

“We are all caught up in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever effects one directly effects all indirectly.”

-The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Disparities are particularly dangerous when they are **cumulative, durable, and group-based:**

Kansas City Disparities:¹

Education- In Kansas City, black students scored less than white students in all proficiency assessments in all areas of state mandated assessments and the ACT. Black students are also much more likely to be taught by an unqualified teacher.

Employment- Unemployment rate for blacks >3x that for Whites in Jackson County. Wyandotte County: Unemployment rate is slightly less than 2x as high for Blacks.

Healthcare- In Jackson & Wyandotte Counties the proportion of whites who have health insurance is twice that of Blacks.

Housing- Approximately 50% of Black families in Jackson and Wyandotte Counties own homes while on average 73% of Whites own their home. Blacks are also rejected for a mortgage at a rate twice that of whites. Finally, house values are disparate: there is an \$11,400 gap in median home values between Blacks and Whites a \$33,800 gap in Jackson and Wyandotte County, respectively.

Criminal Justice System- In Kansas City the incarceration rate of Whites is 373 per 100,000 compared to 3,686 per 100,000 for Blacks.

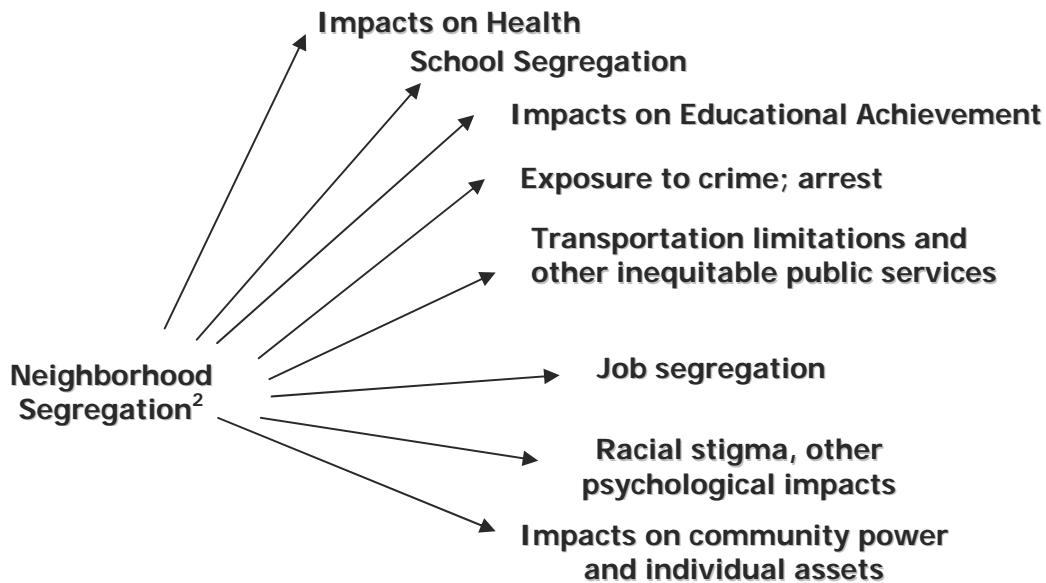
- Opportunities are geographically distributed and often clustered throughout metropolitan areas
- All these inequities are inherently tied to one another; we cannot successfully address a singular opportunity structure in isolation.
- Examining one of these opportunity structures in isolation fails to account for the birdcage effect, where each structure serves as a bar, together creating a barrier to opportunity.

“For every complete step forward that Whites make in Greater Kansas City, Blacks living near by – even next door – make only 73% of a step in the same direction.”
-p. 6, State of Black Kansas City 2006 Equality Index.



¹ Source: State of Black Kansas City 2006 Equality Index. From the Urban League of Greater Kansas City. Available online at: <http://www.ulkc.org/urban-league-publications/equality-index-2006/ULEQUALITYINDEX.pdf>

- Your location within this “web of opportunity” plays a decisive role in your life potential and outcomes.



DISPARITIES ONLY TELL PART OF THE STORY

- Focusing on disparities alone fails to account for how inequities hurt ALL residents of a region.
- Disparities are also based upon the median; this is flawed because it may mask declining opportunities for all.
- A region with racially segregated areas of distinct high and low opportunity has a significant impact on the region’s overall health; this ultimately impacts all residents’ opportunities.²
 - Nearly all of Kansas City’s growth is in exurb/greenfield areas while the inner-city has seen little growth.
 - This fragmentation creates waste/redundancy, competition for resources, impacts environments w/ sprawl, and increases race-based disparities. In essence, it makes the Kansas City region economically unhealthy and overall less competitive.
- Regions who utilize regional policies are economically (and socially) healthier.

²Adapted from figure by Barbara Reskin at: <http://faculty.washington.edu/reskin/>

³Communities of Opportunity: A Framework for a more Equitable and Sustainable Future for all. The Kirwan Institute. Available online at: http://www.kirwaninstitute.org/publications/ki_pub_docs/Comm_of_Opportunity_Jan_2007.pdf

Index of Dissimilarity:⁴

The dissimilarity index measures whether one particular group is distributed across census tracts in the metropolitan area in the same way as another group. A high value indicates that the two groups tend to live in different tracts. D ranges from 0 to 100. A value of 60 (or above) is considered very high. It means that 60% (or more) of the members of one group would need to move to a different tract in order for the two groups to be equally distributed.

White with Black-Entire Population:

2000:  69.1

Children under 18 are even more segregated:

White with Black-Children under 18:

2000:  70.9

Even higher levels of segregation for elementary students:

Segregation of Elementary Students:

2000:  74.2

Moving Forward:

- Need to recognize and communicate our *LINKED FATE*



- Need diverse coalitions with strategic interventions and transformative results: MORE²
- With strategic interventions that work toward transformative change...
WE CAN AND HAVE MADE PROGRESS!

For More Information:

- State of Black Kansas City 2006 Equality Index. From the Urban League of Greater Kansas City. <http://www.ulkc.org/urban-league-publications/equality-index-2006/ULEQUALITYINDEX.pdf>
- Organizing for Success: A Call to Action for the Kansas City Region. From the Brookings Institution. http://www3.brookings.edu/metro/pubs/20060831_kansascity.pdf
- The Kirwan Institute www.kirwaninstitute.org
- MORE² <http://more2.org/>



⁴ Source: The Lewis Mumford Center. Available online at: <http://mumford.albany.edu/census/data.html>