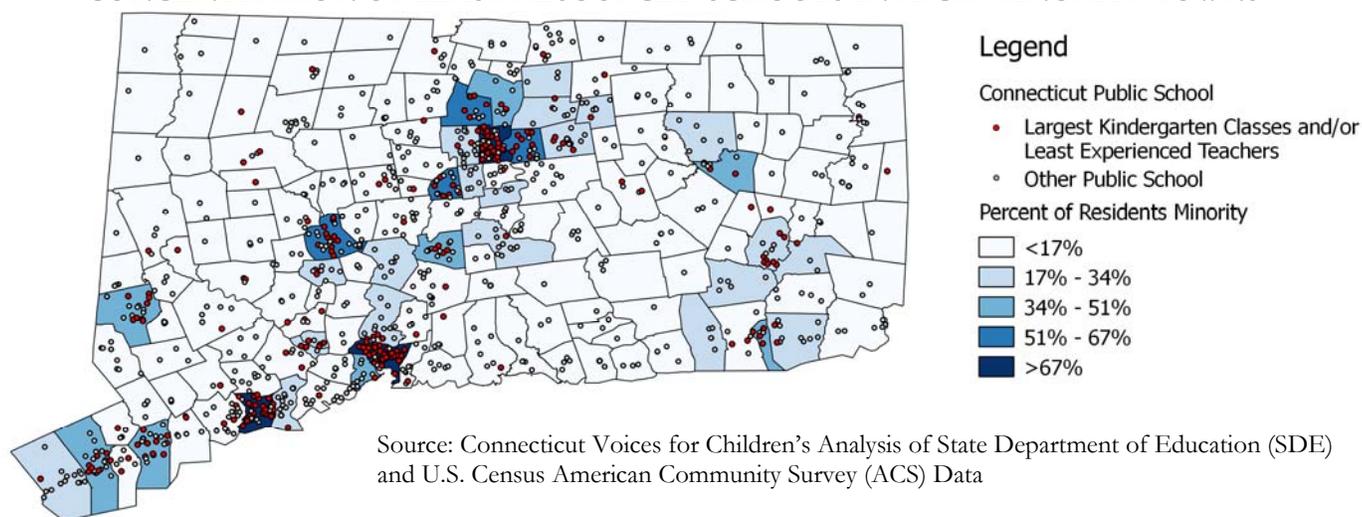


# UNEQUAL SCHOOLS

## Connecticut's Racial, Socioeconomic, and Geographic Disparities in Class Size and Teaching Experience

On nearly every measure of student academic achievement, Connecticut's Black, Latino, and less affluent students underperform relative to their white and more affluent peers. Low-income and minority students who often face external barriers to academic success stand to gain the most from a high-quality, well-resourced education. **However, persistent residential segregation concentrates many of Connecticut's students of color and low-income students in a small number of schools and districts with the least access to educational resources like small class sizes and more experienced teachers.** These disparities likely exacerbate Connecticut's race- and class-based differences in educational opportunity. *Connecticut must address these disparities to ensure that every student receives an equitable education.*

### CONCENTRATION OF LEAST RESOURCED SCHOOLS IN HIGH MINORITY TOWNS



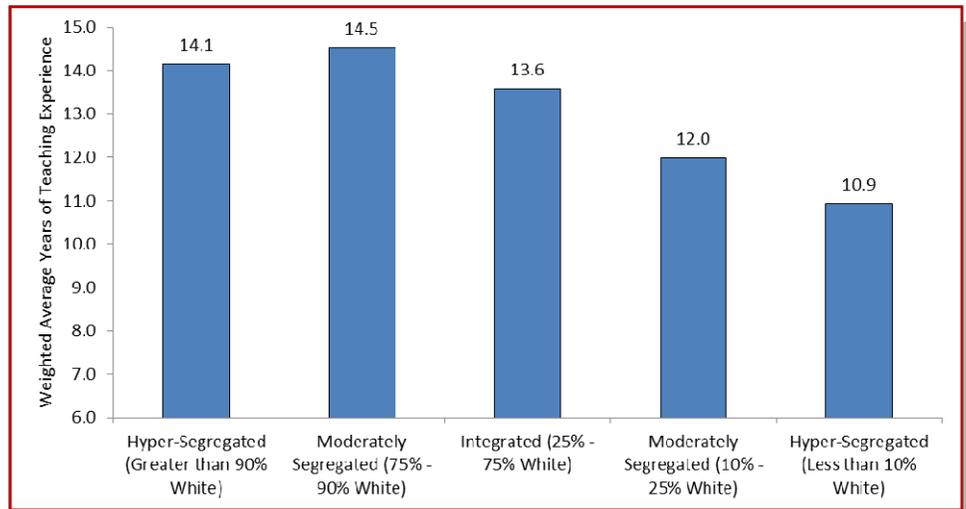
## KEY FINDINGS

- In the 2012-2013 school-year, **students of color and low-income students made up the majority of students in schools with the largest kindergarten classes and in schools with the least experienced teachers.** In the rest of public schools, a majority of students were higher-income and white. These disparities likely occurred because most of these under-resourced schools were located in towns with few white residents and high rates of child poverty.

- School districts rely heavily on property taxes for funding. Differences in property wealth between different towns may help explain disparities in school resources. **Towns with very little taxable property tend to have schools with the largest kindergarten classes and least experienced teachers, even though these towns actually charge some of the highest property tax rates in the state.**

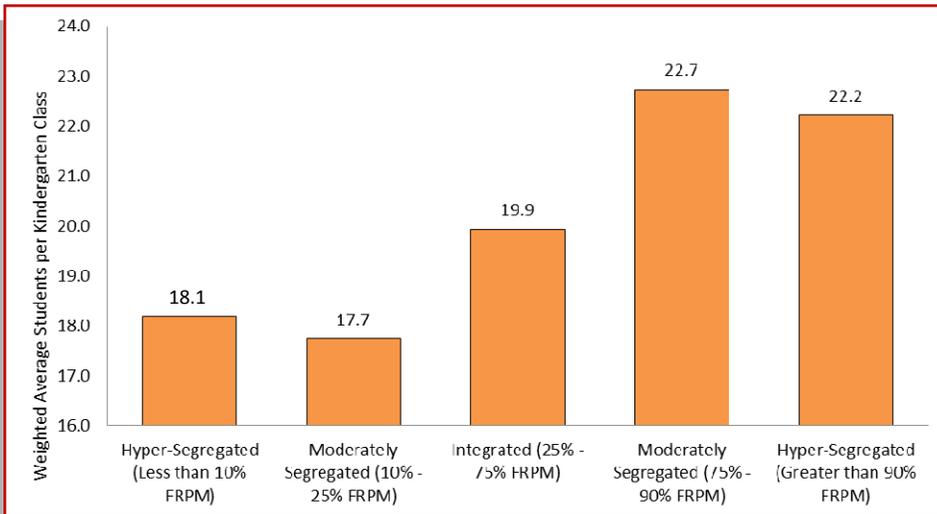
## AVERAGE TEACHER EXPERIENCE BY SCHOOL RACIAL/ETHNIC SEGREGATION STATUS

- As the percentage of white students in a school decreases, teachers tended to become less experienced on average (see figure), and kindergarten class sizes tended to grow larger.



Source: Connecticut Voices for Children's Analysis of SDE and U.S. Census ACS Data

## AVERAGE KINDERGARTEN CLASS SIZE BY SCHOOL SOCIOECONOMIC SEGREGATION STATUS



- As the percentage of students eligible for Free or Reduced Price Meals (FRPM) in a school increases, kindergarten class sizes tended to become larger (see figure), and teachers tended to become less experienced.

Source: Connecticut Voices for Children's Analysis of SDE and U.S. Census ACS Data

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Establish a system of education funding that ensures every child attends a school with the resources necessary to offer them a high quality and substantially equal education that meets their needs, regardless of the property tax base in the student's town of residence.
- Increase transparency in how education money is spent to ensure dollars are invested in evidence-based resources.
- Investigate forces that drive segregation by race and class, and explore means of ensuring equal access to integrated schools and neighborhoods. Residential segregation appears to be a major driver of school resource disparities.

The full report is available at <http://www.ctvoices.org/publications/unequal-schools-connecticut-racial-socioeconomic-and-geographic-disparities-kindergart>