

1606 ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION AMENDMENTS

confined to public schools because it is a fixed policy of the largest group of the nonpublic schools not to identify pupils by color or race with the result that statistics are not available. The data presented have been chosen because they serve to outline the comparison between the 1960 and the current situation.

These estimates are the responsibility of the Office of Education. They do not represent actual counts or hard data from a mailed questionnaire survey, but they are calculated from data and are much better than outright guesses. The 1960 data were taken from U.S. Census reports and represent nonwhites and whites in every case. The current estimates are based on statistical information secured at different times, but in no case are the data older than 1963.

The current data variously represent nonwhites and whites, or Negroes and others. The comparisons between 1960 and the current situation are between the breakdown currently available, whatever it is, and nonwhites-whites (which is the only breakdown available from the 1960 Census). Whenever possible separate estimates have been made for the kindergarten, elementary (grades 1-8), and secondary (grades 9-12) levels, the breakdown which is available from the 1960 Census.

The group variously named Mexican Americans, Spanish Americans, Latin Americans, or Puerto Ricans is included with the white group because of Census practice and regardless of the fact that they are frequently a severely disadvantaged group.

Enrollment in vocational schools is incorporated at the appropriate grade. Enrollment in special schools is incorporated at the appropriate grade when it was known to the investigator; otherwise it was disregarded.

In general, the principal problem, and the most likely source of error in the estimates, was that of taking the distribution by color in grades 7, 8, and 9 in junior high schools and allocating it to grades 1-8 and 9-12, which is the 1960 Census pattern.

The figure in column 6 is the nonwhite gain in percentage points. The figure in column 7 represents the same nonwhite gain expressed as a percentage of the 1960 base figure, which is itself a percentage. The comparison of the current situation with the 1960 situation is a mixture of two principal elements. One is the over-all gain in population in large cities, which in turn is reflected in school enrollment. The other is the relative gain of nonwhites as an element in the population compared to the whites. By reducing the basic enrollment data for the two groups to percentages, or proportions of the whole, the influence of over-all gain in big city population is eliminated. The figure in column 7, then, represents the relative gain of nonwhites relative to whites and apart from the over-all gain of both groups.

The average, or mean, of the nonwhite gains expressed as percentages of the 1960 base percentages is 27.3 at the kindergarten level, 27.9 at the elementary level, and 29.0 at the secondary level. These are means of percentages and in order to be interpreted meaningfully each percentage must be accorded a separate status as a statistic by the reader. They indicate that the gain in the proportion of nonwhites in the 21 large cities is slightly more than one-quarter of the original 1960 proportion, considering each city as a unit of interest equal to that of any other city.

If another six years produces a like gain, the gain over the twelve years will be over 50%. A gain of 50% applied to an original proportion as low as one-third would project a city more than half nonwhite as respects school enrollment.

A word of caution: It is difficult to compare these percentages with each other and bear in mind all of the considerations that affect the comparison. The fact that the secondary level gain is larger than the elementary level gain does not, for example, mean that the difference in absolute number of nonwhites in secondary schools now as against 1960 is greater than the difference in absolute number of nonwhites in elementary schools now as against 1960.