A CASE STUDY OF DWIGHT MORROW HIGH SCHOOL
AND THE ACADEMIES AT ENGLEWOOD:
AN EXAMINATION OF SCHOOL DESEGREGATION POLICY
FROM A CRITICAL RACE PERSPECTIVE

by

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written under the direction of

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and approved by

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Newark, New Jersey
May, 2011
This study examines the impact of a voluntary school desegregation program—the Academies @ Englewood (A@E)—on the Dwight Morrow High School (DMHS) campus in the upper-middle-class city of Englewood, New Jersey. The author of this dissertation conducted observations in both academic and social settings, in-depth interviews, surveys, and focus groups. The data that were collected and analyzed provided stark counter-narratives to the dominant discourse that linked diminished expectations and low academic ability with Black and Latino students at DMHS, but, in contrast, related academic privilege and cultural elitism with the racially heterogeneous students attending the A@E.

Critical Race Theory in Education (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Solorzano & Yosso, 2001) was utilized as the theoretical framework in the analysis of the litigation that eventually led to the development and implementation of the A@E, to the current cultures and organization of both academic programs, and to the academic and social experiences of the students in both programs.
This research suggests the following: the A@E achieved its intended goal of attracting high-achieving White and Asian students to the DMHS campus and of providing a small number (50 students per class) of high-achieving Englewood students with an academically rigorous high school option. However, the A@E students were not effectively integrated into the DMHS culture, but were, instead, kept isolated in a separate facility, where the A@E functioned as an autonomous, academically selective, school-within-a-school. Students who attended the A@E benefited from this rigorous, enriched educational environment, but implementing the program fostered feelings of second-class citizenship in the DMHS students, who exhibited, and continue to exhibit, initiative in their ongoing attempts to maximize what they perceive to be limited academic opportunities.
DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to three amazing people whom I love beyond words:


The successful completion of this project honors your life and your tireless commitment to our family, to education, and to those who continued to function, even in the fray. I would not have completed this task if you had not done so before me. Even in death, I heard your rallying cry: “Here comes the Boo!” This is for you, Daddy!

My mother, Maggie Mae Funderburk Jones

You continue to teach me amazing truths: 1) How to make the extremely difficult look extremely easy. 2) How to experience life fully, in sun and in rain. 3) That paying now rather than later is the only way to go. 4) That being an amazing friend is life-changing. Thank you for believing in me when I did not believe in myself. And, thank you for continuing to be my teacher.

My husband, Preston LeRoi McGowan

You have remained proud of me and supportive of my work. You have shared wholeheartedly (and uncomplainingly) in the challenges, the uncertainties, and the sacrifices associated with this task. I thought I had fallen in love with you fully in Bermuda in 2006. I was wrong. Love grew and grew, every time you pushed and pulled me through this task throughout our first years of marriage. Can we go for a walk now?
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I acknowledge the following amazing people who provided wise and patient guidance:

My Committee, whose contributions pushed me to grow as a scholar and a person.

John Degnan and Arnold Mytelka. Without your early contributions and contacts, the legal history of this work would have been lost.

Richard Segall, former Superintendent of Schools, Englewood Public School District. You believed my work was important and necessary. Thank you for clearing hurdles that otherwise would have rendered this research “a thought lost in translation.”

Study participants, who graciously shared their memories, thoughts, and feelings. My gratitude goes out to the dedicated teachers and administrators at DMHS and the A@E. Your work is so important and so challenging. Your dedication and skills are not acknowledged often enough. I acknowledge both.

Students of DMHS and the A@E, who were courageous enough to be brutally honest. What you told me always made me think and sometimes made me smile. You and all of your peers deserve much more from your schools and from those who teach in them and administer them. You are the reason for my having done this work. I will never forget you.

Three the Hard Way—Lamarr Thomas, Amod Field, and Ray Dandridge. You make the responsibility of being passionate school administrators, scholars, fathers, and friends look easy. Your students are better because of your commitment and dedication. And so am I. You continue to be wise counsel.

Charley Flint and the other “Women Warriors” who traversed this PhD path before me, shedding their personal light on my journey. My undying gratitude goes to Flora Taylor, Mariah Britton, Betty Holmes-Anthony, Katherine Knight Wilcox, and Yvonne Martinez-Thorne. I stand on your strong shoulders.

Celeste Miller, “New York City Teaching Fellow Lady for Life.” Thank you for standing on a New York City subway platform and telling me: “Of course you can do your PhD!” And so it was.

Aunt Betty Holmes Anthony and Mildred Jones. It was in your offices at The City University of New York that this PhD concept was hatched! Both of you have cheerfully served as my academic and professional godmothers. For all of your support I am eternally grateful.

Kaili Baucum. I pass the torch to you. You have borne witness, up-close and personal, and persist in your desire to make this happen for you. We share “a special kind of crazy,” and now, my friend, it is your turn. Hurry up—with your brilliant self! We have Black children to save!
Joelle Tutella. Thank you for all the critical and encouraging pushback, for the referral to Barbara Schloss (she is awesome!), and for the endless laughter.

My niece Rachel Dionna and my nephew Aaron Christopher. You were only twelve and nine years of age, respectively, when I began this journey, and now we are discussing college visits and high schools! I hope that, somehow, your understanding of my sacrifices will help you make wise choices in the future.

My big sister Michelle. Who else can understand what it was like to grow up at 474, with John, his aviators, and Blimpies and Maggie’s special cord on our television set? I thank God for how well you know me and for your special way of helping me through my toughest times.

Finally, to the beloved spirit of my Grams, Gessie Blackmon Funderburk (1909–1996), whose gentle, loving presence always eased my anxiety. I still see you peeling my peaches, even after Mom told me that I had to eat the skin. In two generations, we have pushed the family from an eighth-grade education to a PhD. I got this one Grams!
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CHAPTER I
STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Magnet programs are a reflection of the historical desegregation efforts made by some school districts to create an educational alternative for parents and to bring school districts into compliance with the 1954 ruling of Brown v. Board of Education. However, despite the presence of these programs, public education in the United States has experienced a gradual return to separate and unequal and to increased re-segregation. Currently, most public schools have become even more segregated than they had been before the Brown ruling (Frankenburg & Siegel-Hawley, 2008; Orfield & Yun, 1999).

Examining the policy implications of a magnet school program when it is used as a tool to facilitate racial desegregation, this research uses Dwight Morrow High School (DMHS) and the Academies @ Englewood (A@E) in Englewood, New Jersey as a case study. Englewood, an upper-middle-class school district serving kindergarten through twelfth grade, is in Bergen County, the wealthiest, most densely populated county in New Jersey. In addition, Englewood has the highest concentration of Blacks (39%) and Latinos (21.8%) and the second highest number of lower-income housing units of any municipality in Bergen County. Englewood Cliffs (EC) is an affluent borough with a school district that serves kindergarten through eighth grade. EC, which is adjacent to the eastern border of Englewood, is 98% White and Asian. Englewood has one public high school—DMHS—that serves both Englewood and EC.
In 1985, EC requested termination of its sending/receiving (S/R) agreement with Englewood, so that EC could enter into a new agreement with an adjacent community, Tenafly, which is 95% White and Asian. Englewood responded with a lawsuit that sought to regionalize its district with Englewood Cliffs and Tenafly. This litigation initiated a 15-year legal battle, which resulted in DMHS becoming a Bergen County School of Choice (BCSC) as part of the New Jersey Interdistrict Public School of Choice Program. Funding from this program enabled the Englewood Public School District (EPSD) to establish a voluntary desegregation program, namely the Academies @ Englewood (A@E) magnet program, which was housed in a separate building on the DMHS campus. The A@E magnet program was designed to attract high-achieving White and Asian students living in Bergen County with the intent of achieving an improved racial balance at DMHS.

In the litigation involving Englewood, EC, and Tenafly, the subject of race was excluded because it was viewed as a distraction to what was considered the more important, and race-neutral, discussion of the quality of education in Englewood. This absence of a critical examination of the role of race and racism accounts, in part, for the lack of effectiveness of the A@E. This research uses Critical Race Theory (CRT) as the theoretical framework to illuminate the previously inadequate examination of how race and racism affected the implementation of the A@E on the DMHS campus. It will do so by using historical narratives found through archival research, and current narratives generated through interviews of attorneys, former board members and Englewood school
administrators, current school administrators, and teachers, and through focus groups involving students in both academic programs.

This work then goes on to explore issues that include the interplay of race, class, and the locus of power for the parties involved in the protracted litigation and the resulting desegregation policy. It also considers the implications of these initiatives for school administrators, faculty, students, and parents.
CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Origins of Critical Race Theory

Critical Race Theory (CRT) is a concept derived from legal scholars, including Derrick Bell (1980, 1983, 1987) and Alan Freeman (1978, 1988), who were searching for a theoretical construct that did not require the separation of critical theory, race, and racism, as suggested in Critical Legal Studies (CLS). According to Bell, CLS could not effectively challenge the legitimization of oppressive social structures without considering the role of race and racism (Bell, 1980, 1983; West, 1995). For this reason, these legal scholars were searching for critical space in which race was brought to the foreground and a space where critical themes were central (Crenshaw, 2002). Mari Matsuda (1991) described CRT as

...the work of progressive legal scholars of color who are attempting to develop a jurisprudence that accounts for the role of racism in American law and that works toward the elimination of racism as part of a larger goal of eliminating all forms of subordination. (p.1331)

CRT developed from a need for new direction following the civil rights setbacks of the 1970s and 1980s, when official civil rights policy was no longer a component of the national agenda. At this point, the United States Supreme Court had begun to limit precedents that pledged equality for Blacks, and critical race theorists saw a need “to give voice” to existing civil rights concerns. Critical race theorists wanted to move beyond Blacks’ reliance on the law as their only path to pursuing civil rights and to embrace “story telling” as an essential new form of protest (Jones, 2002). As a framework useful
in examining social hierarchy, CRT positions race at the center of the analysis and reveals how racism continues to affect the lives of marginalized groups in the United States.

To better understand CRT and its application to this research, it is necessary to understand its history in legal studies and its four basic tenets. First, CRT recognizes that *racism is a common, everyday experience of people of color*—a pervasive, permanent social construct of [US] American society (Delgado, 2001). Second, *racism as “ordinariness” deems racist behavior difficult to address*—especially on an institutional level—and supports standards, such as color-blind ideology, that allow race and racial categories “to manipulate or retire when convenient” (Lewis, 2006). Third, the US hierarchy of “White over color,” (White supremacy) serves important functions that have contributed to “all contemporary manifestations of group advantage and disadvantage,” also referred to as *White Interest Convergence* (Bell, 2004). Fourth, CRT recognizes that people of color *have a unique voice or “counter story”* that should be heard and valued as highly as White views are heard and valued. CRT maintains that this more comprehensive approach will benefit from the experiential knowledge, the counter story, of people of color, and that there exists a “voice to be heard” that can be readily understood through the lens of CRT. As Adrienne Dixson has affirmed, “CRT scholars are not making up stories—rather, they are constructing narratives out of the historical, sociocultural, and political realities of their lives and those of people of color” (2006).

Data gathered using CRT as a theoretical framework also can be used to develop and implement policy changes. For this research, CRT can be used not only to determine a
counter narrative—one that is discounted or rarely heard—but also to construct a more illuminating history of the implementation of the magnet program at DMHS. This more dimensional history examines how a desegregation policy affected student performance, the outcomes for Englewood students, and whether its implementation was a well-informed decision that helped a majority of DMHS students. This narrative also can inform policy by—as suggested in CRT—keeping race central to the discussion in order to question whether the strategy to racially desegregate DMHS via the magnet program had (and has) been well received and wisely implemented. This has been accomplished through the voices of individuals involved, from early policy architects to current teachers and students; their participation in the study engendered suggestions regarding how future desegregation policy could achieve the social and academic results for Black and Latino students that the policy was intended to achieve.
Figure One: Tenets and Scholars of Critical Race Theory

**Tenets of CRT**

- Racism is endemic to life in the US
- Race and races are social constructions
- Voice of color that is the Counterstory or Counternarrative
- White Interest Convergence

**Education Scholars using CRT**

- Derrick Bell
- Kimberlé Crenshaw
- Angela Harris
- Gloria Ladson-Billings
- Garret Duncan

**In the tradition of W.E.B. DuBois and Carter G. Woodson**

- Richard Delgado
- Tara Yosso
- Daniel Solorzano
- Margaret Montoya
- Francisco Valdez

**Mari Matsuda**

- Eric Yamamoto
- Neil Gotanda
Critical Race Theory and The Court Case

This research examines the policy implications of a school desegregation law suit—
Board of Education of the Borough of Englewood Cliffs, Bergen County v. Board of
Education of the City of Englewood, New Jersey v. Board of Education of the Borough of
Tenafly, Bergen County (the Court Case). What follows is a brief history of the case in
order to contextualize the resulting policy—the magnet program—and to establish the
relevance of CRT as a theoretical framework.

In 1965, Englewood was a racially mixed community of working, middle-, and upper-
class Whites and Blacks, with most Blacks residing in the Fourth Ward.(see Appendix 1).
Englewood Cliffs (EC) was a wealthy, mostly White community bordering Englewood’s
east side and literally on the pinnacle of a cliff in Englewood. As a kindergarten through
twelfth-grade district, Englewood was able to offer EC—a kindergarten through eighth-
grade district—the option of sending its ninth-grade students to DMHS for grades nine
through twelve. Englewood and Tenafly agreed to a sending/receiving agreement (S/R)
and found this relationship advantageous when the Englewood Board of Education
(BOE) agreed to build additional high school facilities to accommodate a larger student
body; this edifice would come to be known as the South Tower Building. EC agreed to
send a predetermined percentage of its students to DMHS each year through 1976, when
the EC BOE would be allowed, under legal provisions, to revisit the S/R agreement.

In 1977, EC made its first attempt to withdraw from the S/R relationship with Englewood
by requesting that the Commissioner of Education review the agreement. EC alleged that
the ten- year contract had been honored and that EC needed to be released from the S/R
agreement to explore relationships with other districts in order to ensure that its students received a “thorough and efficient education,” as stated in the New Jersey State Constitution. The petition was dismissed, and the Commissioner of Education denied EC’s attempt to reinstate the law suit. During the same period, the EC BOE began to express, during public meetings, its concerns about the enrollment of EC students at DMHS—specifically the lack of control it had over DMHS personnel and curriculum decisions and how its per-pupil expenditure was managed by the Englewood BOE with minimal input from the EC BOE (Board of Education of the Borough of Englewood Cliffs, Bergen County v. Board of Education of the City of Englewood v. Board of Education of the Borough of Tenafly, 1988). In order to gather greater community support, the EC BOE needed to determine if more members of the EC community felt similarly; to this end, it ordered a study that dealt with how EC families felt about the quality of education offered at DMHS, how they felt about sending their children to DMHS, and whether the S/R relationship should be terminated. The study was led by Professor Francis Ianni (Columbia Teachers College), who suggested that EC was concerned with social characteristics, primarily “racial balance and discipline” at DMHS (Board of Education of the Borough of Englewood Cliffs, Bergen County v. Board of Education of the City of Englewood v. Board of Education of the Borough of Tenafly, 1988). According to court documents, disparaging articles were published in Bergen County newspapers that focused on problems at DMHS and that fueled local political debates, especially in EC as it prepared for BOE and borough council political campaigns.
The attendance of EC students decreased more rapidly than the decline in the EC school-aged population. Throughout most of the 1970s, the number of EC ninth graders slated to attend DMHS was approximately 60% of the graduating eighth-grade class; this number decreased from 69% in the 1980–1981 school year to 4.4% in the 1987–1988 school year (Board of Education of the Borough of Englewood Cliffs, Bergen County v. Board of Education of the City of Englewood v. Board of Education of the Borough of Tenafly, 1988). Tenafly, a wealthy, mostly White community bordering EC and Englewood, was experiencing a decline in enrollment and saw an educational relationship with EC as a viable measure for preserving its teaching staff and increasing its revenues—EC families paid $5,000 tuition to Tenafly. By November 1985, the EC and Tenafly school boards had drafted resolutions for a new S/R agreement and submitted this agreement to the State Commissioner of Education for approval.

In 1985, the White school-aged population (ages 5 to 17) of Tenafly was 88%; of EC, 84%; and of Englewood, 37%. Black populations in Tenafly and EC were under 1%; in contrast, the percentage of Blacks in Englewood was 48%. Considering these striking racial disparities, Englewood responded with a countersuit to EC’s request to end the S/R agreement and enter a new agreement with Tenafly. In the countersuit, Englewood proposed that the three districts regionalize, forming one comprehensive high school to remedy what was clearly a civil rights issue—Englewood’s racially segregated high school. At this point, while having an official S/R agreement, Tenafly High School (THS) was already receiving tuition-paying students from Englewood and EC. In 1987, THS was receiving private tuition from 90 students, 75 of those coming from EC. This case—
"Board of Education of the Borough of Englewood Cliffs, Bergen County v. Board of Education of the City of Englewood v. Board of Education of the Borough of Tenafly, 1988—to regionalize the three districts became the longest litigation in the history of the three districts concerned; it lasted fifteen years (1985–2000), and resulted in several changes in these districts, most notably in Englewood. In 1995, it was reported that “[t]he creation of a magnet school program that excels in specific fields is the most popular solution to achieving racial balance at Dwight Morrow High School in Englewood, a study found” (The Bergen Record, April 6, 1995). The New Jersey Supreme Court ordered the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) to create a “cooperative solution that would contribute to educational improvement” at DMHS, and in 2001, Englewood attempted its first magnet program with one applicant. This “cooperative solution” was further developed by Dr. John Grieco; it was a magnet program modeled after the Bergen Academies in Hackensack, called the Academies @ Englewood (A@E) and housed in the South Tower Building on the DMHS campus. This was the cooperative desegregation effort favored by the NJDOE instead of the mandatory regionalization plan proposed by Englewood that had been denied by the New Jersey Supreme Court. The plan would voluntarily attract high-achieving White and Asian students to an academically rigorous program while simultaneously ameliorating the racial isolation of DMHS’s Black and Latino students. The following diagrams show the relationships that existed between/among Englewood, EC, and Tenafly school districts prior to the 1985 litigation; EC’s proposal when it attempted to dissolve its S/R agreement with Englewood and enter an agreement with Tenafly; Englewood’s counterproposal to regionalize the three districts; and finally, the current organization of the school districts with the so-
called “cooperative solution” (eg, magnet program) in place. The diagrams also show the racial composition of each school district and the hyper-segregation of each district. Finally, the diagrams demonstrate the racial balance that could have been achieved via the proposed regionalization plan and the racial composition of each district following implementation of the A@E magnet program. The diagrams show which outcome—regionalization versus the magnet program—would have produced a more favorable outcome vis a vis balancing the racial isolation in each school district.
Figure Two: School District Structure and Racial Composition Prior to Litigation, 1985

Figure Three: EC Lawsuit to end S/R Agreement with Englewood
Figure Four: Englewood Countersuit to Regionalize Englewood, EC, and Tenafly

Figure Five: The Cooperative Solution—Current Configuration of Schools with Magnet Program (A@E) on DMHS Campus
Quantitative School Level Data for DMHS and the A@E

During data collection attempts were made to find and analyze disaggregated student records from the DMHS and A@E programs, however student level data for both programs are not disaggregated between DMHS and the A@E. Student level data is reported to the district which reports it to the state department of education as one report—thus on paper DMHS has successfully been desegregated and student academic outcomes have improved. The following tables detail the student populations of the A@E and DMHS in 2005-2006 and 2010-2011. They include the racial composition of each program, the enrollment summary of DMHS students highlighting Englewood Cliffs student enrollment and a graph of districts that send the most students to the A@E, or are closest in proximity to Englewood, including Englewood Cliffs and Tenafly. This data is used to show quantitatively what the study participants unpack in their interviews in terms of how the implementation of the A@E has affected the DMHS campus.
Table 1 Racial/Ethnic Composition DMHS and A@E 2005-2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>DMHS #</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>A@E #</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Totals #</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>22.39</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>11.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>335</td>
<td>59.50</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>25.37</td>
<td>454</td>
<td>43.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>36.23</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>21.75</td>
<td>306</td>
<td>29.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>28.78</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>14.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>563</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>469</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1032</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 Racial/Ethnic Composition DMHS and A@E 2010-2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>DMHS #</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>A@E #</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Totals #</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>14.83</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>8.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>59.34</td>
<td>131</td>
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<td>404</td>
<td>43.35</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>36.52</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>24.36</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>30.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.39</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>33.05</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>17.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>472</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>932</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Table 3 Enrollment Summary DMHS and Englewood Cliffs Students 2010-2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>DMHS #</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>EC #</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Totals #</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.74</td>
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<td>19.0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>273</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
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<td>36.52</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.76</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>35.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.39</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>76.2</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>481</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 Whole School Enrollment Summary 2010-2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>DMHS and A@E #</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>7.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>439</td>
<td>44.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>30.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>17.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>981</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Districts Involved in the Litigation</td>
<td>To A@E</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Tenafly</td>
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<th>Englewood’s Neighboring Districts</th>
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**Relevant Sending Districts to A@E 2010-11** (in terms of litigation and physical proximity to Englewood)
A Critical Race Perspective on Englewood

Whites attempted to keep discussions of race and the quality of public education mutually exclusive throughout the litigation. However, during more heated exchanges, issues of race emerged as central to the debate. EC and Tenafly parents felt under attack whenever Englewood parents stated their belief that resistance to regionalization was based on the racial composition of DMHS. Because EC and Tenafly perceived Englewood’s statements as accusations of racism, both communities defended themselves by denying that their reasoning was based on racism and by expressing dismay. Black parents grew increasingly frustrated with these denials and with the defensiveness of EC and Tenafly parents. This impasse served to intensify their distrust of the White communities and their conviction that EC and Tenafly parents refused to engage in honest dialogue concerning strategies to manage racial imbalance. It was Englewood’s problem, and EC and Tenafly Whites had no intention of cooperating to identify and implement a solution. The prevailing attitude of Englewood Blacks was that Whites did not want to regionalize school districts because of their inherent fear of interaction with Blacks and Latinos. It was further assumed that Whites did not want their children attending a school with a preponderance of Black and Latino students. White residents rationalized their position by focusing on the quality of education at DMHS and not on the racial composition of the student body. This denial of racism by White parents served to foment Black tension and distrust. Englewood’s concerns regarding race were dismissed as anachronistic or as unfounded pretexts, leaving Englewood Blacks convinced that their community’s needs were being ignored—hence the need for CRT to guide this research. CRT gives credence to the voices of the Black leadership in Englewood in such a way that does not suggest that their position was more important but simply that it was
as important. As previously integrated into the research of Richard Delgado, Daniel Solorzano, and Laurence Parker, CRT acknowledges the existence of race, racism, and discriminatory practices and permits a historically under-represented cultural and racial framework to guide their questioning, methodology, and data collection (Delgado, 1999; Delgado and Stefancic, 2001; Solorzano and Yosso, 2002; Parker and Lynn, 2002).

Besides CRT’s roots in legal studies and its use in examining the litigation that was the impetus for this research, the four tenets of CRT are used to examine the policy implications of the case in terms of the implementation of the A@E magnet program and the program’s far-ranging effects on administrators, teachers, and students on the DMHS campus. Englewood is a racially and socioeconomically mixed community (see Appendix 2), but DMHS disproportionately serves a working class Black and Latino student population while the A@E serves racially mixed, high-achieving students from Englewood and throughout Bergen County. The first tenet of CRT recognizes that racism is a common, everyday experience of people of color—a pervasive, permanent social construct of [US] American society (Delgado, 2001). This tenet guides the research as it examines the racial composition of the student groups, and on an institutional level, how race matters for students attending DMHS and for those attending the A@E. The second tenet suggests racism as “ordinariness” and therefore deems racist behavior difficult to address—especially on an institutional level—and supports a color-blind ideology that allows race and racial categories “to manipulate or retire when convenient” (Lewis, 2006). This tenet is especially relevant when examining the relationship between race and educational equity in both programs. Further, this tenet is applied when examining the
efforts made by the current joint DMHS/A@E administrators and the NJDOE to address the state’s concerns about equitable access to quality academic programs for all students. The third tenet, the hierarchy of “White over color” (White supremacy) serves important functions that have contributed to “all contemporary manifestations of group advantage and disadvantage” (Bell, 2004) and is used to determine whether there are significant advantages for the students who attend the A@E versus those who attend DMHS. Finally, the fourth tenet of CRT recognizes that people of color have a *unique voice* or “*counter story*” that should be heard and that should be valued as highly as the White point of view. This tenet directs the research to prioritize all student voices that contribute to the literature on this desegregation effort. This case study of DMHS and the A@E, using CRT, allows for the discourse on implementing the magnet program to challenge reductionist notions that insist on excluding race and institutional racism when evaluating a desegregation policy in general and the Englewood policy specifically. As Linda Tillman suggests race-based approaches to research are necessary as they offer the opportunity to challenge dominant norms surrounding an issue and provide the chance for the counter narrative to inform policy. The counter narrative is usually brought forth by groups historically silenced in educational research (Tillman, 2002).
Educational Research and Critical Race Theory

The following describes the means by which CRT has been shown to be a useful approach in analyzing educational inequities. According to CRT, social inequity, in general, and educational inequity, in particular, are based on three premises: 1) race continues to be a significant factor in determining inequity in the United States; 2) our society is based on property rights; 3) the intersection of race and property creates an analytical tool that can be used to understand social (and therefore educational) inequities (Ladson-Billings and Tate, 1995). As Gloria Ladson-Billings and William Tate proposed:

If racism were merely isolated, unrelated, individual acts, we could expect to see at least a few examples of educational excellence and equity together in the nation’s public schools. Instead, those places where African Americans do experience educational success tend to be outside the public schools (1995, p. 55).

However, past educational research has suggested: 1) that poor children, regardless of race, perform worse in school and 2) that the high rate of poverty among Blacks contributes to this inferior performance. Applying a CRT construct—that racism is endemic to American life—it should be suggested that the causes of Black children’s poverty, in tandem with impoverished schooling, represents both institutional and structural racism (Ladson-Billings and Tate, 1995).

Ladson-Billings and Tate further proposed that educational research should, by applying CRT, reinterpret or reevaluate Brown v. Board of Education and subsequent school desegregation policies. Today, students of color are more segregated than ever before; further, instead of providing improved educational opportunities, school desegregation mandates have encouraged White flight and have diminished the supply of qualified
Black teachers and administrators (Orfield, 1988; Bell, 1983; Hawley 1988; Schofield, 1989). Ladson-Billings and Tate cited Kimberle Crenshaw to support their claims that: 1) the desegregation movement subsequent to Brown v. Board of Education has been a cause of confusion for several generations of Blacks and Whites; and 2) civil rights activists must, after reconsideration, conclude that discussions of education and antidiscrimination are fundamentally ambiguous (Crenshaw, 1988). Kimberle Crenshaw pointed out the ambiguity of the discourse about antidiscrimination initiatives and argued that, in its present iteration, the discourse accommodates both conservative and liberal views, thereby creating a double-edged sword:

This dilemma suggests that the civil rights constituency cannot afford to view an antidiscrimination doctrine as a permanent pronouncement of society’s commitment to ending racial subordination. Rather, anti-discrimination law represents an ongoing ideological struggle in which occasional winners harness the moral, coercive, and consensual power of the law. Nonetheless, the victories it offers can be ephemeral and the risks of engagement substantial (Crenshaw, 1988, p. 1335).

Crenshaw supported her contentions about the ambiguity of civil rights legislation, such as the Brown decision, with research in a predominantly Black school district in Northern California. When the district sought to attract White students, it organized camping and skiing outings, which were attended by White students who possessed, or could afford to purchase, the relatively expensive requisite equipment and gear. However, when these incentives were not sufficient to sustain White student enrollment, the district closed the Black high school, and its students were bused to four White schools in the district (Crenshaw, 1988). Ladson-Billings and Tate indicated that a successful desegregation program is one that “ensures that Whites are happy (and do not leave the system en
Ladson-Billings and Tate challenged the claims of educational neutrality, objectivity, color-blindness, and meritocracy by recognizing the counter story, “one’s own reality.” They also asserted that “naming one’s own reality” serves to counteract the demoralization of marginalized groups. They also pointed out that applying CRT to educational research enables the voices of people of color to “complete [the] analysis of the educational system.” They cited Lisa Delpit, who argued that “one of the tragedies of education is the way in which the dialogue of people of color has been silenced” (Ladson-Billings and Tate, 1994). Accordingly:

Without authentic voices of people of color (as teachers, parents, administrators, students, and community members), it is doubtful that we can say or know anything useful about education in their communities (Ladson-Billings and Tate, 1994, p. 58).

This section describes how CRT has been used as a framework in research on the experiences of Black students in magnet school environments—focusing specifically on the inability of these students to succeed relative to the superior performance of their White counterparts. The research shows that William Tate and Celia Rousseau suggested that CRT scholarship in education be used neither as exclusively qualitative nor as exclusively quantitative research, but rather as problem-centered research (2002). With this approach, CRT allows the type of problem to determine the type of methodology, while at the same time allowing for the use of an appropriate analytic method to examine educational inequities (Dixson and Rousseau, 2005). In *Beyond Love: A Critical Race*
*Ethnography of the Schooling of Adolescent Black Males* in *Equity and Excellence in Education*, Garrett Duncan used CRT as the theoretical framework for studying the experience of Black male students at a magnet high school in the Midwest. The school, which he called City High School (CHS) for the purposes of his study, was a magnet academy that became an educational unit in a voluntary desegregation agreement between a city and its suburbs. CHS became nationally recognized as a racially integrated school with exceptionally high academic standards; it also was thought to possess “a caring institutional culture” (Duncan, 2002). Duncan’s research is relevant on several levels; he learned that CHS did not disclose the fact that very few Black males were in attendance even though the school was located in a district that was more than 90% Black. In 1998, when CHS was recognized as first in the state for exceeding several academic benchmarks, there were only 24 Black male students in a total student body of 274, and only one Black male student among its 53 graduates.

Using CRT, Duncan examined “the stories that students, teachers, and administrators use to explain the marginalization and exclusion of Black male students that, in part, help to sustain these conditions of oppression” (2002). As part of a larger study that examined the social and academic lives of Black male students at CHS, Duncan created a framework that found that conversations about Black males and education were “offensive without identification” (Ladson-Billings, 1999). Or, according to CRT, these White conversations about Black male students were considered neutral, but were in actuality expressions of normalized racist behavior. Duncan presented ethnographic data that demonstrated that these conversations conflicted with those of the Black male...
students, and that CRT provided a means to accurately examine school policy and curb such marginalization of Black male students. Duncan also included the perspectives of others in the school, thereby enabling him to compare “dominant discourse” with the counter stories of the Black male students. Through the lens of CRT, the Black males’ counter stories became a component of the discussion; without this approach, their counter stories would not have been spoken, nor would they have been heard.

Duncan’s research addressed some of the forces that marginalize Black males, who in this situation, were considered “beyond love.” I cite one particular instance that supports the use of CRT in educational research. Duncan posited that when school desegregation policy was developed, it was born out of curiosity and the need to control Blacks (Laible, 2000; Palmer, 1993; Williams, 1974). Such policies often were designed to integrate Blacks into institutions that had compensatory and subsequent support programs. However, these policies did not require their developers to examine their biases or their complicity in reproducing racist norms (Bell, 1992, 1998; Delgado, 1995). Black culture was not understood well enough to possess value, primarily because it was considered “too different” from the culture of the majority (Duncan, 2002). Applying CR theorist Richard Delgado’s premise that “we cannot identify with or love anyone who is too different from us” (1995), Duncan suggested that much of the educational research on Black males described them as “too different from other students, and oppositionally so” (Duncan, 2002, p. 133). Therefore, it was conceivable that Black males would have a difficult time in schools—and that the “problem-solving” approach to desegregation, or
subsequent support of Black students, “contributes to the further marginalization of the
group” (Duncan, 2002).

This assertion that Black males at CHS were considered “beyond love” was illustrated in
the exchanges between Black male students and CHS teachers and administrators. Black
male students were associated with athletic programs and/or mentoring programs; the
administration had an educational consultant discuss the “issues” it was having with
Black male students, and the majority of teachers functioned under the traditional
stereotypes, namely, that the Black student population comprised those who were lazy,
were unable to compete academically, or were cheaters. Duncan’s ethnographic approach
allowed for many CHS voices to be heard and analyzed. His approach also considered the
apparent inability of CHS to fully conceptualize the conditions that would have been
needed for Black male students to succeed. Even though CHS considered itself a caring
institution, directly or indirectly it excluded one group of students from its culture
because it had not examined, appreciated, and accorded equal value to this group’s
culture. Therefore, CHS policies had failed to successfully address the needs of Black
male students. Duncan’s analysis led him to conclude that “racist stereotypes remain
fixed in the imaginations of CHS students and teachers.” Such thinking undermined the
ability of Black male students to excel. The negativity of the assumptions about, and
descriptions of, Black male students created an inhospitable climate that adversely
affected their academic achievement. Therefore, strategies that encouraged CHS’s
competitive environment did nothing to ameliorate the conditions that marginalized
Black males and might even have compromised some of the positive qualities of such
competition. Duncan’s research made it clear that attempts to transform the lives of CHS students should have gone well beyond professional development workshops; rather, educators should have examined the moral fabric of the school’s culture. CRT-guided research effectively does this—especially when it examines policies relating to minority students. According to Duncan:

>[O]ppression and domination should be the primary terms for conceptualizing the exclusion and marginalization of Black male students at CHS, and that liberation should be the primary term for conceptualizing the remedy to the problems they encounter. Toward this end, CRT privileges the narratives of those who have been victimized to ameliorate the conditions attendant to oppression and domination and, in particular, engages the problem of the different in ways that generate new social theories in the service of liberation (2002, p. 141).
Social Construction of Whiteness—Whiteness as Property

Having provided the literature on CRT, the relevance of race, and its usefulness in identifying societal inequities, I reference law professor and CR theorist Cheryl Harris, who suggested that the intersection of race and property is a valid construct for examining racial inequities in education (1993). Harris’s premise is based on the observation that property rights, not human rights, are fundamental to our society. Therefore, Whiteness as a social identity can be considered the definitive property needed for power, access, and equity in education (Harris, 1993). Harris’s definition of Whiteness as property supports the premise that the Englewood school desegregation policy was tied to larger social and political issues in Englewood, and in New Jersey, and that, on an institutional level, this educational policy was based on the need to racially integrate Blacks with Whites and Asians to create a racial balance that would improve the academic outcomes of Black and Latino students. In her journal article, “Whiteness as Property,” Harris wrote:

> slavery linked the privilege of Whites to the subordination of Blacks through a legal regime that attempted the conversion of Blacks into objects of property. Similarly, the settlement and seizure of Native American land supported White privilege through a system of property rights in land in which the “race” of the Native Americans rendered their first possession right invisible and justified conquest (1993, p. 1721).

CR theorists consider Harris’s construct of the “Property Functions of Whiteness” useful in understanding educational inequities. Harris’s theoretical construct includes: 1) rights of disposition; 2) rights to use and enjoyment; 3) rights to reputation and status property; and (4) the absolute right to exclude.
Rights of Disposition

Harris suggested that property rights usually are understood to be fully transferable, but that personal rights are considered nontransferable; therefore, it is difficult to view these personal rights related to Whiteness as transferable or as property. However, “alienability of certain property is limited (eg., entitlements, government licenses, professional degrees, or licenses held by one party and financed by the labor of the other in the context of divorce) (1993).” Ladson- Billings and Tate applied Harris’s interpretation to posit that “whiteness, when conferred on certain student performances, is alienable. When students are rewarded only for conformity to perceived “white norms” or to sanctioned cultural practices (eg, dress, speech patterns, or unauthorized conceptions of knowledge), White property is being rendered alienable (Ladson-Billings and Tate, 1995; Ogbu, 2003).

Reputation and Status Property

In order to connect Whiteness and property, Harris ascribed to the condition of Whiteness the qualities of being tangible and external. She used cases of libel and slander to demonstrate that an individual’s reputation and status can be described as property—that is to say, to damage someone’s reputation is considered tantamount to damaging his personal property. Ladson-Billings and Tate suggested that the concept of reputation is more relevant when considering race and schools than had been previously accepted. For example, Harris (1993) proposed that to call a white person “Black” is to defame him or her. In a 1994 New York Times article, journalist H. G. Bissinger wrote, “. . . urban schools lack the status and reputation of suburban schools, and when urban students move to, or are bused to, suburban schools, these schools lose their reputation”
(Bissinger, 1994). Similarly, when administrators, teachers, and parents defined a school as urban, Black, or any category considered non-White, this was an automatic slur against the school’s reputation.

Right to Exclude

Harris suggested that the right to exclude is central to the concept of Whiteness as property since “whiteness has been characterized, not by an inherent unifying characteristic, but by the exclusion of others deemed to be ‘not white’” (1993). Whiteness as an identity has been protected as property in legal decisions (*Plessy v. Ferguson*) that secured segregated institutions. Historically, Black slaves in the United States had been totally excluded from educational opportunities; during Reconstruction, Blacks were allowed to be educated separately from Whites. However, following the *Brown I* and *Brown II* decisions, it was mandated that school districts allow Blacks equal access to racially integrated public schools. However, Blacks were once again excluded through other actions, namely “Educational White Flight” as well as Whites sending their children to private schools or to School Choice options, including charter schools and magnet schools. In 1993, Harris wrote this analysis:

“[Brown’s] dialectical contradiction was that it dismantled an old form of whiteness as property while simultaneously permitting its reemergence in a more subtle form. White privilege accorded as a legal right was rejected, but *de facto* white privilege not mandated by law remained unaddressed. In failing to clearly expose the real inequities produced by segregation, the status quo of substantive disadvantage was ratified as an accepted and acceptable baseline—a neutral state operating to the disadvantage of Blacks long after *de jure* segregation had ceased to do so. In accepting substantial inequality as a neutral baseline, a new form of whiteness as property was condoned (1993, p. 1753).
Harris suggested that part of the “mixed legacy” of the Brown decision was its inability to dismantle the racist structures that continued to support school segregation. She proposed that even more problematic than the inability of the Brown decision to reverse racist societal norms was the social construct of Whiteness as intellectual property that was used to debase and derogate the intellectual capital and culture of minority groups:

“Possession—the act necessary to lay the basis for rights in property—was defined to include only the cultural practices of Whites. This definition lay the foundation for the idea that Whiteness—that which Whites alone possess—is valuable and is property” (1993, p. 1753).
Theoretical Relevance and Criticism

Theoretical Relevance

In a 1994 presentation at the America Educational Research Association (AERA) Ladson-Billings and Tate proposed the application of CRT to an examination of race and racism in an educational setting. Their presentation suggested the rationale for using CRT and how it should be applied to educational research; in addition, they asserted that CRT in educational research might begin by challenging traditional analyses of school desegregation efforts—beginning with Board of Education v. Brown.

Ladson-Billings and Tate asserted that “race remain[s] a significant factor in society in general and in education in particular” and understood that because race was so difficult to compute, contain, or even define, researchers have avoided using CRT as a lens for examining social and institutional inequities. Michael Omi and Howard Winant (1993) contended popular notions of race as either a construct or an objective condition have limitations. Thinking of race strictly as an ideological construct denies the reality of a racialized society and its impact on people of color in their every day lives. On the other hand, thinking of race solely as a condition to be objectified denies the problems associated with race and racism (1993). For these reasons Ladson-Billings and Tate proposed that race has been “under-theorized” in educational research, but that it should be applied as a theoretical construct comparable with those of class and gender. They built their proposition on the earlier works of Carter G. Woodson and W. E. B. DuBois, who considered race as the central construct for comprehending educational inequality,
and who, in the early 1900s, tried to establish the legitimacy of race as a relevant theory. Woodson best illustrated his (and their) concerns in his book, *Mis-education of the Negro*:

> The same educational process which inspires and stimulates the oppressor with the thought that he is everything worthwhile depresses and crushes at the same time the spark of genius in the Negro by making him feel that his race does not amount to much and never will measure up to the standards of other peoples (1933, p. xiii).

Past research that included race in the discussion has remained oversimplified and color-blind, thereby discounting its findings (Ladson-Billings and Tate, 1994; Lewis, 2006). Race needs to be accorded a theoretical value that is similar to that of gender and class in order to recognize inequities in education and/or to dismantle the construct of racialized educational policy (Bell, 1987; Ladson-Billings and Tate, 1994). CRT accords weight to the minority perspective, allowing for full explication of race as a theory not only to challenge disparities between groups but also to question purported reforms (Ladson-Billings and Tate, 1994). For instance, if race and racism were not considered a primary construct when developing and instituting a school’s policies and programs, then there would be no measurable benefits for students of color—the policy would benefit another group, or more important, would fail to benefit the minority students it was intended for (Bell, 1987; Delpit, 1988). Or, as has been confirmed by national student outcomes, if gender and class were examined in isolation, there would be no way to account for, and to address, the disproportionately high national suspension rates for Black and Latino males (Hacker, 1992). In this example, and many others relating to minority children and the indicators of academic success, race matters. There is validity in class-based and gender-based explanations of educational inequity, but these explanations are not
sufficiently cogent to account for the numerous disparities in educational achievement between Whites and students of color—especially Blacks and Latinos (Oakes, 1985).

I propose using CRT as a theoretical framework for examining school desegregation policy in Englewood because race and racism have historically been avoided in this discussion. The application of CRT does not suggest that race is the only component to consider when examining inequities in education, but it does suggest that race is the most important and most ignored component. Race, historically, has been considered mutually exclusive of other important social factors—as if discussions of race would negate other aspects of a phenomenon. However CRT also recognizes other forms of oppression (class and gender) that are material to the discussion when researching educational inequalities for Blacks (Parker, 1998). Parker describes this intersection of race, class, and gender as critical to alerting practitioners and scholars alike about the deleterious effects of discriminatory practices:

The critical centering of race (together with social class, gender, sexual orientation, and other areas of difference) at the locations where the research is conducted and discussions are held can serve as a major link between fully understanding the historical vestiges of discrimination and the present-day racial manifestations of that discrimination (1998, p. 46).

Theoretical Criticism

What is most arresting about critical race theory is that . . . it turns its back on the Western tradition of rational inquiry, forswearing analysis for narrative. Rather than marshal logical arguments and empirical data, critical race theorists tell stories—fictional, science-fictional, quasi-fictional, autobiographical, anecdotal—designed to expose the pervasive and debilitating racism in America today. By repudiating reasoned argumentation, the storytellers reinforce stereotypes about the intellectual capacities of nonwhites (Posner, 1997, 42).
As the quote from Judge Richard Posner’s 1997 research confirms, CRT was criticized for its controversial stance on race, specifically its use of the terms “racial realism” and “White supremacy” as well as its use of story telling (Dixson and Rousseau, 2005). More traditional legal scholars who subscribed to the use of alternative methods of examining legal rules did not embrace the “story telling” component of CRT. Rather, they categorized “story telling” as “agony tales” and suggested that the CRT framework was not sufficiently scholarly (Jones, 2002). In defense of the use of the term “White supremacy” rather than “racism” when referring to relationships between Whites and people of color, CR theorists believe that all White people benefit from White privilege—regardless of their ethnicity. In Critical Race Theory and Education, David Gillborn wrote, “[a]ll White-identified people are implicated in [relations of shared power and dominance]; they do all benefit, whether they like it or not” (2008, p. 61). However, critics suggested that this homogenization of Whites masked the effects of class oppression that were ignored by categorical statements of White supremacy. In this capacity, White supremacy did not take into account the construct of non-color-coded racism that is excluded in CRT and that does not include the Irish, Italian, and other minority ethnicities from Europe who have experienced discrimination (Cole, 2008). Critics ultimately believed that positioning people of color as central in CRT negated an understanding of non-color-coded racism and did not address reality. In this research, CRT and its language of exclusion did not hinder the positioning of Whites and Blacks in Englewood. The use of White supremacy in reference to Whites in Englewood connected to a more important concern over White flight from Englewood schools, and to the
privilege and entitlement found in the other predominantly White school districts that were involved in the initial litigation.

When critiquing Derrick Bell’s (1992) tenet of Racial Realism Theory, which asserts that racism is a permanent aspect of this nation’s culture, and that the goal of achieving racial equality is unrealistic, John Powell (1993) proposed that Bell’s assertion sent an incomplete message and diminished the hope that equality for Blacks might still occur, however slowly. Powell contended that Bell’s belief that Blacks would never experience racial equality sent a message of despair that could not change policies (Powell, 1993). Initially, Powell’s critique seemed valid, and hopeful, in comparison with Bell’s position; however, since Powell expressed his criticism, our country has witnessed events that appear to vindicate Bell’s theory that racial equality for Blacks, both inside and outside of our educational institutions, is an unrealistic goal.

Certainly, not all Blacks are exposed to racial epithets nor do most experience racially motivated violence, as had often been the case in past decades. However, there is a commonly held belief in the Black community that when Blacks are treated in a manner perceived to be motivated by racism, other Blacks will respond by identifying with the victims (Dixson and Rousseau, 2005). Solidarity among Blacks, stemming from their life experiences, exists, and CRT provides the framework for their narratives to be accorded value in the research. The validity provided by the majority opinion that traditionally had transformed Black’s perceptions into reality is not necessary in CRT—their counter story is independently valued (Dixson and Rousseau, 2005).
**Conclusion**

I have defined CRT, recognized its research potential, addressed its critics, and illustrated a few of its applications to education research and the social construct of Whiteness. In conclusion, the following reiterates the relevance of CRT in the analysis of DMHS and the A@E.

Intersecting Englewood’s educational policies with the tenets of CRT positions race and racism at the center of the discussion, accords privilege and value to minority and student voices, and recognizes Whiteness as property (as defined by Harris) a social construct that directly influenced the creation and implementation of the A@E. Research on the use of magnet schools to implement desegregation policy has established that disparities exist between the provision of access and the life experiences of minority students. In response to the Court’s mandate (*Brown II*) of “all deliberate speed,” some school districts established magnet programs to attract White students to districts predominantly populated by Blacks. These measures were instituted to preclude the mandatory busing that would have compelled reluctant White parents to send their children to Black schools while accepting a certain percentage of Black students in their public schools.

Critical Race Theorists (CRTs) suggest that such a policy is an example of White Interest Convergence, in which the interests of Blacks in achieving racial equality in public schools is accommodated only when their interests converge with those of Whites (Bell, 2004). Busing children in Englewood, Tenafly and EC, rather than regionalizing these
districts, met the needs of Englewood’s political and commercial interests. Implementing the A@E as a component of DMHS enabled each district to maintain its autonomy and provided an educational option that was distinctly separate from the option DMHS offered to Black and Latino students.

In this case study of DMHS and the A@E, CRT has been applied to determine whether the A@E—designed in reaction to Englewood’s rejected proposal to regionalize the Tenafly, EC, and Englewood school system—primarily served the needs of the native Englewood community and those of the White and Asian student groups Englewood was attempting to attract. CRT also supported a challenge to Englewood’s educational policymakers that ignored life experiences of its DMHS minority students.

Using CRT enabled separate and combined examinations of DMHS and the A@E. This approach was possible because DMHS was required to report all data on the school’s organization as well as academic performance for DMHS and the A@E to the NJDOE. The ability to examine DMHS both as a collective entity and as two separate institutions provides greater understanding of the degree of effectiveness, or lack thereof, of its policies. Ethnographic and case studies of districts with magnet programs are filled with the voices and narratives of both native student groups and magnet school student groups. In this research, DMHS and A@E student voices and narratives provided the data that, when viewed through the lens of CRT, revealed how students’ experiences in these two educational programs differed dramatically according to race, economic class, and academic classification. Applying CRT, this research offered an alternative examination
of the impact of school policy—one that included insights on the lives of the students in their physical and social environments and a deeper understanding of the disparate social constructs of A@E and DMHS students.
CHAPTER III  

REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND RELATED RESEARCH  

The City of Englewood  

The following literature describing Englewood and its historical efforts to desegregate its public schools is included to contextualize and to draw parallels with Englewood’s most recent efforts to desegregate DMHS as examined in this research. The literature is positioned to highlight the experiences of Blacks in Englewood and their challenge of schools that functioned as racialized structures.

Englewood is located two miles from the Fort Lee, New Jersey, entrance to the George Washington Bridge; less than five square miles, it is densely populated with more than 29,000 residents (Census.com, 2007).

Englewood was founded in 1859 as a bedroom community for Wall Street magnates. At this time, it was linked to New York City by railway and a ferry service that traversed the Hudson River and was primarily wealthy and White. Most Blacks in Englewood had been brought from the South as domestic workers and lived in what previously had been the White Fourth Ward. In 1933, *The Englewood Press* reported “150 Southern Negroes Imported to Englewood Since Last August by Special System at $10 Apiece.”

Englewood was incorporated in 1899, and served as a hub for the surrounding area and as a business and educational center, accepting tuition students from surrounding districts in its public schools (*The Englewood Press*, 1933). Englewood’s public schools were considered some of the best in the Northeast (Bouton-Goldberg, 1998).
Englewood’s demographics shifted in the 1930s after construction of the George Washington Bridge. The municipality that previously had two classes—wealthy Whites and working class Blacks—now had a growing middle class comprising families that wanted to leave New York City for suburban life and returning World War II veterans, who joined this mass exodus from New York City, moving their families to Englewood while commuting to jobs in New York City (Bouton-Goldberg, 1998). This influx of the middle class increased the population of Englewood; in particular, the number of Blacks burgeoned. As early as the 1930s, Englewood’s Black population grew more than in any other municipality in Bergen County, with the exception of Hackensack (Bouton-Goldberg, 1998).

**Change in Demographics—Change in Status Quo**

Englewood’s demographics were not the only thing that was changing. With more working class and middle-class Blacks and Jews moving to Englewood, Blacks began to organize to express their resentment about a political establishment that wanted the socioeconomic dynamic to remain unchanged. Englewood’s Black population viewed segregation of the city’s elementary schools as part of the White’s plan to maintain status quo. This meant that Blacks would remain in the Fourth Ward and that their children would attend its elementary school, Lincoln School. Residential segregation in Englewood was the norm; with Blacks concentrated in the Fourth Ward, the elementary schools reflected these geographic boundaries; the Neighborhood School policy stipulated that children must attend the school located closest to their homes. The ward
numbers represented a socioeconomic hierarchy: First Ward residents possessed the greatest wealth, and their homes had the highest property values; Fourth Ward residents represented the other end of the socioeconomic spectrum, with the lowest incomes and lowest property values. The Englewood public school system, zoned by neighborhood, was a reflection of this socioeconomic hierarchy. Englewood’s schools reflected de facto segregation since virtually all Blacks lived in the Fourth Ward. Lincoln School became the center of controversy in the 1960s as Blacks fought for integration. In 1947, a Black student in Englewood wrote a poignant essay for one of her college classes, in which she alluded to an “impending crisis” in Englewood centered on growing tensions between Blacks and Whites, between the affluent and the poor:

I have lived in Englewood, New Jersey for eleven years. Since I moved there, I have seen some changes take place. The population increased from 16,000 to 25,000 . . . I have been aware, too, of things that have remained constant. The beautiful high school, even though desperately in need, has not been provided with an auditorium. The wealthy families continue to live on exquisite estates hidden behind massive old trees in the lovely hill section. The Negroes remain crowded together in their own section of town known as Texas . . . I want the White adults to recognize the intellectual equality of the Negroes, as did their children in the high school, who elected Negroes to office in several of the organizations there. I want Englewood to be a national example of a perfect community. (The Englewood Press Journal, November 27, 1947 np)

**Englewood School Policy—1930–1960**

In an earlier work on Englewood, Robert LaFrankie determined that racial segregation in the city has been endemic since the early 1900s. While the community recognized it, city politicians, including members of the School Board, did not officially acknowledge a problem. LaFrankie’s research focused on three contributing factors (1967):
1. Involuntary residential segregation of Blacks in the Fourth Ward, resulting from early settlement patterns of Blacks who worked for wealthy Whites “on the hill” and from the development of low-income and mixed-income houses in one ward.

2. Voluntary segregation of those Blacks who wanted to “live their lives among their own people.”

3. Segregation by design or by the intent of politicians and business owners who wished to contain Blacks in the Fourth Ward.

With the increase in middle-class Jewish residents—especially in the Third Ward—a joint effort of Blacks and Jews focused on finding a solution to what they considered a shared concern: the need for quality education for all Englewood students. LaFrankie’s work suggests that had it not been for the cooperative efforts of Jews and Blacks, the latter would have had an even more difficult time achieving educational equality.

LaFrankie’s research focused on the years from 1930 to 1962 and on the “establishment or continuation of school policy having relevance to racial segregation in the public schools” (1967). His work paid particular attention to what he considered “critical policy decisions” that affected Englewood’s public schools. These decisions are worth identifying for this research because they not only demonstrated the effects of racism on the political and social climate during these years but also underscored the successful efforts to desegregate the elementary schools. LaFrankie’s work contextualized Englewood’s recent school desegregation policy with its past efforts.

LaFrankie identified seven critical policy issues from 1938 to 1962. His research led him to believe that Englewood’s policies reflected the Board of Education’s awareness of racial segregation and its avoidance of this issue until compelled to take action after the Supreme Court ruling in favor of Brown. These policy issues were:
1. A second junior high school at Lincoln School opened in 1940; it segregated Fourth Ward Black students to Lincoln School through ninth grade. Black families fought unsuccessfully to transfer their children to Engle Street Junior High School (White), while some White families obtained physicians’ letters claiming that their children had to be transferred to Engle Street School for medical reasons.

2. In 1954, traditional neighborhood boundary lines were redrawn by the School Board in an effort to manage overcrowding in the city’s five elementary schools. Given population increases and Blacks struggling to transfer their children from segregated Lincoln School to Liberty School, fewer Lincoln School classrooms were being used. The new boundary lines were unacceptable to Blacks. With the help of the NAACP, they filed a complaint against the School Board with the Division of Discrimination of the State of New Jersey. The State Commissioner charged the Board of Education with a violation of New Jersey’s antidiscrimination laws and stipulated that the boundary lines be redrawn. The Commissioner also indicated that a separate junior high school at Lincoln School was unacceptable and that it had to be eliminated by September 1956.

3. In 1957, the School Board authorized the construction of a new elementary school, junior high school, and auditorium. The new elementary school, Donald A. Quarles School, was built in the First Ward, and the State Commissioner commented in his study, Racial Distribution in the Englewood Public Schools: “[i]t should be noted that Donald A. Quarles School, with its modern construction and large, beautiful grounds (ten acres), obviously provides a physical setting superior to that of the other elementary schools” (1962).

4. In March 1957, the School Board voted to build a single junior high school on the campus of Dwight Morrow High School. This decision ended years of two junior high schools serving two racially segregated populations.

5. In February 1962, eight Black families attempted to enroll their children in Donald A. Quarles School instead of their neighborhood Lincoln School and Liberty School. The School Board maintained its Neighborhood School Policy, which had staved off past efforts to integrate by mandating that children must be educated in the school closest to their home unless there is “some just reason to send him elsewhere.” This policy did not support racial integration because of Englewood’s atypically large Black population concentrated in the Fourth Ward. The Neighborhood School Policy had been the norm,
which had worked for Blacks in the North because of their lower populations. However, in Englewood, the Black population was the second largest in the state, and Blacks were residentially segregated in the Fourth Ward. Therefore, because of the city’s residential segregation, its Neighborhood School Policy supported segregated education.

6. The School Board attempted to alleviate racial imbalance without changing the policy that permitted Black students to attend only Lincoln School or Liberty School. One of the measures introduced was the establishment of a “demonstration school.” The Board of Education reaffirmed its position that de facto racial segregation was not illegal in light of Blacks’ decisions regarding where they wanted to raise their families. However, the Board was interested in creating a “voluntary and experimental” open enrollment school that would help elementary schools throughout the district “gain new approaches to elementary education.” The proposal to implement a demonstration school rather than addressing racial imbalances was met with organized resistance from the Black community. Augustus Harrison, the local NAACP Chair at the time, pointed out that the Mayor of Englewood (Volk) “Officially takes his stand with the Board of Education in bowing to a small but powerful group of White supremacists in this city who have been very active, and more and more openly campaigning to keep Englewood a ‘clean White’ city” (*The Englewood Press Journal*, May 31, 1962). The resistance movement was successful. On June 27, 1962, the Board issued the following statement: “Our previous proposal of a ‘demonstration school’ with voluntary enrollment has been found to be unfeasible because of an insufficient number of potential pupils” (*The Bergen Record*, June 28, 1962).

7. In June 1962, New Jersey Governor Richard J. Hughes “. . . notified all school officials in New Jersey that the traditional neighborhood concept in the assignment of children to schools must be made sufficiently flexible to prevent racial segregation” (*The New York Times*, June 19, 1962). Englewood attempted to meet this state mandate by establishing a central intermediate school for grades five and six in the Engle Street building. This policy was hindered when the Board of School Estimates refused to grant the additional funds needed to renovate the school; however, in 1962, after the Mayor of Englewood changed his vote to support the central intermediate school, the Board of School Estimates granted the additional funds, and the Engle Street School was reopened as an intermediate school for grades six through eight. The Lincoln School (98% Black) was closed, and all of its students were reassigned to Quarles, Roosevelt, Cleveland, and Liberty.
According to LaFrankie, Blacks and Whites were satisfied with the decision to create a central intermediate school. This move ended the long-standing struggle to desegregate Englewood’s elementary schools. Whether most Blacks were satisfied with the closing of Lincoln School and sending their children to elementary schools in the White wards was not addressed in LaFrankie’s work. However, it was known that Blacks wanted their children to have educational opportunities in the “better” (White) elementary schools. The following literature addresses the question of whether moving Black students from Lincoln School to predominantly White schools was the best social and academic option; however, it was the only method of desegregation that would occur at the time.

According to LaFrankie and others, the policy to integrate Lincoln School by bringing in White students was considered the last possible option. The only option for Black students to attend a racially integrated school was to have their school dismantled. Englewood’s Whites organized against school desegregation policies that would have exacted significant sacrifice on their part—in other words, sending their children to Lincoln School. Whether this sacrifice included busing their children, having their children attend predominantly Black schools, or opening a so-called “demonstration school,” the results in Englewood and elsewhere support Bell’s concept of White Interest Convergence—that the needs/wants of Blacks are addressed only when they align with the needs/wants of Whites. LaFrankie’s identification of policies that desegregated Englewood’s public schools fifty years ago illustrated this, as exemplified by the closing of Lincoln School rather than integrating it. LaFrankie’s 1967 findings suggested that influential political and business groups historically avoided cooperating with Blacks to provide them with an equally satisfactory education. Quite the opposite; Whites
demonstrated their need to maintain the economic, educational, and social status quo as long as possible by keeping Blacks marginalized through both residential and educational segregation.

LaFrankie’s work also sought to determine the role and level of effectiveness of the educational “decision-makers,” including the Superintendent of Education, School Board members, and local political and business leaders. LaFrankie suggested that the majority of critical policy decisions were made by members of the Board of Education (1967). LaFrankie offered six additional observations concerning Englewood’s educational policies and the stakeholders who were considered more or less powerful:

- While the Superintendents—he identified three—were involved in the policy decisions, the local politicians controlled the allocation of funds for school construction and/or integration plans
- Superintendents, school administrations, and staffs were not interested in crises surrounding racial segregation. These individuals and groups got involved only if they were forced to do so
- Local politicians, including members of the City Council and the Mayor were instrumental in the decision-making process much more than residents realized
- “Pressure groups,” such as the NAACP and the Urban League, played major roles in influencing the actions of the decision-makers. These decision-makers, who hailed from city government, exerted much more influence than did members of the School Board and Superintendents
- “Outside” legal rights and civil rights groups, which included educational researchers and experts hired by different constituent groups such as the NAACP also pressured the city’s political leaders to decide in favor of integration
- During this period, Englewood’s power base was largely Republican, conservative, and White; individuals and groups used their influence to promote their views on school integration. Among the power brokers was the city’s major newspaper, *The Englewood Press Journal*, which substantiated much of LaFrankie’s research.
LaFrankie observed that the Superintendents either were unable to lead, or that their efforts were systematically undermined, rendering them unable to assume the necessary influence to maneuver through shifts in status quo—this was similar to the city’s current school-based and district-based leadership. LaFrankie believed that ineffective leadership helped maintain the status quo in Englewood’s public schools and that only when outside pressures were firmly applied did the situation change. The needs of Englewood’s students had been “poorly served” and had been overruled by the city’s power base.

LaFrankie’s work indicated that Englewood had struggled for decades with racial imbalance in its schools. Therefore, racial imbalance and disparate academic outcomes of its students should not be evaluated in isolation. Student groups that had experienced sustained isolation and lower teacher expectations based on racial stereotypes demonstrated lower academic outcomes. LaFrankie’s work can be cited to suggest that Englewood’s attempts to provide, or refuse to provide, equal educational access to all of its students had affected student performance—especially that of its Black students. His work can inform the present, including the anticipated effectiveness of current school desegregation policy in a district in which there had been a long history of educational segregation.

LaFrankie’s study of educational policies that attempted to address racial imbalance in the Englewood schools ended with the 1962 decision of its School Board to close Lincoln School and to open a central intermediate school. This action officially desegregated Englewood’s elementary schools without completely undermining the Neighborhood
School Policy that allowed students in the more affluent wards (One, Two, and Three) to attend schools with other students in their socioeconomic group. Black children who had attended the defunct Lincoln School were sent to the remaining three elementary schools located outside the Fourth Ward.

Englewood’s policy was part of a larger strategy to address segregation in its elementary schools; however, the policy proved costly for the Black community. Lincoln School, which was 98% Black, was closed and its students were bused (or walked) to the White elementary schools. While this addressed racial imbalance in the elementary system, the experiences of the Black students who attended these newly integrated schools were profound. I include the following literature on the effects of school desegregation on United States students, including data on the effects of elementary school desegregation on Englewood students, to suggest that, as it had been implemented in the past, school desegregation demanded too much of Black students and too little of White students, and that Englewood’s desegregation policy affected academic outcomes of its high school students, namely those attending DMHS.
Intersection of School Desegregation Policy and Student Outcomes

In their 1958 study, “Desegregation: Some Propositions and Research Suggestions,” Edward Suchman, John Dean, and Robin Williams provided an analysis of the motives for resistance to desegregation and how desegregation was perceived by some power brokers.

- Resistance to desegregation is often firmly rooted in the deepest sentiments of the people. Probably the most effective way of unlearning such a reaction is through personal contact. Desegregation offers an opportunity for Negro and White children to develop lasting attachments although, of course, there is no assurance that these will occur.

- The problem of desegregation is to a large extent a problem of power. The decision of the Supreme Court represents an exercise in power, and the implementation of its ruling reflects the ability of the Court to induce community leaders and school administrators to behave in accordance with its intentions.

- Power is a fundamental form of interaction, permeating every aspect of social life. While there is a widespread tendency in American society to view power with suspicion, the requirements of social control and social coordination make the exercise of power indispensable to society.

- One reason that community leaders may be expected to oppose desegregation is simply because the policy is a threat to stability and an omen of change—and change contains the possibility of a redistribution of power. The desegregation policy may be resisted by some powerful people, not on the basis of the inherent principle but because they feel uncertain about various dimly perceived general consequences which might threaten to shake the foundation of their power.

- Success of the desegregation policy at the local level is likely to depend considerably on the ego-involvement of a small number of power wielders. (Williams, et al, 1964, p. 9)

There are numerous conflicting studies on the effects of desegregation on student academic outcomes. Christopher Jencks and Marsha Brown concluded that in the early 1960s racially mixed classes improved academic outcomes for all students if nonwhite
students were the minority; however, Black students performed poorly if White students were the majority (1975). Lawrence Felice measured the achievement and attitudes of bused and nonbused students and of the “receiving” White teachers and students (1974) and found that Black students who were bused performed worse than their nonbused counterparts; further, all minority students had lower achievement scores after two years of busing. These outcomes were attributed to the school’s interracial climate. It was found that communities that implemented busing, which was met with organized community resistance, showed decreased academic outcomes of its students of color (Felice, 1974).

Teacher attitudes and behaviors as well as their interpersonal skills also were considered an accurate indicator of academic outcomes of students in integrated classrooms. Nancy St. John’s study, *School Integration, Classroom Climate, and Achievement*, asserted that the training and selection of teachers was critical, and that teachers’ interpersonal skills were even more important than their content competency. According to St. John, minority children in desegregated classrooms were at higher risk of social rejection, a situation that negatively affects their achievement. Therefore, teachers leading desegregated classrooms must understand how to build positive bridges between individuals and groups to help Black students gain social acceptance (1971).

The Supreme Court ruling was based on the premise that segregation hurts Black children by depriving them of a quality education. This is an excerpt from its decision:

... To separate them from others of similar age and qualifications solely because of their race generates a feeling of inferiority as to their status in
the community that may affect their hearts and minds in a way unlikely ever to be undone. . . . We conclude that in the field of public education, the doctrine of "separate but equal has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal. (Brown v. Board, 1954, p.4 of Appeal from US District Court for the District of Kansas)

The Court’s decision to desegregate schools was based on psychological evidence that suggested that Black children suffered lower self-esteem by exclusion from White schools. However, before and after the Brown ruling, evidence was published suggesting that desegregated schools would benefit all students only if the majority of the community supported the integration process. Otherwise, children of color would suffer.

In a 1935 article, “Does the Negro Need Separate Schools?” in Journal of Negro Education prior to the Brown ruling, W. E. B. DuBois wrote, “I know that race prejudice in the United State today is such that most Negroes cannot receive proper education in White institutions.” However, DuBois was not suggesting that separate but equal institutions were the better path, but rather that desegregation would incur significant costs for Blacks. He illustrated his point thus:

It is saying in plain English that a separate Negro school where children are treated like human beings, trained by teachers of their own race, who know what it means to be Black in the year of salvation 1935, is infinitely better than making our girls and boys doormats to be spit and trampled upon and lied to by ignorant social climbers. . . . [t]he Negro needs neither segregated schools nor mixed schools. What he needs is an education. (1936, Quoted from Woodson, 1977,p. 328)

In his article, “Twenty Years of School Integration Won Much, But Much Is Undone,” Robert Reinhold cited Norman Podhoretz: “[i]t used to be thought that the academic performance of [B]lack children would improve in integrated schools, but there is no evidence to confirm this idea” (1972). Reinhold continues to suggest that integration has
little effect on academic performance, neither helping Black students, nor hurting the [W]hites, as Whites had feared. Brown transformed much of a nation while exposing the rest of it to the charge of hypocrisy. Twenty years later, the “self-righteous, liberal North” is more segregated than the “feudal, red-necked South (1972). William Chapman suggested in “School Integration Questioned” that a major cause of the anger which erupted in many communities on both sides of the debate where schools were desegregated was evident because Blacks felt that the inhumanity that the Black children had to endure was not worth the price. Part of the White resistance to integrating their public schools was to punish Black children. This was systematically done by large and disproportionate numbers of Black students being suspended and encouraged to drop out of many desegregated school systems (Chapman, 1972). There was little academic improvement in Black children who attended desegregated schools; there was evidence to support this finding before and after the Brown decision. Some scholars suggested that integration actually supported disparities between Black and White students, with subsequent White flight to the suburbs and the isolation of poor Blacks in inner city schools. As James Coleman observed, paradoxically desegregation may be causing a resegregation of public school. By doing away with central city segregation, desegregation has helped increases greatly the segregation between districts through accelerated loss of White students to the suburbs (Coleman, 1979).

Leroy McCloud examined the effects of these policies on Englewood students, specifically the Black elementary students from Lincoln School and Liberty School, who in October 1963, were bused to White schools. The purpose of McCloud’s study was to
determine “the effect of the reassignment and the ensuing conflicts upon the attitudes toward desegregation of the involved pupils” and whether this policy influenced Black elementary students’ academic achievement. McCloud questioned whether the Englewood school integration policy was “worth the turmoil and anxiety which resulted” and whether it was “a successful action for these pupils.” (McCloud, 1980)

McCloud believed that his work was becoming increasingly relevant in 1980, almost thirty years after the Brown decision. He based the relevance of his study on the fact that both Blacks and Whites clearly doubted the effectiveness of desegregation on the experience of Black students. McCloud quoted William Chapman, who provided evidence that Black student achievement scores had improved only slightly in integrated classrooms, and that since the Brown decision, Black students had suffered social isolation and lowered self-esteem. On the twentieth anniversary of Brown, Chapman wrote in The Washington Post:

. . . Legal segregation retarded the educational and mental development of Negro children, the Supreme Court had said, and from that flowed the assumption that desegregation would change the pattern. Now that is questioned, not merely by resisters but by many Black and White liberals. (“School Integration Questioned, Integrated Schools Bids Charged” The Washington Post, May 14, 1974)

McCloud’s research provided a brief history of the involvement of what LaFrankie considered “outside groups” that had pressured the Englewood School Board and its Superintendents and had filed motions on behalf of the city’s Black parents. McCloud believed that organizations such as the Urban League, Bergen County chapters of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) and the NAACP, as well as certain Black churches, were instrumental in expediting desegregation. McCloud’s inclusion of these groups
provided a history of Black activism in Englewood and showed that their struggles on behalf of Black students had been an integral part of Englewood’s school desegregation narrative.

McCloud studied two groups of students: Black children from Lincoln School, who were bused to three White elementary schools in Englewood; and Black children who remained at Liberty School which was 60% Black.¹ These students were third-, fourth-, and fifth-graders in 1963, which meant that they were between 23 and 26 when McCloud completed his study. To ascertain how these students felt about their educational experiences and whether desegregation had improved their education, he mailed questionnaires that asked these students to recall their experiences of boycotting, picketing, and participating in sit-ins, and their classroom experiences in both segregated and desegregated schools. He also analyzed their academic progress, using permanent student records that included teacher evaluations, achievement test scores, attendance records, and IQ scores to determine whether the desegregation policy had satisfied its mandates. Some of his findings:

Desegregation in Englewood did not accomplish better preparation for college of the [B]lack students from Lincoln School. The findings of this study indicate that desegregating the schools did not accomplish its purpose. The Black Lincoln students should not only have made equal academic progress to the Black students in the Liberty School, but rather their achievement should have been greater, especially since their achievement before leaving the Lincoln School was approximately equal to that of the Liberty School students. Although there was not a significant difference in the progress of both groups, it is obvious that the Lincoln students did not gain as a result of the change. In fact, as the decline of the academic achievement for the Lincoln students continued each year, it

¹ Originally it was intended to desegregate Liberty School as well, but the plan was changed in order to progress more gradually, with Lincoln being desegregated first.
might be conjectured that the Lincoln students might have made better progress if they had remained at Lincoln School. (McCloud, 1980, p. 150)

McCloud found that the students who were youngest during their transition from Lincoln School in 1963 were most affected. These were the students who, McCloud conjectured, became less interested in attending school in their later years. He found:

Ten percent of the Liberty School students were school dropouts, while 25 percent of the Lincoln School students did not finish high school. It seems that if desegregating the schools had been successful for the Black students, fewer of the Lincoln School students would have been dropouts. (McCloud, 1980, p. 109)

The participants in McCloud’s study indicated that they did not believe that they were learning anything as the main reason for their increasing lack of interest in school as time progressed. McCloud also examined the publicity about desegregating the Lincoln School that claimed that providing Blacks with a better education was the primary reason for this change. However, McCloud’s surveys showed that 54% of Liberty School students were attending college, whereas only 37% of Lincoln School students were college-bound. Had desegregation achieved its objective, it could have been expected that more Lincoln students would have attended college. McCloud’s findings on the student attitudes suggested that the desegregation process was initially difficult, “causing the students problems and confusion,” but that by the end of their tenure at their respective desegregated schools, they had become more “at ease and felt that they were accepted by the principals, teachers, and other pupils.”

While McCloud did not provide quantifiable evidence regarding his participants’ attitudes,
he believed that the Lincoln students were “handicapped as a result of the change” and that they shouldered the burden of an entire community’s hopes, but that the program had not been well executed. Some of McCloud’s respondents suggested that future desegregation efforts should not fall completely on the shoulders of the Black community, and that it should be initiated much earlier in the child’s academic career. They also commented that both Whites and Blacks should have been bused to make the racial make-up of each school more equitable—instead of closing the Black elementary school, thereby forcing the Black children to bear the brunt of these major social and psychological adjustments.

New Concerns in Englewood—Identifying the Problems

Since the research of LaFrankie and McCloud, significant changes have occurred in Englewood’s public schools; these have led to further racial imbalance, especially in Dwight Morrow High School (DMHS). Some of the challenges that the Englewood Public School District (EPSD) faces are directly related to changing demographics and real estate patterns described in the previous literature. Following efforts noted in this literature to desegregate Englewood’s elementary schools in the 1960s and 1970s, Englewood had experienced demographic shifts. Most middle-income families buying homes in Englewood did not have school-aged children, or if they did, they planned to send them to private schools. This left approximately 60% of Englewood’s adult population with children of school age. Half of these children lived in the Fourth Ward, the only ward in Englewood with more than 20% of its population living in poverty (1980, 1990, 2000 US Census). As of the 2000 census, Englewood had 9,614 housing
units (2000, US Census), and close to 1,000 of these were subsidized by state or federal funding programs such as Section 8 or the Housing Choice Funding Program.

During the 1940s and 1950s, DMHS had been a regional high school, ranked as one of the best public high schools in the state and the country. Statistics from 1984 showed that 86% of students planned to attend; in stark contrast, the class of 2004 reported that only 58% planned to attend college. DMHS also had, over the years, struggled to improve its performance on state standardized assessments. Since 2000, DMHS has ranked at the bottom of Bergen County high schools and in the lowest 20% in New Jersey. In 2005 and 2006, more than half of its students, excluding those attending the A@E, took the Special Review Assessment (SRA)—what has been considered a less challenging alternative to the HSPA—in order to graduate from high school. None of this poor performance can be attributed to lack of sufficient funding. In 2007, Englewood had among the highest property taxes in New Jersey with per-pupil expenditure at $19,598 (New Jersey State Report Card, 2007–2008).

Some of the problems at DMHS appeared to stem from poor academic preparation in earlier grades. Students in the sixth and seventh grades historically performed below state expectations on their state assessments. These scores showed students functioning two to three years below grade level. Their academic performance continued to be subpar as they entered high school, and they had a difficult time transitioning. For students entering DMHS, excluding the A@E students, one-third of the freshman class failed at least one core subject, and approximately half of these students, or 15% of the freshman class,
failed to earn a sufficient number of credits to become sophomores. There was an increasing disparity between teacher expectations and student effort, and there seemed to be little agreement between the two groups concerning appropriate methods of assessment and amount of homework. While teacher standards were high, no systematic methods were in place to help struggling students succeed. It can be assumed that if no remedial programs were instituted, DMHS students would continue to struggle.

The problems identified at DMHS have been exacerbated by the implementation of the A@E magnet program on the same campus. In terms of demand for the program and student outcomes, this program, which was intended to comprise 50% students from Englewood and 50% students from the remainder of Bergen County, has been a success, with more than twice the number of applicants than there are desks. The A@E offers its students five academic programs, including biomedicine, finance, law and public safety, information systems, and pre-engineering. Its total enrollment averages 425; and it has graduated, on average, 105 seniors each year for the past five years. One hundred percent (100%) of the graduating class prepared for, and were accepted, by four-year colleges and universities, including several Ivy League schools. All students have performed successfully on state standardized assessments, earning ratings of proficient or advanced; these scores have dramatically improved the DMHS state report card since the A@E scores are calculated as a component of DMHS scores. This aggregate report portrays DMHS as having greatly improved student outcomes and having addressed the racial isolation of the DMHS students; however, if the data were separated, the reports would
show A@E students performing well in a racially diverse community and DMHS students continuing to perform poorly in a hyper-segregated environment.

Following an exploration of Englewood and its historical and current efforts to desegregate its schools, this section offers an alternative perspective on Brown v. Board of Education (1954) that places Englewood’s efforts in a national context. This pivotal moment in school desegregation in the US—an end to the law that provided a “separate but equal” education for Black children—was the basis for Englewood’s battles. While the ruling in Brown v. Board of Education has been considered the law that changed the course of education for Black children and provided educational equity, America’s schools were never effectively desegregated, but instead have seen a “quiet reversal” of Brown. According to Gary Orfield, America’s schools are more segregated now than prior to 1954 (Orfield, 1999). Thus, this section also includes a synopsis of critical school desegregation lawsuits after 1954 that attempted to uphold Brown’s mandate through both voluntary and involuntary methods.
World War II ended in 1945. Black soldiers returning to the United States, having fought for democracy and human rights, campaigned for these same rights for American Blacks. The “Double V campaign” signified victory in the fight for civil rights, both abroad and at home. One returning soldier bristled after it was suggested that he become a laborer: “I was a staff sergeant in the Army . . . traveled all over England . . . sat fourteen days in the English Channel. I wasn’t going to push a wheel barrow” (Patterson, 2001). His indignant response represented that of most Blacks. By 1948, after considerable urging from civil rights leaders, President Truman reversed discriminatory hiring practices in the federal government, outlawed the poll tax, desegregated the Armed Forces, and declared that lynching was a federal offense. Some historians have suggested that, after World War II, Truman took these actions in order to present “the new face of the US”—a country that lived by the egalitarian principles it had fought for—to the world. Other historians have suggested that Truman recognized the growing strength of organized resistance. Blacks were leveraging the justice system to demand equality under the law. It may be that Truman feared international repercussions about what was being called “the greatest unresolved task for American democracy” (Patterson, 2001). The treatment of American Blacks was under attack. Sensitive to the judgments of the rest of the Western world, the Truman administration was concerned with anti-discrimination law suits instituted by the NAACP and the far-reaching implications of ongoing policies of segregation for our nascent foreign policy (Bell, 2004). The judicial and executive branches likely included sympathetic parties apprehensive about inequitable conditions; they also understood that to choose to remain a segregated society put the nation at risk. Fear of communism
prevailed during the McCarthy era years. In an amicus brief to the Supreme Court, Secretary of State Dean Acheson wrote:

[D]uring the past six years, the damage to our foreign relations attributable to [race discrimination] has become progressively greater. The United States is under constant attack in the foreign press, over the foreign radio, and in such international bodies as the United Nations, because of various practices of discrimination against minority groups in this country . . . [t]he undeniable existence of racial discrimination gives unfriendly governments the most effective kind of ammunition for their propaganda warfare (Dudziak, 2000, p. 106).

There is no record that the Supreme Court considered the threat of communism and a tarnished image overseas as sufficient reasons to rule in favor of Brown, but according to DuBois: “[n]o such decision would have been possible without the world pressure of communism,” and it was “simply impossible for the United States to continue to lead the ‘Free World’ with race segregation kept legal over a third of its territory.”

Again and again, perceived self interest by Whites rather than the racial injustices suffered by Blacks has been the major motivation in racial remediation policies. We may regret, but can hardly deny, the pattern. This was certainly the case in the school desegregation cases. While Blacks had been petitioning the Courts for decades to find segregation unconstitutional, by 1954, a fortuitous symmetry existed between what Blacks sought and what the nation needed (Bell, 2004, p. ).

Charles T. Clotfelter (2004) suggested that the Brown decision brought changes to school districts that were measurable and at times destructive, dramatic, and subject to reversal. In Brown v. Board of Education, the Supreme Court ruled that all states were responsible for desegregating their public schools, citing that state-sanctioned segregation of public schools was a violation of the Fourteenth Amendment and, therefore, was unconstitutional (1954). This historic decision marked the end of the "separate but equal" precedent set by the Supreme Court nearly 60 years earlier in Plessy v. Ferguson and
served as a catalyst for the expanding civil rights movement during the 1950s (2004).

One year later, on May 31, 1955, Supreme Court Justice Earl Warren read the Court's unanimous decision, now referred to as Brown II, instructing the states to begin desegregation plans "with all deliberate speed" (2004). Despite this mandate, there continued to be strong resistance to school desegregation.

What was as relevant as the Brown II decision was the organized resistance movement generated in response to it. The ruling was supposed to desegregate schools, thereby compelling racial integration. True measures of racial integration would have been fundamental to this policy, benefiting both Blacks and Whites. However, Whites rejected the Court’s decision, developing creative policies that circumvented the Court’s mandates. These evasions influenced future educational policy. The following literature examines subsequent legal actions and their outcomes that influenced both mandatory and voluntary school desegregation policies.

**Pivotal School Desegregation Law and Policy—Post Brown**

Following the Brown v. Board of Education ruling, Blacks continued to institute litigations concerning racial equity, as well as equitable resources and services for Black students. While Brown had been touted as having reversed the Plessy v. Ferguson ruling to racially segregate all public institutions, Brown was more consequential because of the backlash from the White community. Organized and widespread White resistance led to population shifts and accelerated suburbanization (White flight). In many White communities, Whites chose to move; however, those who remained refused to participate
in mandatory desegregation efforts such as busing. The cases that came after Brown further demonstrated the resolve and tenacity of Blacks who responded with more than thirty years of litigation in major American cities.

Beginning with Deal v. Cincinnati Board of Education in 1996, the following literature provides insights on the nature of school desegregation efforts on a national level and places Englewood’s legal history in the context of what was happening nationally in reaction to the Court’s decision to desegregate schools. One of the larger issues on the local level that arose following the Brown decision was how to effectively execute the ruling and, after Brown II, how to do so “with all deliberate speed.” The cases that follow focus on the recurrent issue of White resistance to local school districts’ mandatory desegregation efforts, and litigation by Blacks in response to obvious instances of obstruction and stalling on the part of Whites. Blacks were consistent in their fight to compel school districts to uphold the Court’s decision. Englewood’s policies were framed legally and theoretically by the cases presented. The section ends with a brief narrative of the most recent litigation in Englewood that initiated this research. The purpose is to create a broader understanding of Englewood’s educational policy choices as they related not only to the community’s social and political climate but also to the national climate.
Deal v. Cincinnati Board of Education (1966)

Cincinnati was one of the first cities to provide an extensive magnet school program in an attempt to introduce integrated educational opportunities intended to stabilize the city’s schools and neighborhoods (Levine, 1977). In her analysis of Deal v. Cincinnati Board of Education, Virginia C. Griffin (1977) pointed out that there had been a number of initiatives concerning the desegregation of Cincinnati’s schools, including its Board of Education’s resistance to Black student transfers from Cincinnati to suburban districts, an action that had been ordered by the Ohio Board of Education. These white suburban towns were small and had previously requested separation from Cincinnati schools (1977).

Deal v. Cincinnati Board of Education was a class action against the Board of Education of Cincinnati, brought by the parents of Black students enrolled in the Cincinnati public schools. The suit argued that the city’s public schools should not mandate the operation of racially segregated public schools, and that construction of new schools on certain sites would increase patterns of racial segregation (Griffin, 1977). The Board denied that it had created, operated, and maintained racially segregated schools, alleging that “the only issue in the case was whether it violated the constitutional rights of the plaintiffs by refusing to adopt and enforce an affirmative policy of balancing the races in the Cincinnati Public School System” (1977).

The Supreme Court held that there was no constitutional obligation upon the Board to balance the races in the public school system, and further, that there was a failure of proof
on the part of the plaintiffs to establish a policy of segregation or manipulation by the Board. (1977). The Board was allowed to dissolve student transfers from the city to the suburbs; instead, it began to implement an extensive “alternative” school policy, which was used to achieve racial balance in schools and provide options for suburban children to return to schools in the city. However, study authors, Joseph Felix and James Jacobs, contended that for Cincinnati’s magnet schools to effectively create racial balance, there would have to be a wider range of attractive magnet schools that more students would be motivated to attend. Felix and Jacobs found that 40% of parents of elementary school students in Cincinnati felt they would definitely send their children to a magnet school; Black parents answered in the affirmative twice as often (1977). The study authors further suggested that in order for magnet schools not to wreak havoc on neighborhood schools, the neighborhood schools had to be solid. Cincinnati residents feared that magnet schools would attract greater numbers of the best and the brightest from their community, leaving neighborhood schools in an even more precarious situation (1977).

Green v. County School Board of New Kent County [Virginia] (1968)
Fourteen years after Brown I, Virginia’s public schools remained racially segregated, with more than 94% of the state’s Black students attending all-Black schools. While the policy of school choice had been implemented in Virginia, scare tactics had been used to intimidate Black parents into refusing to send their children to White schools. Parents were afraid to send their children to these schools, using school choice forms and requesting student transfers. With schools remaining segregated, the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) filed suit, petitioning the Supreme Court to hear Green v. County School
Board of New Kent County, [Virginia] (Rossell, 1990). In this case, much less well known than Brown, the Court decided that “eliminating racial discrimination was not enough to establish a unitary system—that is, a system in which there were no white schools and no Negro schools, but just schools” (Green v. Kent, 1968). Justice William Brennan stated: “The time for mere deliberate speed has run out . . . The burden on a school board today is to come forward with a plan that promises realistically to work, and promises realistically to work now” (Green v. Kent, 1968). The Court required that public schools become “more racially mixed than would occur merely as a result of ending discrimination” (Green v. Kent, 1968). The Court’s ruling initiated an era of proactive rather than reactive policy regarding school discrimination, including the implementation of magnet schools.

Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education (1971)

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg, North Carolina school system, which includes Charlotte, had more than 84,000 students in 107 schools in the 1968–1969 school year. Approximately 29%, or 24,000, of these students were Black and 14,000 of these Black students attended schools that were 99% Black. In 1971, the Supreme Court ruled in Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg that several strategies, including busing, could be used to desegregate schools. The Justices were specific in their language suggesting policy for proactive school desegregation; however, two points directly affected the implementation of busing and magnet schools. The Court ruled:

- Attendance Zones: The remedial altering of attendance zones is not, as an interim corrective measure, beyond the remedial powers of a district court. A student assignment plan is not acceptable merely because it appears to be neutral, for such a plan may fail to counteract
the continuing effects of past school segregation (Swann v. Charlotte, 1971).

- Transportation: The District Court's conclusion that assignment of children to the school nearest their home serving their grade would not effectively dismantle the dual school system is supported by the record, and the remedial technique of requiring bus transportation as a tool of school desegregation was within that court's power to provide equitable relief. An objection to transportation of students may have validity when the time or distance of travel is so great as to risk either the health of the children or significantly impinge on the educational process; limits on travel time will vary with many factors, but probably with none more than the age of the students (Swann v. Charlotte, 1971).


In The Future of Big City Schools: Desegregation Policies and Magnet Alternatives, Daniel Levine suggests that court rulings during the 1970s had decimated the hope of achieving and maintaining mixed school populations. In Detroit in 1976, a federal judge was ordered to find a means of desegregating three subregions of Detroit’s public school system, in which enrollment was at least 90% Black (Levine, 1977). This followed the 1974 decision, in which the US District Court had ruled that Detroit did not have to merge with 53 suburban districts to bring about desegregation, and a ruling by District Judge Robert E. DeMascio, which held that some schools in Detroit would have to remain predominantly Black in order to achieve a fairly uniform racial distribution in other schools since the entire Detroit school district had become 75% Black by 1975 (Levine, 1977). In requiring Judge DeMascio to devise a desegregation plan for students in the three subregions that were predominantly Black, the Appeals Court judges acknowledged that it would be “extremely difficult, if not impossible” to do this: “We recognize . . . that it would be appropriate for us to supply guidelines to the District Judge
as to what he should do . . . Omission of such guidelines is not based on any failure to consider the problem in depth . . . It is based upon the conviction . . . that genuine constitutional desegregation cannot be accomplished within the school district boundaries of the Detroit School District.” (Levine, 1977). In *The Carrot or the Stick for School Desegregation Policy*, Christine Rossell suggested that the Court’s approval of a voluntary, versus a mandatory, plan based on magnet schools did not require that “a desegregation plan be mandatory in any way, only that it be effective” (1990).


The first *Morgan v. Kerrigan* case was decided in 1974. In this case, Judge Arthur Garrity concluded that the Boston School Committee had segregated the Boston Public Schools, including their magnet examination schools, "with the purpose or intent” to do so. The Judge took over the Boston Public Schools and addressed the issues around the lower Black student enrollment in comparison with their White counterparts in Boston’s magnet schools (*Morgan v. Kerrigan*, 1974). Judge Garrity noted that students from schools with high percentages of Whites performed "two to three times greater [on the admissions examination] than students from schools with high percentages of Blacks. The First Circuit Court later observed that the Boston School Committee was aware that “whites were much more successful than blacks on the entrance examinations, yet they made no effort to reconsider the appropriateness of the examinations (*Morgan v. Kerrigan*, 1974). With these observations in mind, Judge Garrity stated that the Boston School Committee had an "affirmative obligation to reverse the consequences of their unconstitutional conduct" and to "eliminate all vestiges of the dual system" (1974). He
further stated that "ideally, every school in the system would have the same racial proportions [as the city as a whole]" (1974).

The Judge detailed a desegregation plan for Boston’s magnet schools, stating that "[a]t least 35% of each of the entering classes at Boston Latin School, Boston Latin Academy, and Boston Technical High in September 1975 shall be composed of Black and Hispanic students" (1974). In establishing this 35% set-aside, Judge Garrity noted that, in conjunction with an Asian enrollment of between 6% and 8%, "the anticipated enrollment in the entering class at the examination schools will be similar regarding racial and ethnic composition to that of other city-wide high schools" (1974). The First Circuit Court supported Judge Garrity's order for remediation, affirming that the set-aside was a "basic tool in remedying constitutional violations" (1974). In 1987, after more than sixteen years of his control, the First Circuit Court directed Judge Garrity to return control over the student assignment process to the Boston School Committee "in recognition that the local autonomy of school districts is a vital national tradition" (Morgan III, 1987).


*Englewood Cliffs v. Englewood* was brought by the Englewood Cliffs Board of Education when it sought to rescind a contract that had allowed the community to send its students to Dwight Morrow High School (DMHS), the Englewood public high school, and instead, sent them to Tenafly High School. Englewood Cliffs (EC), an affluent (majority White and Asian) township, argued that Dwight Morrow High School no longer was meeting the academic standards that EC wanted for its students (Education Law Center,
2005). The Englewood Board of Education opposed the motion of EC, responding with a counterclaim to combine the three districts of Englewood, EC, and Tenafly into one regional high school. Englewood argued that EC wanted to end its contract, not because of poor academic standards, but rather because of the racial composition of DMHS, which was more than 77% Black and Hispanic (Education Law Center, 2005). The Court sided with Englewood, stating that EC could not end its relationship with Englewood since that would compound the existing racial imbalance in the school. However, the Court declined to approve Englewood’s move to regionalize the three high schools. The Court required that Englewood and the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) develop a solution that would be acceptable to all (2005). The NJDOE proposed that Englewood establish a magnet school within DMHS to attract and increase enrollment of White and Asian students. Englewood resisted this suggestion, reaffirming that it believed that the only real solution to racial imbalance in DMHS was regionalization. The Court did not side with Englewood; instead, it placed the responsibility on the State of New Jersey to develop an alternative plan (Institute on Education Law and Policy, 2005).

In 2001, former Superintendent of the Englewood School System, Joyce Baynes, visited a local successful magnet school and suggested that Englewood adopt a similar model for DMHS. Englewood reluctantly agreed and dropped its legal battle to regionalize the three high schools. The A@E was subsequently established on the DMHS campus; it attracted White and Asian youth from surrounding towns in Bergen County (2005).
What Happened Next—Magnet Programs and School Choice

The following literature addresses the implementation and effectiveness of school choice plans. As mentioned earlier, magnets were one means of addressing the concerns that related to anti-busing; magnets also gave some control and choice to White parents who believed involuntary measures to achieve desegregation were unacceptable. White flight had become a major concern of local governments throughout the country, and it was no different for Englewood—especially since the city’s population comprised a substantial group of affluent Whites and had grown to include increasing numbers of Black and Latino residents. White flight had not radically affected the city’s population; however, it had affected enrollment in the public high school. Since most Whites living in Englewood could afford to send their children to private schools, and did, DMHS was populated by increasing numbers of Black and Latino students. The following literature supports the premise that the population shift in DMHS to an enrollment of 98% Blacks and Latinos was not representative of the population of Englewood. Further, the lower academic performances of its students suggested that racial norms continue to exist. This research identifies fundamental reasons for the changes in academic performance that accompanied the shift in demographics; it also explores whether the subsequent desegregation policy improved DMHS’s academic standing. Providing literature on magnet programs and the implications of their use helps this research determine whether a magnet school residing on the DMHS campus was the most effective policy.

A magnet school is a public school that provides specialized curricula and courses. “Magnet” connotes that such schools attract students from across geographic boundaries, defined by school boards as school zones. Some magnet schools have a competitive
entrance process that requires an entrance examination and/or an interview (Smrekar and Goldring, 1999). Most magnet schools also concentrate on a particular academic discipline, or area of study, which may include mathematics, natural sciences, engineering; humanities, social sciences, fine and performing arts; and technical/vocational/agricultural education. Magnet schools originally were established with the hope that their geographically open admissions policies would help end racial segregation in "good" schools and help decrease de facto segregation of schools in poorer areas by offering more appealing and desirable educational programs (Smrekar and Goldring, 1999).

One method of desegregation after the Brown II ruling was busing students from segregated Black schools to local White schools. In reaction to these efforts, some White parents began to move out of urban areas to the suburbs (Orfield, 1999) to avoid sending their children to newly integrated school systems; this left many urban school systems increasingly Black and re-segregated. School districts nationwide were compelled to introduce other measures for school desegregation, with the intent of attracting White families back to their cities. One such measure was the implementation of magnet schools as a form of school choice (McMillan, 1980).

Twelve years after the Brown I decision, Congress passed the Emergency School Aid Act (ESAA). ESAA was intended to “pluralize educational offerings in an effort to encourage voluntary desegregation of our nation’s school districts through a magnet concept” (Smrekar & Goldring, 1999). ESAA provided federal financial aid to magnet schools as a means of desegregation; between 1976 and 1981, federal aid increased from $10 million
to $40 million. During the Reagan administration, the Magnet School Assistance Program (MSAP) was implemented, and from 1985 to 1993, the federal government provided states with $739 million to promote magnet schools (Steele & Eaton, 1996). This legislation supported MSAP’s four directives: 1) reduction/prevention of the isolation of minority students in areas with high concentrations of minority students; 2) provision of relevant and marketable courses and curricula; 3) creation and implementation of innovative educational methods and practices; and 4) development of projects that purposefully link magnet schools with larger schools to connect all students (Christenson, 2003).

Magnet Schools of America observed: “The history of magnet schools is tied to the 1960s protest over school desegregation and the educational reform model of public school choice as a way to address educational inequity.” In the early 1970s, Gordon Foster wrote: “One of the most spurious desegregation techniques is the “magnet school” idea . . . . The magnet concept is a message to the White community that says, in effect: This is a school that has been made so attractive educationally [magnetized] you will want to enroll your child voluntarily in spite of the fact that he will have to go to school with Blacks” (Foster, 1973). In the 1980s, Michael Alves, a Massachusetts state desegregation planner, wrote: “Magnets skewed on the basis of social and economic class will invariably structure a learning environment for those which it desires most to attract” (McMillan, 1980). A Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee 1965 Report:

“One of the easiest ways for school boards to comply . . . is to adopt a so-called “freedom of choice” plan. The method is simple . . . get a few Negroes to sign up to attend white schools, and then let the local citizens “encourage” them to withdraw their applications. An even better way is to reject all Negro applicants
because of overcrowding, bad character, improper registration, or any other excuses . . . But, if by chance, a few Negroes slip through—go directly to the parents’ employers or local welfare agents” (cited in Orfield and Yun, 1999).

Recently, the rationale for magnet schools has expanded from a tool for desegregation to provision of opportunities for educational innovation; promotion of increased curricular and instructional choices to satisfy parents’ interests and priorities (Blank & Archibald, 1992; Griffin & Douzenis, 1994; Morris & Goldring, 1999; Smrekar & Goldring, 1999); and improvement of scholastic standards and provision of high quality education in urban schools (Clinchy, 1985; Goldring & Smrekar, 2000; Smrekar & Goldring, 1999). Given the increase in the numbers of magnet schools, one concern is that the initial, and primary, reason for their implementation, desegregation, is being ignored. According to Claire Smrekar and Ellen Goldring, “Magnet schools are being introduced in more urban districts in an attempt to promote racial diversity and innovation, improve scholastic standards, and provide a range of curricular options to satisfy parents’ interests and priorities” (Smrekar and Goldring, 1999).

In their report, Desegregation and White Enrollment: Decline in a Big-City School District, Daniel Levine and Jeanie Keeny Meyer analyze data from Kansas City Public Schools to show that a rapid increase, rather than a more gradual increase, in the percentage of Black students enrolled is more likely to stimulate withdrawal of White students (1977). Schools that experienced a rapid increase in the percentage of Black students in the initial period of desegregation also had a greater increase in Black enrollment and a greater decrease in White enrollment than did schools in which desegregation occurred less abruptly and more gradually (Steel and Levine, 1994).
In “Policy Implications of Research on White Flight in Metropolitan Areas,” Gary Orfield observed that the difference between White enrollment before and after school desegregation was related to the level of resistance of the White community to desegregation (1976). Orfield’s argument was that the research on White flight is anachronistic, considering that the trend toward declining White student enrollments and White opposition to desegregation had been established patterns prior to mandated desegregation. At the time of this research, Orfield questioned whether school desegregation had caused White families to leave urban communities or whether their departure from inevitable, independent of the issue of school desegregation. He also questioned whether other changes in urban areas had accelerated the departure of Whites (Orfield, 1976). Orfield argued that these questions should be examined before developing educational policies (1976).

Smrekar and Goldring found that Cincinnati’s magnet school parents, regardless of race, had higher incomes than did nonmagnet school parents (Smrekar and Goldring, 1999). They also identified similar trends with regard to the educational levels of magnet school parents. They were more likely than their nonmagnet school counterparts to have higher levels of education. For instance, 21% of the magnet parents compared with 12% of the nonmagnet parents surveyed were college graduates. Finally, parents in Cincinnati’s magnet schools experienced lower rates of unemployment, with 13% reporting that neither parent was working, versus a 26% rate of unemployment for nonmagnet school parents. Based on their findings, Smrekar and Goldring linked higher levels of income, education, and employment to parents who chose magnet schools for their children.
Smrekar and Goldring, therefore, suggested that these parents were more likely to be aware of the presence of magnet schools in their districts and of the potential benefits of these schools for their children. School choice, especially the option of magnet schools, was rooted in the post-Brown era of school desegregation and in the South’s circumvention of the Court’s ruling of “all deliberate speed.” Another concern was that magnet schools created racially integrated learning environments, but did not create schools that represented socioeconomic diversity. Magnet schools, especially in cities such as Cincinnati, enabled students from diverse cultural backgrounds to learn together, but the establishment of these schools in poorer districts might be ignoring the initial concern of improving education for all students.

In Different by Design, Mary Metz wrote that magnet schools functioned as a two-tiered arrangement in which magnets must not merely be distinctive but rather “practically superior” to attract appropriate volunteers and other human resources. These schools then began counterproductive relationships with students and the communities in which they functioned, but did not directly serve (Metz, 1986). The “superior” reputation of magnet schools was established to attract not only services and resources but also parents who were looking for alternatives to schools that historically were underperformers.

According to Doyle and Levine, in “Magnet Schools: Choice and Quality in Public Education,” magnet schools helped students succeed because they provided parental choice, commitment to student success, and control over student selection (Doyle &
Levine, 1984). However, critics contended that their success was the result of the creation of a dual school system, in which the best students were pooled, leaving behind struggling students, regardless of race or class. While the strong pull of the magnet school for suburban students encouraged racial integration, magnets also encouraged duality within a school system that neglected the needs of local students. If magnet schools were benefiting from increased funding, greater resources, and more committed teachers, this made a case that all schools could benefit similarly (Doyle & Levine, 1984).

**Programs and Tracking in Englewood**

The previous literature discussed the implementation of magnet programs and the role of magnet programs in terms of school choice and educational equity. When Englewood implemented its magnet program, the district reconsidered the feeder programs of DMHS—specifically the quality of its middle school and elementary school programs. Based on this examination, Englewood determined that its one middle school and four elementary schools were not creating a ninth grader who was adequately prepared for the challenges of a rigorous academic program. In response, the district developed several programs to increase academic rigor earlier in the students’ academic careers. The following section includes brief descriptions of the programs Englewood instituted to better prepare students as well as literature that questions whether tracking supports a new kind of racial segregation in schools. The programs Englewood instituted—while race neutral in their approach—may have produced racialized outcomes that support the concentration of lower performing Black and Latino students at DMHS by identifying, and isolating, high-performing students, and then directing them into the A@E pipeline.
This literature will consider whether implementing the A@E program encouraged district-wide tracking.

Elementary and Middle School Programs

One of the programs implemented was the Dual Language Immersion program, founded by Elizabeth Willaum in 1991, and instituted at Englewood’s Quarles Elementary School. While some dual language programs begin in middle school or high school, Englewood’s begins in pre-kindergarten, with classrooms split between native Spanish-speaking and native English-speaking students. One bilingual teacher and one English teacher is assigned to each class; the former teaches in Spanish only; the latter teaches in English only. Both student groups responded well academically, and in 2008, the district’s English-language learners scored about the same as the other student groups in the district on state tests; they were about 16 points behind White students statewide. As Willaum reported:

The English language learners are truly proficient by the time they’re in third grade, and they’re outperforming their English-speaking counterparts. *(Education Week, 2011, p.1)*

Willaum also reported in a subsequent interview for this research that this program had other benefits; among them was “holding on to the Englewood students we would have lost to other districts because their parents were not satisfied.”

The IVY program—entitled to suggest these children will eventually reach Ivy League Colleges—is a gifted and talented program that targets the top five to ten percent of students in each class; they may be identified and recommended by their teachers as early
as third grade. IVY bases acceptance on the opinions of previous teachers, a student essay, extracurricular activities, and state test scores. The program prides itself on identifying high achievers and developing the necessary habits and skills for these students to succeed either in the Academy Prep Program or in the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) Program, which is in place at the Janis E. Dismus Middle School (JEDMS). Academy Prep and AVID were developed not only to identify high achievers in middle school, but also to attract and retain Englewood middle-school students who were leaving the district to attend private school. Academy Prep, as its name suggests, prepares students for the rigors of the A@E; AVID is a nationally recognized educational program that targets “middle-of-the-road” students and provides them with learning skills that are necessary to succeed in higher-level academic courses. In Englewood, the AVID Program has been expanded to include not only seventh and eighth graders, but also fourth and fifth graders, as well as ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth graders. The Academy Prep program has separate classes for all instruction and prepares eighth-graders for the entrance exam that is required by the A@E. AVID classes are elective classes that are added to the student’s schedule. The EPSD is very proud of these programs, and its data indicate that both Academy Prep and AVID have successfully retained students who, without having access to these programs, most likely would have elected to leave the district.

This brief description of the programs Englewood has in place to provide rigorous academic opportunities for Englewood’s students leads to making a connection between tracking (ability grouping) and race. This literature is included to consider the impacts of
ability grouping on different student groups and to question whether tracking may contribute to racially re-segregated schools.

Tracking may be implemented at several levels within a school’s structure (Oakes, 1985, 1990). Tracking requires that students be contained in certain classes, or class sections, based on an assessment of their performance on one or more diagnostic examinations. Students then usually remain in the designated group throughout their school careers; generally speaking, little mobility exists in school programs that are tracked (Oakes, 1985, 1999). According to Oakes’ findings, tracked classroom often groups student heterogeneously by ability but homogeneously by race:

The “theory” of tracking argues that, to facilitate learning, children should be separated into groups so that they may be taught together with peers of similar ability and apart from those with higher or lower abilities. But in both school systems, classes that were supposed to be designated for students at a particular ability level actually enrolled students who spanned a very wide range of measured ability (1995, p.3).

Along the same line of thinking, researcher Prudence Carter has suggested:

Even within mixed-race and mixed-class schools, ability grouping and tracking are the new forms of segregation and, consequently, undermine social interactions across various racial, ethnic, class, and cultural boundaries” (2005, p. 172).

Tracking has produced dismal results, especially in those relegated to the lower tracks (Sorensen and Hallinan, 1977). Students in higher tracks—even the less capable—have better academic outcomes, most likely because they are exposed to the stronger curriculum and generally better teaching found in the higher tracks (Dawkins and Braddock, 1994; Darity, Castellino and Tyson, 2001; Gamoran and Mare, 1989). Tracking represents educational determinism for all students, but especially for Black and
Latino students who are found in disproportionately higher numbers in the lower tracks (Oakes, 1995; Jencks & Phillips, 1998; Mickelson, 2001). Since tracking may begin early in the child’s academic career, the effects of the tracking experience become cumulative. The most striking result of this cumulative experience is that the longer the students’ exposure to differing levels of instruction, and expectations, the greater the disparities in their academic outcomes. It should be noted that these students usually come from similar socioeconomic backgrounds (Mickelson, 2005).

Supporters of tracking consider ability grouping to be a race neutral process that assigns students to a specific group based on objective assessments and further suggests that the problems lie in the manner of implementation and not in the inherent design of the system (Hallinan, 1994). However, Meier, Stewart, and England (1989) and Welner and Oakes (1996) suggested that tracking should be examined in terms of first-generation and second-generation segregation, with tracking representing the latter. They explained that first-generation segregation was the isolation of a race within a district, whereas second-generation segregation occurred when racially-associated distribution of educational opportunities was implemented.

Tracking to maintain racial segregation was outlawed after the cases Hobson v. Hansen, (1967) and People Who Care v. Rockford Board of Education (1994). However, schools—perhaps inadvertently—maintained unofficial White tracks within desegregated school systems (Mickelson, 2001; Welner, 2001). Tracking, therefore, was problematic for all students, but especially for Black children. As Roslyn Mickelson (2005) observed,
“. . . racially correlated ability grouping and tracking practices result in racially
discriminatory educational outcome. As Travis Gosa and Karl Alexander (2007) suggest
by citing Oakes, such tracking should be considered:

“. . . internal (re)segregation as a result of educational tracking, a form of
segregation not usually thought of as such. Middle class black students
who are not isolated in poorer, racially segregated, low-achieving schools
may find themselves, instead, in substantially segregated classrooms
owing to patterns of within school ability grouping and tracking” (2007, p.
304).

CONCLUSION

This study questions whether a magnet program implemented as a school desegregation
policy has been effective. The study also examines the implications of this program on
those closely involved: administrators, teachers, and students. Grounded in previous
research that has been reviewed and referenced in this chapter—which includes social
science research, judicial history, and Englewood’s historical efforts to desegregate its
schools—the rationale of this study is that educational desegregation programs are
difficult to implement, but that their successful implementation is possible if all parties
are better informed about the short-term and long-term effects on the children and the
adults directly involved.
CHAPTER IV

METHOD

Purpose

The purpose of this research is to examine whether implementing school desegregation policy—specifically the A@E magnet program on the DMHS campus—was an effective desegregation and school improvement plan.

Critically examining the experiences of a small percentage of DMHS and A@E students, as well as those of a selected number of teachers and administrators at both schools, the research seeks to answer the question of whether the Englewood magnet program achieved its intended objectives of attracting high-achieving students of several races, thereby improving the racial balance for both schools, or whether the program established a racial balance in the magnet program. The research also addresses the question of whether the A@E model, functioning on the DMHS campus, supported replication of racial norms and expectations for students in the comprehensive program (DMHS).

Examining whether the Englewood students’ interests and academic outcomes remained the first priority of the magnet program’s implementation, the research seeks to determine whether the policy was inordinately influenced by Englewood’s political, economic, and social forces, which appeared to focus less on the needs of DMHS students and more on the those of the community’s stakeholders.

This mixed method research—which comprises interviews of faculty, school and district administrators, and Board members and student focus groups—is aligned with its
theoretical framework, Critical Race Theory (CRT). CRT directs the researcher to seek counter-narratives, that is to say, untold stories—historically, the stories of racial minorities. This approach integrates “student voices,” in which students are encouraged to participate in school-wide policy decisions that directly affect them. This approach became relevant in the 1960s and the 1970s, two decades of radical social change, but lost favor during the subsequent two decades, the 1980s and 1990s, which were characterized by political conservatism (Muncey & McQuillan, 1991; Olsen, Jaramillo, McCall-Perez, & White, 1999). During these two decades, student opinions were rarely considered, with the result that many students manifested growing estrangement from, and disaffection with, actions that influenced educational reform. Prior research on the degree of student engagement in school reform issues suggests that students who did not connect with the process of developing educational policy disengaged from their schools on profound levels. They cut classes more frequently, performed poorly on exams, and had increased dropout rates (Fullan, 2001; Rudduck, Day; & Wallace, 1996).

The research supports the premise that partnering with students to identify problems and devise solutions requires that involved adults recognize that students can provide valuable perspectives that can help inform and shape school policy. In fact, it has been suggested repeatedly that student involvement can contribute to effecting policies that actually achieve their goals (Kushman, 1997; Levin; 2000; Mitra, 2001, Rudduck; Day, & Wallace; 1997; Thorkildsen, 1994). Previous research has looked at student participation in the classroom; this research seeks to analyze how student opinion and
feedback on a school-wide level could have been incorporated into Englewood’s decision-making processes.

The Englewood school reform policy was designed to create a more equitable, positive student experience; however, the perceptions of many students were those of categorical exclusion. This research method—specifically, individual interviews and focus groups—created a forum for students to express their candid opinions on the magnet school program and whether it was the best way to improve racial imbalance and academic outcomes at DMHS. This method also accords validity to DMHS students’ voices, positioning their opinions appropriately and fairly in the developmental history of the school.

Case Study Design

Local journalists, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE), and private educational consultants have visited the DMHS campus with specific goals in mind. Journalists covered events on the DMHS campus as part of local education news, the NJDOE sent its representatives to observe whether there was academic equity in the two programs, and educational consultants were hired to make recommendation on measures to integrate the two programs. However, their examinations contributed only small, fragmented pieces of the written history of DMHS and the A@E. This research includes accounts from these groups in a case study design that more comprehensively examines the impact of the magnet school program on the DMHS campus. A case study design allows for several qualitative methods to be applied in combination in order to elicit a
better understanding of how this policy had come to be developed and implemented, the implications for the current student body, and whether or not the policy achieved a desegregated campus. The following section details the research methods used in this case study design and how these methods support the focus of the research.

For social science researchers, or for this research concerned with the effectiveness of specific education policies, the verisimilitude of case studies provides a “nuanced view of reality” (Flyvbjerg, 2001). Developing an emotional closeness to his/her subjects also may prompt the researcher to develop more rigorous research skills. For instance, other forms of research that maintain emotional distance between researchers and their subjects may lead the former to formulate more abstract interpretations of their findings, in which the methodology becomes more important than the subjects. Looking for predictive theory and concrete behaviors in the social sciences is counterproductive because it is probable that neither exists (Flyvbjerg, 2001). Therefore, what becomes evident is that “[p]redictive theories and universals cannot he found in the study of human affairs. Concrete, context-dependent knowledge is more valuable than a vain search for predictive theories and universals” (Flyvbjerg, 2001).

Prior to the increased use of quantitative measurements in the social sciences, case studies had been considered a standard, accepted method of evaluation. According to Beveridge, “. . . more discoveries have arisen from intense observation of very limited material than from statistics applied to large groups” (1951). This point is not made to suggest that case studies always are
the best research design, but rather that they provide a comparably relevant research method. Research design should depend on both the study subjects and the study circumstances (Flyvbjerg, 2001). With this in mind, the following authors describe the effective use of case studies, that is to say, their ability to inform future research and policy.

Amanda Lewis’ work, *Race in the Schoolyard: Negotiating the Colorline in Classrooms and Communities* (2006) seeks to determine whether schools function as racialized structures, and if so, the impacts of these structures on students and their educational communities. Lewis also considers whether racialized norms impact their schools. She concludes her study by frequently visiting schools and “bearing witness” to student experiences (2006). The author emphasizes that the time she spent in these schools, closely observing student and teacher interactions, was invaluable and that the qualitative data collected was extremely useful to her research.

Here I had seen, in minute-by-minute school interactions, the generation of unintended consequences—evidence of the ways school might not be serving all students equally (Lewis, 2006, p. 3).

The choice of case study design for this research has been based largely on the information to be gathered and the questions to be asked concerning the effects on students of school desegregation policy in Englewood. DMHS and the A@E report their school and student data to the Englewood Public School District (EPSD), which, in turn, reports these data, in the aggregate, to the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE). However, this case study intends to determine whether, and in what ways, this desegregation policy affected students in DMHS and the A@E differently; therefore, the
research design is framed separately but in ways that enable comparison of the participants’ responses. The research examines DMHS and the A@E as two discrete student populations that purportedly experienced, and reacted to, one policy.

This duality allows for independent comparison of the two educational programs in relation to the experiences of students in the A@E program and students attending DMHS. Application of a case study approach to examine the effects of school desegregation policy on students in each school called for examination of student attitudes regarding their respective programs: 1) on an individual basis; and 2) in relation to the attitudes of their peers, teachers, administrators, and the architects of this policy. The case study is intended to be neither a case history nor a case record but rather a teaching tool that “. . . need not contain a complete or accurate rendition of actual events; rather, its purpose is to establish a framework for discussion and debate among students” teachers, and policy makers (Yin, 1994). Research on the effectiveness and the limitations of case studies used in qualitative research suggests that a common concern mentioned when considering the use of case studies is the contrast between what is defined as the process of conducting a case study and the case study as a unit of study (Merriam, 1998). Clarifying the definition of “case study” reveals its usefulness for this work. (Merriam 1998) defines a case study as “. . . an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single instance, phenomenon, or social unit.” This definition permits the development of “boundaries” around the subject, in this case, the effects of a specific school desegregation policy. A case study can be further characterized as particularistic (Merriam, 1998). This suggests that a case study can be applied to a particular condition,
situation, or event, and that the event is important for what it is able to expose and illuminate (Merriam, 1998).

In this case, the event was the A@E magnet program, situated on the DMHS campus, to address the significant racial imbalance of the DMHS student body. Using a case study to examine this program brings attention to “the way particular groups of people confront specific problems, taking a holistic view of the situation” (Shaw, 1978). Olson’s definition of the characteristics of a particularistic case study approach is useful in describing the DMHS and A@E situation; it can exemplify what worked and what did not work; it also can describe specific instances and elucidate a general condition; finally, it may or may not be influenced by the author’s biases (Olson, 2001).

Study Framework and Data Collection in Englewood—The Efficacy of Example

A conceptual framework for this research has been developed to examine the two programs on the campus of DMHS: the DMHS Comprehensive Program and the A@E Magnet Program. Racial and class differences of the student populations necessitated the creation of a framework that allowed for an accurate accounting and comparison of racial demographics and student outcomes; the latter included attendance rates, standardized exam scores, graduation rates, and college acceptance rates. The framework was inspired in part by the US Department of Education’s, Innovations in Education: Creating and Sustaining Successful Magnet High Schools. This federal guide asserts that magnet schools should maintain a “strong commitment to equity, ensuring that a diverse group of
students have outstanding educational opportunities, adhere to high standards, and receive necessary support for success” (US Department of Education, 2008).

The research also is informed by a theoretical framework, Critical Race Theory (CRT), which prescribes that all questions used in individual interviews and focus groups be designed to probe for, and gather, counter-narratives of the study participants. Questioning whether the designated criteria for success were achieved for students in both schools provides a more informed analysis of the efficacy of the A@E program in achieving its intended goals.
Data Collection and Analysis

Direct Observations

Prior to and from Winter 2009 through Summer 2010, interviews of school-based administrators, teachers, and students were scheduled. The intent of these interviews and focus groups was to gather the interviewees’ and focus group participants’ thoughts and feelings of how the students and teachers functioned on campus and if there was purposeful movement of students between buildings. The research was conducted to understand the behaviors of students in their classrooms, and the dynamics of the interactions between and among students (and teachers) in the two schools. Direct observation helped the researcher confront and process the emotions that accompanied numerous visits to her alma mater, and it also helped her develop more objective views of the current student populations and the effects of the entirely restructured system: that is to say, two academic programs housed in two separate buildings on the DMHS campus.

In-Depth Interviews

A series of thirty-five in-depth, unstructured interviews of adults were completed from March 2010 through September 2010. These differed from structured interviews in that while there were several core concepts and guided questions used for each respondent group, the questions were designed mostly to assist in coding by encouraging the discussion to go towards the direction required for the specific study participant group. For instance, when interviewing the attorneys involved with the litigation the guided questions were steered more towards race and specific details regarding the litigation; for the NJDOE representatives, implementation of the A@E; and for the teachers, their teaching philosophies. (See Appendix ____). This method allowed the researcher to come
to understand an unfamiliar school environment. The questions were developed to establish an initial understanding of the student’s feelings about the situation, while creating the necessary questioner-respondent give-and-take that would generate meaningful insights on the extent of the impact of the magnet program on students and teachers alike. Each group of interviewees had a different set of guided questions; these were based on the specific connection/s of the interviewees to the school and/or to the litigation.

Focus Groups

Six student focus groups lasted about ninety minutes each. Two exclusively DMHS focus groups comprised one senior group and one junior group; two exclusively A@E groups comprised one senior group and one junior group; two additional focus groups were mixed, comprising on the average five A@E students and five DMHS students. The physical structure of the campus supported students gathering in classrooms. DMHS and A@E teachers and administrators were granted written permission by the EPSD Superintendent, Richard Segall, to support my research; their support included asking students (via e-mail or during class) to serve as participants, either after school or on their lunch break. No adults, other than this researcher, were present at the six focus groups. During the first fifteen minutes, the students read and signed the Confidentiality Agreement and ate their (researcher-provided) snacks. The guided questions were used to lead the discussion and to encourage the students to elaborate on, and exemplify, their thoughts and feelings. The entire proceedings were audio-taped and transcribed for analysis of content.
School Level Data

Data concerning the racial composition and home districts of the students currently attending each academic program were evaluated to determine the efficacy (or lack thereof) of the presence of A@E in desegregating DMHS. These data also included the top “sending” districts to the A@E to determine how many White and Asian students—especially those residing in either Englewood Cliffs or Tenafly—had come to the DMHS campus.

Mixed Method Approach

This work combined school level data, direct observations, interviews and focus groups together to create a comprehensive response to the concerns identified on the DMHS campus identified in this research. In order to organize the copious text from the audio-taped transcriptions, the data were examined and then collated through an initial (primary) and then a focused (secondary) coding process. During the initial coding of the participant accounts, pertinent themes were identified, based on the relationship of the participant with the litigation, Englewood, DMHS, or the A@E. Initial codes differed according to the participants’ affiliations and focused on themes relating to race, school policy, and the academic and social environment of the DMHS campus. Secondary coding applied more specific criteria used to develop the conceptual schema based on the data. Coding was completed by cutting and pasting relevant text from electronic copy of each transcription. The resulting documentation was categorized and labeled according to a chosen theme. Throughout the secondary coding process, the researcher asked herself
why the text was significant, and based on this assessment, either deleted the text or combined the text in order to develop more specific secondary codes that were clearly connected to the premise of the study. This process was undertaken for each interview and for each focus group. A conceptual schema was developed, based on the coded data, to tie together these data and to address the research questions.

This mixed method approach supported triangulation, which tested the consistency of findings obtained through the participants’ various interactions. Triangulation increases the chances of controlling some of the risks and/or multiple conditions that influence the results, including researcher bias. In this research, direct observation and survey data gathered from both DMHS and A@E students complement student focus group data and teacher and administrator interview data. Applying different methods also helped the researcher shape “next steps” in the data collection and analysis process. During data collection, findings from one approach shaped subsequent approaches. For example, responses from the homogeneous (all DMHS or all A@E) student groups) led to developing two heterogeneous student groups (a mixture of students from each academic program). Several methods of inquiry served to stimulate additional research questions and/or to reexamine the findings that had been obtained through one method. In-depth interviews with teachers and long focus groups with students provided new insights on how the desegregation policy was/is perceived and how this policy should be changed. Integration of the methods expanded the scope of the study and most likely informed the general debate on voluntary and involuntary desegregation. Finally, a research strategy integrating several methods is more likely to produce outcomes of higher quality and
depth. Further, a mixed-method approach can lead to the creation of more rigorous alternatives to conventional or monolithic methods of gathering and analyzing data.

**Study Participants**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Participant Groups</th>
<th>Number in Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Law Makers, Englewood Advocates, and Policy Makers</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey Department of Education Officials</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current District and School Based Administrators</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table Six: Study Participants**

Litigators and Early Englewood Advocates

The research included interviews with former attorneys, EPSD Board members, and EPSD Superintendents. Considered oral historians, these participants were asked to recall their experiences with the fifteen year litigation and their roles in implementing the A@E magnet program. The criterion for choosing them was the role each had played in the development of the desegregation policy. The experts who had been retained by the EPSD to support their counter- proposal (1986) to the regionalization of the school districts of Tenafly, Englewood, and Englewood Cliffs (EC) articulated their recollections of testimonies, briefs, school visits, and the ultimate decision to move forward with the magnet school program. Their recollections of the situation and their thought processes as they evaluated the situation are critical to a deeper understanding of the efficacy, or lack thereof, of the current policy. In the aggregate, the opinions of these oral historians represent those of many of the key players who had reached independent
judgments on the degree of efficacy and viability of Englewood’s desegregation strategy.

The fifteen interviewees comprise:

- Five former attorneys for EC, Tenafly, and Englewood
- Two former Englewood Public School District (EPSD) Superintendents
- Two former EPSD Board members
- Two current EPSD Board members
- One expert witness
- One former Dwight Morrow High School (DMHS) Principal
- Two New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) Representatives

The NJDOE became concerned with educational equity after the A@E had been implemented. It sent its representatives to visit the DMHS campus and report to the Commissioner of Education regarding the impact of the A@E on DMHS in terms of educational equity of each program and degree of transparency in reporting A@E student data. One former NJDOE representative and one current NJDOE representative were interviewed.

EPSD and DMHS Administration and Board Members

This group includes two district level administrators, including the former EPSD Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent. The former had held numerous positions in EPSD and had been the Principal of DMHS during the protracted legal proceedings (1986–1991). Also included in this group of administrators was the leadership team based at DMHS, including one Principal and two Assistant Principals for both academic
programs and the Supervisor of the South Tower Building who manages A@E’s daily operations. In terms of feedback from these individuals, it is worth mentioning that the DMHS leadership team comprises three Black males, two with children attending Englewood public schools, and one DMHS alumnus, who graduated during the litigation (1987). Their membership/participation in more than one stakeholder group (EPSD parent, Black DMHS alumnus during the litigation) was considered during data analysis.

Members of the Englewood School Board, who are elected to a three-year term, develop school policies, are responsible for the district budget, and appoint the Superintendent of the Englewood Public School System. Board members articulate the opinions and official positions of one body of policy architects. Board members historically had been divided on the decision to implement the magnet program at DMHS; they were further divided as to whether the magnet program has achieved its objectives. Their feedback, not only as Board members, but also as residents and as parents of students, provides valuable insights on the rationale that influenced their decisions. Four Board members were interviewed, including two who also are EPSD parents.

Teachers and Students
The largest number of participants are the students attending DMHS and the A@E, along with teachers and administrators of DMHS and the A@E. The DMHS students selected are members of the graduating classes of 2010 and 2011 who had attended a minimum of two years after the A@E magnet program was in place. Total documented enrollment in the 2010 senior class was 216 including DMHS and A@E students; the research includes
a minimum of ten percent (10%) of this total—with twenty five from DMHS and twenty five from A@E. The same selection process in terms of percentage of total students was applied to the junior class, which numbered 289 including students from DMHS and the A@E. Faculty members were selected from both the comprehensive (DMHS) and magnet (A@E) programs. Since school organization differs for each program, some members of the A@E teaching staff also are identified as representing one of five curriculum departments or as Academy Curriculum Leaders. DMHS and the A@E share the same school administrators: one Principal and two Vice Principals, all of whom were interviewed.

**Study Rationale**

The study rationale is based on the discovery that there is a dearth of critical analysis of desegregation policies from the perspectives of the students. Student voices historically have been ignored in the policy-making process, thereby creating an information gap in the reporting and analysis of student outcomes (Anderson and Herr, 1993). The intent of this research, which is grounded in Critical Race Theory, is to develop a contextual, historical analysis of a specific school desegregation effort and to challenge ahistoricism (Dixson and Rousseau, 2006). It is the researcher’s position that such a challenge is necessary because what often is lost in debates about school policies and their implications are the life experiences of individuals who are directly influenced by these policies—in this case, the experiences and perceptions of the students. It is axiomatic that the creators of school policies institute programs they believe will improve their schools and provide their students with more positive educational experiences. However, it also is
the case that school polices—given highly politicized conditions in the communities served by public schools—must satisfy the interests of the stakeholders (eg, the local and state politicians and business community) if these often controversial policies are to be approved. Stakeholders are not the students; the corollary is self-evident: it is possible, even probable, that these policies may not adequately address the needs of the students.
Study Significance

Given the racialized treatment of African Americans in the United States, learning while Black can be as dangerous to one’s mental and physical well-being as driving while Black (Hale, 2001, p.10).

In 1968, after Green v. New Kent County, the Supreme Court designated a school system that had successfully desegregated its schools with the label “unitary.” However, in the early 1990s, the Supreme Court re-examined the criteria for granting school districts unitary status, and in Oklahoma v. Dowell and Freeman v. Pitts, ruled that school districts may be granted unitary status only if they had demonstrated full compliance with court desegregation orders for a reasonable amount of time, and only if all indications of historical discrimination had been eliminated (United States Commission on Civil Rights, 2007). The research focuses on a school district that had made a commitment to becoming integrated by implementing a desegregation policy that was designed to change the fundamental organization of its comprehensive high school. The research focuses on a city that had been struggling to desegregate its school system for more than five decades. The unitary status of Englewood’s public high school was legally challenged, which initiated the litigation that ultimately resulted in its most recent desegregation policy, namely, the establishment of the A@E magnet school on the DMHS campus.

Public schools function in a complex and challenging political climate. There are data-driven requirements that help shape school curricula and internal standards, and there are legislative requirements that mandate meeting national academic standards (eg, the Bush administration’s “No Child Left Behind,” which has been supplanted by the Obama administration’s “Race to the Top.”) Now, the United States has entered a phase of re-
segregating its public schools (Orfield, 1997), in which it is understood that race no longer may be considered a “tie breaker,” and in which “racial imbalance is not segregation” (PICS v. Seattle, 2007). This new thinking challenges student allocations by school boards as they struggle to institute measures that will result in some semblance of racial balance in their public schools (PICS v. Seattle, 2007).

The Supreme Court ruled that integrating public schools remains “of compelling importance” (2007). However, in the same voice, it ruled unconstitutional the application of many of the voluntary school desegregation policies of the past (Orfield and Lee, 2007). This ruling has caused school districts to abandon efforts to desegregate their schools. A major consequence is that our nation’s schools are re-segregating, and this reversal has been encouraged by judicial decisions in two major urban areas: Seattle (PICS v. Seattle, 2007) and Louisville (Meredith v. Jefferson, 2007). Since economic and political climates and cultural norms are in continual flux, and since city and state (and therefore school district) demographics also are subject to change, this research begins to address the relevance of, and necessity for, enforcing in perpetuity school desegregation policies; a policy designed to last for ten or twenty years is an inadequate policy.

For school board members and school administrators who are working to effect improvements in the racial balance in their schools, the research provides a narrative of the challenges, benefits, and drawbacks of implementing a certain type of magnet school program. The research also contributes to a discussion of how a specific desegregation policy changed the culture of a specific school population. Similar to Leroy McCloud’s
inquiry as to whether desegregating schools was “worth the aggravation and trauma for the Black child or any minority group involved . . .” (1980), the research examines one strategy for promoting racial balance and improving student outcomes, and raises the question, “Which kind of policy can best achieve this objective, while simultaneously minimizing the negative effects on the native students?”

**Study Limitations**

This research topic had poor natural boundaries. The research could have been explored for several years with no guarantee, even then, that the topic had been completely examined. The researcher considered this may have been a consequence of being from Englewood and having a deep understanding of the complex relationships between all of the study participant groups and the Dwight Morrow campus. It may also be because of the complex web any school reform policy can weave when it involves comparing vastly different school communities that are faced with the difficult task of educating children with different abilities. In terms of this research having to creating boundaries around the participant data and excluding certain groups for the sake of balance and objectivity in the data was difficult. It was tantamount to doing violence to the reality of the event. In turn, the work was in compiling leftover data from this research to be used and combined with future research.

This research often relied on illustrative information provided by different sources. Some of the participants, in particular former district and school administrators as well as local elected leaders, have departed from Englewood. In addition, several administrators who
had been instrumental architects of school policies are deceased. Among them is the person who brought the A@E model to Englewood, John Greico, former Superintendent of New Jersey Vocational Schools. Mr. Greico died unexpectedly two years after accepting the position of Superintendent of the EPSD (while maintaining his previous position). He helped implement the A@E program, which was modeled on the Bergen County Academies, located on the campus of Bergen Technical and Vocational High School in Hackensack, New Jersey².

The A@E is an academic program and is not an independent school. Therefore they do not report student level data (e.g. standardized test scores or attendance reports, and racial composition data) to the State Department of Education independently. A@E student data is combined with DMHS student data and reported as such. This accomplishes two things: one, DMHS has consistently made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) according to the standards set forth for No Child Left Behind benchmarks since the inception of the A@E—this is one way advocates of the A@E have been able to suggest that it has worked well as a program to desegregate DMHS and improve the student outcomes. And two DMHS appears to be racially desegregated when you combine the heterogeneous student population of the A@E with the homogeneous racial composition of DMHS. However, exclusive of the A@E student level data, DMHS has not been racially

² Bergen County Academies was established in 1992 as Academy for the Advancement of Science and Technology and has been awarded the New Jersey Department of Education Star Award. Bergen County Academies was admitted to the Coalition of Essential Schools and was the first school in New Jersey to be admitted to the National Consortium for Specialized Secondary Schools of Mathematics, Science, and Technology. It has been the model for six subsequent academies on the Bergen Technical and Vocational High School campus, with all of its instructors having a master’s degree or higher; twenty percent (20%) have PhDs. Their graduating classes annually report acceptances to all of the Ivy League colleges and universities, and their graduate have collectively received more than $400 million in scholarship funds between 1992 and 2002.
desegregated, and while this research did not attain student level academic data, it is likely that exclusive of the A@E DMHS student academic outcomes have also remained poor. This lack of disaggregated student level data, coupled with limited data from parents, older and younger students from both programs are limitations of this research. This narrative of DMHS and the A@E would have been enriched by that information.

The Researcher’s Role
My experiences as a DMHS student and a former resident of Englewood provided the access and the motivation needed to command this research. However, my life experiences also allowed for bias, of which I am acutely aware. I drew upon the work of Alan Peshkin (1992), who suggested that, regarding bias in qualitative research, it is necessary to be aware of one’s subjective self and the role that our conscious and subconscious self plays in research, since awareness is a far better option than is denial (Glesne and Peshkin, 1992). I attended Englewood schools exclusively from pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade. While I was attending DMHS (1986 to 1990), the litigation involving Englewood, EC, and Tenafly was in progress. There were continual media coverage and intense community discussion regarding the court case; however, what I remember was how little the intense debate penetrated my self-absorbed adolescent world. The litigation involving the three towns, and the larger political and social issues, became a pressing issue only when I became a teacher (in 2000 and an educational researcher in 2006). As the number of years I have lived outside of Englewood increases (five) and as the temporal distance between my DMHS student experiences and my current status widens, it is my perception that I have developed the
requisite emotional detachment, objectivity, and research skills to objectively examine Englewood (and the effects of its school policies) as subject matter. As Eisner (1998) has suggested:

Each person’s history, and hence world, is unlike anyone else’s. This means that the way in which we see and respond to a situation, and how we interpret what we see, will bear our own signature. This unique signature is not a liability but a way of providing individual insight into a situation. (1998).

My research involved talking to students, teachers, school-based administrators about a sensitive and possibly inflammatory topic—their experiences as students, teachers, and administrators, and the effects of implementation of the A@E magnet program on their school experiences or their professional lives. As a former public school teacher, I knew that students probably would be either eager to talk about their experiences or reluctant to do so; the latter would, of course, have adversely affected the quality of the data produced. I also understood that teachers would hesitate in being totally forthcoming if they had any concerns about the protection of their anonymity. I approached this vital issue of trust from several directions. In hindsight another limitation may have been my race, and connection to DMHS as alumni. During the analysis of data I had to consider whether I would have gathered more honest responses from the A@E teachers regarding race had I not been a Black DMHS graduate. Black teachers at DMHS believed they shared an understanding of history of DMHS with me. A@E teachers were not as “easy to warm” during the interview process and regardless of their program affiliation, White teachers were less likely to communicate honestly about their feelings on race and instead focused on statements that demonstrated color blind ideology embodied in statements like “I don’t care what color my students are! I am here to teach.”
I initially interviewed the district Superintendent to discuss my study design and my concerns about how to approach both the students and the teachers. I explained that my interest in doing this research was prompted by my having been a DMHS student during the litigation. The Superintendent’s trust in me is based on our relationship of more than twenty years. He had been my high school Principal; and when he moved to Englewood to fulfill his professional responsibilities, he happened to move to a residence located three blocks from my family’s home. The Superintendent provided his full support; he introduced me and described the research project in an e-mail (See Appendix B) sent to all school-based administrators; in it, he informed them of my role as a researcher who had been approved by the School Board; he further informed them that Rutgers University’s Internal Review Board had approved my presence on the DMHS campus and my prospective interactions with DMHS and A@E students and faculty members. The Superintendent’s actions on my behalf (for which I am extremely grateful) enabled me to gain full access to both academic programs and their respective faculties and staff members.

School-based administrators who were active study participants were aware that I had been given permission to interview teachers. After they granted full access to their faculty members; I placed Research Consent Form (See Appendix B) that briefly described the research project and indicated my interview schedule in their school mailboxes. While most teachers were initially apprehensive about being interviewed, I developed trust by sharing that I was a former teacher (between 2000 and 2006) and a former DMHS student.
(Class of 1990). Most important, I indicated that all individuals who participated in the research (whether in interviews or focus groups) would remain anonymous, protected by the Confidentiality Agreement; their identities and the content of the interviews or focus groups would not be reported to any governing body in Englewood, including but not limited to, their Principal or Vice Principal, the Superintendent, and the Board of Education. After they had been assured that all persons who shared their thoughts and feelings would remain anonymous, and that a carefully structured system to protect their anonymity was in place, some chose to be participants in the audio-taped interviewed.

With the students, I approached issues of trust and confidentiality through encouraging their self-selection. Teachers were asked to e-mail those students who were appropriate to (members of the junior and senior classes). The students who initially accepted my invitation to participate in a focus group spread the word to friends whose ages were congruent with the stated requirements. For my part, I promised snacks, beverages, and anonymity. I also approached both DMHS and A@E students with the help of a school-based administrator who had served in the EPSD for more than fifteen years, and who had forged strong relationships with students and teachers. This individual’s voice was critical. He encouraged face-to-face interactions with me and helped teachers and students understand that their participation was sanctioned by the leadership of both schools. My former close ties to the Englewood community were instrumental in opening doors; the Superintendent’s “seal of approval,” which was promulgated to school-based and district-level administrators, subsequently helped me walk through these doors.
CHAPTER V

FINDINGS

Introduction

This research concerns the policy implications of a lawsuit involving three affluent school districts in Bergen County, New Jersey, in dispute over a decision to implement a voluntary desegregation initiative—a magnet program. The Academies @ Englewood (A@E) was established and housed in a separate building on the campus of Dwight Morrow High School (DMHS), which comprised a student body that was 98% Black and Latino. The objective was to attract high-achieving White and Asian students from the surrounding towns.

The findings are the result of interviews and focus groups with adults who had worked for, or currently work for, EPSD or DMHS and with current DMHS and A@E students. The interviews and focus groups were designed to describe the desegregation plan, the outcomes of the plan, and the current climate at DMHS. The writer probed to bring to light the recollections of those who had been involved in the litigation; how the current administration is dealing with issues of educational equity regarding the two schools; and how the presence of the A@E on the DMHS campus has affected/is affecting DMHS administrators, teachers, students, and parents.

The findings are presented in this order: starting with the oral historians who recalled their experiences with, and perceptions of, the litigation and ending with the students, who responded to questions regarding how they have been affected. The findings are
presented in five sections; the first four sections are organized into subsections of adult study participants including seven litigators and early Englewood advocates, comprising attorneys and expert witnesses involved in the initial litigation between Englewood and Englewood Cliffs and former Englewood superintendents, administrators, and board members. The second group comprises two former New Jersey Department of Education employees who visited the DMHS campus to assess issues of equity after the A@E had been established. The third and fourth groups comprise six current EPSD and DMHS administrators, three DMHS teachers, and three A@E teachers. The data from these four groups are juxtaposed with the largest respondent group, represented by six focus groups of students—class of 2010 and class of 2011—of DMHS and the A@E. These six focus groups and the data derived from seventy questionnaires generated by these focus group participants constitute the largest section, which is designated as a counter-narrative to the responses of the adults, as determined by applying Critical Race Theory, the theoretical framework of this study.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Participant Groups</th>
<th>Number in Group</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Law Makers, Englewood Advocates, and Policy Makers</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey Department of Education Officials</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current District and School Based Administrators</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>60</td>
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Table Seven: Study Participants
Law Makers, Englewood Advocates, and Policy Architects:

Race and Divergence

The following accounts of the oral historians provide insights regarding the challenges encountered during the litigation to desegregate DMHS. The attorneys were asked to discuss their respective roles in, and experiences with, the litigation, their perceptions about the school districts they represented, and any other information that would serve to contextualize the outcomes of the litigation. For example, the attorney representing Englewood Cliffs (EC) was asked to recall the motivations of the EC Board of Education (BOE) and the motivations of EC to end the Sending/Receiving Agreement with Englewood in order to enter a new agreement with Tenafly. The attorney representing Tenafly was asked to comment on the motivations of Tenafly in refusing to regionalize with Englewood. The attorneys representing Englewood were asked their opinions on the reasons for the creation of a magnet program, which was the consequence of this protracted legal battle. Further, the attorneys were asked to provide their thoughts regarding whether racism (towards Englewood students) had fueled this policy decision. Based on these initial guided questions, the attorneys’ responses focused on race and divergence. Race surfaced as a descriptor of communities and student populations involved in the litigation. Racism and racist language and behaviors surfaced in covert and subtle manifestations in the rhetoric and in the emotional responses of parents and members of the community as well as in legal actions and policy decisions.
Divergence emerged as a theme in the language of the early Englewood advocates and policy makers, including former Englewood administrators and Board of Education members. They repeatedly alluded to the changes in attitudes, efforts, and plans to regionalize Englewood, EC, and Tenafly. They explained that their initial decision to advocate for regionalization of Tenafly, Englewood, and EC was to support the 98% Black and Latino DMHS student population; in essence, they asserted, “We are as good as anyone else, and we all want the best education.” However, as the litigation continued, the participants accounted for what they saw as a divergence from the initial higher level of community and board support for regionalization to wanting to end the litigation and provide a program that would voluntarily attract students from outside of Englewood. Further, they remembered the distinct shift from an alternative policy to deal with racial segregation of DMHS offered by Englewood’s administration to the Bergen Academies model of a highly selective magnet program intended to attract White and Asian students from communities outside of Englewood.
Figure Six: Law Makers, Englewood Advocates, and Policy Architects Code Schema
Race

In an appeal filed by Englewood’s attorneys in support of regionalizing Englewood, Tenafly, and EC school districts, the attorneys wrote: “This case is about race and about education and about much else; but it is mostly about race.” (1986). EC understood that Englewood believed that EC’s decision to end its S/R agreement had been motivated by racism; however, the EC case was rooted in other issues that had been identified at DMHS; these included, inadequate facilities, a high incidence of poor test scores, and the high attrition rate of DMHS principals. EC realized the importance of presenting a case based on solid evidence when its initial request (in 1977) to terminate the relationship was not reviewed by the Commissioner of Education. At that time, EC had not gathered sufficient data to support its request, nor had the EC BOE rallied the support of the greater community. This was not the case in 1985 when EC was better prepared based on the condition of DMHS and the performance of its students. In addition to citing poor test scores, the EC Board pointed to the fact that a cross-section of Englewood parents were not sending their children to DMHS. EC parents resented the fact that they had been forced into a contractual agreement to desegregate DMHS when attendance by White children in Englewood could achieve this goal; however, a substantial number of White Englewood parents chose to send their children to private schools. The following is the response of an EC attorney who had been involved in the initial litigation:

Q. What do you remember about EC parents’ feelings about Englewood parental involvement in the problems at DMHS?

A. I think in their own kind of layman’s way they [EC parents] kept saying “Where are the Englewood families which are so diverse?” I mean, Englewood is held out in New Jersey and I think, justifiably, as one of the better integrated towns in the state with the lowest level of racial tensions for an integrated town. But Englewood Cliffs White parents also seemed to be
making a point by sending their kids elsewhere. So, in their rudimentary kind of way they [EC] would say, “You know, when you [Englewood] try to argue that it’s such a great school, that White kids ought to be attracted to it, it’s not happening in Englewood.” We’re [EC families] being almost forced to do it. We live in a different town; they’re in Englewood. They have a choice to either go to Englewood public schools or pay to go elsewhere. We have a choice to withdraw from the Sending/Receiving relationship, which doesn’t serve us well anymore, and we have little influence on the school.”

The EC attorney remembered that these were seen as sufficient grounds for EC parents to refuse to send their children to DMHS; however, EC parents were aware that race would remain an issue. When asked to recall what he remembered about the initial litigation, and whether EC parents had made a direct connection between the races of the DMHS students and their reasons for wanting to end their S/R agreement with Englewood, he made this observation:

They [EC] knew that race would be a factor considered by the Commissioner, but they were interested in how legally to present a picture that wasn’t impermissibly racial. First of all, they [EC] never thought of themselves as racist; they were pure in mind. So, they never internalized the criticism. They dealt with it [race] as a tactical, issue that would have to be dealt with. Second, they [EC parents] weren’t going to send their children there [DMHS] for anybody. It seemed, even White families in Englewood had decided not to go to Dwight Morrow and had elected to do what the parents in Englewood Cliffs did, which was to finance private education.

As early as 1978, the EC BOE had ordered a study on the attitudes of EC residents to determine whether there was sufficient community support for terminating the S/R agreement with Englewood. This study, led by Professor Francis Ianni of Columbia’s Teachers College, suggested that the EC community was concerned with “social characteristics, primarily ‘racial balance’ and ‘discipline’ at DMHS.” The study also suggested that for White parents the quality of a school is influenced by its racial balance or lack thereof; thus, they perceived that a school with a high percentage of Black
students could not be a quality school (Fine, cited in 1986 court documents). This suggests that the EC BOE considered its previous unsuccessful attempt to end its S/R agreement with Englewood and its study of community attitudes. Further, it determined that the increasing Blackness of the DMHS student complexion might indeed be a motivating factor. As could be expected, this “race neutral” legal strategy was countered by a racialized response from the Englewood BOE.

When questioned regarding the Englewood BOE’s decision to pursue the regionalization of the three districts, a former Englewood BOE president (whose tenure corresponded with the duration of the litigation) suggested that the Englewood BOE felt compelled to devise a strategy that would push EC and Tenafly to move beyond their official position (ie, purely academic concerns) to what the Englewood BOE believed was their primary concern, that the DMHS student population was 98% Black and Latino.

Q. What do you remember about the time when the Englewood Board of Education was preparing to propose regionalization?

A. I think that Englewood was kind of dreaming. I don’t know if they really thought this is going to come to be. I guess it was kind of a move that was like . . . well, let’s propose this because how can they, [tell us it's about race] you know . . . what is going to be their argument against it when they don’t want to talk about race.

His observation suggests that Englewood had instituted a power move—that early in the litigation, the Englewood BOE had understood that the racial composition of the DMHS student population was the primary driver for EC’s desire to end its S/R agreement. That it wished to coerce EC to make this admission amounted to an affront to Englewood. Therefore, Englewood needed to make it clear that proposing regionalization sent the
explicit signal: We are as good as Tenafly or any other district that is predominantly White. Michelle Fine, PhD, an expert witness for DMHS, supported this contention after visiting both the DMHS and Tenafly campuses. Her account was intended to “demystify” the DMHS campus and to provide an expert’s opinion to counter what was being expressed by the EC community and what was being reported in the local newspapers.

Q. What do you remember about DMHS from the time you spent on campus?

A. It was a good place for students who were doing well—and there were students performing well. It was a good place for students in the [academic] middle. But like most US schools, Dwight Morrow was struggling with how to teach the low-functioning student. It was not a chaotic space, and the children seemed to have a deeper understanding of what it means to be part of a multicultural world. The White students, in particular, had the rare opportunity to be in close contact with people who did not all look like them. Contrast this with my time with the students in Tenafly, where the population is much more homogeneous. In my opinion, these students were missing something in terms of exposure and cultural understanding.

An attorney for Englewood supported Dr. Fine’s testimony with this commentary:

I made unplanned visits to the campus, and I was always struck by the physical beauty of the campus . . . the tower and all. I found the students to be acting similarly to what I’d seen on other high school campuses. Students moving from one building to another . . . there was order. The idea of the scary DMHS student is a myth.

During this discussion, the participants remembered DMHS as a school that was not educating every child well, but was not far from the nation’s educational norm, which was inherent difficulty in reaching and supporting lower-functioning students. What seemed even more important was that the students in Englewood—especially the White students—were gaining more than a solid academic foundation by functioning in a racially integrated environment. This belief suggested that exposure to other races and a
deeper cultural understanding were considered as valuable as academic achievement.

Clearly, this was not the case for EC parents, as suggested by another study participant, who had worked closely with the EC BOE:

“... education was like religion for these [EC parents] people.”

A former DMHS principal remembered his first memory of DMHS in 1985 and addressed the racial issue:

There was a very distinct image, and I still retain that of standing in the South Building looking at the North Building during class change. And how the kids were grouped... and one would expect in a school that’s racially divided for the kids to be separated, but the groups were mixed. There were white kids in the group. There were African Americans. There were people I couldn’t identify what group they were in, but they were getting along just fine. From the outside you heard, “You got too many violent kids. You got too many kids who aren’t trying.” These were people who had had no connection with the school for years, but for the people who were in the schools, there seemed to be a sense that the world was looking at us. We’re better than what they say we are, and we’re going to prove it.

This former principal had been informed that DMHS was a school with “problems.” However, the administrator remembered that this was primarily the opinion of those outside the district, and that among those within the district there was a sense of pride about DMHS and its students and teachers. When asked about shifts in public opinion and possible reasons for viewing DMHS as a “problem school,” a former DMHS teacher and EPSD administrator suggested that public demand for “accountability” via publicized test scores resulted in a direct comparison of Englewood’s academic performance with that of other districts to point out deficits.

Q. What do you believe contributed to such shifts [academic and social] in the student population at DMHS during the early 1990s?
A. I think it was during those times, those years when the state mandated more standardized testing and published the results of those tests in the newspapers, and I think people began to focus on that, and began to see that Dwight Morrow’s scores really were not comparable to the scores of other districts in the surrounding areas.

During the litigation to regionalize Englewood, EC, and Tenafly The Bergen Record held “Town Meetings” with parents from the surrounding communities, including but not limited to EC and Tenafly. These meetings were intended to encourage discussion among parent groups that otherwise would not have had occasion to gather and discuss the issue and to take suggestions as to measures that could be implemented to desegregate DMHS.

In the following account, a former DMHS principal remembered racially charged discussions that did not achieve their objective of helping to develop alternative strategies to address Englewood’s racial segregation.

Q. Can you explain more of what happened during this time? [the process to develop an alternative to regionalization.] Who was involved?

A. It became probably one of the saddest days for Bergen County when they were doing the town meetings. We were asked “How do we find a voluntary solution [to desegregate DMHS]?” And the closer the meetings got to Englewood physically, the more hostile they got, and it was basically racism with kind words around it. It wasn’t that they were looking for a solution; it was I don’t want my kids in jeopardy by being with those [DMHS] kids, and that was the consistent message, and it just got louder and louder. The community, Englewood, reacted in split ways. One was, by golly, it’s the right thing to do, and the other group said if these people can be that angry, they’re not going to come and help our kids; they’re going to hurt our kids, and we don’t want them; and there’s some of that still around.

Also critical were the reactions of Englewood parents who, as the litigation continued, were not unified both in their responses to EC’s request to terminate the S/R agreement with Englewood and in their support of regionalizing DMHS. This schism would widen as Englewood parents became less connected with the older Englewood BOE members,
those who had been involved in the effort to desegregate their elementary schools during the 1960s. When asked about this shift in support of regionalization, a former administrator opined:

There was a growing feeling of . . . if they don’t want to be with us [Blacks], we don’t want them [Whites]. But the Board [who proposed regionalization] was part of the same group that had worked to desegregate the schools back in the sixties and seventies. Russell Major was a major factor in that, and he was the dominant person on the Board.

A parent of two DMHS graduates and a former Englewood BOE member remembered wanting to put a stop to the initiative to regionalize. Even though she had proposed and supported regionalization, she observed that the issue of the racial composition of DMHS students and the length of the litigation were problematic. It felt as if the struggle to have EC and Tenafly students attend DMHS was becoming counterproductive, that it was diverting time and energy from effecting substantive improvements in DMHS.

Q. What made you have a change of heart [about regionalization]?

A. It just was to me a glaring, and for most of us, a glaring racial thing. And then they sat there, on this thing [regionalization], for time after time, year after year, day after day, and month after month, fighting them [EC] about yes, you’re going to have them here [DMHS]. I think really, in our [Englewood] heart of hearts, and if you had any ounce of sense, you knew this [regionalization] was not going to happen. It was just not going to happen. They [EC and Tenafly] were just not going to send their kids down here [DMHS].

Current DMHS students identified with the historian’s remarks, suggesting that Englewood needed to shift its efforts from regionalizing the schools—bringing White and Asian students to the school—and to concentrating on improving DMHS for the students who were in need of greater academic support. The same former BOE member and parent suggested that the benefits of regionalization, which was supposed to bring about
improved racial balance and improve the educational experience were becoming less apparent. Therefore, it was necessary to focus attention on improving DMHS for the Black and Latino students already in attendance.

Q. (Continuation from previous question) What made you have a change of heart [about regionalization]?

A. These people [Tenafly and EC parents] are not going to send their kids down here anymore.” And then why do we [Englewood] have to have them here to make our school the best that it possibly could be? My thing was to focus on what we had and make it the best that it possibly could be for the kids that are here and for the kids that will have to come here.

As the litigation stretched into its tenth and eleventh years, and the Court continued to object to regionalization, yet demanded a remedy for the racial imbalance at DMHS, the Englewood BOE was forced to consider alternatives to regionalization. At one point in the discussion, a former administrator mentioned that Dr. John Grieco, founder of the Bergen County Academies in Hackensack, considered DMHS a promising venue in which to establish another academic model. The following discussion considers how this magnet program would work on the DMHS campus, those who suggested its implementation, those who would administer it, and how the strategy was presented to the Englewood community.

Divergence

This section describes what occurred in Englewood during the mid to late 1990s, when there was a 180-degree change in the attitudes of the Englewood BOE and its residents about regionalization; which resulted in a petition from the State Commissioner of Education to abandon the pursuit of regionalization. The Commissioner’s 1997 report stated:
Based on the past history of this matter, I believe that involuntary regionalization almost certainly would not achieve the goal of improving racial balance among students attending Dwight Morrow High School, but rather would more likely cause additional students to attend private schools or to move to new districts. Thus, the result would be additional segregation and an increased sense of inferiority on the part of students attending Dwight Morrow (Board of Education of the Borough of Englewood Cliffs v. Board of Education of the City of Englewood v. Board of Education of the Borough of Tenafly, 2000).

This change is noted in the account of local EPSD leadership and in the alacrity with which an alternative to regionalization was decided upon and implemented. In the same 1997 report, the Commissioner stated:

. . . that neither regionalization nor agency adjudication could resolve the segregation problem at Dwight Morrow. Although acknowledging that the protracted litigation involving the three districts had “not ameliorated the racial isolation of the students attending Englewood's public schools,” the State Board expressed its intention to pursue a voluntary solution that focused on the development at Dwight Morrow of a magnet school (Board of Education of the Borough of Englewood Cliffs v. Board of Education of the City of Englewood v. Board of Education of the Borough of Tenafly, 2000).

In February 2000, Englewood attorneys expressed their client’s position to the Commissioner:

. . . an academy would not end racial segregation at Dwight Morrow and not[ed] its preference that the academy be part of a comprehensive high school, and not simply replace the existing educational program (Board of Education of the Borough of Englewood Cliffs v. Board of Education of the City of Englewood v. Board of Education of the Borough of Tenafly, 2000).

However, following fifteen years of litigation, a magnet program, an extension of the Bergen Academies magnet program would be accepted by the EPSD administration, funded by the State of New Jersey, and established on the DMHS campus.

By July 1994, the State Department of Education had initiated two regionalization studies, which would be managed by Applied Data Services (ADS) and Harry Galinsky,
a former Superintendent of Education from Paramus. The objective of these studies was to identify viable alternatives to regionalization. The following year, Englewood attorneys had not received results from either study, so responding to pressure from local officials, the State Department of Education released the findings of both the ADS study and the Galinsky report. During this time, some parents from the communities that were the subject of the studies expressed their views to local reporters. Their thoughts demonstrate the growing tensions between the members of these communities.

Tenafly Parent, Ellen Kozlowski:
Tenafly should not be singled out as the community to solve Dwight Morrow’s problems. The school district is something we care about very much. It’s something we’ve worked for very hard. This is a close, old-fashioned neighborhood, and we take great pride in our schools. Our kids are getting an excellent education. We’re concerned that our school stays the best. Instead of Dwight Morrow looking to itself to solve its problems, it’s saying “We’ll grab Tenafly.” There’s a fear that the schools in our town would be changed inescapably. That would be a shame; it would be so sad, and what would that do for Dwight Morrow? We’ve gotten to Tenafly on our own professional successes—because of our hard work, we got where we are. (The New York Times, April 11, 1995)

Ignoring race meant ignoring students of color and the embedded power of institutional practices that were inherently racist. Such a head-in-the-sand stance could not lead to equity—not in initial proposals, nor in subsequent litigation, nor in subsequent policies. If desegregation policies were to be equitable for all students, racial demographics, racist attitudes and behaviors, and racial inequities had to be open to frank and thorough discussion. Such discussions would focus on regionalization of the three school districts; the historic differences in the resources and services of each district; and specific strategies for substantively improving the quality of education for those Englewood students who were struggling academically. By continually disregarding the issue of race
in interviews during school visits and in their legal depositions, White actors side-stepped the importance of racism as an oppressive social construct.

In December of 1994 the Department of Education contracted with Dr. Harry Galinsky a retired superintendent of schools and former president of the New Jersey Association of School Administrators to assist Englewood, EC and Tenafly in developing a plan to promote a voluntary desegregation policy at DMHS. The Galinsky report (promulgated in 1995) suggested that “[t]he creation of a magnet school program that excels in specific fields is the most popular solution to achieving racial balance at Dwight Morrow High School in Englewood . . . .” The following year, the New Jersey State Education Commissioner, Leo Klagholz, refused to approve mandatory regionalization and encouraged Englewood to adopt the magnet school proposal. At this point, Englewood found it impossible to continue to pursue the court case, convinced that the immense amount of time, effort, and money that had been poured into it had compromised the educational experience of DMHS students. Indeed, many community leaders, disturbed by the inordinate length of the litigation and the immensity of the monetary resources that it had consumed had become highly vocal about the unmet needs of DMHS students.

Reverend Stanley Dennison, Englewood:
We deviated our focus from educating them [Englewood students] to trying to attract another kind of student to the district, I’m not saying that’s a bad thing, but at what expense? (The Bergen Record, March 15, 1997)

In 1997, after accepting the State Department of Education’s (DOE) proscription against combining districts, the New Jersey Supreme Court ordered the DOE to create a “cooperative solution which would also contribute to educational improvement” at
DMHS. The following year, the Court placed “initial responsibility” on Englewood to develop a voluntary plan to [racially] integrate DMHS—for example a magnet school approach. (Educational Law Center [ELC], 2003). While the Superior Court had upheld the lower Court’s order against regionalization of the three districts, in 2001 Englewood attempted to open a magnet program at DMHS, but it had only one applicant.

Englewood’s Superintendent, Joyce Baynes, realized that Englewood would require additional support for this new program to work. This realization led to the magnet program that was modeled after the Bergen County Academies, which had been developed and led by Dr. John Grieco. The Bergen County Academies, even with its highly selective admissions process, had attracted high-performing students who were racially diverse. After he Englewood BOE visited the Bergen County Academies in 1996, it determined that this model could be used to attract high-achieving White and Asian students. This should, they reasoned, serve to remediate the racial isolation of the Black and Latino student population at DMHS. Dr. Baynes, along with seventeen other Bergen County Superintendents, agreed that this magnet school would effectively address racial imbalance at DMHS. Adjacent towns would become “sending districts” after the program was in place. Unfortunately, leadership strategies and integration of the magnet school into the DMHS educational community was inadequately addressed. According to Dr. Baynes, implementation of this new program was poorly handled, especially when it came to strategies for engaging and motivating DMHS students.

Q. When you look back what do you remember about the policy decisions that led to the A@E?

A. The idea of the academy piece was very different than the academy piece that exists now in terms of the selectivity of it. The feeling was that the kids who were turned off to school in the eleventh and twelfth grades[at DMHS] were
the ones that needed to be captured, and in order to capture them, we wanted to offer them something that they were interested in . . .

. . . but it [the magnet program plan] shifted drastically when Dr. Grieco came to Dwight Morrow High School. The plan was to work together, because he had experience with academies . . .

. . . there was time spent with him trying to explain the things that had gone on, and the different principals and teachers and you know. He [Grieco] was at more of a political level and really liking this idea of having the Academy in King Hall (the South Building of DMHS), and he proceeded basically to make it an academically selective academy, and call it a desegregation plan.

This was a pivotal moment: at this point, divergence began to manifest itself in terms of the perception of the A@E by Englewood leadership in contrast to the vision of Dr. Grieco and the Bergen Academies team. The Englewood administrators believed that a magnet program’s objective should be the retention and support of DMHS students who were struggling; in contrast, the A@E objective, with its highly selective program, was committed to retaining the “most academic” Englewood students while simultaneously attracting high-performing White and Asian students who resided outside the district. This constituted a fundamental divergence from regionalization or, for that matter, any other program designed to improve academic outcomes of low-performing DMHS students. Since the A@E was a highly selective program aimed at attracting and nurturing high achievers, it was likely to alienate those DMHS students most in need of academic support.

Englewood’s DMHS administrators had institutional memory to share with Dr. Grieco; for this reason, they believed that they would be able to work together to implement the A@E. However, Dr. Grieco conceived and developed the A@E as an extension of the
Bergen Academies and reflective of this program’s administrative and academic goals.

Therefore, Englewood as a district, including DMHS-based leadership, would exert minimal control regarding implementation of the A@E. As Dr. Baynes remembered the dynamic:

Q. So how did it [implementation of the A@E] work then?

A. He [Dr. Grieco] had his own director in terms of that building; an administrator in charge of that building. So, for the first few years, that building was totally separate from Dwight Morrow High School. They siphoned off the brightest kids, and the rest of the kids came from other districts, and he [Dr. Grieco] had even promised the parents that there was not going to be any interaction. They shouldn’t worry. Later, the state became concerned and began to see that this [A@E] was not actually desegregating Dwight Morrow High School.

This change from a focused struggle to regionalize the high schools to the implementation of a highly selective magnet school housed in a separate building on the DMHS campus not only was a divergence in terms of policy, but also was a divergence from the initial reason to regionalize was about—that Englewood students were just as good as Tenafly or EC students. Through its countersuit, Englewood had argued that DMHS students were being “demonized” because they were Blacks and Latinos, but that they were equally capable so far as their intelligence, character, and potential to learn were concerned. Backing away from the fight to regionalize sent a strong message of defeat to the DMHS students. And, for the embattled residents of Englewood, the opportunity to continue to confront what they were convinced were the racially motivated actions of EC and Tenafly residents was irrevocably lost. They no longer had the forum in which to demand why involuntary regionalization would be unlikely to improve racial balance at DMHS, but rather would be likely to cause student flight, either to private
schools or out of Englewood to another district (Board of Education of the Borough of Englewood Cliffs v. Board of Education of the City of Englewood v. Board of Education of the Borough of Tenafly, 2000). While it is important to draw attention to the fact that divergence was related to the development of the A@E and its negative consequences for DMHS students, it also is important to observe that the choice of the magnet program confirmed and solidified the power and privilege of the communities of EC and Tenafly.

The next section focuses on the response of the New Jersey Department of Education after the establishment of the A@E, in particular its concerns with the equity and transparency of the A@E and DMHS.
New Jersey Department of Education Officials

Authority and Equity

In a press release highlighting the opening of the A@E on the DMHS campus, the A@E was described as “the ‘magnet’ portion of the overall academic program at DMHS, operating as a school within the school.” The press release also quoted former Commissioner Librera:

Today, you begin the exciting journey of being the first class to benefit from this innovative program that combines very high academic expectations with exemplary career preparation . . . . You will also have the added distinction of being part of a program that represents an extremely creative solution to a 30-year-old desegregation problem . . . . Your class reflects the diversity that we knew could be achieved if we offered a challenging program and opened it to everyone.

(New Jersey Department of Education, 2002)

In 2002, the A@E was seen as the voluntary solution to the racial isolation of students at DMHS; however, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) had concerns regarding student equity and transparency of reporting student data for both schools. This section focuses on major shifts in authority at DMHS and the A@E, and how the NJDOE addressed burgeoning issues of equity in terms of student access and degree of opportunity in the two schools.
Figure Seven: NJDOE State Representatives: Codes and Themes
Authority

In 2002, the New Jersey Supreme Court determined that the Commissioner of Education, not Englewood, “retain the ultimate responsibility for developing and directing” a desegregation policy. The same year, Englewood’s Superintendent, Dr. Joyce Baynes, left Englewood; however, instead of hiring a new superintendent, the NJBOE hired Dr. John Grieco as Superintendent of Englewood Public Schools; the new assignment was in addition to his position of Superintendent of Bergen County Technical Schools. The A@E opened with 127 students; 50 of them from Englewood. When questioned about this period in the history of Englewood, a former Assistant Superintendent remembered that Englewood seemed to have had little control over what was going on at the A@E:

Q. Do you believe that Englewood should have implemented the A@E? Was another policy considered?

A. I don’t think Englewood really had much to say. This was a Supreme Court mandate to the New Jersey Department of Education. The New Jersey Department of Education did whatever it needed to do to get this mandate fulfilled. The NJDOE was given a charge by the Supreme Court—desegregate that place [DMHS].

A. When it was given to Englewood to desegregate before Grieco . . . I think we got two white children to sign up. It didn’t work. They did that for a year and a half, from what I remember. So, in order for them to fulfill, and when I say them, the NJDOE, because everybody kept thinking it was Englewood. Englewood was only the place.

When asked to consider whether the A@E could have been successful had the program been implemented differently, former Assistant Superintendent responded:

Q. Do you think there was a way in which this [implementing the A@E] could have been done differently?
A. No. Because I don’t believe that the White upper-middle-class and the Asian parents would have allowed their children to come to DMHS. Racism is alive and well.

Another former administrator remembered that in order for the out-of-district parents to feel confident in sending their children to DMHS, an entirely different image would have had to be promoted. These parents had to be made to believe that the Bergen Academies team was in charge and that their children would be safe. He remembered:

The big fear Dr. Grieco had when he came in was that the parents were so afraid of Dwight Morrow, the kids outside of Englewood, that if he did not keep them separate and provide a security zone, they would refuse to come, and that was a very intentional decision the first year.

If this were the case, and the desegregation policy put in place at DMHS was supposed to keep the two student bodies separate, how could it benefit the students attending DMHS? How was the program supposed to help desegregate the DMHS campus? The A@E was developed to function as an extension of the Bergen Academies, not as an extension of DMHS. This disconnect in the planning stage foreshadows the consequences for DMHS. The A@E would function as a school-within-a-school, with a separate administration and hiring practices that served to alienate not only DMHS students but also their teachers and administration. The A@E functioned as an autonomous entity; further, its building renovations and curriculum enrichment through student trips, after-school programs, and student internships made it clear to DMHS students, who had none of these perquisites, that, in effect, they were being neglected, and that this neglect and these affronts were completely out of control of the DMHS administrators to rectify.
At this point, the State of New Jersey was providing the A@E one million dollars annually—through the Interdistrict School Choice Funding—with the stipulation that the Commissioner of Education provide the State with semiannual reports the desegregation process at DMHS and the specific contributions of the A@E to this effort. It should be noted that state funding was managed solely by Dr. Grieco’s team.

This section focuses on accounts of former NJDOE representatives who made site visits to DMHS to report on the equity and transparency of the two academic programs. The representatives visited DMHS two to three times annually between 2005 and 2008 and reported on issues concerning the educational equity of the two programs and whether the A@E functioned as an effective desegregation strategy for DMHS. DMHS remained 98% Black and Latino during this period.

**Equity**

One of the concerns the A@E being modeled after the Bergen Academies and its adoption of the “Academy Way” was that it succeeded in skimming off the top layer of students from other districts. The A@E was the only program receiving Interdistrict School Choice funding that had selection criteria, which made it out of reach for many of DMHS students. This has two significant effects on DMHS students: First, those who were not accepted by the A@E were made to feel like second-class citizens on their own campus; second, all DMHS no longer were able to interact with their high-achieving peers. The DMHS student remained isolated racially and isolated from more fulfilling and exciting academic options. Marie Barry, Director of the Office of Career and
Technical Education, who made regular site visits to the DMHS campus, remembered the concerns about the selectivity of the A@E and the inevitable negative effects on DMHS of its exclusionary practices.

Q. What was different about the A@E?

A. Well, the Academy Way. Bergen Academy style is very selective. So, it works, but one also could argue, and they do, that the Bergen Academy Model is very challenged with providing access for all students. There are selection criteria there. You know, by statute for County Vocational School, they are permitted to have entrance criteria. So, you typically get students who already are accelerated academically in those situations. They admit from the sending districts those who would potentially be the valedictorians at another comprehensive high school. They’re getting the best and the brightest.

Ms. Barry also remembered concerns with physical plant issues, which she documented when visiting DMHS and the A@E, and how the distinct differences in the facilities must have adversely affected students at DMHS. Such discrepancies must have adversely affected DMHS student attitudes.

Q. How do you remember the DMHS campus when you visited?

A. It was just like a college—it looked like a college campus. However, as beautiful as the building [North Tower Building] is, when we walked inside it was . . . it was chaotic, with students not in classrooms . . . very security-guard oriented . . . display cases with things that were ancient . . . and you got the feeling, “Oh, my God, this is not a place I would want to be.” There were no expectations of these students—very limited, low expectations. And, for students who were there, there was no feeling that they were valued, especially compared to what we saw when we walked across the campus.

Q. To the South Tower Building [the A@E]?

A. Yes. We saw labs equipped with the best kind of good equipment, students sitting around round tables having discussions. It was a night-and-day kind of experience.
A former Assistant Commissioner of Education who also made site visits to the DMHS campus remembered concerns over what had already been described: The very different academic environments of the two programs. Here, he described what was suggested that DMHS administrators do in order to improve conditions at DMHS.

Q. When you visited DMHS and observed the conditions, what were your concerns?

A. The focus was obviously looking at the under-achievement of students of color, African-American, Latino, Hispanic students in that district. The concerns were about the instructional opportunities, the instructional offerings. Taking a look at who was registered for what courses, the success level of students within courses, and also an interest in the social development of the students, as evidenced by the fact that there had been two separate proms for a number of years, separate graduations for a number of years, and clubs, the National Honor Societies, Advanced Placement classes. Who among the student population was being given opportunities . . . and excelling in these opportunities over time?

Q. Please discuss policy suggestions that address equity of the two academic programs.

A. We suggested a transformational model, which means that you would have to, for the Academies, change both buildings; change the leadership, and change a good percentage of the teaching staff, and bring in people who are accustomed to running schools like this . . . one of the other things is not to run Dwight Morrow High School, which is how I saw it functioning, as a big block. Break it up so that there are learning communities inside that building that are of a higher academic model . . . then there wouldn’t be that one small learning community, the A@E. The whole campus would be that. And all learners would have the same kind of educational plan, meaning that they would all have internships, they would all have mentors, and there would be these multiple, small learning communities.

In 2003, based on visits made to the DMHS campus, the Commissioner submitted his first report to the State; it indicated that there had been no improvement in racial integration of DMHS, exclusive of the A@E. Three years after its inception, in 2005, the
combined total enrollment for DMHS and the A@E was 1,209 students. Of these, approximately 44% were Hispanic, 41% were Black, 8% were Asian, and 6% were White. The total DMHS enrollment, excluding that of the A@E, was 898 students; of these, 51% were Hispanic, 46% were Black, 2% were Asian, and 1% was White. The total enrollment for A@E was 311 students; of these, approximately 25% were Black, 25% were Hispanic, 28% were Asian, 21% were White, and 2% were Other. These figures indicate that DMHS remained as racially isolated as it had been before the arrival of the A@E. An administrator’s response:

Q. Can you explain how you believe the A@E has worked as a desegregation plan?

A. I don’t know any better way to say this . . . it’s just that segregation exists on our campus. In as much as this model was brought in supposedly to integrate the campus, I think it has done a great job in changing the demographics; it brings Caucasians and Asians onto our campus, but I think it has done a horrible job in finding ways in which they are able to interact with each other outside of the different programs. So, in essence, what you really have is two schools here. You don’t have one school. You have two schools on one campus.

These reports underscore that Englewood had been encouraged to rethink the manner in which the A@E was implemented and to provide more innovative educational opportunities for more students, specifically those attending DMHS. The differences between the two programs, and their facilities, were creating a second-class citizenship status for DMHS students and were not addressing the racial isolation of DMHS students. However, it is important to keep in mind that DMHS leadership had been barred from executing the A@E program, as mandated by the state, since Dr. Grieco and his team were administering it. These concerns over authority, transparency, and equity were further complicated when Dr. Grieco died suddenly in 2004. After his death, Jim Smith,
who had worked closely with Dr. Grieco, assumed the role of Principal of the A@E and then—according to the dictates of the State—was appointed Principal of the entire unified campus.

The State’s “late in the game” and heavy-handed intervention is worthy of note for two reasons: 1) State involvement usurped the authority of the DMHS administration, disallowing it to have any voice in managing the magnet program; and 2) the State turned a blind eye to issues of educational equity, authority, and transparency, despite the fact that it had been made aware of the existence of two entirely separate and autonomous schools, with different facilities, schedules, curricula, and extracurricular activities. From a policy perspective, it would be virtually impossible for this magnet program, developed as an extension of a separate organization (Bergen Academies), to connect with DMHS students and to mitigate racial segregation on the DMHS campus. Given its exclusionary practices and its physical separation from the DMHS students, one could imagine quite the opposite. The question remains: Why did the State not intervene before the A@E program was implemented on the DMHS campus, before psychic damage was inflicted on DMHS students, who felt devalued, disaffected, and treated like second-class citizens.
Current District and School Based Administrators:

Culture, Change and Identity

This section highlights the challenges the current district and school-based administrators faced when managing DMHS after the establishment of the A@E. Their interviews focused on what occurred when they attempted to implement specific changes—the merging of the two programs—as mandated by the NJDOE following visits to the DMHS campus. The school-based administrators, in particular, were under considerable pressure to lead this charge. Their responses centered on their efforts to bring together the two educational cultures, the organizational changes that took place to effect this unification, and their deep concerns, based on their observations of DMHS and A@E students’ struggles to forge new identities.

The current DMHS leadership team comprises one principal, two vice principals, and a supervisor for the A@E. The principal and vice principals are fairly new in their positions with Principal Dorian Milteer having the shortest DMHS tenure (two years). Assistant Principals Garry Dennis and Lamarr Thomas have held their positions for five years and two years, respectively. Mr. Milteer and the two Assistant Principals had served in different leadership positions in the Englewood school district; the Supervisor for the A@E, Ms. Gordana Picinich is a White woman who previously had been an administrator at the Bergen Academies. These four administrators function as a team to manage the entire campus.
Different social and academic cultures of DMHS and A@E

As a social construct during litigation and implementation of the A@E

NJDOE mandates for equity and transparency

Identity

of peers in the A@E and DMHS

of school structure and belonging

Figure Eight: District and School-Based Administration Codes
Culture

During court proceedings in 1988, attorneys from all communities described Tenafly High School (THS) and DMHS school cultures as “necessarily different.” Englewood students were thought to require a stricter, more structured environment that offered various classes, including “school to work” options. In contrast, Tenafly students were described as independent learners who managed their academic schedules, which included more honors and advanced placement classes. EC used these descriptors to support its position that EC students would be best supported and received at THS since EC students were accustomed to an environment such as THS, which offered students more autonomy in direct contrast to DMHS, with its structured environment with clear enforcement of regulations. Administrative Law Judge Kenneth R. Springer wrote in his decision:

Perhaps the most striking difference between the two districts is in school climate and culture. While both offer well-rounded college preparatory programs, DMHS has a much greater emphasis on improving basic skills, maintaining discipline, and increasing attendance, areas taken more for granted at THS.

Another major difference in atmosphere between the two schools is the importance attached to strict enforcement of proper student behavior. When Richard Segall, a respected and dynamic educator, assumed the duties of principal of DMHS in September 1986, he took immediate steps to make it more difficult for students to cut classes, to put students in required study halls, and to restrict access to portions of the campus during the school day. In contrast, THS has an innovative policy known as “individual decision time,” which gives qualified students considerable freedom to travel about the school building during unscheduled periods and manage the use of their free time. (Springer, 1988, p14)
During the interviews with district and school-based leadership, the administrators were asked to discuss the school culture and climate at DMHS and the A@E. This was done for two reasons: 1) administrators exert direct effects on school culture because of their authority to develop and enforce rules; and 2) there were striking differences in the educational environments of DMHS and the A@E. In the latter, students were observed sitting in hallways and completing their work on the floor of common areas. In the former, DMHS comprehensive students were continually being asked to move along to their classes and to show their hall passes. In an effort to consider the culture of DMHS twenty-three years after Judge Springer’s appraisal, here is an account from a current Englewood school administrator that details some differences in school culture at DMHS and at the A@E. It should be noted how little had changed in terms of regulations and their enforcement—especially for DMHS:

Q. Can you describe the culture of the campus—in the two buildings?

A. . . . the culture of the two buildings. I’ll give you an example . . . the main building . . . the North Building in the comprehensive high school . . . students are required to carry passes. If you come out of classroom, you’d better have a pass. You cannot be anywhere in that building without having written authorization from some authority figure. The exact opposite is true in the South Building. In the South Building, the culture speaks to . . . you are responsible for your own time and for where you are supposed to be, when you are supposed to be there. And so, students are not required to have a pass to leave their classrooms. They sign in and sign out. And so, there’s a certain level of . . . I guess I can use this word . . . autonomy . . . that exists for the students in the A@E program. Something as simplistic as when we reinstituted the literal bell ringing in the comprehensive high school, the Academies fought against having bells ringing in their building. And so, bells do not ring in the South Building, but they do ring in the North Building. Because again, every step that may be progressive for the comprehensive high school may be seen as an assault on what is called the “Academies Way.” And so, here you have another example of . . . you have concrete authority in place. I think that’s a very good way to say that: you have concrete authority in place in the North Building, but you have an abstract authority in place in the South.
Building. Those are significant differences that are noteworthy, but definitely making the point that the cultures in the two buildings are very different. I think primarily some of this has to do with the way the Academies @ Englewood Program was designed. It was designed as a true Professional Learning Community in that they hashed out their problems; they debated what they perceived were the most important issues pertaining to the growth and development of the program. And they learned how to interact in a way that was devoid of any influence from the North Building. When the mandate to make a unified campus a reality began to be imposed, in their eyes—I think I used a great word earlier—it was seen as an assault on what they do.

This description of the two programs makes several points critical to this research. First, there are significant differences in the manner in which students experience authority.

The students attending the A@E are encouraged—similar to the THS students Judge Springer described—to take responsibility of their time management and to become more responsible learners. The expectations are that the student is prepared and also sufficiently focused to manage his/her time responsibly. The A@E students appear to regularly rise to this occasion. DMHS students receive very different signals from their teachers and administrators. They are required to inform their teachers about their every move; through a bell schedule, they are sent the message that they are not able to manage their schedules without the support of a highly structured environment. In this section, the school administrators who had been charged with creating a more inclusive culture were asked to describe their experiences and observations.

Authority is directly related to a school’s culture, and A@E’s and DMHS’s different management styles have been difficult to merge. As had been commented, the fairly rigid authority considered necessary for DMHS students was perceived as an infringement if one subscribed to the “Academy Way.” This comment was supported by another
administrator, who advocated for the importance of focusing on DMHS academic outcomes:

Our issues, our challenges are in the comprehensive high school in the North Building. There is much that needs to get done to improve student learning. And then, at the A@E, there is more to do to maintain the original academic rigor, so that this standard does not get diluted.

These two accounts make the connection between the academic and the social concerns at DMHS and the A@E. The second account emphasizes the educator’s concerns with not diluting the A@E standards, those governing academics and those governing behavior. Both standards determine the culture of both programs. Neither administrator implied that DMHS and the A@E needed to have the same regulations; however, this was what was required. Much of the tension between these two programs was based not on the differences mentioned, but on the fact that these cultures had not been merged. The “abstract authority” was viewed as a privilege by DMHS students, a privilege that they were denied. The more the DMHS student was subjected to “concrete authority,” the more they desired the “abstract authority” seen as an entitlement enjoyed by the A@E students. And, the more the administrators enforced more stringent regulations campus wide, the more the A@E students resented attempts to merge the two cultures. As expressed in student accounts, the A@E students felt their privileges were accorded to them because they were “working hard and being part of something special.” Further, they believed that DMHS student behaviors had given administrators reasons for creating and enforcing a more regulated culture. Such a disparity in attitudes made it much more difficult for DMHS administrators to create a more unified culture that met the needs of the students in both academic programs.
When asked to comment on the disparate cultures, another administrator spoke to a sense of entitlement found in both academic programs.

There are two different views of it. For our [DMHS] students, there’s a sense of entitlement that I should have the ability to kind of do what I want. And if I can’t have my way, you shouldn’t have to tell me that I can’t. On the A@E side, there is more a sense of “We’re [A@E students] here for this reason, but because I’m smart, because I’m here, I should be able to do these things.

**Change**

This section addresses the theme of change, which became evident when administrators were asked to discuss what happened following site visits from the NJDOE. Change was discussed not only in terms of the larger goal of unifying the campus but also in terms of the State’s mandate for change that was given to everyone, including teachers, charged with the responsibility of effecting change.

Individuals who manage educational innovations generally receive little or no preparation for their challenging assignment . . . They attempt to carry out their responsibilities and cope with their managerial tasks as best they can, leaning heavily on intuition, previous work experiences, and “common sense.” Their decisions tend to be ad hoc in nature, uninformed by systematic analysis of problems, and made without reference to an overall change strategy (Gross, 1979, p 20).

After the NJ DOE visited the DMHS campus in 2007, the agency assisted EPSD in creating specific goals that were designed to unify the campus. Regarding the list that follows, it is important to note that while the mandates have been implemented, several points of distinction between the two programs continue to exist. For example, there is one shared guidance program; nevertheless, the A@E has separate guidance services for its students as well as separate internship support. Both DMHS and A@E students have
shared electives, after-school activities, and senior activities (eg, the prom and graduation) but in their respective focus groups, the students made it clear that these measures have not helped to create bonds between the two groups. There still are separate class meetings, by academic program, and because the students attend classes in separate buildings, there are limited opportunities to socialize.

NJDOE Campus Unification Goals

To unify the high school campus and establish it as a single school with multiple, shared programs, the district introduced the following operational changes for the 2006–2007 school year:

1. One daily class meeting schedule
2. One campus calendar
3. One Back-to-School Night
4. One campus representation on communications
5. Honors classes, grades 10–12, taught in both buildings with students from all campus programs participating
6. Ninth grade initiative for non-A@E students to prepare them for rigorous high school classes and to train them in school success behavior and study patterns
7. Campus enrollment in art, music, physical education, and most career path electives
8. Expansion of the district’s successful AVID program from 6–10 to 6–12
9. Sports teams and clubs operate as representatives of Dwight Morrow High School campus;
10. Campus supports unified publications (eg, one yearbook); class trips are organized on a school-wide basis
11. Campus-wide end-of-year high school events (eg, prom, awards ceremony, graduation)
12. One guidance department under the leadership of a campus director/assistant principal


This list of changes ordered by the State draws attention to how the A@E program had been developed and implemented and the immensity of the task of merging the two programs. This list also emphasizes that these changes were intended to benefit both student groups, the difficulties inherent in implementing these changes, and the reasons that the NJDOE failed to recognize that these issues were inevitable, given the organization and objectives of the A@E.

This research examines the level of efficacy of these changes, whether they helped DMHS and A@E students form relationships, and how the students felt about these changes. In this section, current administrator accounts describe some of the changes that were mandated and the considerable challenges these staff members faced in attempting to carry out the state mandate.

The administrators were asked how the initiatives designed to merge the two academic programs were being received by the staff. Responses focused on the concerns of the A@E teachers about teaching DMHS students in the comprehensive program, the consequences of these changes in terms of DMHS student access, and the efforts to create greater academic opportunities for both DMHS and A@E students.

Q. What has been the response to efforts to merge the academic programs?
A. People [teachers] in the Academy are very much afraid of their ability to work with a population that is not honor students, and that goes beyond the race issue. Kids who don’t want to, who don’t come into the class ready to perform, are harder to deal with than kids who come in and say “fill me up.”

This account addressed to the difficulties the administrators faced when trying to impose radical changes on the pedagogic culture. The administration believed that A@E teachers should be encouraged to teach students of varying academic ability. But according to this administrator, A@E teachers were hesitant and reluctant to deal with students who were not functioning as well as these teachers were accustomed to. This concern was brought to the fore in the teacher interviews and a consistent theme is that A@E faculty was not interested in teaching DMHS students because these teachers believed they would be compelled to lower their standards to get most DMHS students to “make the grade.” Conversely, DMHS teachers were very interested in having brighter, more highly motivated students in their classes; however, the most academically capable DMHS students were in the A@E honors classes. The changed policy forced the DMHS administrators to require teachers to work with different types of children, which they were not accustomed to doing, and which they were not eager to do. The result was disaffection on all sides. According to one of the administrators:

It [the A@E] will not maintain itself on its own. You have to have a concerted effort to keep a program strong and true to its initial mission. Otherwise, it just splinters off and dissolves. So, the Academy perception, especially that of the teachers, is “We’re changing too much. We’re changing too much. And some of the kids who come back, alumni (we now have our first graduating class from college) say, “It’s not the school that I went to, it’s different.”
This administrator was concerned with the changes required by the state to unify the two schools, and how these changes could jeopardize the quality of the A@E. The response also implied that A@E teachers were reacting to conserve what they considered to be the sacrosanct academic standards of the A@E program, and that they considered the State-mandated efforts to unify the two schools as strategies that ultimately would weaken the academic integrity of the A@E rather than achieve their purpose.

Considering the conviction that the A@E was designed as a “Professional Learning Community,” and that it was to function as an autonomous educational institution, the task of current DMHS leadership to implement State-mandated changes had become increasingly difficult. There were several reasons: The program to desegregate the DMHS campus was created without input and feedback from DMHS leadership. The A@E was created as a highly selective magnet program with its own powerful leadership. The distinct culture of academic and social autonomy had been promulgated to all from the outset. After Dr. Grieco’s untimely death, the NJDOE, concerned about the lack of connection and cross-fertilization between the two programs, determined that these highly disparate programs be merged, and assigned this weighty responsibility to DMHS leadership via a list of mandates and deadlines for their implementation. The demands to change current DMHS programs did not serve the needs of the DMHS students. The NJDOE mandates to merge the current programs created diverted focus and effort on DMHS students’ outcomes; therefore, the result was a diminution of academic opportunities for DMHS students while enhancing those for A@E students. Thus, the NJDOE intervention failed to achieve its intended objectives. Teacher and student
perceptions of the changes confirm the existence of “hyperfocus” on the A@E to the
detriment of the DMHS educational environment.

**Identity**

During the current administrator interviews, another theme was perceived: the identity of
each academic program, individual student identity based on the program he or she
attended, and group identity per student self-perceptions and perceptions of the others.
The administrators were clear that problems associated with these identities were the
direct result of A@E being considered the better program. Further, the modifications
associated with merging the two programs brought to the surface tensions that centered
on “Who belongs where?” When asked to describe how A@E and DMHS students
regarded each other, the issue of how students identified each other versus the realities of
their respective experiences emerged. Administrators suggested that replacing
perceptions with more realistic understanding had been difficult, if not impossible. This
research suggests that this not only is because of the isolation of both groups of students
but also because of a dearth of academic program development for DMHS students. The
students attending DMHS saw themselves as second-class citizens because they
continually witnessed the A@E students receiving better opportunities. An administrator
described how DMHS students perceived themselves as second-class citizens:

Q. Can you describe the views A@E students and DMHS students have of
each other?

A. In essence, some of what we’ve had to fight through is getting those
[DMHS] students into a space where they don’t feel like second-class
citizens in their own home.
A. A lot of animosity. I mean not to the point where students were being targeted, but it was the haves and have-nots. It was, “How dare you [A@E student]. You think you’re better than me.” I’ve heard it all. I’ve heard it from the parents, from both sides. I’ve heard the parents from Englewood say, “I wish this place would leave because they think they’re better than us.” And vice versa.

These responses point to several key issues concerning DMHS students’ feelings of inadequacy. However, this research, based on the previous findings concerning the planning, execution, and monitoring of the A@E program, suggests that this sense of second-class citizenship cannot be blamed solely on the presence of the A@E; it also comes from the inability of DMHS to improve and expand the academic offerings at DMHS. A large, comprehensive high school positioned on one side of a walkway leading to a much smaller, highly selective magnet program can not help but draw attention to enormous disparities and inequities. The attention given to DMHS merging with the A@E inevitably exhausted both human and financial resources, which in turn, created obstacles to further development and enhancement of the DMHS program. A DMHS administrator had this to say:

Q. What has been done to address the needs of the DMHS students? Was there a plan in place to improve student outcomes?

A. There is no standard vision. And that’s why I say if you don’t change the culture here and create that . . . and they try with Small Learning Communities, which was the idea. No vision. It was all on paper, but there was no inventory of how they [A@E] created that. There was no teacher buy-in. There was no student buy-in. There was nothing. It was thrown on the table . . . we’re going to copy them [A@E]. And that’s why it has failed to this day. And why it won’t succeed unless they change the majors . . . actually start all over again. It won’t change. That’s why I say, if you don’t have a unified vision of what this place should look like . . . you’re going to have chaos.
The administrator spoke directly to the lack of resources allocated to the
development of what would be a new identity for the DMHS academic program.
As the administrator explained, there was no student buy-in and no teacher buy-
in. In their respective focus groups, the students discussed that there was no desire
to identify with DMHS because it was a poorly functioning educational
environment. They felt that they belonged to an institution that was not worthy of
their loyalty. This research indicates the reasons that there was no vision for the
DMHS program by including the narratives of former Englewood administrators
who attested to a change in direction (divergence), the decision to implement a
magnet program on the DMHS campus that, because of its highly selective nature,
would draw attention to the deficiencies in the DMHS program. Unless DMHS
academics became competitive with those of the magnet program, it would
become increasingly more difficult for DMHS students to identify with their school.

The A@E community also was aware of, and articulated, issues of identity, but
their concerns were aligned with how the strategies for merging affected their
“brand.”

Q. Can you explain more of what you mean in terms of how the students want
to identify themselves with their program?

A. And I just want to say that with the Academy, we are confronted really,
and if you talk to the students and teachers, their sense of wanting the
Academy . . . They recognize it being on the campus of Dwight Morrow,
but they also want it to be “the Academy.” Like I am a graduate of “the
Academy,” so there is that sense. And yet, I know that there also is the
sense of the members of the community: “But you are Dwight Morrow,
because you are on Dwight Morrow Campus.”
And that is something illustrated by the fact that you know there are some people who will say, “We don’t have a sign that says “Academy.” You know there is no sign out there that says “Academy.” You know that’s just like one manifestation of that. And so, you know it’s very interesting that we have evolved over eight years into being on the campus, integrating activities, programs, and yet we have also, I think to some degree, still said, still maintained the Academy as far as its program with its culture.

This administrator made the point that A@E students wanted to be identified with their program; however, there was pressure from the community for A@E students to be identified as DMHS students. This research suggests that A@E students’ need to identify with their program was directly related to the establishment of the A@E program as an extension of the Bergen Academies, as a separate institution on the DMHS campus, because DMHS had a less than distinguished academic program. It should be noted that out-of-district students were not recruited to attend DMHS but rather to attend the A@E. The EPSD Web site (epsd.org) lists DMHS and A@E under separate links found below *Our Schools*, and A@E has its own Web site (academies-englewood.org) distinct from the EPSD Web site. Students exercised their right to communicate to the group to which they belong, as evidenced in two separate Facebook pages: *DMHS and A@E should stop hating each other . . . seriously* and *The Academies at Englewood isn’t F@$#ing Dwight Morrow High School*. The Facebook entries, the separate Web sites, and the differing recruitment methods were unequivocal evidence of the distinctions drawn by the educators, the students, the students’ parents, and the greater community. One only need to “scratch the surface” to uncover obvious issues of identify.
Teachers

Academic Program Structure and Resistance

In an exploratory interview conducted prior to this research, a DMHS teacher was asked to provide thoughts about the implementation of the A@E and its effects on the DMHS campus:

It is perceived that we are [desegregated] because on paper the percentages are different now from what they were when A@E was not here. But in day-to-day activities and interactions, you don’t see it [desegregation].

The interviews with teachers were intended to delve more deeply into what they thought about the effectiveness of the A@E as a desegregation tool, the impact they believed it had on the campus environment, both for them and for their students. The questions were developed to determine how the teachers on both sides of the DMHS campus interpreted their roles. The data gathered were compared with the data provided through student narratives, and were examined to determine whether, either intentionally or unintentionally, these influential adults were sending their students messages. Whenever teachers were asked to express their feelings about the presence of the A@E on the DMHS campus, their responses focused on structure and resistance: structure meant specific differences in the social and academic environments of the two programs; resistance meant varying negative reactions to the State-mandated changes implemented by the administration. A@E teachers were reluctant to comment on what they believed the DMHS teachers should provide their students; whereas DMHS teachers described at length the differences between pedagogic approaches in the two programs. This section is concerned with the responses of both sides. What follows are responses of three DMHS-
based teachers, one who taught in both academic programs and three A@E-based teachers, one who taught in both academic programs.
Figure Nine Teacher Codes

Academic Program Structure

Student Behavior

Teaching Philosophies

Resistance
to change and authority
Academic Program Structure

Student Behavior
(based on the researcher’s observations during visits to both campuses)

To gain access to the A@E, one had to pass one’s badge over the magnetic pad on the entrance door. The older structure of the DMHS entry way did not support such security measures; nevertheless, this “fortress mentality” was off-putting to the researcher; it served as an “off-limits” signal to DMHS students and faculty. This research does not question the motives for this measure; however, accounts of the original program planners do suggest that the A@E South Tower Building was, indeed, considered off-limits to DMHS students during the first four years of the new school’s operation, and that Dr. Grieco had promised the parents of prospective applicants to the new magnet school that A@E students would be kept separated from the DMHS population.

When this researcher visited DMHS in the North Tower Building, a police officer was stationed just beyond the entrance. He politely queried my destination and requested that I sign in at the desk. In contrast, in the A@E building, a school employee, who sat at a desk in the rear of the entrance, also queried my destination and directed me to an office located in the building. Each entry and the manner in which a visitor is greeted and directed is revelatory of the culture of the institution. While the officer at the front desk of DMHS was helpful and polite, he also was kept busy ensuring that students were where they should be, and issuing directives such as “remove your hat,” “pull up your pants,” and “move along and get to class.” As mentioned earlier, the A@E is an expressly autonomous program in which it is expected and understood that each student is
responsible for managing his/her academic schedule in an appropriate manner. Thus, the atmosphere of the A@E common areas and hallways is distinctly different from that of DMHS. However, after the merging of the two programs, DMHS students had access to the A@E facility and A@E students had access to the DMHS facility. Student accounts (in a subsequent section) observe that this created “more walkers,” implying that some DMHS students simply walked the halls in both buildings instead of attending class. This phenomenon was confirmed on two occasions when the researcher witnessed a staff member (who works primarily on the A@E side) question a DMHS student as to where he was supposed to be and tell him in no uncertain terms to go there. When the student ignored the directive, the administrator expressed frustration. This teacher felt that the creation of a unified campus led to greater opportunities for inappropriate student behavior:

Q. You mentioned the push to merge the programs has caused some problems. Can you explain?

A. Discipline has become a huge problem. I feel that, sad to say, I think that as we’ve done more with Dwight Morrow . . . like take going to an assembly. In the old days, when there was more of a divide on the campus, there were separate assemblies. But now they’ve merged them, so that maybe it’s all eleventh and twelfth graders going to an assembly together, and all ninth and tenth graders going together. And sadly, discipline is a humongous problem. Student behavior is a humongous problem at Dwight Morrow. Now I feel that some of these behavioral issues have come over to this [A@E] side too.

Teaching Philosophies

During the planning stages of the A@E, Dr. Grieco brought a team of administrators and teachers from the Bergen Academies to develop hiring practices and formulate teaching philosophies. Project-Based Learning (PBL) was foundation of the A@E classroom
structure, and candidates underwent a (separate from the EPSD hiring process) a multi-step interview process to determine whether their backgrounds and training qualified them to teach at the A@E. Teachers often were selected from corporate or nontraditional employment backgrounds, which meant that they were very strong in content/subject matter but had taken few, if any, teaching courses. The consensus among past EPSD and DMHS administrators was that only a few teachers from DMHS had been hired. The principal at DMHS did not participate in hiring decisions for the A@E program; however, it was noted (in an interview with an A@E teacher) that if a candidate who had applied for a position at DMHS was deemed to be a better fit for the A@E, the resume was forwarded to A@E leadership. These hiring practices and the rigorous curriculum contributed to what was considered (by both administrators and teachers) as differences in institutional objectives and classroom structure. The following accounts are those of teachers discussing differences in social environments and educational philosophies of the A@E and DMHS. In the following, an A@E teacher recollected hiring practices and educational philosophies under the watch of Dr. Grieco and contrasted them with current practices and philosophies:

Q. Can you explain more of what you described as the different teaching styles here at the A@E?

A. The teachers are offering more innovative learning experiences at The Academies, I feel. And I can't . . . it's not a blanket statement, but I feel there are just more innovative teaching experiences that are being offered here because the teachers here are encouraged to do it, and we were encouraged to do it because when we were hired, we were told this is a place where project-based learning takes place. This is not an “open your textbook to page 395; we're going to read aloud.” That's not who we are here. This is about project-based learning. And a number of the teachers who were hired originally to teach at The Academies are still here, and we're hanging on by our fingernails.
He [Dr. Grieco] was very much like, “the layout of the room affects teaching style as well.” But his big emphasis was on project-based learning. That we would give students the tools to answer questions, and then we threw out these essential questions, and the students had to answer them on their own. And then we teachers facilitate the process. And this was embedded in the philosophy of this school.

... teachers at the Academies are not really... they’re not even called Academies teachers per se anymore. You might end up teaching Academies kids; you might end up teaching Dwight Morrow kids. It’s like who knows? And there’s no separation in teaching philosophy, and I think that the two sides of the campus do require different approaches to teaching.

This response is a segment of a longer interview in which the teacher shared the view of other A@E teachers who agreed that they were hired to teach at the A@E because they possessed specific skill sets. These A@E teachers were hired to become members of this unique institutional structure, which was described during their interviews, and they desired to work in this kind of an environment. A@E teachers were committed to the A@E structure that supported student autonomy and in which the students were, for the most part, prepared to become independent learners. The A@E teachers’ accounts suggest that A@E students and DMHS students required different teaching approaches. This researcher agrees; however, the differences should not be based on the academic program, but on student needs, regardless of program affiliation; otherwise, these different approaches could be considered tracking. Students who are taught according to their academic program are not afforded opportunities to observe the learning styles of peers who are operating on a different level; further, they are not able to experience different teaching styles within one classroom. The remarks below might be provocative to DMHS teachers who would interpret the sentiment as elitist or, as some DMHS teachers interviewed for this study remarked, that A@E teachers wanted to “stay on their
side,” effectively eliminating the opportunity of interacting with DMHS students. The thoughts of a DMHS teacher:

Q. What do you see as the major differences between teaching styles here [DMHS] and at the A@E?

A. I mean my own philosophy is that they’re kids. I think that teachers in each program are going to give their best to each of their kids. And the only difference is, if you’re drawn out of your comfort zone as a teacher, to teach the other [who do not belong to the academic program the teacher was hired for] kids, I don’t think that all those [A@E] teachers would bring everything to the table[to the DMHS kids] that they would bring to their [A@E] kids. I think every teacher’s style is different, and in a way, they should different because they [students] have different needs that have to be met. The way I see it is when you have an A@E student, you have to be able to master the content, but not so much your pedagogy. Whereas with a Dwight Morrow student, you don’t necessarily have to master your content, but you had better be a master of your pedagogy.

This DMHS teacher echoed the sentiments of her peers in explaining that A@E and DMHS teachers have different skills, and that these differences were necessary, based on the abilities and needs of the respective student populations. This relates not only to structural teaching differences, but also to different expectations that DMHS teachers have of the two student groups. This research disagrees with the DMHS teacher’s contention that DMHS teachers might not need to have mastery of the content, given the fact that there is consensus that the DMHS curriculum needed to be strengthened. Teaching well, but not teaching enough, in terms of content, was not an option if one were aiming to create and sustain a challenging academic environment with high expectations for its student. Successful academic programs balanced a solid understanding of the subject matter with inspiring and innovative pedagogy; successful academic programs did not sacrifice one for the other.
Resistance

Teachers who agreed to be interviewed were asked to consider the implementation of the A@E as a desegregation tool and whether they believed that the two academic programs allowed for educational equity. Teachers also were asked to reflect on how the State mandate to merge the two programs was affecting their ability to teach. The theme of resistance emerged as teachers representing each of the programs described some of the difficulties they had encountered as they attempted to function in both programs. Some of their sentiments concerning resistance were in direct response to the belief of DMHS teachers that the A@E was thrust upon them without their consent and without any regard as to how the presence of a magnet school on the DMHS campus would affect them professionally. The A@E teachers’ resistance was expressed most potently when they considered sharing their “brand” and/or diminishing their “brand” by the merger with the DMHS program instead of remaining an extension of the Bergen Academies and separate from DMHS. Resistance was clearly evident in broader discussions of the strategies used to create a more unified educational community and in the explicit and implicit messages sent to, and received by, both DMHS students and A@E students as they faced the daily challenges of negotiating their changing educational environment.

The following interview addressed a shared concern of DMHS teachers about the resistance that was inevitable if one considers the ham-fisted manner in which the A@E program was established on the DMHS campus.

Q. From your perspective, would you discuss whether the A@E has been an effective school desegregation policy?

A. You cannot legislate desegregation. You cannot legislate culture.
Q. What do you mean?

A. I mean that it has to evolve. And when it’s forced, you’ve already created a barrier. We could go back to the case of Arkansas, where students were told they must go, and that the school must accept them. Okay, so the law says, “I have to accommodate you?” How do I behave after that? One day, we were told that we had a new Academy. Done. Separate staff. They’ll have that building, and this is the way it’s going to be. Part of the issue is that the intent was to stabilize the numbers, the population numbers. There is an inordinate number of minorities here [DMHS] compared to the town’s makeup. Bringing the Academy here, and attracting students from outside this area, the intent was to balance the numbers. The intent was fine, but there was no collaboration. It was just done. And the animosity continues.

This teacher described resistance in terms of “having to deal with” the magnet program without consultation with the staff. DMHS teachers believed that they were not a part of the A@E, yet it was purported to be the program of choice that they were expected to accommodate. DMHS teachers remained resistant to the A@E, and have begun to internalize the feeling of second-class citizenship, a state of mind shared by their students. Sensing the hostility, some of the A@E teachers wished to remain as separate from their DMHS counterparts as possible, and there was no mention of accommodation in their responses. By and large, their position was that the situation was better for all parties involved in the A@E when the magnet school functioned as a separate entity. This A@E teacher responded to the same question asked of the DMHS teacher:

Q. From your perspective, would you discuss whether the A@E has been an effective school desegregation policy?

A. It [A@E] was fine earlier. I think part of the problem began when there was really more pressure to be connected with Dwight Morrow. In those early years, for all practical purposes, the Academies really was a separate school. I mean it had its own yearbook; it had its own prom; it had its own graduation; there were two principals on the campus. For all practical purposes, it really was two separate schools
although I know that, for political reasons, we are not supposed to admit this.

The DMHS and A@E teachers’ responses were antithetical. The A@E teacher’s opinion cited above reflected that of the majority of other A@E teachers. Their consensus: A@E was a better place to educate students before the campus unification initiative. Indeed, earlier accounts by administrators who are current school employees made it clear that the A@E program was intended to be a separate and autonomous educational institution, and that any attempts to merge its functions with those of DMHS would be considered an intrusion that would exert detrimental effects. In stark contrast, DMHS teacher comments included the widely held view that A@E teachers exuded an elitist “holier than thou attitude.” A@E teachers repeatedly expressed the wish to be “left alone.” All of these responses are understandable given the situation: one group felt that it was being excluded from its own space while the other group felt that it had been granted the express right to carry out their pedagogic responsibilities with no interference. So the Englewood secondary educational program had become a distinctly “unhappy marriage” between DMHS, a comprehensive academic program that had been neglected as a result of fifteen years of litigation and an unusually high attrition rate of principals, and the A@E, a well established, academically rigorous magnet program, whose presence on the DMHS campus served to draw attention to the shortcomings of DMHS.

For a school desegregation program to work, there must be synergy between the program’s developers and school administrators and teachers (Mickelson, 2005). This relationship often is organic because magnet programs—if instituted as a desegregation
policy—are developed and implemented within a district—not created by a separate administration, mandated by the State, and housed in a separate building on the campus it was supposed to desegregate. This was the case in Englewood: the A@E was developed by non-DMHS leadership, mandated by the State, and occupied a separate building on the DMHS campus. The interviewees provided the” back story” concerning the consequences of the unfortunate cultural divide between the A@E and DMHS, the differences in the structure and culture of the two programs, the mutual resistance to the State-mandated merging of the two programs. According to accounts of early administrators and teachers, State employees, and current administrators and teachers, the presence of the A@E had not addressed the racial isolation and academic outcomes of Englewood students attending DMHS. This research—based on all findings, but especially on the responses of students who agreed to participate in focus groups—demonstrates that the A@E had not mitigated racial desegregation at DMHS, but rather had provided an alternative academic experience for a small number of Englewood students and for another somewhat larger number of students from Bergen and Hudson counties.
Students

Tracking, Privilege (Academic and Social), Peers, and Opportunity

Before taking part in six focus groups involving juniors and seniors representing both programs, the students completed a brief survey and read a description of the A@E as a remediation policy instituted to facilitate desegregation at DMHS and to improve DMHS student outcomes. The survey contained 18 multiple-choice questions designed to capture students’ perceptions of their academic program and the other program, of their peers and the other program’s peers. They also were asked to comment on the role of A@E on the DMHS campus—as a separate entity or as an integral part of DMHS—and whether the A@E had been an effective desegregation policy and if so, in what capacity. Students were asked to discuss their experiences and their perceptions related to the 2008 merger of the A@E and DMHS programs. The students were asked to describe the differences between the two programs and whether their co-existence on the same campus had become problematic, and if so, in what ways. The theme, Student Identified Distinctions (SID), emerged with five codes and several subcodes. The overarching theme and the five codes were determined before the research; in contrast, the subcodes were inductive and their determination flowed from an examination of the data. These codes and subcodes are presented in Figure Eleven:
Figure Ten: Student Codes
Tracking

AVID and Academy Prep

Student findings begin with intradistrict tracking to position the student codes regarding differences recognized in academic rigor and academic privileges. Their responses were related to broader questions regarding the differences between the academics in each program and their feelings about their academic experiences. Englewood students who attended the A@E described being identified as high achievers and chosen to participate in either the IVY or dual-language program as early as kindergarten. They recalled being chosen in middle school to participated either in AVID or Academy Prep. The students were clear that selection for these programs afforded them academic opportunities that their peers, who were excluded from these programs, could not enjoy. During a mixed (A@E and DMHS) group of seniors students from Englewood explained what happened to students after they have been designated good students in elementary school:

Q. Wait. Can you explain further what you mean about applying to the A@E?

A. (Student 1) Teachers talk. They go to the next teacher and say, “Oh, so-and-so is a good student. Take care of this student.”

A. (Student 2) I think it starts out young. Cause in middle school, elementary school . . . the people who are in the Academies from Englewood are the people who are at the top of the class [then] . . .

A. (Student 1) We’ve always been separated . . .

A. (Student 3) We’ve always been in honors classes.

Q. Could you finish that sentence? So, you’re saying from elementary school you’ve been . . .

A. . . . in the top of the class. It starts out young, and that’s where you get the drive from. I had Mr. Thomas as a teacher in sixth grade [dual language], and I’ve seen him turn people around who I
thought didn’t have the same work ethic as me . . . I’ve seen him be that caring teacher for those students.

Q. And at a much earlier age?

A. Yeah. And if there were more people like that going fast to push you . . . okay, you might not be at the top of the class, but you can get there. You have a future. Teachers need to be like that.

This A@E student from Englewood remembered being in classes in which she was identified and pushed at an early age. She also recalled having teachers work with students who, she believed, did not have the same “work ethic” that she did, but who were “turned around” by excellent teaching. Her perceptions point to the solution for the lower academic outcomes of the DMHS students, caring and highly motivated teachers, but they also pointed out the structural rigidity of these programs: if a student was not afforded early opportunities to enter a higher achievers’ track, he or she would have a dearth of quality academic choices. This student understood that, although she had the drive that would propel her, regardless of teacher intervention, many of her peers did not. Nevertheless, if they were fortunate to have the right kind of teacher, they might have been able to turn themselves around before it was too late. Good teachers, she believed, are not common in Englewood. Her response also recognized the limitations of good teaching; it could not get all students to excel but at least it gave more students the chance to improve. The opposite outcome also was noted; some Englewood students were not given opportunities to prepare themselves for more demanding courses or for acceptance at the A@E. During a focus group, comprising seniors who were attending A@E, students from both in and out of the district, a senior from Englewood described how
certain Englewood students had been selected, based on their middle-school performance to take the admissions test for the A@E:

Q. So for those of you from Englewood, be specific. How did you end up in the A@E? Explain your process.

A. . . . a lot of my friends [at DMHS] want to get the education that we [A@E students] are getting, but when we were in middle school, we didn’t really apply for the Academy, so to speak; it was more like whatever class you were in, you were able to go. Like Academy Prep and AVID, those were the students who were supposed to come to the Academy. Like they already had it, they already had their foot in because our teachers had recommended us while the rest of the students didn’t really get the chance to take the test or even know what the program was about.

A. You know going to the middle school, certain people were in honors classes in middle school, like AVID and stuff, we’re always at the top. And then they made the Academy Prep program. They [JEDMS teachers] made you apply to the Academies. No one knew about it. And so, even the other Dwight Morrow students, I’m pretty sure they weren’t presented with the program because . . . it wasn’t a choice to go to the Academies for them . . . we [Academy Prep] had the same three teachers for all three years.

Q. Was that AVID or Academy Prep?

A. Academy Prep. We don’t really have friends from Dwight Morrow because of that.

Englewood parents wanted a rigorous option for their middle-school children to better prepare them for the A@E and to perpetuate the work of selective elementary programs such as IVY and Dual Language. When Dr. Grieco was Superintendent, he believed that the way to improve the DMHS curriculum and get more Englewood students well prepared to attend the A@E was to develop a “preprogram,” administered on the middle-school level—in the belief that consistently higher expectations would eventually prevail in the rest of the system. Pressure from parent groups, and his convictions about
preparing ninth graders, led to the creation of the Academy Prep program. The students also described two aspects of tracking that are detrimental to both student groups: those who had been skimmed from the top of their respective classes, and those who had been left behind. Although Englewood students who were in the elite group did not demonstrate a sense of entitlement, the students who had been left out assumed that they did. The data from the focus groups that explored the issue of tracking suggest that the students from Englewood who attend the A@E recognized that being a member of these selective programs was a positive experience, but they also understood that it had isolated them from the DMHS students. These data also indicate that this separation, occurring when the students were ninth graders, could make it difficult for them to negotiate since some Englewood students entered the A@E and many others, who had been friends for years, entered DMHS. According to the students, the culture gap widened throughout high school and often contributed to disparate academic outcomes. Although the A@E was designed to desegregate DMHS, some of the district’s policies and programs appeared to have undermined that process, as early as third grade.

It also should be noted that, according to interviews with administrators who had worked closely with Dr. Grieco, the Janis E. Dismus Middle School (JEDMS) was on his agenda. He had been concerned with the leadership, curricula, and teaching strategies, and with the fact that the middle school had not achieved the designation of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) under the federal mandate of “No Child Left Behind” (NCLB). Extending both AVID and developing the Academy Prep program were strategies to develop a better ninth grader and to begin the work of improving Englewood’s schools
from both sides—from the high school down and from the elementary schools up. Unfortunately, one of the difficulties inherent in providing rigorous academic programs such as these was that other approaches must be simultaneously developed to address the needs of children and adolescents who required additional educational support via alternative academic approaches. Tracking was perceived by the students whose opinions were solicited as providing few opportunities for students to move into more demanding courses. If they were perceived as slower and less motivated in the earlier grades, they often were “stuck” even if, later on, they showed intellectual growth and increased interest.

The following code of Academic Privileges and Professional Standards examines how, after they had been accepted into an academic program, these students recognized the disparity in academic rigor between DMHS and the A@E.
Privilege (Academic)

Rigor

During a focus group of DMHS seniors—along with the question to what extent they were being challenged—they also were asked about academic options at DMHS.

Q. Can you explain what you mean about wanting to be challenged more here at DMHS?

A. You know what I would love to do? I’d love to take AP classes cause that helps your college application and stuff. And that’s proven that’s not offered to us [at DMHS]; they’re probably depriving us, I guess.

Q. So, there are no AP classes on this [DMHS] side?

A. No.

Q. So, if you did want to take an AP class and take the AP exam at the end of the year, can you take it at the Academies?

A. You can take the exam, but they’re [teachers] shady about that.

A. For me, if I knew out of eighth grade that this [DMHS] was not going to get me ready for the world, I wouldn’t have come here.

These DMHS seniors were acutely aware of the flawed DMHS policy and how it negatively affected their chances for advancement. Any opportunity for DMHS students to take honors classes was squelched when all of the honors and AP classes were scheduled to take place in the A@E building. It is not that these classes were unavailable for DMHS students, but their lack of proximity adversely affected students who were less motivated, or who lacked confident; they were not inclined to aim for these classes since all of them had been removed from their immediate setting. The student’s perception that the A@E teachers were “shady” implies that DMHS students did not feel encouraged to take these classes, and if they did venture forth, they did not feel welcomed by the A@E faculty. This student’s perceptions were borne out by similar responses that asserted that
fewer DMHS students took these honors and AP classes because of their feelings of inadequacy. The DMHS seniors also indicated that they felt less well prepared for the challenges facing them in the world of higher education or the workplace, and that if they had been made aware of their limited educational option, they might not have attended DMHS. This feeling of being short-changed and the natural resentment incurred suggested that these seniors had come to understand that they were educationally disadvantaged and less likely to succeed after graduation. The DMHS juniors were not as explicit about this concern. During the DMHS junior focus group, they talked about the academic rigors of their classes and whether they felt that they were being well prepared for life after high school. The discussion focused on what was lacking in their classroom instruction:

Q. Can you discuss how you believe your academic program has challenged you and prepared you for life after high school?

(Student 1) So for me . . . I’m a junior and I still haven’t written a research paper. I hear people say that you usually do it in your junior year around the time you write your first research paper? But I have no idea how to write a research paper. No clues . . . nothing.

(Student 2) I’m not going to lie. My whole high school year, when I had to do a PowerPoint, I copied and pasted because they [DMHS teachers] don’t care. I’m sure over on the other side, you have to have your work thought out and you have to actually do research. Over here, you just plug it into Google and get information.

(Student 1) The teacher I spoke to showed me the syllabus of what he has to teach us, and he was like, “This is the crap that I got to teach you. This is nothing. This is what you should have learned way back then. It’s like foolishness. It doesn’t mean anything.” Like so not challenged! (shrugs)

(Student 2) Even the projects aren’t challenging.

(Student 3) Third-grade projects!
(Student 4) Slap some pictures on there.
(Student 1) Like a poster board and stuff. When I talked to someone else [at the A@E], they had PowerPoint, and papers, and handouts, and all this stuff. Our projects were poster boards.
(Student 4) I’m a senior. I’m doing poster boards! (incredulous)

Juniors and seniors at DMHS described their academic experiences as poor. Some of the DMHS seniors were participants in AVID and still felt that they had been missing instruction crucial to their success after high school. They identified basic skills, such as writing critical analyses and essays, using information technology to conduct research, and creating coherent and graphically compelling presentations, as missing from their course of study. They did not explicitly convey that they had internalized the sense of being less deserving, and they seemed diffident about expressing their dissatisfaction and demanding more from their teachers. Their comments clearly defined deficits in academic projects and types of assignments and limitations in their curriculum. As their responses indicate, they were allowed to take honors and AP classes at the A@E, but they were not encouraged to advocate for themselves. The administrators’ interviews asserted that leadership had struggled to accurately identify the DMHS students who should be encouraged to pursue honors and AP classes. The decision to relocate honors classes to the A@E building was a consequence of the practice of “skimming” high achievers from the DMHS mixed-ability classes and moving them to the A@E. Of course, DMHS administrators were keenly aware of the void:

Q. Can you explain more of your answer about DMHS student reaction to the A@E? (this account is part of a larger response to the question)
But I know it’s [high-achievers transferring to the A@E] also had a reaction, whereby the students in Dwight Morrow High School are now missing that component, which is the students who are in the honors program are not in the mainstream at Dwight Morrow High School; they
are now part of the Academies. So, I can see the complexity of it [honors classes only given at the A@E].

The students understood the connection between academic rigor and their teachers. The following section describes both DMHS and A@E students’ perceptions that their teachers were directly responsible for their academic success or failure. The following data concerning teacher quality and level of expectations were gathered from the student focus groups during initial interrogations about major distinctions between the two programs specific to teachers’ standards. The code “Rigor” directly addresses one of the post-litigation Court mandates: to improve DMHS student outcomes through the implementation of the A@E program. These student responses suggest the A@E had increased academic opportunities for a small percentage of Englewood students, whose who had been advised early on to apply to the A@E. Unfortunately, the rest of the Englewood students remained isolated from the A@E and had significantly less academic enrichment and teacher encouragement.
Privilege (Academic)

Teacher Expectations and Quality

Following discussions concerning academic rigor and the availability, or lack thereof, of honors and AP courses, the focus groups led students to describe their teachers, the nature of student-teacher relationships and teacher contributions to enriching their academic experience. This was done for two reasons: 1) teachers delivered instruction, and elicited motivation, and prepared students for life after high school; and 2) teachers in DMHS and A@E were critical in effecting the merging of the two educational programs since they were expected to liaison among policy makers, school administrators, students, and parents.

All DMHS students who took part in the focus groups were critical of their teachers, but for different reasons. They pinpointed their teachers’ inability to simultaneously attend to the students who were prepared for class versus the “troublemakers” who were not; in other words, the students were critical of their teachers’ inability to effectively manage their mixed-ability classes, to properly discipline and control while at the same time effectively teaching the subject matter. The DMHS students observed that those who behaved badly were a major distraction and, as a consequence, the quality of the instruction suffered. They also believed that their teachers’ expectations were not sufficiently high and that these lowered expectations adversely affected the quality of instruction and iminished the rigor of the tools used to assess learning (eg, quizzes, tests, exams, papers). Finally, and perhaps most importantly, DMHS students understandably judged their teachers by comparing them with the A@E teachers, who they believed were
better. For example, when asked how well teachers had prepared students for college and beyond, a DMHS senior responded:

Q. How have your teachers been a part of preparing you for life after college? Can you talk to me about some of those experiences with your teachers?

A. In this school, in Dwight Morrow, they [teachers] don’t see us succeeding. They just want us to get out of their school. They say we cause them headaches.

In sharp contrast, this is what three A@E students had to say when responding to the same question:

Q. How have your teachers been a part of preparing you for life after college? Can you talk to me about some of those experiences with your teachers?

B. (Student 1) It needs to be more integrated. Say the Dwight Morrow students had our teachers. Mr. David . . . some teachers will get you in shape.

A. (Student 2) There are some really good teachers at the Academies.

A. (Student 3) You hate them, but you love them for actually teaching.

These DMHS and A@E responses clearly delineated the students’ contrasting opinions about their teachers’ ability and desire to fully prepare them for what lay ahead in their post-high school lives. DMHS students believed that their teachers did not care about them and would be relieved when they graduated. A@E students were of the opinion that, while their teachers were difficult in terms of amount of work and high expectations, they felt much better prepared to pursue post-high school opportunities in higher education and/or job training. Upon reflection, they were grateful for the quality of the instruction. Contrast this with DMHS students, who felt that their teachers had not motivated them to strive to excel (or at least, to become more proficient) and that there
would be significant negative consequences, including a lack of preparedness for college level courses.

During a mixed (A@E and DMHS) group of juniors, students shared their views about DMHS instruction in terms of teacher standards and expectations. They compared DMHS teachers to A@E teachers, describing the learning experience in each environment:

Q. So explain further about what you mean when you say the teachers [from the two academic programs] are different?

A. (A@E Student) At the Academies, teachers make you do stuff. It’s not a question. They’re strict and you have to get stuff [school work] done. Well, my impression of Dwight Morrow is that you can get over. You really don’t have to do anything. Maybe that’s why they don’t do much. Because they can get over it, and any student who can get over, will.

A. (DMHS Student who takes classes at A@E) I have had good experiences, like in ninth periods and stuff, which I had to go get myself. Their education over there [A@E], like the classes, they're taken more seriously. They're [A@E teachers] more stern. Like I actually feel like I am learning. But like I don’t get that feeling when I'm at Dwight Morrow. I feel like it's kind of like a rat race, if anything, just to get a passing grade. Like that's the environment I'm in because there are kids, once their grade is a D or a C, once they know they're passing, they figure they don’t have to do anything. And it's sad because the teachers, they're like . . .

A. (DMHS Student 2) They [DMHS teachers] treat everyone like that. But like when I come in and it's like I actually want to learn something, and all we're getting is packets from the Internet, I feel the teachers aren't doing their part because they address all of the kids, a lot of the kids, the same. I'd say half the class doesn't care about their grades. The teachers would kind of like to join them in that view, and leave the kids who want to learn hanging.
These DMHS students were unique for two reasons: 1) they were in-the-district students who had been friends before their separation, and who continued relationships with their neighborhood friends, regardless of program affiliation; or 2) they were students who elected to take honors classes at the A@E and, for this reason, had a wider perspective on the dynamics of the two programs. Their insights were that the disparities between the teaching in A@E and DMHS were directly related to teachers basing their motivation on that of the students, and the obstacles to connecting with motivated students because of the daily distractions fueled by ongoing behavioral issues. The students observed that DMHS teachers were influenced by pervasive student malaise and that teachers refused to take responsibility for their lack of drive and creative energy, attributing their failures to ongoing disruptive behaviors. In the same focus group, DMHS students described differences between DMHS teachers and A@E teachers and the problems and the ensuing problems:

Q. (connected to previous question) So explain further about what you mean when you say the teachers [from the two academic programs] are different?

A. (DMHS Student 1; takes classes at A@E) Some of the teachers . . . I’m not going to say all of the teachers, but some of the teachers set their standards so low because they’re trying to teach everybody in the class. I have a couple of Academy classes, and to experience the difference between the standards here and the standards at the Academy . . . it’s a big jump!

A. (DMHS Student 2; does not take classes at A@E) The problem with the [DMHS] teachers here is they’re too busy trying to punish someone. And you come into a class, you’ll always find a teacher arguing with a student because the student has like maybe a hat on or is sitting the wrong way. They spend too much time lecturing us about the bad things in life. That we don’t do this and that . . . instead of teaching us how to get through life.
This exchange made it clear that both students believed that there was a striking disparity between teacher standards and expectations between the two program and that DMHS teachers spent an inordinate amount of time and energy on disciplining students rather than on teaching them. This research found a relationship between low teacher expectations and poor student behavior—in other words, the lower the teachers’ standards, the poorer the students’ behaviors. In earlier accounts, DMHS teachers interviewed lamented a paucity of brighter, more motivated students in their classes and they had to devote too much time and energy on handling behavioral issues. This skewed focus resulted, in turn, to students who were—or could be—higher achievers feeling ignored, or as one disaffected student observed, that “we give the teachers headaches.” These accounts send a clear signal: there is an urgent need at DMHS to provide honors classes, to identify those students who have the potential to take on intellectual challenges and encourage them to do so, to support them in their learning, and to create small learning communities. This final strategy would serve to motivate students to self-select into a program with an academic focus that would hold their attention and would address behavioral problems.

The A@E student focus groups provided a forum for distinctly different assessments of teacher expectations and academic preparedness. During a focus group of A@E seniors, the students described their teachers’ expectations in these terms:

Q. Can you be more specific about teacher expectations?

A. (Student 1) I think [A@E] teachers have higher expectations for us. Well a lot of them do. The workload is preparing us.
A. (Student 2) I liked the fact that she [A@E teacher] challenged us. She was that one teacher that came down on us, and she was like listen, high school is going to be different. She was like, I’m not holding back, but she would help you. She would hold a study session after school if you wanted. But I think throughout the years . . . it gets easier because you learn how to handle everything [schoolwork, pressure, extracurriculars] and then, all of a sudden, whether a teacher is hard on you or not doesn’t matter. You just take it.

A DMHS senior stated what he believed were the differences in the qualifications of A@E teachers and DMHS teachers. He also described DMHS students’ internalization of the intellectual inferiority they felt when they compared their academic progress, or lack thereof, with that of A@E students:

Q. Please be more specific about the differences between classes. Do you mean just in terms of academics or what?

A. The teachers also treat us differently. I have two classes over there [A@E] and they [the teachers] kind of look down on Dwight Morrow High School students.

Q. How do you see that?

A. I can explain. Like say a student did something wrong, and you did the same thing. They [the teachers] will not hold that over that student. They would mostly put it on you. You would be responsible for whatever had happened.

Q. They’re making an example of you?

A. So, if the teachers are doing it, the students will also do it. That’s why they [A@E students] are always saying that they’re better than us [DMHS students]. That’s what’s going on.

We are the lab rats, and they are the scientists! (laughter)

This observation related to the argument used in litigation that sought to regionalize—that regionalization, if not pursued, would send a message to the Englewood students that they were somehow inferior to the other students. The fight for regionalization was
pursued because it was believed that this policy would ensure that DMHS students were
not given reasons to feel inferior. However, implementation of a magnet school (the
A@E) in a separate building on the DMHS campus had engendered a sense of privilege
in its students while at the same time engendering a sense of inferiority and disaffection
in DMHS students; they had begun to believe they were less capable than their A@E
peers. This research suggests that these student attitudes will prevail, regardless of
NJDOE mandates, unless the situation is remedied by offering DMHS students a choice
of academic enrichment options as well as the necessary encouragement and the vital
teacher support to pursue these options and to succeed.

The discussions of teacher quality and teacher expectations in the six student focus
groups were unequivocal: both sides of the campus believed that there were better
teachers, and therefore improved opportunities for learning, in the A@E program. A@E
students described their teachers as demanding but caring and found the challenging
assignments necessary to their ability to succeed in more complex tasks. With the
exception of a few teachers, DMHS students viewed their teachers as largely uninterested
in teaching them and in helping them improve and advance. They acknowledged that they
felt that their teachers considered them to be an annoyance; further, they believed their
teachers had failed to provide them with the tools and the skills that are essential to their
future success in life. As is common in high schools with poor performance levels, the
DMHS students sought and valued teachers who can “help” and “support” them (Duncan,
2003). They absolutely wanted their teachers to be fully engaged in the teaching process,
while somewhat less involved in the punitive process. As is common in high schools with
high performance levels, the A@E students acknowledged that their teachers expected a lot of them but also appreciated that the demands made of them had resulted in an improved ability to think critically, to express themselves clearly, and to remain focused on the task at hand even when the material was challenging. A@E students also agreed that their school were not plagued by the behavioral issues that characterized DMHS classrooms, and that this made their classroom experiences much more conducive to learning. In addition, when they were probed to articulate what they would like to see changed, DMHS students repeatedly referred to the A@E program as the locus of quality teaching and of richer, more varied learning opportunities. They also pointed to the need to ameliorate the racial isolation of DMHS students by implementing courses expressly designed to bring together students from both schools. This would require a total “rewiring” of teacher expectations and intensive and ongoing training to improve their ability to teach mixed-ability classes.
Privilege (Academic)

Administrative Leadership

DMHS experienced an extremely high attrition rate of principals in the decade between 1990 and 2000; the longest tenure was Dr. Segall’s five years (1986–1991) and the current Principal, Dorian Milteer with two years. During the interviews, students were asked to talk about “current issues” that were of interest to them. Coding for administrative leadership provided context for the accounts of school-based administrators, who described the challenges of managing byzantine institutional structures and heterogeneous student populations. Student discussions about adults on campus were not limited to teachers; they indicated that school-based leadership was lacking in terms of forging personal connections with students and developing educational programs that satisfied the needs of students in both academic programs. DMHS students addressed the problem of a principal who did not know who they were; they also addressed the lack of continuity of administrative leadership because of the “revolving door” policy that governed their hiring and firing. A@E students felt abandoned by school leadership after the programs came to be managed by one principal instead of two. They also felt that they did not receive sufficient administrative support toward nurturing the culture of the A@E. Two DMHS seniors offered these opinions:

Q. What did you mean about the administrators on campus being a problem? Be more specific.

A. (Student 1) Like every principal gets fired at the end of the year, so why even waste our time getting to know them. We’ve seen a new principal every year.

A. (Student 2) How can you improve if no one stays with us? It’s like a coach for a team. How are you supposed to help the team if you’re not even with them?
These DMHS students saw the high attrition rate as problematic: without continuity of leadership, there can be no meaningful long-term relationship between the student body and the principal. The students rightly viewed such a relationship as necessary and valuable; in other words, students desired to know and trust their principal and vice versa. They were disturbed that they had not been afforded the opportunity to form such a relationship.

These concerns relate to a discussion that occurred during a focus group of A@E juniors who expressed their distress at having only one Principal with authority over both DMHS and A@E campuses:

I think the reason why the school has changed so dramatically is because the people who created the Academies are not here anymore.

He [Milteer] is coming from being a principal at elementary schools. He doesn't understand how high schools work.

I think a lot of the administration at our school [DMHS], like the principal and the two vice principals, grew up in Englewood, so they kind of . . . I don’t want to say “show favoritism,” but I don’t think that they're as "for the Academy" as they should be. Because a lot of times for things that are just for the Academy, they are a bit more reluctant to agree and be excited than if it was for Dwight Morrow.

An exchange between A@E seniors underscores the value that A@E students ascribed to their relationship with their principal (Jim Smith was the designated Principal solely of the A@E in 2007 and for the entire campus in 2008) and how they believed that his leadership, and their relationship with him, had suffered after he had the responsibility for both schools. (Having one principal for both schools was a NJDOE mandate.)
(Student 1) In our freshman year, we had Mr. Smith as just our principal.

(Student 2) Mmmm.

(Student 1) One thing I can remember about him is he knew my name. He would stop me in the hallway and ask how I’m doing. He went on the Frost Valley trip with us. He went down the zip line . . . but when he controlled both schools . . .

(Student 2) (finishes sentence) . . . we never saw him again.

(Student 1) Once he got control of both schools he disappeared. And you’d see him, and you could tell he was tired. And I think that was one of the things that has brought down this school. We need two principals.

(Student 2) You need someone to run this school, and keep an iron fist, and say this is what the school [A@E] was, you took the classes [in your home district], you got the recommendations, you did it yourself, now prove it. Prove that you belong here. This school doesn’t have that anymore. Now it’s just like . . . all right, can you graduate?

A tradition at the A@E is a ninth-grade unification trip to Frost Valley YMCA camp in Claryville, New York. Since A@E students come from different towns in Bergen County, this trip was intended to encourage students to build relationships with each other, the teaching staff, and leadership teams before entering the A@E. Students in both A@E focus groups fondly remembered their Frost Valley trip but the seniors remembered Principal Smith’s participation as something that had made the trip special for them. They felt that his personal connection to each of them had made their school experience more meaningful. They equated having one principal for the A@E as having someone who was dedicated to their needs just as the one principal for DMHS was dedicated to DMHS students’ needs. A@E students believed that the current leadership had a deeper connection with DMHS, and for this reason, they were opposed to having
one individual in charge of both academic programs. They wanted someone who would be a strong and vocal advocate for A@E students and A@E programs.

DMHS students also expressed the desire to have a close relationship with their Principal. However, since recent history had taught them that the leadership position probably would be occupied by a new person when they returned in the fall, they were not going to expend the effort to develop a relationship with the current Principal. A@E students believed that the current leadership was mainly interested in supporting DMHS efforts to merge with the A@E program; they viewed this as tantamount to dismantling the construct of A@E autonomy, which was sacrosanct to both the students and the faculty. They associated the administrators’ focus on merging the two academic programs as flowing from their professional and social roots in Englewood. They logically concluded that if the A@E had its own Principal, one who understood and valued “the Academy Way” (as it had functioned before State intervention), they would have a strong advocate who would fight to protect their interests. Thus, A@E students wanted to ensure that the A@E was permitted to operate with a diminished influx of DMHS students and with its academic principles protected and perpetuated. They took seriously the truth of the description in the A@E recruitment literature: “The A@E offers career academies for students of exceptional merit.” A@E students believed that the educational rigor of the school’s programs was being diminished (“brought down”) because of the merger with DMHS; further, they were convinced that a strong leader dedicated to their school’s needs would intervene on behalf of upholding the standards of their school.
These students also wanted their school-based administration to have a deeper understanding of students’ needs. Regarding the effective management of two academic programs, with the major objective of desegregating the two campuses, the six student focus groups pointed to a growing divergence between what the students in each school wanted and what the administration had been charged with accomplishing. As noted, the A@E students have a Supervisor dedicated to the program housed in the South Tower Building, but the two schools are overseen by only one administrative team led by one Principal. It is highly unlikely that DMHS will improve its student outcomes if the high turnover rate of Principals continues. Further, it is unlikely that either school will realize significant overall improvement in student morale and teacher morale unless both student bodies and faculties believe that their programs are being supported, not demeaned. Most emphatically, the students were justifiably wary of leadership that was perceived to sacrifice their needs in order to satisfy the State’s mandate. If Principal Dorian Milteer remains Principal in academic year 2001–2012, he will have had the longest tenure (two years) of anyone who has held the position during the past decade.
Peers

Student Motivation and Academic Readiness

The impact of the A@E on the DMHS campus in terms of social relationships between the two student groups was ascertained by asking both groups how they viewed their on-campus social encounters. Prompts included questions that asked them to describe their experiences at the merged prom, in gym classes, and during lunch periods. Discussions about peer relationships veered to concerns about “privileges” offered to students in each program, followed by assessments of how “responsible” and how “mature” the other group appeared to be compared with them. While these discussions initially focused on academics and level of motivation, the researcher observed subtle behaviors associated with social privilege and a sense of belonging (or exclusion) in both A@E and DMHS students. For example, during a discussion centered on student behaviors, a DMHS senior offered this judgment about her less motivated classmates:

You can lead a horse to water, but you can’t make it drink. There are certain students that, no matter what you do, will not do their work.

Some of the DMHS students were critical of their peers who, they thought, were not living up to their potential. An initial premise of this researcher was that A@E students expressed criticism of DMHS students, and indeed this occurred; however, they were not alone in their criticism. An A@E student from Englewood was of the opinion that some of his non-A@E friends had showed signs of academic struggle before high school, and that there was little that DMHS could do to address their situation since these “rotten apples” were on a “slippery slope” that had been in evidence much earlier in their academic careers:
Some of these students have been misbehaving before Dwight Morrow. We know them from the middle school . . . from elementary school . . . and they’ve been on a slippery slope since then. Like I said, one rotten apple ruins the bunch. They [teachers] have to be on their guard, but not too much on their guard, or it could seem like they’re prejudiced towards Dwight Morrow students.

This A@E senior had grown up with the students he deemed “rotten apples” and believed that he was justified in giving them this designation because of his academic success and because he was a Black male from Englewood. This student, in particular, clearly expressed what other seniors had struggled to articulate in their respective focus groups—that DMHS students who did not achieve good grades or pass the entry exam for the A@E program were responsible for their academic failures. The high-achieving Englewood students had internalized their sense of entitlement to the degree that allowed them to distance themselves from their Englewood brethren and to feel justified in their critical judgments. They believed that their achievements were based solely on their own merits, exclusive of good teaching and a supportive faculty as well as being in the higher tracks in both elementary and middle school. This senior also was aware of what he considered the tight rope that teachers had to tread because they needed to be perceived by the administration and the parents as sensitive to DMHS students.

An A@E senior was convinced that differences in student motivation were tied to maturity levels and, further, that it was difficult to respect students who did not share an academic vision similar to his.

Q. Explain to me more of what you mean when you say the students are not as mature. What does that have to do with school?

A. I just think we [DMHS and A@E students] have two different maturity levels, and we’re just not working well with each other, so it’s just
hard to respect people that, you know, you just don’t see eye-to-eye

with.

These accounts are indicative of the interpretation of peer behaviors in both academic

programs. A@E students, in particular, avoided the question of whether DMHS students

were not as smart as they were; instead, they focused on the possibility that DMHS were

“less mature” or “less ready to handle” the responsibilities incumbent on serious students.

A@E students also repeatedly expressed their belief that academic success, good

behavior, and privilege were connected. They interpreted the privileges attached to their

academic environment to be their well deserved rewards for successfully testing into an

academically rigorous program; therefore, such access should not be given to those who

were less deserving, ie, who had not worked to achieve a modicum of academic success.

A@E students also appeared to have internalized a sense of superiority that they

described with language that included “level of maturity, sense of responsibility, and

earned respect.”

Such student-on-student commentary was fueled by the isolation of DMHS students from

A@E students and vice versa. Such separation generated ill-informed, benighted

generalizations by one group about the other. The rhetoric used to describe the attitudinal

and behavioral differences appeared to spring from adult interpretations. This suggests

larger concerns over “teacher talk,” either overheard by the students, or possibly shared

with the students, including implicitly disparaging messages that both student groups

internalized. Based on some of the teacher accounts, this researcher believes that

teachers’ articulated judgments are powerful in shaping and influencing the opinions of

their students. This is directly connected to the earlier point made that teachers were
instrumental in helping individual students and student groups understand and be respectful of their specific strengths and weaknesses as well as those of other individuals and the other group.

DMHS students who participated in mixed groups did not seem to identify with their DMHS peers; instead they associated themselves with their high-achieving friends who attended the A@E. This association was evident in both mixed groups in which these DMHS students took some classes at the A@E and had friends who attended the A@E. They were likely to describe their DMHS peers with language similar to that of the A@E students: “less mature; less able/willing to handle responsibility.” The DMHS students’ A@E friends (in these mixed groups) believed that they were paying their DMHS friends compliments when they described them as “smart” and “motivated” and “not like the rest of them”.

The exclusively DMHS students were unequivocal in their assertions that they did not want to be compared with A@E students and that they were trying to create an identity though a school of their own that should be as respected as the A@E. This was evident in their accounts, in which DMHS students expressed the desire to be respected for their own accomplishments, but often admitted that their accomplishments paled in comparison with those of the A@E students. Their dilemma was directly related to the lack of academic opportunity endemic at DMHS.
The exclusively A@E students were often highly critical of DMHS students. However, the Englewood students who attended the A@E continued to exhibit kinship with their DMHS peers who had attended elementary and middle school with them. This mind set was starkly contrasted with the attitudes of A@E students from outside the district who had difficulty connecting with DMHS students and who expressed little or no desire to form relationships with DMHS students. These out-of-district students were brutally honest when they stated that they would respect DMHS students only if “hell freezes over.” Their refusal to bridge the divide between the two programs, coupled with A@E students’ conviction that DMHS and the A@E should never have become a unified educational entity, underscored the prevalent tensions. Out-of-district A@E students had been recruited to a program that had been “sold” to them as offering privileges that they had earned through their academic prowess; thus, they were not interested in sharing the fruits of their labor with “undeserving” DMHS students. This attitude was clearly expressed by an out-of-district A@E student who retorted: “I worked hard to be here; they [DMHS students] did not.”
Peers

Racialized Student Characterization

When asked to describe the social culture of their respective academic programs, the A@E students (exclusive of DMHS students) explained the differences in building culture and how they thought DMHS students were perceived by out-of-district students who attended the A@E. These A@E students from Englewood had a unique perspective that had been formed by their affiliations with both student groups—in terms of living in Englewood and of having attended elementary and middle school with DMHS students and in terms of their association with the A@E. Their discussion centered on the racial stereotypes some students had about DMHS students and out-of-district students’ interpretations of DMHS students: they believed that their “zoo-like behavior” was connected with their lack of academic success. As reported by Englewood A@E students, there was a direct relationship between the Whiteness of the communities that most A@E students came from and their fear of DMHS students. Their comments focused on respect for other students and adults, fear, and safety.

The following is from a focus group involving in-district and out-of-district students. A@E juniors (Students 1 and 2 are from Englewood) pointed out that students from predominantly White communities arrived at the DMHS campus totally unprepared to socialize in an environment that is virtually all Black and Latino. Further, in many cases, stereotypical beliefs supplanted reality. It should be noted that the students avoided using racial descriptors; however, the school districts to which they allude are predominantly White.
Q. So you’re talking about the out of district students now. Explain what you mean about Englewood’s rep [reputation]?

A. (Student 1) So, basically, you’re coming from a classroom where everyone is orderly and no one disrespects the teacher. You step into Dwight Morrow and . . .

A. (Student 2) (finishes the sentence) . . . Where kids aren't used to respecting their teachers, and they just feel like F___ the teacher. Kids are just like F___you, Mr.

A. (Student 1) Like you know, in the Academies, you never see a kid talk to a teacher like that, but in some classes or even the hallway, you'll see Dwight Morrow kids like F___you, So basically, kids who come from Fort Lee or Edgewater, like she was saying, come from classes where it's straight respect to the teachers . . . where everything is nice and subtle.

A. (Student 2) Orderly.

A. (Student 1) And then you go from orderly and subtle to . . .

A. (Student 2) (finishes the sentence) . . . hectic and chaos.

A. (Student 1) (adds to the thought) Hectic and chaos . . . and a zoo.

These students described the predominantly White and Asian environments of Fort Lee and Edgewater as orderly environments in which students did not disrespect their teachers. This research suggests that their claims are not reality-based (ie, based on direct observations made at these schools), but rather on racial stereotypes internalized by these students, stereotypes that perceived White and Asian students to be “nice and subtle,” while Black and Latino students were in a chaotic environment, one reminiscent of a zoo. While the Englewood students felt that they are allowed to interpret out-of-district student views, they also disassociated themselves from such attitudes, considering themselves to be “beyond the fray.” This provided them with a position that enabled them to help the out-of-district students become acclimated to, and more comfortable with, the
Englewood students. An A@E Black male student from Englewood described an exchange that he witnessed between an out-of-district female student and a Black male DMHS student:

Q. Explain what happened to this student. I don’t understand what this is about.

A. (student 1) So basically, you know, I guess being a Caucasian female, maybe a black guy coming up to you, and trying to talk to you is a scary kind of thing. So, we're all sitting outside, it's like almost the last two weeks of school, and Sharif, he starts talking to . . . no, it wasn't Sharif . . . it was Dante

Q. Let me just ask you … you said she went to an all-black high school?

A. (student 1) Hackensack Middle School.

Q. Okay? (in a questioning tone)

A. You don't understand the situation.

Q. Okay, please explain.

A. (student 1) So basically she was coming from . . . I guess they had an Honor Roll Breakfast, so she was coming back from somewhere across from Dwight Morrow, and I guess a lot of kids from Dwight Morrow were already outside. And this kid, Dante, said to her; he was like, “Oh, you know, you're looking real nice today.” And she was like, “Oh, thank you.” And she tried to walk away, and then he was like, “Oh, you can't talk for a second?”

(student 1)And she passed me and said, “Oh, can you follow me? The guy in the green shirt is following me!” And in my head, I'm like, what are you talking about?

(student 1)I see Dante pass by, and then five minutes later, we're all talking, and she busts through the doors, screaming and yelling.

(student 1) She's like (mimicking distress) “Oh, he!” I'm like “What happened?” She's like, “Oh now, he followed me!” And I'm like, “What happened? Did he hurt you? Did he touch you?” She's like, “No, he talked to me.” And I'm like, “So, why are you crying? What happened?” She’s like, “Nothing. He just talked to me.”
(student 2) But she was really scared.

In age-appropriate language, this teenager described what he believed to be an occasion when an out-of-district student overreacted to a Black male teenager from Englewood because of preconceived negative notions of DMHS students, specifically Black male students. These preconceptions were shared by other non-Englewood students. This irrational fear of DMHS students—especially the males—had been supported by A@E policies that kept its students separated from DMHS students by strategies that included the locked South Tower Building, separate schedules, and Dr. Grieco’s promise (reported by some A@E staff members) to out-of-district parents that A@E procedures would “keep your kids safe. During this mixed session of A@E and DMHS juniors, a DMHS student provided her view on why it was necessary for parents of out-of-district students to be reassured that their children would be taught in an environment that was separate from DMHS:

Q. Please give me an example of what you mean? (After the students began discussing what communities outside of Englewood think of DMHS students).

A. (DMHS student 1) If an Asian mother . . . no offense to like the race or anything like that . . . but if she came and saw Dwight Morrow…

Q. Asian is really general.

A. (student 1) (laughing) Yeah. That's my point. (laughing) If they [Asian mothers] came to the Academies, and they saw the Dwight Morrow side, they will be like, “I don’t want my daughter or son to go to this school.”

Q. Why would they not come?

A. (student 2) Because if they knew that it was a unified school, and there's a whole bunch of Hispanic and Black kids, like a lot of people
think on that level, like, “I don’t want my kids hanging out with those kids”.

A. (student 1) Exactly.

A. (student 3) Most of the Garfield kids leave for that reason.

Q. Why Garfield in particular?

A. (student 2) It’s a "white town," and they don’t like the mixing.

A. (student 3) Like a lot of the kids, you know, they haven't been raised in Englewood, so you know, they don't really want to take their classes over here because they . . . basically when . . . you know, if you're not from Englewood and you just don't know Englewood, you would be like, “Oh my God, look at all these ignorant Black people going like, crazy.”

A. (student 2) And it basically becomes more of a racial thing, and it becomes like, “I don’t want to go there; I'm scared. Like I might get stabbed and shanked.” And that's what people think.

This frank exchange illustrates a scenario that is understandable when students internalize the perceived social stereotypes that depict White and Asian students as being more civilized and “safe” while Black and Hispanic students are inherently more likely to engage in aggressive and hurtful behaviors. The Englewood students from both the A@E and DMHS stated that non-Englewood students were of the opinion that DMHS students were to be avoided because of their potential for bad behavior and that such misperception had created a new reality for DMHS students. This new reality included a characterization, as described by Garret Duncan (2002), as “beyond love.” DMHS students had been further marginalized not only by being relegated to a less desirable academic program but also by being characterized as second-class citizens on their own campus. DMHS students were isolated because of “a bad rap” that they had not been given the opportunity to challenge and disprove. Without more positive interactions with
teachers and administrators, the myth of inability to succeed and a propensity for violence would not be dispelled. And without more positive interactions between the two student populations, both in and outside of the classroom, DMHS and A@E students (especially those who come from out-of-district) would not learn important truths about each other.
Privilege (Social)

Common Area and Free Periods

When students were asked to discuss how they would “rank their academic program,” they invariably asked whether the researcher meant the “whole school” or just their school. After it had been established that they were to comment solely on their academic program, they tended to comment more on social privileges that were granted in school, and on why these privileges mattered the most. A privilege granted to A@E students exclusively was access to the Common Area because they had a free period scheduled into their school day. A@E students had longer school days and a free period; DMHS students had a shorter school day and no free period. While the Common Area was open to all students, students were permitted only during their free period. Lunch was not considered a free period; therefore, DMHS students did not have access to the Common Area during their school day.

A@E students felt that unification of the academic programs was curtailing some of their privileges. DMHS students felt that they were not granted enough privileges in comparison with those enjoyed by A@E students, and that they deserved the same privileges accorded to A@E students. In the following exchange, A@E juniors explained why DMHS students had not been given the same rights as A@E students; they also addressed an injustice that bothered them: their perception that, since all students must abide by the same rules of conduct, under the campus unification initiative, they had been deprived of their basic rights:

Q. How would you rank your academic program? Your school?
A. (A@E Student 1) I think it’s got a lot to do with some people from the other [DMHS] side, not to generalize, but some people on the other side aren’t as mature to handle these privileges.

Q. Okay. So, how does that connect to ranking your school?

A. It [A@E] was supposed to be a separate, specialized school where you find a college and you apply. You’re not supposed to be put on the same level as people who don’t apply themselves to school as much as we do! (exasperated) And we should have special privileges, and like a higher ranking, and be more elite than other people are, but when they’re merging us together, they’re taking away that feeling from us, and we don’t feel special anymore . . . you know what I mean?

This expression of frustration exemplified that these students had gained entry to the A@E on merit, which entitled them to the privileges of exclusive membership. This (out-of-district) student felt particularly frustrated with what she perceived as a retraction of her special rights. She believed her “brand” was being diminished by being associated with DMHS, and that she had not worked so hard to gain entry to a prestigious educational institution to allow this injustice to occur. In light of the State-mandated merger of the two schools, A@E students believed that they were losing their hard-earned social privileges. DMHS students, on the other hand, believed that they deserved the same social privilege because they believed this would provide time to do school work, not merely to “hang out.” A DMHS student explained:

Q. Can you explain what you mean about privileges being taken away? What does the common area have to do with anything?

A. They [the administration] made it a rule since last year that no one with a lunch period can go in there [Common Area] . . . meaning no Dwight Morrow student. If you don’t have a free period, you can’t access the Common Area. We [DMHS students] don’t have free periods, so we’re not allowed to go in. That’s basically what they’re saying . . . without really saying it. So, I feel that’s unfair. We [DMHS] have a library, but it has like eight computers! (frustrated) And it’s never open!
Access to the Common Area represented privilege for students of both programs. However, the DMHS students recognized the Common Area as open to A@E students but closed to DMHS students. Besides being designated for individual study, the Common Area permits the use of iPods and cellular phones, activities that represent one of the most common DMHS infractions. Both A@E and DMHS students understood that the Common Area served important functions. DMHS students do not have a functioning library. (Before reconstruction of the South Tower Building to house the A@E, the Common Area was one of two libraries, both of which were needed since there were no other designated areas for computer use and for group study sessions.) A@E students also believed that new rules and fewer privileges in the Common Area were a result of the effort to merge the campus and that increased access to the A@E building would entail beefed up security to monitor the DMHS students. Such increased enforcement would necessarily affect A@E students.

Social privileges are an integral part of recognizing that, as students mature, the administration rewarded them with greater latitude, greater freedom to make well-considered decisions. Privileges usually were granted in recognition of the students’ ability to efficiently manage their on-campus time. All students were aware that privileges were granted to those who are deemed “deserving or worthy,” and the DMHS/A@E campus was no exception. The meting out of privileges highlights the prevailing sense that DMHS students were less deserving than their A@E peers, and this belief was tied to the perception that, generally speaking, they were less academically
capable. DMHS students’ resentment ran high on this issue; they believed that A@E students “have everything,” and that they were given short shrift. One DMHS teacher explained it in this language:

... I think the view more from the [DMHS] kids was the kids felt like the Academies were put on a pedestal. Especially for the Englewood kids... they’re Englewood residents... and they’re walking into a building [the A@E] where you have a population that is not from this town, and they’re treating you like, “What are you doing here?”

Both DMHS and A@E students connected their worth with the kinds and number of privileges granted. The A@E students understood that they had more privileges and associated this with the fact that they “worked harder” and were more deserving. DMHS students viewed the lack of privileges as directly linked to the perceptions of others that they were less likely to succeed academically. The A@E students also were aware that as the DMHS students were accorded the same, or similar, privileges, their “exalted” position would be “at risk.” Transcriptions of the focus groups made it clear that as the administration communicated the need for programs that carry out the merger, the more concerned the A@E students were about the devaluation of their privileges.
Opportunity

Internships

When NJDOE representatives visited the two academic programs, they considered ways to offer the A@E Senior Experience internship opportunities to DMHS students, but found this to be a significant challenge. The representatives recognized that the Senior Experience internship program generated feelings of inadequacy in the DMHS students. She explained:

“[A@E] students the opportunity to stay longer for an elective class [internship] but there were like gaps in times [between the schedules of DMHS and A@E schedules]. It was nothing that would make it easy for them to do it as well as the A@E students. They just felt like generally they did not belong.”

The students at the A@E have a longer school day that allows for free periods and time away from the campus, so an internship could be built into their schedules. Their free periods were geared for teacher conferences and study time in the Common Area. The Senior Experience internship program was led by a coordinator who matched students with their potential employment focus. The students spent one day a week off campus at their work site. This program, which is a BOE-approved graduation requirement for A@E students, culminated in a Senior Exhibition, in which students made presentations to the Academy community about the work they had undertaken during their internship. In concert with their internship mentors, students established objectives and kept Learning Logs to document their activities and progress. Although this program was made available to DMHS students, it was not a requirement for graduation. DMHS students expressed apprehension when asked about the program. A DMHS senior
lamented, “That program is a given for all A@E students; we have to ask for everything!” Thus, the prevailing sentiment on the DMHS campus was that the internship was another opportunity provided to A@E students that was not intended for DMHS students, but now it was offered, but only grudgingly, to both groups. It should be noted that there was no official communication from the school-based leadership directed to DMHS students, encouraging them to take advantage of the program. When asked to identify substantive differences between DMHS and A@E, both groups pointed to the internship program initially offered only to A@E students, and a requirement for their graduation. One A@E senior and one DMHS senior explained the importance of the internship:

Q. So the internship is just one part of the day?

A. (A@E student) Every Thursday we actually go out to our internship; we don’t come to school. We spend the whole day at our internship.

A. (DMHS student) The seniors have internships. And I just found out this year that I could have asked about an internship. I had thought Dwight Morrow students didn’t have internships, but they do. And it would have been great for me for the major I want to go into.

The DMHS senior believed that she had missed a really great opportunity that would have supported her post-graduation success; she regretted that she had been unaware of her eligibility for a program that would have supported her post-graduation plans. A@E students clearly understood that the internship program helped them prepare a stronger resume and more desirable college application. A@E students were aware that internships provided them with a chance to get their “foot in the door” and with
experience they needed to deal with the world after high school. An A@E senior described what the internship program meant for her:

Q. Can any of you describe the internship program here?

A. I personally believe that my internship, the program that the Academy has, the Senior Experience Program, that program has basically allowed me to get my foot in the door, and now I’m ready to actually go through that door.

According to the A@E (http://www.academies-englewood.org/seniorexperience/), the Senior Experience was designed as “. . . an interactive learning partnership through which students increase, in depth and scope, their knowledge and abilities in a selected area of study under the guidance of a mentor(s).” All students considered working off-campus once a week exciting. However, DMHS students believed that they were being denied the chance—even though they were allowed to take advantage of it—and A@E students saw it as a privilege they had earned via acceptance in the A@E. Discussing the internship, some A@E students also felt that if the privilege were granted to all students, its inherent value would be diminished. A@E students wanted the program to remain exclusive to the A@E. One A@E senior offered this opinion:

Q. So I still don’t understand the issues you all are mentioning with privileges for the whole school. Explain more.

A. Like with the internship. Academies students are privileged with a lot of things like free periods. Dwight Morrow students don’t get free periods. But we get it because we’re in a certain program, so we get certain privileges. You don’t offer the same programs to the Dwight Morrow students as the Academies students. So I understand that they are upset because they are not offered the internship program, but it like goes along with this is just for Academies students.

This student connected the internship with students’ abilities and rights.

Therefore, if a student had not performed well in school, which was how they
demonstrated readiness and ability, they were not deserving of the Senior Experience. Current school structure supported that only students who had shown themselves to be academically responsible deserved internships; therefore, the tensions surrounding the program would increase unless there was intervention. One way to address the ideology of merit and privilege would be to develop an internship program for DMHS students as value-added to their curriculum. It also would be advisable to solicit DMHS student feedback regarding their goals and their connection to DMHS’s burgeoning small learning communities. While some A@E seniors expressed the wish that the internship program remain exclusive to the A@E, others understood that it would benefit DMHS students. An A@E senior explained, “Maybe if they [DMHS students] were given this opportunity [the internship], they would change their behavior.” His internship had motivated him; thus, he believed that it might have similar beneficial effects for DMHS students; finally, he was of the opinion that, regardless of program affiliation, internships should be made available to all. He regarded the internship as a privilege, but one that should not be limited to A@E students.
CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION

This chapter briefly discusses key findings that reflect a fused analysis of the study participant accounts. Following this are the policy implications for teachers and administrators. This chapter concludes with recommendations for further research on school desegregation efforts, magnet programs, and school choice movements in the United States.

More Than a Compromise

The litigators and Englewood advocates comprised former EPSD Superintendents, former DMHS Principals, former Englewood School Board members, and attorneys. These study participants provided historical context for the impact of the A@E on the DMHS campus. Respondents described what they remembered about DMHS before and during the litigation, which provided the back story that would be compared with participant accounts of current conditions on the DMHS campus. Their accounts focused on the initial legal battle to desegregate DMHS by regionalizing Englewood Cliffs (EC), Tenafly, and Englewood and how a plan that might have achieved this objective became hopelessly mired in political concerns to create a voluntary (versus involuntary) school policy. This was summed up in a Commissioner of Education Report (1997) that asserted that regionalization would encourage additional students to attend private schools.

Former DMHS Principals remember that the racial composition of DMHS was discussed only marginally throughout the litigation; their perceptions were that academic quality
and administrative leadership were used as proxies for racial issues. Analyzing the litigation, initial plans to desegregate DMHS, and origins of the resulting desegregation policy (the magnet program), this research suggests that the A@E program was not implemented as a strategy to racially desegregate DMHS but rather as a strategy that satisfied State bureaucracy and local politicians, as well as Tenafly, EC, and Englewood that, in the final years of the court case (1998-2000), expressed the need for an alternative to regionalization and an end to the litigation. Using the theoretical framework of this research, Critical Race Theory, this work suggests that this is an example of White Interest Convergence theory where the needs of the Black and Latino students were addressed following the needs of the White political community that found it necessary to create an option that would satisfy the wealthy and White communities of Englewood Cliffs and Tenafly. An informed policy that placed the needs of the Englewood students ahead of the other communities involved in the litigation would have meant the Court ruled in favor of regionalization. Regionalization could have been an opportunity to demonstrate to Tenafly and Englewood Cliffs residents what it means to function in a reordered social hierarchy. One that does not place them on top of Englewood based on their race and socioeconomic status.

Englewood’s decision to countersue for the regionalization of the three communities was not solely about desegregating DMHS, but also about compelling EC and Tenafly to engage in a meaningful discourse about Englewood’s educational identity in terms of race and class and about managing their S/R agreement in order to benefit both groups. This research suggests that the voluntary school desegregation policy implemented
reflected the inability of the three communities to effectively deal with historic and current issues of race and racism—this at the expense of an analysis of an apparently race neutral policy, the selective magnet program that has had racial consequences for the Black and Latino students at DMHS. The inclusion of the accounts of these litigators and Englewood advocates informs the current discourse on the relevance of race when developing school choice options (such as magnet programs and charter schools) and connections to State politics in this era of fiscal reform. The accounts also inform the debate on the extent to which race and racial structures (such as highly selective magnet programs implemented on low-achieving high school campuses) affect student academic outcomes—especially the outcomes of students who are excluded from these programs.

New Funding Formulas for New School Choice
As reported by the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) study participants, by 2000 the local Englewood School Board and EPSD administration had been removed from the process of implementing of the voluntary desegregation policy, and the State was charged with developing an option that would attract White and Asian students from communities outside of Englewood. The NJDOE representatives reported that the State was in support of a voluntary desegregation effort, such as a magnet program, and that when Dr. John Grieco proposed an academies model similar to the Bergen Academies, the NJDOE provided $1M from the (then pilot) Interdistrict Public School Choice program to support building construction and staff development. This new form of public school choice funding is a redirection of state discretionary educational funding that was unavailable to Englewood when they requested funding to create an earlier version of an
academies program in 1999. However when Dr. Grieco proposed a version of his Bergen Academies the State was able to create this new funding stream. Critical Race Theory would suggest that the State in its understanding of the A@E functioning poorly as a school desegregation effort is currently funding a re-segregation of DMHS. What may have begun as an ill informed policy—in terms of the race and class of students the policy was supposed to support—has now become a well informed policy that is part of the second generation segregation based on tracking the best students into the A@E. The State—by funding this program—is supporting this policy and the subsequent second class citizenship of the DMHS students highlighted in this research.

The NJDOE state representatives interviewed for this research noted the changes in the political guard at the State level following the litigation and implementation of the A@E (2000–2006). They include William Librera, Commissioner of Education in 2001 and Lucille Davy in 2005, who required site visits be completed. The NJDOE employee accounts were necessary to draw attention to the questions the State had begun to raise concerning educational equity between the A@E and DMHS and lack of transparency in reporting student level data by the A@E and by DMHS. DMHS and the A@E reported their student data, including all standardized test scores, in the aggregate, and the State’s site visits were intended to better understand how the presence of the A@E was affecting DMHS student outcomes and whether the A@E was effectively addressing the racial isolation of DMHS students.
Following the sudden death of Dr. Grieco, the State officially acknowledged the obvious inequities in the two academic programs, and that the A@E was not desegregating DMHS, State representatives began to issue directives that required the merging of the two schools. The State representatives’ accounts support the research that the A@E was functioning neither as an agent for desegregation nor as an extension of DMHS; rather, it was solely an extension of the Bergen Academies that functioned autonomously and discourage interaction among the student groups inhabiting the two campuses. The State study participants explained that Englewood’s administrative authority had been doubly usurped when: 1) the Court charged the State with leading the development and execution of the plan to desegregate; and 2) after implementation of the A@E, when the State merged the two programs.

The attorneys and the State representatives suggest that the Englewood administration had understood from its inception that an Academies model would have to address the racial isolation of DMHS students, and that the A@E model—highly selective and located in a separate building—did not address this situation. The State participants’ accounts make the point that, regardless of the Court mandate regarding the locus of authority, or the State decision regarding the autonomy and selectivity of the A@E, it remained the responsibility of the EPSD to improve student outcomes campus wide, and the EPSD was charged with this mission.
Challenges in Unifying the Campus

The administrators also highlighted the challenges of meeting the State-imposed mandates to establish equity of both programs and to unify the campus. The administrators’ accounts detailed the daily challenges in managing both programs on one campus; an examination of their accounts found links between the accounts of study participants who worked outside of the district—litigators, Englewood advocates, and NJDOE state representatives—with those who worked internally—teachers and students.

The administrators’ accounts emphasized the challenges faced when attempting to manage the disparate academic and social cultures of DMHS and the A@E. Their revelations suggested that the A@E had been developed to function not in tandem with DMHS but as distinctly separate from it. A current DMHS administrator responded in this way when asked about the implementation of the A@E:

Q. Can you explain more about the challenges faced when trying to meet the mandates to merge the programs [A@E and DMHS]?  

A. When it was first established, by the way, Dr. Grieco said to the Academies “You’re going to have a separate graduation.” That separateness created a sense of coming to a special program unto itself. And I think, over the years, we have tried to open the doors to everybody in terms of honors level, yet retaining Academy identity for those out-of-district kids who applied to come into a special program.

The administrators’ accounts are important because there has been a significant turnover of DMHS Principals, with one principal per year following Dr. Richard Segall’s departure in 1992; in fact, 2011 was the first year since 1992 that a Principal has remained in the position for more than two years. However, the current Principal and Vice Principals have strong ties to Englewood, and when the State charged DMHS with
establishing one leadership team with authority over the entire campus, the administrators explained, when interviewed, that they believed this had created a conflict of interest—that the perception was that an Englewood team would “take over” the A@E and its program would no longer be autonomous. Therefore, the administrators had a difficult task created by the explicit separateness (two buildings) and the implicit separateness (academic isolation) of the A@E. The A@E is housed in a separate building on one campus and is separated by its high-achieving academic culture, its association with the Bergen Academies, and its exclusion of the Englewood administrative team throughout the planning and implementation phases. While no current Principals or Vice Principals were working at DMHS during this time, all were employees of the EPSD and all had observed the disconnectedness of the two academic programs. Magnet programs—especially those whose purpose is to facilitate desegregation—function within an existing school building. DMHS occupied two separate buildings on one campus; this “blueprint” enabled the A@E planners to house the school in one of these two buildings. The current administration has since struggled to manage the A@E, a magnet program that they neither designed and nor implemented.

Administrators were mandated to merge the two programs while taking into account the fundamental differences between them; teachers were mandated to improve academic outcomes at DMHS since they were considerably lower than those of the A@E. The magnet program, designed to desegregate DMHS and to improve its students’ educational experiences, has failed to carry out both objectives. The current situation finds that most DMHS students who were not accepted into the A@E program report feeling
disaffected—like second-class citizens on their own campus. The administrators exist in a difficult space between meeting the mandates of the State and realizing that DMHS is not prepared to “merge” with the A@E. The challenges the administrators face are not in terms of making the campus one because that would happen with less tension if DMHS was a more compatible program with the A@E. Currently the A@E is a program that was developed to function well independent of another program. DMHS is not positioned to offer the A@E an academic program of interest. Therefore the merge is particularly difficult. The administration mentioned that there is no vision for DMHS. This has led to a blame game where ever study participant group was able to identify another person on their school hierarchy who was the reason for DMHS’s failure. The administrators are where the blame stops as they are in the unique position to develop the fundamentals of a vision for DMHS. One that would begin to address the needs of DMHS students first and help them to create a school identity of their own that they can attach to and be proud of. Currently this is not the case for DMHS students and it is reflected in their motivation and their hyper focus on the opportunities available for students at the A@E. This becomes a highly racialized scenario for the administration when they consider their population at DMHS.

**Pedagogy versus Content**

During data collection (Spring 2010) Englewood teachers were in labor negotiations, in the throes of working without a contract. Despite these less-than-cheerful circumstances, teacher accounts were collected and examined to better understand the role that teachers played in either discouraging or encouraging relationships between A@E and DMHS
students. The teachers’ accounts also were examined to ascertain their level of resistance to the merger initiative and to triangulate with students’ accounts concerning the expectations of their teachers and the quality of the teaching. A@E teachers felt strongly that addressing the needs of more DMHS students would surely compromise the academic standards of the A@E. These same teachers also expressed their concerns over changes in the hiring protocol for new teachers for the A@E and how these changes would adversely affect A@E student outcomes; the newer teachers had not been trained to engage students through project-based learning; this approach had been one of Dr. Grieco’s directives. DMHS students felt strongly that teaching at the A@E was not as challenging because A@E students were self-motivated; therefore, teachers did not have to work creatively to engage their students. Further, DMHS teachers took pride in their ability to successfully manage students with different learning styles and paces, and they insisted on the importance of pedagogic fluency over that of content. However through interviews with A@E teachers they demonstrated a need to identify with color blind ideology. A@E teachers were explicit that they wanted to remain teaching the students at the A@E and believed their statements were not racialized because of the heterogeneous racial composition of the A@E student population. Another level of understanding on the part of the A@E teachers—especially in the face of the unification of the campus—would come only after they believe DMHS is being improved but not at the expense of the A@E. This research would suggest that the A@E teachers will continue to function benignly in their space of colorblind ideology until that ideology is repeatedly challenged in a space that does not risk their employment or character reputation. Most school
environments do not allow for that level of safety and DMHS exemplifies that void. No one wants to be called a racist.

A@E teachers admitted that they had been hired with the understanding that they would be working with a highly motivated student population. In contrast, DMHS teachers described the challenges inherent in motivating students who were not self-starters and in sustaining that motivation. DMHS teachers also expressed great concern about how to reach their less motivated students. It was evident from the tone of their responses that they often felt powerless to encourage and support their students in an educational system that reinforced the perception that DMHS students were second-class citizens on their own campus. How could they not, given a system in which other students (i.e., A@E students) were deemed high-achievers and were, therefore, considered “more deserving of privileges.” Certainly, A@E students were receiving a higher quality education than were DMHS students. However teachers on the A@E side

**Out of the Mouths of Babes**

The students in both programs offered this research information the adults study participants either could or would not. They understood that the current structure of the A@E and DMHS are not conducive to the students in the programs getting to know each other and building healthy relationships. DMHS and A@E students understand that the teachers in both programs have different expectations for them and provide them with different levels of academic rigor based on how they sound and what they look like. The students were also willing to express issues around race and the ignorance that is
supported on their campus when there is little opportunity for Englewood students to be seen as motivated and independent learners. The students are willing to be honest and express that the A@E is not DMHS’s problem. It is a problem because since the A@E has been brought to the DMHS campus it has highlighted the fact that DMHS is not serving Englewood’s Black and Latino—middle of the road to low functioning students well. Through their accounts, the students explained that the understand now what opportunities exist in schools that prepare students for life after high school—and DMHS is not accomplishing this task. The students developed into four categories during the analysis of their data. They were the fairly motivated DMHS student who had internalized their feelings of inferiority in comparison to their A@E counterpart; second was the motivated DMHS student who during interviews reminded the group that they took most of their classes at the A@E and that their DMHS friends were simply “not as mature as they were—and that their failures were their responsibility. The next two groups of students attended the A@E. They were the Englewood A@E student who remained connected to their DMHS friends and understood the value added to their education by attending the A@E, and therefore did not blame their DMHS friends how may have been struggling in school for their poor grades. These students seemed to have a unique understanding of the structural racism and power structure that exists in schools. The final student category was the out of district A@E student who internalized a sense of privilege. They believed DMHS students were “discounting their brand” and making their school less rigorous—in addition to DMHS students’ poor behavior putting their social privileges at risk. These out of district A@E students without intervention would
have little reason to respect the DMHS students. The current social structure and neglect of DMHS academic programming supports their opinions.

This research questioned whether the A@E magnet program had fulfilled one of its objectives: to desegregate DMHS. This was examined by studying how the policy had been developed and executed, and the impact of the policy on the current student population. The aforementioned adult participants had been, or are, involved on multiple levels with the implementation of the A@E on the DMHS campus; however, no group has lived with the student outcomes while simultaneously remaining powerless in their implementation. The six student focus groups provided the most comprehensive responses. DMHS students described how the A@E program had influenced their on-campus academic and social experiences; A@E students described their struggle to secure their position on a campus where initially they were unwelcome strangers. Both groups provided extensive and thoughtful feedback on the academic and social privileges that A@E students received (and believed they deserved), and that DMHS students were denied (but vehemently believed they deserved as well). A@E students described at length their easy access to teachers who had high expectations for them and to an internship program that provided relevant school-to-work experiences that helped prepare them for college and real-world work opportunities. DMHS students expressed the desire for a more enriched and challenging curriculum that they could be proud of rather than one that was inferior to the A@E curriculum, with its honors and AP course offerings and other perquisites. They placed the blame for poor academic outcomes mainly on their teachers, with the exception of a few, who (the students believed) did not motivate
academic achievement because of their low expectations and chronic under-preparedness to teach their mixed-ability classes.

Student feedback that contrasted with that of the adults led to consideration of the impact of the A@E as a desegregation policy. One point in particular addresses several student concerns. Whether intentional or not, the A@E program, from its inception, was not designed to be a tool for desegregation nor was it designed to improve the academic experience of the majority of DMHS students. It was expressly designed to be an educational program that would attract high-achieving White and Asian students to a racially isolated Black and Latino campus. The A@E was designed to isolate the students that it had attracted from out-of-district as well as the academically superior Englewood students. From its inception, the A@E program was housed separately, had its own administration, and did not allow DMHS students to attend its classes. As could be expected, this aura of exclusivity and total separation created a backlash of DMHS student resentment.

As a voluntary school desegregation policy, the A@E has not improved the racial isolation of students at DMHS, housed in the North Tower Building. However, because it functions on the same campus as DMHS, its students, classes, teachers, and special privileges can be continually compared to those of the DMHS. Thus, the A@E has fostered feelings of inadequacy in DMHS students; this sense of inadequacy began to be felt during and after the protracted, contentious litigation that was fighting for regionalization. According to the DMHS students who took part in the focus groups, the
A@E program has fostered a pervasive inferiority complex concerning DMHS students’ position in the academic hierarchy. Therefore, this research suggests that while the A@E has served to retain the academically superior Englewood students through provision of an academically rigorous option for students who otherwise would have fled the district, and has attracted high-achieving White and Asian students from outside of the district, it has not served to desegregate SMHS nor has it provided academic opportunities for the majority of Englewood students, especially for middle-of-the-road and low-achieving DMHS students. When the so-called “best and brightest” of Englewood students left DMHS to attend the A@E, the isolated and deprived status of DMHS students was compounded. They now find themselves racially isolated from Whites and Asians and academically isolated from high-achieving Englewood students. DMHS students are relegated to a lower-track program. This is not to suggest that there are no motivated students at DMHS; however, the process of skimming away and relocating the best students diminishes the ability of less-motivated, discouraged students to interact with students whose attitudes and behaviors might have salutary effects.

The A@E program achieved its objectives of attracting White and Asian students to DMHS. However the White and Asian students attracted to the A@E are not integrated into DMHS. By remaining separated through location and disparate schedules, these students do not socialize with DMHS students. Student accounts suggest that A@E students from outside of the (Englewood) district are perfectly satisfied with this arrangement. Englewood students from the A@E and DMHS suggest that the reason out-of-district students attend the A@E is because they are assured that they will be separated
from DMHS students and “kept safe,” as was promised by A@E founder, John Grieco. The district’s efforts to unify the campus based on the NJDOE mandates present major challenges because of this. A@E students believe that they have earned the right to be in a special program, one that does not require them to interact with the low-achieving students who attend DMHS.

An academy structure would have worked well as a satellite of the Bergen Academies, but not as an autonomous academic community located on the DMHS campus, the school it was supposed to desegregate. A major reason that the subsequent decision to unify the divided DMHS campus has faced resistance is that this change has not been effectively promoted to the people who would be directly affected: students, parents, teachers, and administrators. Current district leaders suggest the A@E program has done a good job; however, they fail to take into account the distress of both DMHS and A@E students who do not want to become one campus. However, the district has been able to demonstrate via official reports (school report cards or NCLB data) of disaggregated student level data that suggest that the presence of the A@E has improved DMHS. Without having disaggregated these student level data, it appears that the A@E has effected certain improvements for A@E students exclusive of DMHS students. These improvements include higher standardized test scores, better attendance rates, and an increased college acceptance and scholarship rate for students at the A@E and not at DMHS. The researcher was not able to procure from the EPSD disaggregated data that would confirm differences in outcomes for A@E students versus DMHS students. However the bulletin boards in the A@E publicizing the recent college acceptances and
high achieving student board is one indicator that alludes to a difference in student performance between the programs. As the Institute on Education Law and Policy’s (IELP) 2007 report of the Interdistrict School Choice Funding program suggests, Englewood’s experience shows that programs that attract out of district students do not necessarily—in the case of Englewood—desegregate the district’s schools or serve in district students well. The IELP report does not suggest that school funding policy like the Interdistrict School Choice program is destined to fail but that these programs do require a more critical level of examination and oversight.
CHAPTER VII

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The findings and discussions presented in this research present a complex picture of what is happening on the DMHS campus for students in two disparate academic programs that have been mandated to become one. When the A@E was in its infancy, its founder died while his vision for the magnet program’s future was still under development; what subsequently evolved was a school within a school, functioning separately from DMHS but located on the DMHS campus. When the State expressed concern about educational equity and ordered that A@E be integrated with DMHS, this created new problems. One problem that was frequently alluded to, both in teacher interviews and student focus groups, was the disparity in curricula and level of expectation of the two academic programs. Teachers and students alike were unable to identify the best course of action for improving standards at DMHS without hyperfocusing on the curriculum of the A@E. While this research accepts as understandable the State mandate to create a more unified student body, efforts toward unification of the two schools might have been more productive if the administrators had taken a different approach. Based on the literature and the findings from this research, the following policy suggestions are offered:

Reconsider the Merge—The Fortification of DMHS

Administrative efforts should be redirected to remedy the detrimental effects of intradistrict tracking, not only in terms of the kindergarten through eighth-grade programs that lead directly to acceptance into the A@E, but also in terms of the social constructs
linked to the admissions process for the A@E. Currently, the A@E is the only desirable educational option in the district and all roads lead either to A@E (perceived as the path to academic success) or to DMHS (perceived as the path to academic failure). This veneration of the A@E is counterproductive. The EPSD should not continue to believe that the achievement gap can be decreased by creating one honors option and, at the elementary and middle-school levels, creating only one path that leads in only one direction. The literature on the effects of tracking and the effects of segregation suggests that a diverse student body requires several comparably rigorous academic options in order to succeed. In the United States, school districts that have the highest academic outcomes provide their students with more than either an honors option or a school to work option. These districts are likely to have established small learning communities (SLC) focused on a specialty that are self-selected by the students and that offer courses that the students can connect with.

These small learning communities would be the first step in academically fortifying DMHS in order to make the merge equitable. Currently because of DMHS deficits, the merge is viewed by the A@E as a need for DMHS to “take from” versus “merge with” them. This research considers A@E’s view is acceptable after examining the function of both programs. The A@E continues to function well exclusive of the DMHS—whereas DMHS is still in need of assistance. DMHS needs to develop into a space that offers programs that DMHS as well as A@E students find competitive and necessary. These changes would include but not be limited to the following:

1. Develop small learning communities based on DMHS academic student need first not in response to the A@E structure. In other
words, do not attempt to mimic the A@E academies and instead create learning communities unique to DMHS that would provide A@E students with courses not offered to them—thus making it desirable to all students and beginning the de-tracking of all of Englewood’s schools.

2. In development include teacher and student feedback in order to encourage buy in once developed

3. Professional development and new hiring procedures for DMHS in order to ensure teachers who are committed to improving DMHS instead of functioning in the current social and academic structure

4. Re-planning/negotiating with the NJDOE to determine acceptable timelines for re-approaching a campus unification model. The unification of the campus should not be re-considered until DMHS has had independent academic success.

DMHS students have a tremendous amount of cultural capital that as of now has been diminished and undervalued; this shown in the findings from teachers who continue to have lower expectations of the DMHS students and the students who have internalized feelings of inferiority. Part of academically fortifying DMHS will be in acknowledging the worth of the DMHS student population. While the students were honest about their feelings of lower self worth at school, the teachers specifically struggled with their role in perpetrating this fraud. Having a substantial academic vision for DMHS shows the students that DMHS is not less than, but different and highly favored. In the twenty five years since the litigation began, the opposite has been demonstrated by teachers and policy makers alike. This research suggests it would be difficult for any student to overcome those expectations and create a better institution. And in terms of the power structures that exists in school and where students fall within; it is not the students’ job to improve their institution alone.
Another concept to consider in Englewood when reconsidering the merge or campus unification is to examine the Montclair Public Schools model: created in 1977 as a school desegregation plan. Montclair’s elementary schools are currently all magnet programs and provide enriched support programs in both middle schools and its high school, thereby creating a continuum of opportunities for intellectual growth, starting at an early age. Unlike Englewood’s plan to enter the A@E which is based on admission testing and one chance to enter in the ninth grade, Montclair students partially (because students may not be accepted into their first choice) self-select into these magnet programs—or rather their parents do; therefore, there is a greater likelihood of student interest in, and enthusiasm for, working toward acceptance into a more challenging program.

Englewood currently has three elementary schools where programs are in place to identify the high achieving student. This is one option for a small group of students. The Englewood school board’s philosophy is that programs mentioned earlier in this work like the IVY program and the dual language program or even the Academy Prep program will entice the average or below average student to perform better and reach for acceptance into these programs. However based on the student findings from this research, that is not happening.

No single program would be appropriate for Englewood’s needs without scrupulous “tailoring,” but examining how magnet programs can be implemented early in the student’s intellectual and emotional development would lead to a better understanding of what measures are needed to exert positive influences on attitudes and behaviors, so that ninth graders emerge better equipped, and motivated, to take on more challenging
academics. Therefore, it is recommended that all of Englewood’s middle school programs be reassessed, not only AVID and Academy Prep, both of which were developed to retain and nurture high-achieving students.

The opportunity gap is closely connected to tracking. Student focus groups found that DMHS students were intensely concerned with what A@E offered in terms of better teachers, honors courses, and internships and what they (DMHS students) lacked. Students at DMHS and at the A@E need to be convinced that DMHS is not inferior but rather that it is different because it must serve the needs of a diverse student body with a broad range of abilities, interests, and needs. If the students on both sides of the DMHS campus do not believe this, then A@E students will continue to fiercely protect their curriculum and their privileges and DMHS students will continue to vehemently express their dissatisfaction.

However, the research suggests that teachers and administrators concur that to bring the two programs together in a more peaceable and effective manner, the approach should not be coercive but rather, as the Court had instructed back in 1997, to first make substantive improvements in the academic curriculum provided to DMHS students. An example is the SLC, which has been considered for integration into the DMHS. This program has not gone forward, for unknown reasons; however, it would be a step in the right direction to offer DMHS students the choice of the SLC rather than assigning them to this program.
Students—especially those who are struggling academically—need to be supported, encouraged, and motivated. There is no current structure at DMHS designed and equipped to provide this badly needed support, encouragement, and motivation. This void leaves DMHS students feeling isolated, disaffected, and resentful, especially whenever they consider what is occurring in the other building, the other school.

In terms of social privileges accorded DMHS students, their perception is that they are closely controlled, and given fewer freedoms than their A@E contemporaries. Their perceptions are borne out by actualities; however, the privileges granted A@E students are contingent on their academic performance and their adherence to decorum. These expectations are inherent in the A@E structure; in contrast, they are not intrinsic to the DMHS structure. Adolescent desire for autonomy is normal; and it is generally accepted that school privileges be related to academic and extracurricular performance. It also is generally accepted that an enriched curriculum and the consistent guidance and support of teachers—not only in the classroom but also outside the classroom—are effective in curbing unacceptable behaviors, raising attendance, and improving performance.

Unfortunately, by their own admission, DMHS administrators are overwhelmed with academic remediation, behavioral issues and in some cases student suspensions. Therefore, it is recommended that the district invest in a full-time professional developer to address these issues, including, but not necessarily limited to developing the small learning communities, the professional development needed to support the small learning communities, and new hiring practices that would bring new teachers to DMHS who are prepared to bring academic rigor to the students of Englewood. This individual would
understand the far-ranging effects of tracking versus a more fluid system. In addition to developing and implementing small learning communities, a radically changed structure would integrate curriculum mapping that would ensure students moving across ability groups. This fluidity would support de-tracking which has to remain part of the curriculum as ability grouping is currently an easier system to manage classrooms with multiple learning styles. This person would also be in charge of developed school wide rubric systems to establish clear expectations for each course of study. If alternative programs were integrated into DMHS, A@E would become contextualized as another option, however desirable, rather than the only path to academic success.

A more far-reaching, cogent communications program is critical in addressing student, parent, teacher, and administrator concerns. As evidenced in the student focus groups, both DMHS and A@E students were of the opinion that their questions and complaints were not being heard; certainly, their concerns were not being addressed. Such a program would involve teachers, administrators, and students (and whenever feasible, parents) and would go beyond those student publications already in place. All social media would be utilized: Web sites for A@E, DMHS, and ESPD; FaceBook; and Twitter. All issues and concerns should be fair game, so that DMHS and A@E students would be given reason to believe that their teachers and school administrators were committed to improving the culture of DMHS and of A@E, encouraging frank and ongoing dialogue, and reducing tensions, not only among students but also between students and teachers, and between students and school administrators. Expectations and needs would be brought to the fore during regularly scheduled small group meetings of students, teachers, administrators,
and, if feasible, parents. These “Fireside Chats” would have to result in actionable results if students were to believe that adults were willing to “walk the walk.” An effective communications program would engender mutual respect and trust and encourage participants to become proactive in bringing about meaningful change. Such a program would also necessarily reduce tensions between the two student groups, between students and educators, and between students and administrators.

The current Superintendent, Donald Carlisle, had this to say on the subject:

High school students are astute observers of their school environment, and our high school students are no exception. Recently, I held lunch meetings with representative students from Dwight Morrow, the Academies, and the Eagle program, learning about them as individuals and seeking their insights as to what works and what they would change about their schools.

Needless to say, I have received plenty of ideas and have invited the students back to discuss some of them in more detail. I will also meet with other groups in the coming months to be sure to get a broad perspective. Our students are articulate, respectful and insightful. They have a lot to contribute to improving our schools. (EPSD Web site, March, 2011)

Finally, teachers on both sides of the campus continue to be stumped with regard to handling poor student behavior and improving student outcomes. Asking A@E teachers to teach at DMHS should not be the only strategy for creating higher expectations and raising standards; in fact, this research suggests that requiring teachers from A@E to teach in DMHS is as counterproductive as integrating DMHS students into the A@E program in the belief that this strategy alone will address poor academic performance. This measure has not been effective because A@E teachers are less willing to accept DMHS students and their issues with acceptance are less about ability and more about the
race and subsequent expectations of the students. A@E teachers were hired to teach highly motivated students, so they should continue to do so. DMHS students would benefit from hiring teachers who have demonstrated their ability to work effectively with low-achievers through the consistent application of high expectations and academic rigor. The focus groups revealed that DMHS students were intensely concerned with the fact that A@E students benefited from better teaching and a more rigorous and enriched curriculum. In a vibrant system, students should not believe they are being short-changed by their teachers, and the same applies to their teachers.
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

School desegregation efforts are not a component of current national or state educational agendas. Instead, the focus of federal and state agencies has become the improvement of academic outcomes via school choice options, such as magnet programs and charter schools that provide data-driven instruction and assessment. While the current approach makes this research relevant, it is recommended that further study of the use of alternative school choice options be conducted to consider their efficacy and their impact on native populations. Future research would determine how various school choice options affect the hyper-segregation of school districts, especially the disadvantaged school districts in major cities in New Jersey and throughout the nation. Further quantitative, comparative research would examine quantifiable differences between and among magnet programs—and other school choice options—and their public counterparts.

Another recommendation for future research would be an examination of the short-term and long-term effects of the re-segregation of specific New Jersey school districts in the state with the documented highest per-pupil expenditure and largest number of school districts in the nation. The aforementioned possibilities should consider the impacts of the racial composition of a student population on both low-performing students and high-performing students as well as on native students and out-of-district students.
REFERENCES


Cole, M.


*Plessy v. Ferguson*, Judgment, Decided May 18, 1896; Records of the Supreme Court of the United States; Record Group 267; *Plessy v. Ferguson*, 163, #15248, National Archives.


Appendix A-Map

Map of Englewood and Surrounding Area
Appendix B-Letter Granting Permission for Research
Form B-1
Letter to DMHS Administration on Researchers’ Behalf from Former Superintendent of Englewood Public Schools

6/10/2010
Permission to Interview

From: Richard Segall <rsegall@epsd.org>

To: Dorian Milteer <dmilteer@epsd.org>; Lamarr Thomas <lthomas@epsd.org>; Garry Dennis <gdennis@epsd.org>; Dona Picinich <gpicinich@epsd.org>; ngordon@epsd.org
Cc: Emily Joy Jones <emilyjoy72@yahoo.com>

Administrators,

Emily Jones-McGowan, DMHS alumnus and doctoral candidate at Rutgers, is doing her dissertation on the implemented solution to the law suit on the elimination of minority student isolation on the Dwight Morrow campus. Her topic, methodology, and engagement protocols for data collection have been approved by the University.

She will be in touch with the school to set up interviews with most of you.

This message authorizes you to talk with her about your experiences at the school and in the district. If you feel uncomfortable with the interview or any question asked of you, you are free to decline to answer or terminate the interview.

On a personal level, I believe that her research proposal is the best of the ones proposed so far to deal with this very complex public controversy. In meeting with her, please provide candid answers within your comfort zone. I do ask, however, that you try to avoid “party line” responses and conjecture answers that lack evidence from your own experience. The background I have about her preliminary research and her interviews so far suggests that she is starting with the foundation issues and framing her work based on them. Answers based on observation and personal experience matter a great deal in this case whereas ungrounded responses may distract and misguide the work. Unlike so many dissertation works, this one has the potential to influence policy makers and change agents in years to come.

Thank you for your help.

Richard Segall
Appendix C—Research Request and Consent Forms
My name is Emily Jones McGowan and I am currently conducting a case study entitled *A Case Study of Dwight Morrow High School and the Academies @ Englewood: an Examination of School Desegregation Policy*. This research is for my dissertation in the Joint Ph.D. Program of Urban Systems which is hosted by the Department of Urban Education at Rutgers University—Newark.

The purpose of my research is to determine whether implementing the magnet program—Academies @ Englewood (A@E) in Dwight Morrow High School (DMHS) was an effective school desegregation policy.

Part of my study is dependent upon the oral history of those directly or indirectly involved with the litigation that led to the decision to execute this magnet program. Your input would provide context to my research and support the triangulation of other participant accounts.

If you agree to take part in the study, your name will appear only on a confidential list of subjects.

There are no foreseeable risks to participation in this study. While your input is not likely to inform school policy immediately, this study may produce valuable data concerning educational equity and the ways in which magnet programs can substantially affect the experience of public school students.

I would greatly appreciate your involvement. If you are willing please call or email.

Sincerely,

Emily Jones McGowan

Biographical Note: Emily Jones McGowan is a doctoral candidate in the Joint Ph.D. Program of Urban Systems at Rutgers University—Newark. She completed her undergraduate degree at Spelman College in Atlanta, GA and a graduate degree at Mercy College in New York. Her research interests have been influenced by her own experiences as a former special education teacher and as a graduate of Dwight Morrow High School in Englewood, NJ.
You are invited to participate in a research study that is being conducted by Emily J. Jones McGowan who is a graduate student in the Joint Ph.D. Program of Urban Systems at Rutgers University—Newark. The purpose of this research is to determine whether implementing the magnet program—Academies @ Englewood (A@E) in Dwight Morrow High School (DMHS) was an effective school desegregation policy according to its initial purpose.

You are part of a sample of administrators at DMHS and A@E. Your participation will include the completion of an interview. Your participation will last approximately 30 to 45 minutes. If you agree to take part in the study, your name will appear only on a confidential list of subjects, and will not be linked to your surveys. Your responses and all data collection will remain confidential.

There are no foreseeable risks to participation in this study. Participation in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate, and you may withdraw at any time during the study procedures without any penalty to you. In addition, you may choose not to answer any questions with which you are not comfortable.

This research is confidential. Confidential means that the research records will include some information about you, such as name, grade, and school program you attend. I will keep this information confidential by limiting individual's access to the research data and keeping it in a secure location. The research team and the Institutional Review Board at Rutgers University are the only parties that will be allowed to see the data, except as may be required by law. If a report of this study is published, or the results are presented at a professional conference, only group results will be stated, unless you have agreed otherwise.

This informed consent form as approved by the Rutgers University Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects on April 28, 2010; approval of this form expires on April 27, 2011.
If you have any questions about the study procedures, you may contact Emily J. Jones McGowan at (XXX)XXX-XXXX or XXXX@pegasus.rutgers.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you may contact the Sponsored Programs Administrator at Rutgers University at:

Rutgers University Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects
Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
3 Rutgers Plaza
New Brunswick, NJ 08901-8559

Tel: 732-932-0150 ext. 2104

Email: humansubjects@orsp.rutgers.edu

You will be given a copy of this consent form for your records.

Sign below if you agree to participate in this research study:

Participant Signature_____________________________ Date ______________

Participant Name Printed_________________________ Date ______________

Principal Investigator__________________________ Date ______________

This informed consent form as approved by the Rutgers University Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects on April 28, 2010; approval of this form expires on April 27, 2011.
Form C-3-Consent Form for Teachers

JOINT PH.D. PROGRAM IN URBAN SYSTEMS
Department of Urban Education

A Case Study of Dwight Morrow High School and the Academies @ Englewood:
an Examination of School Desegregation Policy

Conducted by Emily J. Jones McGowan
Doctoral Candidate—Education Policy Track
Bradley Hall · 110 Warren Street · Newark · New Jersey 07102-1814

XXXX, 2010

You are invited to participate in a research study that is being conducted by Emily J. Jones McGowan who is a graduate student in the Joint Ph.D. Program of Urban Systems at Rutgers University—Newark. The purpose of this research is to determine whether implementing the magnet program—Academies @ Englewood (A@E) in Dwight Morrow High School (DMHS) was an effective school desegregation policy according to its initial purpose.

You are part of a sample of teachers at DMHS and A@E. Your participation will include the completion of an interview. Your participation will last approximately 30 to 45 minutes. If you agree to take part in the study, your name will appear only on a confidential list of subjects, and will not be linked to your surveys. Your responses and all data collection will remain confidential.

There are no foreseeable risks to participation in this study. Participation in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate, and you may withdraw at any time during the study procedures without any penalty to you. In addition, you may choose not to answer any questions with which you are not comfortable.

This research is confidential. Confidential means that the research records will include some information about you, such as name, grade, and school program you attend. I will keep this information confidential by limiting individual's access to the research data and keeping it in a secure location. The research team and the Institutional Review Board at Rutgers University are the only parties that will be allowed to see the data, except as may be required by law. If a report of this study is published, or the results are presented at a professional conference, only group results will be stated, unless you have agreed otherwise.

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Tel: 732-932-0150 ext. 2104

Email: humansubjects@orsp.rutgers.edu

You will be given a copy of this consent form for your records.

Sign below if you agree to participate in this research study:

Participant Signature___________________________________ Date _______________
Participant Name Printed_______________________________ Date _____________

Principal Investigator ___________________________ Date ______________________

This informed consent form as approved by the Rutgers University Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects on April 28, 2010; approval of this form expires on April 27, 2011.
You are invited to participate in a research study that is being conducted by Emily J. Jones McGowan who is a graduate student in the Joint Ph.D. Program of Urban Systems at Rutgers University—Newark. The purpose of this research is to determine whether implementing the magnet program—Academies @ Englewood (A@E) in Dwight Morrow High School (DMHS) was an effective school desegregation policy according to its initial purpose.

You are part of a sample of juniors and seniors from DMHS and the A@E. Your participation will include the completion of an online survey questionnaire and focus group held at the Englewood Public Library. The survey and focus groups will be used to gather information on your school experiences and any issues you have concerning the different academic and extra curricular programs offered to you. Your participation will last approximately 30 to 45 minutes with the survey taking approximately 10 to 15 minutes and if you choose, the focus group completed in the remaining time. If you agree to take part in the study, your name will appear only on a confidential list of subjects, and will not be linked to your surveys. Your responses and all data collection will remain confidential. The survey can be taken in person during a focus group session or online at https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/YK365RH.

There are no foreseeable risks to participation in this study. Participation in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate, and you may withdraw at any time during the study procedures without any penalty to you. In addition, you may choose not to answer any questions with which you are not comfortable.

This research is confidential. Confidential means that the research records will include some information about you, such as name, grade, and school program you attend. I will keep this information confidential by limiting individual's access to the research data and keeping it in a secure location. The research team and the Institutional Review Board at Rutgers University are the only parties that will be allowed to see the data, except as may be required by law. If a report of this study is published, or the results are presented at a professional conference, only group results will be stated, unless you have agreed otherwise.

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Tel: 732-932-0150 ext. 2104
Email: humansubjects@orsp.rutgers.edu

You will be given a copy of this consent form for your records.

Sign below if you agree to participate in this research study:

If the participant is a minor (under 18), a parent or guardian signature is required:

Participant Signature ________________________________ Date _______________
Participant Name Printed ____________________________ Date ______________

Parent or Guardian _________________________________ Date ______________
Parent or Guardian Name Printed ______________________ Date ______________

Principal Investigator _____________________________ Date __________________

This informed consent form was approved by the Rutgers University Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects on April 28, 2010; approval of this form expires on April 27, 2011.
Appendix D—Student Focus Group Guided Questions
Student Focus Group Guided Questions

1. How would you “rank” your school?

2. Do you feel academically challenged by your coursework?

3. Based on your experiences and coursework at school do you feel prepared to take on the world and pursue your plans for after graduation?

4. Do your teachers set high standards for your achievement in their classrooms?

5. Do students attending DMHS and A@E interact academically and socially (for example in extra curricular activities)?

6. Do you believe students attending DMHS and A@E are treated equally by staff and teachers?

7. Do you believe bringing the A@E to DMHS has improved the academics of DMHS for all students?
VITAE

Emily Joy Jones McGowan

1972 Born in Englewood, New Jersey
1990 Graduated Dwight Morrow High School, Englewood, New Jersey
1990-1994 Attended Spelman College, Atlanta, GA
1994 B.A. in Economics
1995-1996 Administrative Assistant, Panasonic, Secaucus, New Jersey
1996-1998 Editorial Assistant, Prentice Hall, Mahwah, New Jersey
1998-2001 Assistant Editor, Library Journal Magazine
2001-2003 Special Education Teacher’s Assistant, Fort Lee Education Center, New Jersey
2005 M.A. in Education
2003-2006 New York City Teaching Fellow
2006-2011 Attended Joint Graduate Program in Urban Systems, Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey—Newark
2006-2010 Graduate Assistant, Urban Teacher Education Program, Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey—Newark
2011 Ph.D. in Urban Educational Policy