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My School District Isn't Segregated: Experimental Evidence on the Effect of Information on Parental Preferences Regarding School Segregation

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Abstract

U.S. public schools are increasingly segregated by income, resulting in substantial educational inequality among U.S. schoolchildren. We conducted a nationally representative survey to explore the relationship between parental beliefs about and preferences regarding school segregation. Using experimental manipulation, we tested if learning about levels of school segregation in their local school district affects a parent's attitudes and preferences regarding school segregation. In doing so, our study helps elucidate whether disagreement with respect to segregation-reducing policies stems from differences in parental beliefs about the extent of segregation in their district or from differences in parental preferences given existing levels of segregation. We found that parents hold largely inaccurate beliefs about local segregation levels and underestimate, on average, the economic segregation in their district. However, information treatments that correct inaccurate beliefs do little to influence support for policies to reduce segregation.

Keywords

class inequality, policy-oriented research, segregation, poverty and education, school policy

School segregation has proven to be a stubbornly persistent feature of the U.S. public schooling system. Despite attempts to reduce racial school segregation in the late twentieth century (e.g., civil rights reforms and a series of court-mandated desegregation orders), these efforts have largely stagnated since the 1980s (Johnson 2015; Reardon and Owens 2014; Stroub and Richards 2013). In contrast, economic school segregation has grown over the past half-century, largely as a result of rising income inequality (Duncan and Murnane 2011; Owens, Reardon, and Jencks 2016). In the United States today, the average poor student attends a school with about 70 percent poor students, whereas the average nonpoor student attends a school with less than 40 percent poor students.[1] School segregation is associated with increased funding disparities between students

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(Weathers and Sosina 2022), larger achievement gaps (Logan, Minca, and Adar 2012; Owens et al. 2016; Reardon 2016; Reardon et al. 2019), and lower rates of upward social mobility (Johnson 2019).

Although Americans report concerns about growing rates of school segregation (Center for American Progress 2017; The Century Foundation 2021), segregation continues to rise, in part because of their behavior. Even when parents do not explicitly hold preferences based on racial and socioeconomic (SES) characteristics, they choose homes and schools based on attributes that are correlated with race and SES, resulting in segregated neighborhoods and schools (Billingham and Hunt 2016; Goyette and Lareau 2014; Hailey 2022a; Roda and Wells 2013). This apparent contradiction between self-reported preferences and actual behaviors is perhaps not surprising; Americans also voice concern about rising income inequality while simultaneously pushing back against economic redistribution (Mijs 2021; Trump 2017). Indeed, past research paints a complicated picture of beliefs and preferences[2] regarding inequality in the United States. For example, some studies indicate that Americans are ignorant of rising inequality; others suggest Americans are aware but tolerant toward it (McCall 2013).

Yet little is known about how information may affect attitudes and preferences regarding economic school segregation, a key feature of the U.S. educational system. On one hand, it is possible that variation in parental preferences regarding school segregation stems, in part, from some parents holding inaccurate beliefs about local levels of segregation. In this case, if not for relative ignorance of the high segregation levels in their districts, parents might be more critical of segregated school systems and more likely to support policies to reduce segregation.[3] On the other hand, increased knowledge about economic segregation may be largely irrelevant to parents' general attitudes and policy preferences, suggesting segregation is maintained due to parents' general tolerance of segregated schools.

Beliefs about stratification are consequential because they affect tolerances for inequality and appetites for change (Kluegel and Smith 1986; McCall 2013). By understanding the mechanisms that shape such beliefs, we can have a window into the processes that produce inequality. Voter preferences influence local policy adoption (Einstein and Kogan 2016), so understanding stratification beliefs can inform which interventions may produce public support for policies designed to reduce inequality. This article builds on prior theoretical and empirical research on preferences regarding segregated schools (Billingham and Hunt 2016; Goyette and Lareau 2014) and the ways status, context, and information shape beliefs about inequality (Hunt 2007; Kuziemko et al. 2015; McCall 2013; Mijs and Hoy 2022) by examining the factors shaping contemporary parental attitudes around within-district economic school segregation. We limit our focus to within-district economic school segregation, which accounts for one-third of overall school segregation (Owens et al. 2016; Stroub and Richards 2013),[4] for three main reasons. First, parents typically make educational decisions for their children in a local context (e.g., selecting a neighborhood, school, or district within a given metro area rather than selecting across metro areas; Burdick-Will et al. 2020), although advantaged parents with the means to do so will move across metros specifically for school options (Rhodes and DeLuca 2014; Warikoo 2022). Second, from a policy perspective, efforts to reduce school segregation within districts are likely the ''lowest hanging fruit'' because the costs of reallocating students to schools within a district are lower than the costs of reallocating students to different districts within a state. Third, school segregation is strongly influenced by a district's school attendance boundary policy, which is responsive to local parental preferences because parents exert political pressure on district administrators (Einstein and Kogan 2016; Monarrez 2023; Saporito and Van Riper 2016).

We conducted a nationally representative survey with descriptive and experimental components to empirically explore the processes that produce parental beliefs about and attitudes regarding school segregation. We investigate the following research questions: (1) How do beliefs and preferences regarding school segregation vary as a function of key individual demographic characteristics? (2) To what extent do parents hold accurate beliefs about the levels of school segregation in their district? and (3) Does providing parents with information on the local levels and consequences of school segregation affect their general attitudes or policy preferences regarding school segregation?

We first examine U.S. parents' baseline attitudes and policy preferences and the extent to which they hold accurate beliefs about levels of local segregation. Because an individual's lived

experience of segregation and inequality is shaped by their race, gender, and education, among other attributes (Hunt 2007; Kane and Kyyrö 2001; Merolla, Hunt, and Serpe 2011; Wilson et al. 2021), we descriptively explore the beliefs and preferences of Americans overall and differences in such beliefs and preferences across key demographic groups. Next, we experimentally test the malleability of attitudes and preferences regarding economic school segregation using an information treatment that provides each parent with individually tailored information on levels of school segregation in their local district and a brief research note on the negative consequences of school segregation for poor children. This approach allows us to empirically adjudicate between competing possibilities on American ignorance of or tolerance toward segregation.

We find that parents systematically underestimate the degree to which economic school segregation exists in their local school districts. Only about one in six parents in the sample live in a school district with little to no school segregation, yet roughly one in three parents believe they do. Despite these misperceptions, receiving information on the actual levels of segregation in one's district and its consequences for children does not affect support for segregation-reducing policies. In addition, we find that parents substantially vary in their attitudes and preferences regarding segregation-reducing policies but, on average, demonstrate little concern regarding local economic school segregation, consistent with a framework of American tolerance toward inequality. The median respondent supports only small increases in taxes and school travel time to further efforts to reduce segregation, much less than what would be required to meaningfully reduce school segregation from a policy perspective.

BACKGROUND

Choosing Economically Segregated Schools

Parental choices, beliefs, and preferences play a large role in structuring the economic makeup of children's schools (Billingham and Hunt 2016; Hailey 2022a, 2022b). Residential and schooling decisions are made in an individual context, but they have cumulative ramifications on the composition of a community's schools. Parents select neighborhoods based in part on the perceived quality of the schools associated with them (Goyette and Lareau 2014; Owens et al. 2016; Reardon and Bischoff 2011) while simultaneously trying to stay within their financial means (Rhodes and Warkentien 2017). As a result, affluent families tend to avoid high-poverty schools (Lareau 2014) and will pay a premium for homes in neighborhoods where the schools have higher test scores (Bayer, Ferreira, and McMillan 2007; Black 1999). This leads to increased economic school segregation because schools with higher test scores are disproportionately located in more affluent neighborhoods (Owens 2018; Reardon and Bischoff 2011). Furthermore, affluent families in high-poverty neighborhoods often take advantage of charter, magnet, or private schools rather than attending local public schools (Pearman and Swain 2017; Saporito 2003) .

Revealed preferences indicate parents tend to prefer economically segregated schools, yet parents are often unclear when describing how and why they select specific schools for their children. Decisions about schooling are made in a complex choice environment where not all of the options are apparent or convenient and access to information is stratified by income, race, social networks, and geography (Burdick-Will et al. 2020; Denice and Gross 2016; Schneider and Buckley 2002). Although parents rarely state the SES composition of a school as a factor driving their choices, in practice, this appears to be one of the most salient features in school choice (Burdick-Will et al. 2020; Holme 2002; Schneider and Buckley 2002). Moreover, parents—particularly affluent and well-connected parents—rely heavily on social networks and peers' opinions to inform their conceptions of what a ''good'' school looks like, irrespective of actual academic quality (Fong 2019; Holme 2002; Rhodes and Warkentien 2017). Importantly, the school attributes that advantaged parents view as high quality may not map onto the measures of effectiveness used by scholars and policymakers (Haderlein 2022; Hailey 2022a; Houston et al. 2022; Wodtke, Geoffrey et al. 2023).

Parental attitudes and preferences also shape policy on a broader scale. Public opinion influences policy outcomes, and local policy is especially sensitive to the preferences of voters (Einstein and Kogan 2016). School boards and district administrators are responsive to parents' demands even when they do not align with the district's goals

more broadly (Diem, Frankenberg, and Cleary 2015). For example, school attendance boundaries, which structure school segregation within a district, are subject to change based on the political pressure exerted by parents (Lareau, Weininger, and Cox 2018). In extreme cases, advantaged parents can prompt communities to secede from the broader school district to gain increased control over attendance boundaries and educational decisions (EdBuild 2019; Houck and Murray 2019; Siegel-Hawley, Diem, and Frankenberg 2018; Wilson 2016).

Perceptions of School Segregation and Inequality

Prior research illustrates that parents hold inaccurate understandings of the effectiveness of historical desegregation efforts for reducing social and economic inequality. Americans generally support the idea of diverse and integrated schools, but they disapprove of many policies intended to reduce segregation, with busing receiving especially intense pushback (Hochschild and Scott 1998; Pride 2000). Many desegregation programs, like busing, have been widely perceived as failures by parents (Pride 2000), but recent quasi-experimental research shows the opposite: Court-ordered desegregation policies were remarkably successful in improving long-run educational, social, and economic outcomes for Black children without negative consequences for White children (Johnson 2015, 2019). As court-ordered desegregation policies have ended, some school districts have shifted to SES-based assignment plans intended to reduce economic school segregation. However, only approximately 4 percent of U.S. public school students are enrolled in such a district (Reardon and Rhodes 2011).[5] Although relatively uncommon, recent research shows that SES-based assignment plans can have positive effects on reassigned students' academic and disciplinary outcomes (Domina et al. 2021). Still, parents may prefer lower levels of segregation in the abstract while simultaneously holding concerns about what it might mean for their own children's educational opportunities.

Our study is situated within a broader literature on the effects of information treatments in prompting individuals to update their beliefs and change their preferences (Cruces, Perez-Truglia, and Tetaz 2013; Haaland and Roth 2023; Karadja, Mollerstrom, and Seim 2017; Kuklinski et al. 2000; Kuziemko et al. 2015; McCall et al. 2017; Mijs and Hoy 2022). However, the existing experimental evidence is mixed regarding if (and when) correcting inaccurate beliefs affects attitudes and preferences. These studies are best understood in the context of two competing theories on American attitudes toward inequality: ignorance versus tolerance (McCall 2013). Under an ignorance framework, Americans are largely unaware of inequality levels but would otherwise be critical of inequality if their perceptions matched reality. In contrast, if Americans are tolerant of inequality, we would not expect the act of correcting misperceptions induce meaningful shifts in preferences. To distinguish between these possibilities, it is critical to understand the extent to which individuals hold accurate beliefs about levels of inequality and whether preferences for reducing inequality can be changed by updating misperceptions.

Americans tend to underestimate current levels of income inequality (Hauser and Norton 2017; Kuziemko et al. 2015), overestimate social mobility (Kraus and Tan 2015), and overestimate their own incomes relative to the national distribution (Cruces et al. 2013). Consistent with the ignorance framework, several studies have found that information treatments increase concerns about inequality and preferences for policies to reduce it (Cruces et al. 2013; Karadja et al. 2017; McCall et al. 2017). In contrast, other studies, such as Kuziemko et al. (2015) and Kuklinski et al. (2000), found that information does little to move preferences or support for redistribution policies, consistent with a tolerance perspective where individuals, even if aware of inequality, are unlikely to be critical of it. Importantly, however, inequality beliefs and responses are issue-specific (McCall 2013), so inequality views in one domain (e.g., income inequality) may not necessarily translate to another (e.g., school segregation). Within education contexts, studies have shown that Americans tend to hold overly optimistic views about educational outcomes (Clinton and Grissom 2015), and school choice and policy preferences can be swayed by information treatments (Houston and Henig 2023; Valant and Newark 2016; Valant and Weixler 2022).

Finally, Americans are heterogeneous in their beliefs about inequality generally and segregation specifically (Kluegel and Smith 1986). Perhaps unsurprisingly, racial minorities have different perceptions of and views on inequality than do

White individuals (Hunt 1996, 2007; Kane and Kyyrö 2001). Likewise, views differ by gender (Cotter, Hermsen, and Vanneman 2011; Kane and Kyyrö 2001), education (Kane and Kyyrö 2001; Newman, Johnston, and Lown 2015), political leanings (Collins 2023), social class (Newman et al. 2015), and context (Merolla et al. 2011; Newman et al. 2015). These differences may reflect differences across social groups in experiences of inequality and advantage. However, the extent to which demographic position is associated with how informed parents are about local school segregation remains relatively unexplored.

METHODS

In the spring of 2021, we conducted a survey experiment in which participants were randomly assigned to either an informational treatment about school segregation or a control condition. In this way, we tested whether information about local levels of segregation and the consequences associated with school segregation has a causal effect on participants' attitudes and preferences regarding school segregation. Prior to conducting the experiment, we preregistered the hypotheses, experimental design/items, and analysis plan.[6]

Participants

We recruited a nationally representative sample of parents with school-age children from Lucid, an online survey platform used widely in academic research. Experiments fielded on Lucid have been shown to yield similar results to those fielded with other nationally representative survey samples (Coppock and McClellan 2019). Lucid provided zip codes for each survey respondent, which we linked to school districts. By doing so, we were able to provide each parent in our treatment group with information on the actual level of economic school segregation in their local school area.

Our original sample included 1,720 survey respondents. Because the demographic covariates were collected by Lucid directly when forming the panel, there is no missingness among the demographic measures or zip codes. However, when we linked these data to district characteristics from the Stanford Education Data Archive (SEDA), a small number of respondents had missing data on school district covariates, such as district enrollment or demographics (97 respondents; 5 percent). We dropped these respondents for a resulting analytic sample of 1,623 respondents.[7] Descriptive statistics of our survey sample are displayed in Table 1. All covariates (race, ethnicity, income, age, political party, education, and region) are balanced across treatment and control groups.

Experimental Design

We operationalize economic school segregation as the within-district difference in exposure to free or reduced-price lunch (FRPL) eligible students between non-FRPL-eligible and FRPL-eligible students.[8] These measures were drawn from SEDA (Reardon et al. 2021).[9] SEDA contains data on geographic school districts, including charter and magnet schools located within the geographic boundaries of a given administrative district. FRPL eligibility is a coarse indicator of family income and has several drawbacks as a measure of poverty, but it captures aspects of educational disadvantage that are not captured by household income measures (Domina et al. 2018). In addition, FRPL eligibility is the standard definition of economic disadvantage used by researchers, given its universality (Greenberg, Blagg, and Rainer 2019).

Figure 1 provides an overview of the experimental design for this study. The full set of survey items can be found in the online Supplemental Material. Because parents may hold notions about what it means for a child to be impoverished that depart from FRPL eligibility, we began the study with a short description of school segregation (including the fact that we delineate high versus low income using FRPL eligibility). Next, we asked participants about their perception of the level of economic school segregation in their local district using intuitive images illustrating different amounts of school segregation. Respondents were then randomly assigned to the treatment or control condition. Respondents in the treatment condition were provided with information on the approximate level of school segregation in their school district and a short note about the negative consequences of school segregation for children (based on research by Quillian 2014). We opted to simultaneously include both pieces of information to strengthen the experimental treatment, but we thus cannot disentangle the effects of information on local segregation levels from information on

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Survey Sample.

	Analytic sample		Treatment		Control		Difference
	Mean/ Proportion	SD	Mean/ Proportion	SD	Mean/ Proportion	SD	*p* value
Female	.45		.44		.45		.92
Age	41	12	41.10	11.72	40.36	11.33	.20
Hispanic	.13		.12		.14		.12
Race							
White	.78		.80		.76		.06
Black	.12		.11		.13		.15
American Indian/Alaska Native	.01		.01		.02		.19
Asian/Pacific Islander	.05		.05		.05		.61
Other/prefer not to answer	.04		.03		.05		.17
Household income ($1,000)	65.69	49.09	67.62	48.74	63.79	49.39	.12
Education: simplified categories							
Less than high school/none of the above	.09		.09		.10		.48
High school	.27		.28		.27		.98
Two-year degree	.07		.08		.06		.13
Four-year degree	.26		.25		.27		.32
Graduate degree or more	.31		.31		.30		.60
Political party							
Democrat	.51		.50		.52		.54
Republican	.29		.30		.28		.31
Independent	.20		.20		.20		.70
Region							
Northeast	.23		.24		.21		.28
Midwest	.19		.20		.18		.32
South	.38		.36		.40		.13
West	.20		.20		.21		.80
School district measures							
Economic school segregation	.14	.11	.14	.11	.14	.11	.36
Percent FRPL eligible	.58	.20	.57	.20	.59	.20	.12
District enrollment (1,000 students)	79.45	139.44	81.58	141.87	77.35	137.05	.54
Number of charter schools in the district	21.04	38.51	20.90	38.39	21.17	38.66	.89
Per-pupil total expenditure ($1,000)	14.15	5.72	14.03	5.72	14.26	5.73	.41
Per-pupil total revenue ($1,000)	13.86	5.27	13.74	5.23	13.98	5.32	.38
District SES	−.08	.81	−.06	.80	−.10	.82	.32
Outcomes							
Segregation guess	2.79	1.75	2.80	1.74	2.78	1.76	
Difference guess – actual segregation	−.13	2.06	−.11	2.08	−.15	2.04	
Attitude index	−.01	1.00	.03	.98	−.01	1.00	
Policy index	−.01	1.00	.00	1.01	−.01	1.00	
Additional travel time (minutes)	4.15	57.62	5.16	22.66	3.15	78.09	
Tax increase (dollars)	571.46	1608.55	544.23	1462.68	598.39	1741.33	
Observations	1,623		807		816		

Note: Respondents' guesses of their local segregation levels ranged from 1 (corresponding to Level A in Figure 2) to 6 (corresponding to Level F in Figure 2). Difference column displays *p* values from *t* tests of mean equivalence for control and treatment groups; none are statistically significant at the 5 percent level. Economic school segregation is measured using the non-FRPL/FRPL difference in exposure to FRPL students. Histograms illustrating the distributions of outcome variables are shown in Figure A2 in the Supplemental Material. FRPL = free or reduced-price lunch; SES = socioeconomic status.

the consequences of segregation. A goal of our experiment was to provide accurate and understandable information to the parent respondents, who are likely not well versed in the complex methods researchers use to conceptualize and measure school segregation. With this in mind, we opted to use a relatively simple and straightforward display of segregation rather than a more nuanced or technical illustration. Figure 2 shows the visualization strategy used in our survey to measure respondent perceptions of local levels of school segregation.

Participants in both the treatment and control conditions then answered identical questions on their general attitudes and policy preferences regarding economic school segregation. These included a set of questions on general attitudes toward school segregation (e.g., ''How important

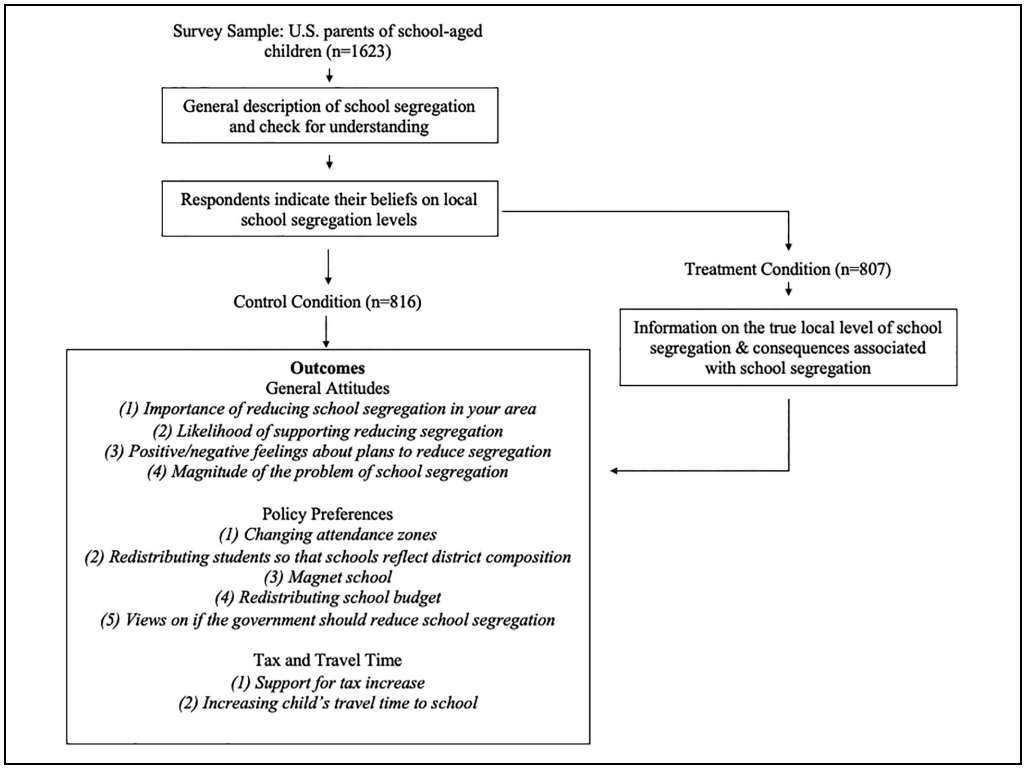

Figure 1. Design of survey experiment.

of an issue do you think the reduction of school segregation is in your local area?'') and specific hypothetical policy proposals (e.g., ''How likely are you to support changing attendance boundaries to reduce school segregation?'').

A key feature of our survey is the way we link each parent to information regarding the level of economic school segregation in their local district. However, we do not directly observe the school district that each parent lives in. Instead, Lucid provided us the zip code of residence for every parent in our survey sample. We linked each parent's zip code to a school segregation database as they completed the survey, allowing us to display information specific to each respondent in real time (for a detailed description of the process to link zip codes to segregation levels, see the online Supplemental Material). Robustness checks, presented in Figure A1 in the online Supplemental Material, indicate our linking method is quite accurate: An estimated 86 percent of parents were assigned to the correct school district, and 93 percent of parents were assigned to the correct binned segregation category (another 5 percent of parents were assigned to a category one bin away from their true category).

Finally, it is important note that the validity of our experimental design does not necessarily depend on the accuracy of information provided. In designing our study, we tried our best to ensure parents were given accurate levels of segregation in their local district. However, one could consider an alternative experiment with randomly assigned ''information'' that was in reality unrelated to the true levels of segregation in a parent's district. Although of questionable ethical standing, such a deception study would still show how people react to encountering evidence they had over/underestimated local economic segregation and any effects of this information on attitudes and preferences.

Outcome Variables

To measure a parent's general attitudes and policy preferences for reducing school segregation, we

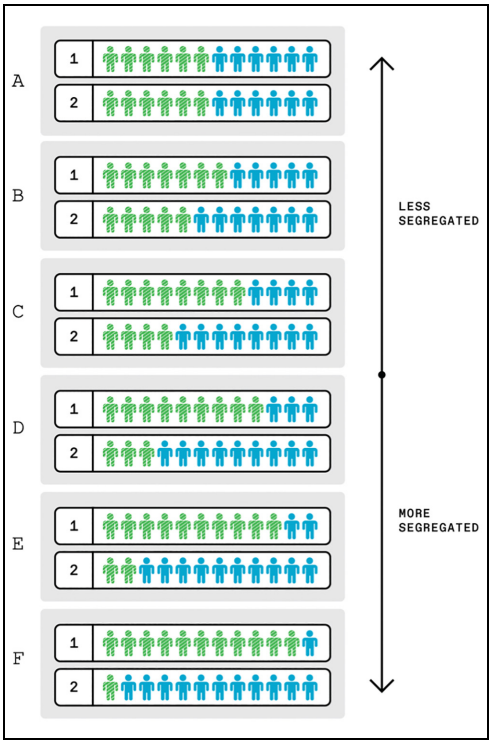

Figure 2. Visualizing segregation bins in survey experiment.

Note: This figure appears in black and white in print versions of this study. However, all images were displayed to survey respondents in color.

constructed two indices using principal components analysis. The first index is a composite of four questions that aim to capture a respondent's general attitude regarding the importance of school segregation as an issue. The second index is a composite of five questions that aim to capture a parent's support for specific policy proposals intended to reduce school segregation. The survey questions underlying our indices can be found in the online Supplemental Material and are summarized in Figure 1.[10] Each index is the first principal component score of the relevant survey questions, standardized within sample using the mean and standard deviation of the control group. The first principal component explains 67 percent and 70 percent of the response variation of the underlying general attitude and policy survey questions, respectively (for a summary of the factor loadings for each question, see Table A2 in the online Supplemental Material). In addition, we measured two continuous outcomes that have substantively meaningful unit interpretations: the number of additional minutes a respondent might allow their child to travel to school to reduce local within-district school segregation and additional taxes (in dollars) a respondent would support to cover the costs of reducing local economic school segregation.

Analytic Strategy

We begin by descriptively exploring variation in our four outcome variables among respondents in the control group: the attitude index, the policy index, willingness for their child to travel additional minutes to school, and willingness to support increased taxes to reduce school segregation. To do so, we examine bivariate associations between individual and district characteristics and the outcome measures. Furthermore, we estimate linear regression models of the following form:

$$y_{id} = \beta_0 + \boldsymbol{X_{id}\gamma} + \boldsymbol{D_d\delta} + \varepsilon_{id}. \quad (1)$$

In Equation 1, y_{id} is one of our four outcome variables for respondent i in district d, $\boldsymbol{X_{id}}$ is a vector of individual-level covariates, and $\boldsymbol{D_d}$ is a vector of district-level covariates. The individual-level covariates include gender, race, ethnicity, age, income, education, political party, and geographic region, and the district-level covariates include school segregation level, percent of students eligible for FRPL, district enrollment, number of charter schools, per-pupil total expenditure and revenue, and district socioeconomic status. Multivariate results from Equation 1 appear in the Supplemental Material.

Next, we use a similar approach to examine both the bivariate and multivariate relationship between individual and district chracteristics and beliefs about local economic school segregation. We use a similar set of descriptive regressions to investigate which individual and district characteristics are related to a parent's beliefs about local segregation and the accuracy of those beliefs:

$$belief_{id} = \beta_0 + \boldsymbol{X_{id}\gamma} + \boldsymbol{D_d\delta} + \varepsilon_{id} \quad (2a)$$

$$(belief_{id} - actual_d) = \beta_0 + \boldsymbol{X_{id}\gamma} + \boldsymbol{D_d\delta} + \varepsilon_{id}. \quad (2b)$$

In Equations 2a and 2b, $belief_{id}$ is a variable containing a parent's self-reported belief about levels of economic segregation in their local school district (from one of the six segregation categories displayed in Figure 2); $actual_d$ is a variable containing the actual segregation levels in a parent's district (also from one of the six segregation categories).

Finally, we ran a series of regressions designed to determine the effect of our information treatment on responses to survey questions:

$$y_{id} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 treat_{id} + \boldsymbol{X_{id}\gamma} + \boldsymbol{D_d\delta} + \varepsilon_{id} \quad (3a)$$

$$y_{id} = \beta_1 under_{id} + \beta_2(treat_{id} * under_{id}) + \beta_3 over_{id} + \beta_4(treat_{id} * over_{id}) + \boldsymbol{X_{id}\gamma} + \boldsymbol{D_d\delta} + \varepsilon_{id} \quad (3b)$$

$$y_{id} = \beta_0 + \beta_1(belief_{id} - actual_d) + \beta_2 treat_{id} + \beta_3[treat_{id} * (belief_{id} - actual_d)] + \boldsymbol{X_{id}\gamma} + \boldsymbol{D_d\delta} + \varepsilon_{id}. \quad (3c)$$

In Equations 3a, 3b, and 3c, $treat_{id}$ is a dichotomous variable that indicates membership of the treatment group. In Equation 3b, $under_{id}$ is a dichotomous variable equal to 1 when $belief_{id} - actual_d < 0$ and equal to 0 otherwise. Likewise, $over_{id}$ is a dichotomous variable equal to 1 when $belief_{id} - actual_d \geq 0$.[11] Thus, Equation 3b allows us to test for heterogeneity based on whether respondents underestimate versus overestimate local school segregation. We omit the constant in Equation 3b so we can estimate effects directly by group. Equation 3c illustrates heterogeneity based on a continuous measure of the difference between perceived and actual segregation levels. Finally, we investigate treatment heterogeneity by income using equations of the same form as Equations 3b and 3c.

RESULTS

Attitudes and Preferences Regarding School Segregation

We begin with our results on parents' baseline attitudes and preferences regarding school segregation. These analyses focus on the control group because their attitudes and preferences regarding school segregation and segregation-reducing policies in the United States could not have been influenced by our information treatment. Table 2 reports the average attitude and policy preference indices for each demographic group, and Figure 3 displays a coefficient plot testing whether these indices significantly vary across demographic groups. Averages for the general attitudes and policy preferences are presented in standard deviation units.

We find a number of notable differences in average attitudes and preferences regarding segregation across demographic groups. For example, female respondents tend to report lower levels of both general and policy-specific support for reducing segregation than do male respondents (attitude difference = −.35 SD,[12] $p < .001$; policy difference = −.43 SD, $p < .001$). Likewise, compared to White respondents, Asian respondents report less support for reducing segregation (attitude difference = −.35 SD, $p < .05$; policy difference = −.42 SD, $p < .05$). We do not find evidence of statistically significant differences between White respondents and respondents from other racial groups or between non-Hispanic and Hispanic individuals. Older respondents report significantly lower support for reducing segregation relative to younger respondents (attitude difference = –.29 SD, $p < .001$; policy difference = −.31 SD, $p < .001$), and respondents with household incomes above the median tend to report higher support for reducing segregation relative to those below the median (attitude difference = .34 SD, $p < .001$; policy difference = .45 SD, $p < .001$).

Across education levels, we also see meaningful heterogeneity: Relative to respondents without a high school degree, parents with a four-year (attitude difference = .37 SD, $p < .01$) or graduate degree (attitude difference = .93 SD, $p < .001$) tend to report more positive general attitudes toward reducing segregation, and parents with a high school (policy difference = .26 SD, $p < .05$), four-year college (policy difference = .55 SD, $p < .001$), or graduate (policy difference = 1.05 SD, $p < .001$) degree report higher support for reducing segregation through policies. Respondents who identify as Republican (attitude difference = −.64 SD, $p < .001$; policy difference = −.63 SD, $p < .001$) or Independent (attitude difference = −.72 SD, $p < .001$; policy difference = −.74 SD, $p < .001$) voters tend to report lower levels of support for reducing

Table 2. Average Levels of Attitude and Policy Indices by Demographic Characteristics.

	Attitude index			Policy index		
	Mean	SD	*N*	Mean	SD	*N*
Gender						
Male	.16	1.03	482	.21	1.01	966
Female	−.19	.92	379	−.24	.92	754
Race						
White	.01	1.02	659	.04	1.03	1,347
Black	.13	.99	113	.09	.89	207
American Indian	.16	.91	13	−.11	.66	21
Asian	−.34	.78	39	−.29	.87	81
Other	−.17	.7	37	−.21	.9	64
Ethnicity						
Non-Hispanic	−.01	1.01	737	.01	1.01	1,497
Hispanic	.1	.92	124	.04	.96	223
Age						
Below median	.15	.94	427	.18	.93	833
Above median	−.14	1.04	434	−.14	1.04	887
Household income						
Below median	−.25	.9	209	−.31	.92	389
Above median	.09	1.02	652	.11	1	1,331
Education						
Less than high school	−.4	.89	82	−.35	.94	156
High school	−.31	.99	236	−.32	.95	470
Two-year degree	−.35	.98	51	−.43	.84	121
Four-year degree	−.03	.99	231	0	1.04	444
Graduate degree	.53	.82	261	.55	.81	529
Political party						
Democrat	.33	.89	451	.33	.9	887
Republican	−.31	1.06	236	−.26	1.06	490
Independent	−.4	.9	174	−.4	.9	343
Region						
Northeast	.27	.95	186	.21	.98	390
Midwest	−.21	1.04	157	−.19	.99	322
South	−.07	.97	331	−.01	.98	633
West	.05	1.01	187	.04	1.02	375

Note: This table displays group-level averages using only observations from the control group (n = 816). Multivariate models predicting general attitudes/policy preferences are shown in Table A3 in the online Supplemental Material.

segregation relative to respondents who identify as Democratic voters. Finally, relative to respondents living in the Northeast, we see less support for reducing segregation among parents in the Midwest (attitude difference = −.48 SD, $p < .001$; policy difference = −.53 SD, $p < .001$), South (attitude difference = −.34 SD, $p < .001$; policy difference = −.27 SD, $p < .01$), and West (attitude difference = −.22 SD, $p < .05$; policy difference = −.23 SD, $p < .05$). Multivariate regression models that control for demographic and district-level characteristics are shown in Table A3 in the online Supplemental Material.

We also find meaningful variation in parents' willingness to support tax increases and to increase the time their children travel to school to reduce segregation (see Figure A2 in the online Supplemental Material). For example, when considering the distribution of additional travel time, our calculations show that a parent at the 25th percentile is unwilling to have their child travel any additional minutes to reduce local school

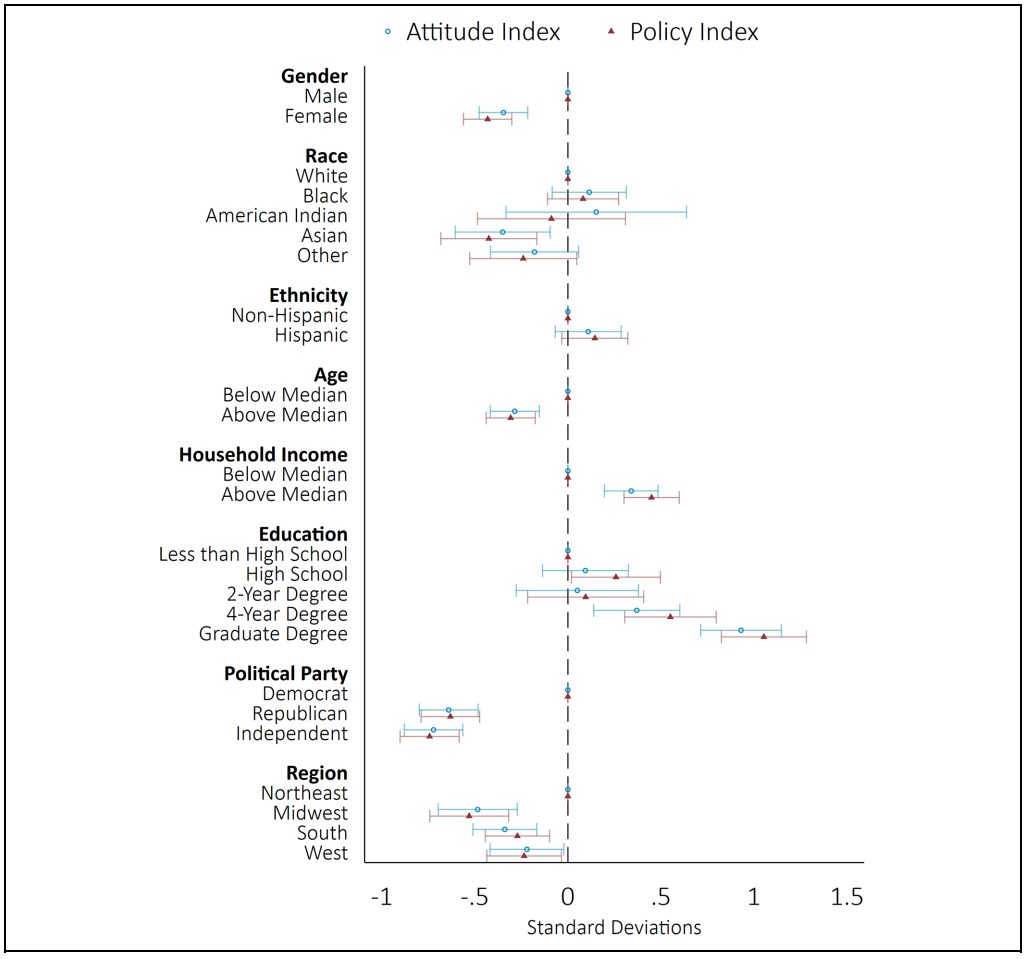

Figure 3. Bivariate associations between demographic characteristics and general attitudes/policy preferences.

Note: This figure displays bivariate regression coefficients using only observations from the control group (n = 816); multivariate regression results are displayed in Table A3 in the online Supplemental Material. Bivariate associations between district characteristics and both indices are shown in Figure A3 in the online Supplemental Material.

segregation, whereas a parent at the 75th percentile of this measure is willing to send their child to a school 10 additional minutes away (a 50 percent increase in mean travel time). Similarly, a parent at the 25th percentile supports just $5 in additional annual taxes to cover the costs of reducing school segregation, whereas a parent at the 75th percentile supports a $200 increase.

Beliefs about School Segregation

We now turn to parents' beliefs about school segregation. Figure 4a displays the distribution of parent perceptions of economic school segregation overlaid on top of the distribution of actual levels of school segregation in parents' districts. Figure 4b displays the distribution of differences between a parent's perception and their district's actual segregation levels. Only about one in six respondents correctly identified the segregation level in their local district, which corresponds to the expected fraction of guesses to be correct across the six bins simply by chance (100 ÷ 6 = 16.67). On average, parents underestimate the approximate amount of school segregation by .13 categories. Interestingly, perceived segregation

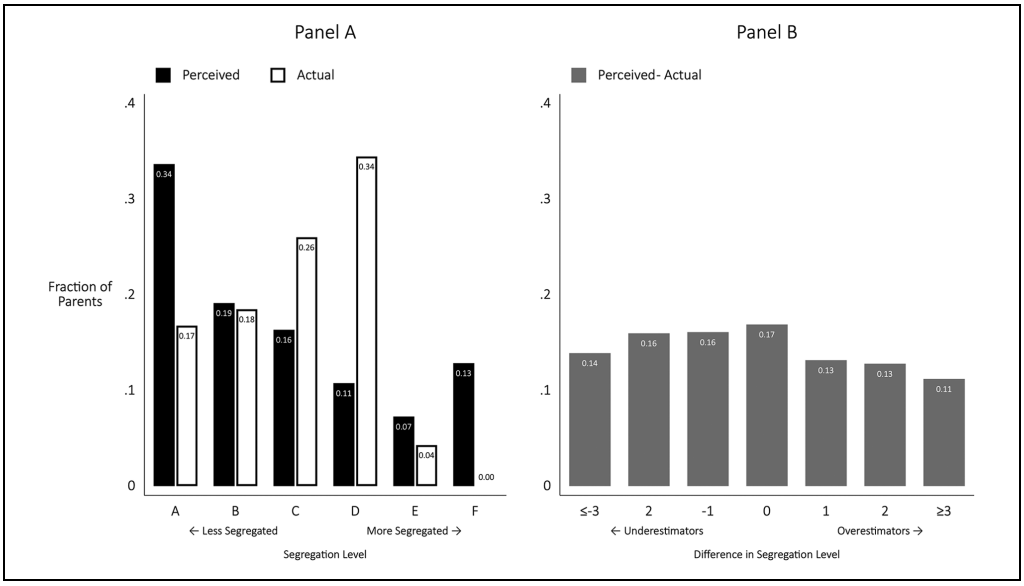

Figure 4. Distribution of perceived and actual levels of segregation: (a) perceived and actual and (b) difference between perceived and actual.

Note: Segregation Categories A to F correspond to the bins displayed in Figure 2. In Figure 4b, the $\leqslant -3$ bar contains approximately 1 percent of respondents who had a value of -4 and 13 percent who had a value of -3 (no respondents had a value of -5). The ≥ 3 bar contains the approximately 6 percent of respondents who had a value of 3, 3 percent who had a value of 4, and 1 percent who had a value of 5. The full version of Figure 4b is shown in Figure A4 in the online Supplemental Material.

exceeds actual segregation at both extremes of the distribution (i.e., Categories A and B, corresponding to little or no segregation, and Categories E and F, corresponding to much or total segregation), whereas actual segregation exceeds perceived segregation in the middle of the segregation distribution (i.e., Categories C and D). It is also useful to note differences in the fraction of actual districts that correspond to each bin; for example, given that very few districts are in Category E and no districts are in Category F, underestimating by four bins is very unlikely. These results emphasize that U.S. parents have a very poor understanding of the extent to which their local school district is economically segregated.

Next, Table 3 and Figure 5 show how demographic characteristics are associated with beliefs about local school segregation. First, Table 3 shows averages for perceptions of levels of local segregation and differences between perceived and actual segregation levels by demographic characteristics. Figure 5 illustrates demographic variation in differences between perceived and actual segregation levels (i.e., under- and overestimating segregation levels).

Across demographic groups, respondents are heterogeneous in the extent to which they accurately predicted levels of local economic school segregation. We focus on tendencies to over/underestimate local segregation, but Figure 5 also indicates where perceptions differed significantly between groups. Male respondents tended to underestimate local segregation (difference = $-.36$ bins,[13] $p < .001$), whereas female respondents tended to overestimate (difference = .18, $p < .05$). Respondents who self-identified as White (difference = $-.15$, $p < .05$) or Hispanic (difference = $-.43$, $p < .01$) tended to slightly underestimate segregation levels. Likewise, younger respondents (difference = $-.26$, $p < .001$) and those with above-median household incomes (difference = $-.28$, $p < .001$) tended to underestimate segregation levels, and those with below-median household incomes overestimated segregation levels, on average (difference = .42, $p < .001$). By education groups, respondents

Table 3. (Mis)Perception of Segregation Levels by Demographic Characteristics

	Perceived segregation level			Difference between perceived and actual segregation		
	Mean	SD	*N*	Mean	SD	*N*
Gender						
Male	2.7	1.74	966	−.36	2.03	905
Female	2.87	1.75	754	.18	2.07	729
Race						
White	2.7	1.72	1,347	−.15	2.04	1,272
Black	3.24	1.87	207	−.01	2.18	198
American Indian	2.62	1.53	21	−.24	2.17	21
Asian	2.78	1.70	81	−.06	2.05	80
Other	2.97	1.83	64	−.03	2.10	63
Ethnicity						
Non-Hispanic	2.79	1.74	1,497	−.08	2.04	1,425
Hispanic	2.67	1.76	223	−.43	2.16	209
Age						
Below median	2.77	1.73	833	−.26	2.07	775
Above median	2.77	1.76	887	.00	2.05	859
Household income						
Below median	3.07	1.78	389	.42	2.14	374
Above median	2.69	1.73	1,331	−.28	2.01	1,260
Education						
Less than high school	2.94	1.81	156	.24	2.11	148
High school	2.91	1.75	470	.31	2.02	452
Two-year degree	2.74	1.61	121	.08	1.78	114
Four-year degree	2.78	1.74	444	−.21	2.04	421
Graduate degree	2.61	1.75	529	−.60	2.07	499
Political Party						
Democrat	2.77	1.79	887	−.31	2.09	831
Republican	2.76	1.73	490	.01	2.08	472
Independent	2.82	1.66	343	.15	1.94	331
Region						
Northeast	2.69	1.71	390	−.23	1.99	369
Midwest	2.81	1.68	322	.48	2.01	309
South	2.79	1.77	633	−.25	2.05	620
West	2.79	1.80	375	−.34	2.10	336

Note: This table displays group-level averages using the analytic sample of observations (n = 1,623). Segregation levels correspond to the bins shown in Figure 2, where A=1 and F=6. Multivariate models predicting perceptions of segregation and differences between actual and perceived segregation are shown in Table A5 in the online Supplemental Material.

whose highest educational attainment was a high school degree tended to overestimate (difference = .31, $p < .01$), and respondents with a four-year degree (difference = −.21, $p < .05$) or graduate degree (difference = −.60, $p < .001$) tended to underestimate. Parents who identified as Democrats underestimated, on average, local segregation levels (difference = −.31, $p < .001$). Finally, respondents in the Midwest (difference = .48, $p < .001$) tended to overestimate economic segregation levels, whereas respondents in the Northeast (difference = −.23, $p < .05$), South (difference = −.25, $p < .01$), and West (difference = −.34, $p < .01$) underestimated segregation levels. Table A5 in the online Supplemental Material displays multivariate regression models predicting variation across demographic and district-level characteristics.

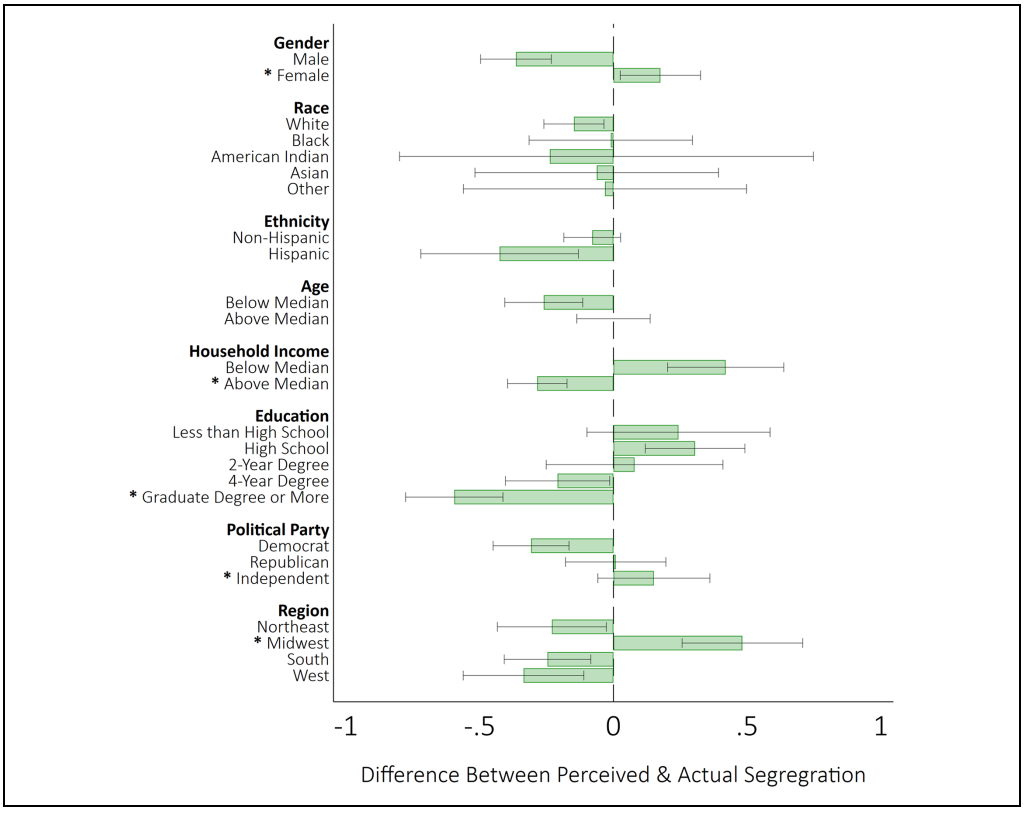

Figure 5. Bivariate associations between demographic characteristics and differences between perceived and actual segregation.

Note: This figure displays group-level averages using the analytic sample of observations (n = 1,623); multivariate regression results are displayed in Table A5 in the online Supplemental Material. Asterisks indicate whether there is a significant difference ($p < .05$) between a given group average and the reference category (reference categories are the first group listed under each heading).

Effect of Information Treatment

Table 4 presents treatment-effect estimates of our informational stimulus. We do not find a statistically significant treatment effect on parents' general attitudes or policy preferences toward school segregation.

We next consider the precision and practical implications of the null treatment effect, following recommendations from Aberson (2002) and Jacob et al. (2019). When considering general attitudes toward reducing school segregation, we find an estimated effect size of .06 SD, indicating treatment groups report slightly more positive feelings toward reducing school segregation than do control groups, although this effect is not statistically significant. The confidence interval around this effect ranges from −.02 SD to .13 SD, which suggests it is unlikely the effect size would be larger than .02 SD favoring the control group or larger than .13 SD favoring the treatment group. In practical terms, this indicates that any expected effects of the information treatment would be substantively quite small, even if they were to reach the upper bound of .13 SD. Given that these preferences were measured soon after treatment, we would also expect them to fade over time. In a real-world context, respondents would be unlikely to receive this type of information just before making key decisions about local policies or schools, so the practical effect of information treatments is likely smaller than the estimates observed here.

For the policy index, which measures preferences for policies that might reasonably be expected

Table 4. Experimental Treatment Effects of Information.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
	Attitude index		Policy index		Additional travel time		Tax increase	
Treatment	.04	.06	.02	.04	2.01	1.58	−54.17	−37.55
	(.05)	(.04)	(.05)	(.04)	(2.85)	(2.54)	(79.79)	(77.65)
95% confidence interval	[−.06 .13]	[−.02 .13]	[−.08 .11]	[−.05 .12]	[−3.5 7.6]	[−3.4 6.5]	[−210.7 102.3]	[−189.9 114.8]
Observations	1,623	1,623	1,623	1,623	1,623	1,623	1,623	1,623
Controls included	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes

Note: This table displays results from eight linear regressions using the analytic sample of observations. Robust standard errors are in parentheses. Included respondent-level controls are gender, race/ethnicity, age, income (ln), education, political party, and geographic region. Included district-level controls are economic school segregation, percent eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, district enrollment (ln), number of charter schools, per-pupil total expenditure, per-pupil total revenue, and district socioeconomic status.

to reduce local school segregation, the estimated treatment effect size is .04 SD, with the 95 percent confidence interval ranging from −.05 SD to .12 SD.[14] Once again, these effect sizes indicate, at most, a substantively small treatment effect influencing policy preferences. For context, consider the .61 SD difference in attitudes toward school segregation between Democrats and Republicans in our sample or the .33 SD difference in attitudes between respondents who are above versus below the median household income. Thus, even the upper bound of the treatment effects are unlikely to have a meaningful substantive effect on changing general attitudes and policy preferences for reducing school segregation.

For the measures predicting tax increases, we also consider Basile (2012), who estimates the total cost to halve school segregation would be approximately \$900 per pupil per year.[15] The bounds on the estimated treatment effect of information in our study range from a \$190 *decrease* in willingness to raise taxes to fund the costs of desegregated schools to a \$115 increase. At best, this is about one-tenth of the estimated cost to halve the amount of school segregation.

Finally, we test for heterogeneous treatment effects by over/underestimation and income. Panels A and B in Table 5 display treatment effects for over/underestimators; Panel A shows the separate treatment effects for over/underestimators (Equation 3b), and Panel B shows the continuous treatment interaction coefficient (Equation 3c). In Panel A, there at first appears to be a statistically significant effect of the treatment for overestimators' policy preferences at the $p < .05$ level; yet, we no longer detect this effect once we account for multiple hypotheses using either the false discovery rate or the more conservative Bonferroni correction. In both cases, the p value for this term is above the conventional significance level. From this, we conclude there is no detectable evidence of a statistically significant or substantively meaningful shift in either attitudes or policy preferences as a result of the information treatment. Perhaps unsurprisingly, like its dichotomous counterpart in Panel A, the continuous interaction term in Panel B is statistically significant for the policy preference index (however, this difference is not detectable once we account for multiple hypotheses). Panels C and D do not show evidence of statistically significant differences in treatment effects by income.

The online Supplemental Material includes several alternative specifications as robustness checks.

Table 5. Heterogeneity of Experimental Treatment Effects of Information.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Attitude index	Policy index	Additional travel time	Tax increase
A. Underestimator dichotomous interactions				
Treatment × (Perceived – Actual ≥ 0)	.10	.12*	−1.60	−36.73
	(.06)	(.06)	(1.73)	(102.93)
Treatment × (Perceived – Actual < 0)	.01	−.06	5.27	−31.03
	(.06)	(.06)	(5.31)	(120.82)
Adjusted R^2	.256	.264	.007	.147
B. Underestimator continuous interactions				
Treatment	.06	.05	1.12	−36.43
	(.04)	(.04)	(2.28)	(77.44)
Perceived – Actual	.01	−.02	2.36	31.22
	(.02)	(.02)	(1.80)	(33.54)
Treatment × (Perceived – Actual)	.01	.04*	−2.57	6.64
	(.02)	(.02)	(1.75)	(38.92)
Adjusted R^2	.256	.264	.004	.040
C. Household income dichotomous interactions				
Treatment × (Household Income > Median)	.07	.02	−.34	9.39
	(.05)	(.05)	(1.47)	(94.98)
Treatment × (Household Income ⩽ Median)	.02	.10	7.86	−190.91
	(.09)	(.09)	(10.17)	(121.75)
Adjusted R^2	.255	.262	.007	.147
D. Household income continuous interactions				
Treatment	.20	.36	44.49	−803.51
	(.39)	(.39)	(52.87)	(664.36)
ln(Household Income)	.06*	.08*	4.56	39.77
	(.03)	(.03)	(4.40)	(52.84)
Treatment × ln(Household Income)	−.01	−.03	−4.04	72.31
	(.04)	(.04)	(4.78)	(65.16)
Adjusted R^2	.256	.263	.003	.040
Observations	1,623			

Note: This table displays results from 16 linear regressions using the analytic sample of observations. Robust standard errors are in parentheses. Included respondent-level controls are gender, race/ethnicity, age, income (ln), education, political party, and geographic region. Included district-level controls are economic school segregation, percent elible for free or reduced-price lunch, district enrollment (ln), number of charter schools, per-pupil total expenditure, per-pupil total revenue, and district socioeconomic status.
*$p < .05$.

First, we include experimental treatment effects on the full, rather than analytic, sample of observations (Table A6). Next, we include experimental treatment effects for each of the individual policy preference survey items (Table A7). Finally, we include treatment effects for dichotomous measures of additional travel time and tax increases (Table A8). Across all specifications, our substantive conclusions on the effect of information on general attitudes and policy preferences remain consistent.

DISCUSSION

This study investigates beliefs about school segregation and preferences toward reducing it among parents of school-age children. Specifically, we explore the role of (mis)perceptions in shaping general attitudes and policy preferences on the issue of school segregation and if information designed to correct inaccurate beliefs might affect these views.

Descriptive analyses show that parents have highly inaccurate understandings of their local economic school segregation levels; parents correctly perceived school segregation in their district only about one-sixth of the time, no better than a random guess between the six segregation categories provided. Not only were parental perceptions inaccurate, but they also tended to be overly optimistic with respect to economic school integration. On average, parents underestimated the amount of segregation in their children's district. Indeed, the most common parental response was that their district had very little or no segregation. In reality, however, these perceptions are inaccurate, given that economic school segregation is high nationally and has been rising over time (Reardon and Owens 2014).

Moreover, we observe substantial heterogeneity in terms of the differences in respondents' perceived and actual local segregation levels. For example, high-income parents tended to underestimate their local levels of economic school segregation, whereas low-income parents tended to overestimate. However, despite inaccurate beliefs about school segregation, receiving tailored information on the actual segregation levels in one's school district did not significantly alter either general attitudes or policy preferences regarding school segregation. In practical terms, even the upper bound of the estimated treatment effects would constitute only a small change, given the large baseline differences in opinions, attitudes, and preferences around school segregation, and would be unlikely to move the needle in any meaningful way. Together, these findings highlight that (1) there are persistent misconceptions about segregation and (2) correcting misperceptions alone does not appear to influence preferences.

Our experimental results are largely consistent with a framework where, at least on the issue of economic school segregation, Americans are tolerant of inequality or, at best, ambivalent toward it (McCall 2013). Why aren't parents more receptive to information about school segregation? Although the mechanisms underlying these patterns are unclear, prior literature on perceptions of inequality and perceptions of school segregation suggest parents may not be amenable to policies they worry will affect their own children (Holme 2002; Majd-Jabbary, Brantlinger, and Guskin 1996; Pride 2000). Given that schooling inequality emerges not only due to the circumstances of disadvantaged children but also due to opportunity hoarding by advantaged families (Calarco 2018; Diamond and Lewis 2022; Freidus 2019; Lewis and Diamond 2015; Lewis-McCoy 2014; Owens 2018; Tilly 1998), one explanation for the null effects may be parents' self-interests. For example, Kimelberg and Billingham (2013) found that middle-class White parents who desired school diversity were unwilling to support policies that might subject their own children to busing and long travel times; yet they supported having other people's children brought to their districts to achieve diversity. Parents may also be influenced by financial self-interests, such as concerns about property values, which are linked to the perceived quality of local schools (Black 1999; Goldstein and Hastings 2019; Owens 2016). In addition, parents may hold racial or SES biases that shape their schooling choices (Billingham and Hunt 2016; Hailey 2022a). Finally, parents may express their views about inequality and redistribution through channels not captured by our survey (McCall 2013).

In shedding light on parental conceptions of local school segregation and on how preferences for segregation-reducing policies respond to informational stimuli on the actual levels and consequences of school segregation, our work has several important implications. First, we add to the large body of literature on how attitudes and perceptions of social class produce unequal social and economic outcomes (Billingham and Hunt 2016; Bobo et al. 2012; Gaddis 2015; Krysan et al. 2009). Second, we build on experimental and theoretical literatures on elasticity of policy preferences to information (Alesina, Stantcheva, and Teso 2018; Clinton and Grissom 2015; Cruces et al. 2013; Kuziemko et al. 2015; McCall 2013; McCall et al. 2017; Valant and Newark 2016). Finally, by focusing on parental perceptions of school segregation, we contribute to the literature on underlying causes of school segregation (Billingham and Hunt 2016; Jacobs 2011; Saporito 2017). In addition, our results may be useful to policymakers and educational administrators interested in understanding parental attitudes and preferences when adjudicating between competing segregation-related policies. Our results suggest general information campaigns designed to reduce educational inequality are unlikely to encourage changes in either attitudes or policy preferences. If the goal is to reduce the amount of segregation in the United States, attempting to change opinions alone is unlikely to be efficient or effective.

Our study has limitations that warrant additional consideration and discussion. First, survey

experiments are a useful tool for testing hypotheses that are difficult to test in real-world scenarios, but there are differences between what people report valuing and what they actually value when making decisions. Responses might thus suffer from social desirability bias. However, recent research on demand effects in survey experiments indicates that respondents have limited ability to adjust behaviors based on their understanding of the experiment's purpose (Mummolo and Peterson 2019). In addition, hypothetical survey responses are quite similar to observed real-world behaviors (Hainmueller, Hangartner, and Yamamoto 2015).

An additional limitation is the presentation of school segregation information, given that it is complex to measure and describe. For example, between-school and between-district measures of segregation differ, as does school segregation depending on the age of the child in question (e.g., there may be less segregation at the high school level if a district has only one high school but many elementary schools). We derived our measures of school segregation using FRPL eligibility, but any single measure cannot adequately index economic disadvantage (Domina et al. 2018; Greenberg et al. 2019). The provided measures were designed to be straightforward and simple to understand for our survey respondents; future studies might consider a longer experiment with more technical and nuanced details on segregation to elicit different segregation-related stratification beliefs. Finally, we did not collect data on whether respondents are homeowners, how old respondents' children are, or the types of schools respondents' children attend, so we are limited in our ability to examine how these factors may have influenced results.

Several aspects of our results should inform future work on these topics. First, because we observe only parental attitudes and policy preferences (but not why and how parents form these preferences), follow-up studies might include a qualitative component to better understand how parents process and interpret information about segregation in their school districts. Furthermore, given widespread opposition to busing and similar policies designed to reduce segregation, future studies might use tailored information treatments to address misconceptions of busing and other segregation-reducing policies as policy failures. Finally, a stronger information treatment might do more to address views on inequality. For example, targeted information on how respondents and their children might be negatively affected by segregation (or could stand to benefit from reducing segregation) may be a more effective approach to moving views on inequality and affecting general tolerances toward the issue. As such, future research should investigate the extent to which self-interest specifically is a mechanism underlying the patterns we observe.

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RESEARCH ETHICS

This study was approved by the authors' institutional review board. Participants gave their informed consent prior to participation, and all necessary steps have been taken to protect participants' confidentiality.

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SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL

Supplemental material for this article is available online.

NOTES

1. Author calculations using SEDA 4.0 data (Reardon et al. 2021). Definitions of economic disadvantage

in SEDA are drawn from the Common Core of Data. Here, poor is defined using student free or reduced-price lunch eligibility.

2. Throughout the article, we use the terms ''beliefs'' and ''perceptions'' to refer to a person's descriptive understanding of the current state of the world. Importantly, beliefs and perceptions can be either accurate or inaccurate. For example, a person who believes their district has no segregation when it is, in fact, highly segregated holds an inaccurate belief (or misperception). We use the terms ''attitudes'' and ''preferences'' to refer to a person's normative views about which hypothetical or actual states of the world are desirable; these are subjective and therefore cannot be evaluated as inherently accurate or inaccurate. For example, a person believing the world would be improved if segregation was reduced has a preference for (and a positive attitude toward) desegregation.
3. Economic school segregation may be less visually apparent than racial segregation, but there are a few ways parents may have a better understanding of economic segregation than we may think. For example, parents tend to sort across neighborhoods based in part on poverty levels (Goyette and Lareau 2014; Rhodes and Warkentien 2017), which suggests they have a baseline understanding of characteristics like average incomes or home values (with additional information available on websites like Zillow). Likewise, Great Schools has publicly available information on school economic composition.
4. The remaining two-thirds of overall economic school segregation is due to between-district school segregation.
5. SES-based assignment plans are typically designed to offset rising levels of economic segregation rather than to achieve socioeconomic integration (i.e., districts where high- and low-income students have demographically similar schoolmates). For this reason, they are seen as a weaker intervention compared to prior decades of court-ordered desegregation and tend to be more legally precarious (Domina et al. 2021; Kahlenberg 2011; Reardon and Rhodes 2011). A strength of these programs, however, is that Americans tend to be more amenable to SES-based plans to reduce segregation compared to analogous race-based policies (Carlson and Bell 2021). In addition, the 2007 *Parents Involved in Community Schools vs. Seattle School District No. 1* Supreme Court case significantly limited the extent to which districts can use race in school district assignment plans.
6. The preregistration document and replication package can be accessed through the Open Science Framework (https://osf.io/yhj4m/).
7. Results are virtually identical with the inclusion of the dropped cases as a robustness check (see Table A6 in the online Supplemental Material).
8. When measuring segregation between two groups, the normalized exposure index reduces to several other common measures, including eta squared, the variance ratio index, and the relative diversity index (Massey and Denton 1988; Owens et al. 2022).
9. SEDA covers virtually all school districts in the United States. Segregation measures are estimated for grades three to eight in all schools in a given school district. Importantly, SEDA includes imputed counts of FRPL-eligible students for districts under community eligibility programs (where all students in the district have access to FRPL, regardless of individual eligibility).
10. The general attitudes index is constructed using Questions 3, 12, 13, and 15. The policy preferences index is constructed using Questions 6 through 9, and 14. These questions were designed in conjunction with experts at the University of Wisconsin Survey Center using best practices in survey research to ensure they were intelligible to parent respondents.
11. Under this formulation, what we call an ''overestimator'' includes (1) parents who believed their local school district to be more economically segregated than it was and (2) parents who accurately guessed the level of segregation in their district. We group these two types of responses together because both should theoretically imply smaller treatment effects of information than ''underestimators'' (i.e., parents who believed their district was less segregated than it actually is).
12. These differences were calculated by, for example, subtracting the average for male respondents from the average for female respondents: $-.19$ SD $-$ $.16$ SD $= -.35$ SD.
13. We calculate this by subtracting actual segregation from perceived segregation for each demographic group of interest.
14. Treatment effects for individual policy questions can be found in Table A7 in the online Supplemental Material.
15. This estimate is for a reform that opens a magnet school to decrease segregation. Associated projected costs include transportation, expenses associated with operating magnet programs, and incentives for the within-district transfer program (for a more detailed cost calculation, see Basile 2012).

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A1. Matching Zip Codes to Segregation Levels

To estimate the number of parents living in each zip-district intersection, we used survey data from the 2019–2013 and 2014–2018 versions of the American Community Survey (ACS; U.S. Census Bureau 2019). We combined ACS survey data with information on the geographic boundaries of all zip codes and school districts, taken from the U.S. Census Zip Code Tabulation Areas (ZCTA; U.S. Census Bureau 2010) data and the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Education Demographic and Geographic Estimates (EDGE; National Center for Education Statistics 2019) data, respectively. We began with the ZCTA-EDGE geographic relationship file, a dataset of all zip-district intersections. For each school district, we drew estimates of the number of parents with children enrolled in public school using ACS school district tabulations from 2009 through 2018. We then divided the number of parents by the land area of each district, calculating an estimate of the population density of parents in each school district. Next, we merged our school district population density estimate onto the universe of zip-district intersections. Finally, we multiplied school district population density by the land area of each zip-district intersection, which yields an estimate of the number of parents living in each zip-district intersection.[1] For zip codes that intersect with school districts, we assigned them to the school district of the zip-district intersection containing the greatest estimated number of parents of public-school children.

To calculate the accuracy of our zip code to school district crosswalk, we divided the estimated number of parents living in a zip code's assigned school district by the total number of parents who live in a zip code. Our method is quite accurate—an estimated 86 percent of parents were assigned to the correct school district. Figure A1 displays a histogram of the fraction of

[1] This strategy assumes a relatively even distribution of parents throughout school districts.

parents who live in a given zip code who are expected to be correctly assigned to their school district using the method described above. Once each zip code is assigned to a single school district, we matched zip codes to the local levels of economic school segregation. To visually display this segregation level to survey respondents, we coarsened each district's continuous segregation value to one of six segregation bins, illustrated in Figure 2 in the main text.

Although only 86 percent of parents are expected to be assigned to the correct school district via their zip code, 93 percent of parents are expected to be assigned to the correct binned segregation category (and another 5 percent of parents are assigned to a category one away from their true category). This is due to the correlation in economic school segregation between neighboring school districts, combined with the fact that coarsening segregation obscures some underlying differences between the segregation levels in a parent's true versus assigned segregation. The correlation between a parent's true and assigned segregation category is 0.94, validating the accuracy of our zip code to school district matching approach.

SUPPLEMENT TABLES

Table A1. Tabulation of U.S. zip code – school district intersections

Number of District Intersections per Zip Code	Total Zip Codes	Total U.S. Parents	Fraction of U.S. Parents
1	16,175	23,173,180	0.438
2	9,023	15,519,609	0.293
3	4,673	8,860,239	0.167
4	1,804	3,760,401	0.071
5	518	1,231,475	0.023
6	120	324,390	0.006
7	23	50,265	0.001
8	6	11,473	0.000
9	2	13,183	0.000
Total	**32,344**	**52,944,215**	**1.000**

Note: This table displays a tabulation of the number of U.S. zip codes (and parents living in those zip codes) with a given number of school district intersections, ignoring any zip-parent intersections that contain very few parents (i.e., less than 2 percent of a zip code's estimated parent population). The zip code – school district intersections are derived from the U.S. Census 2019 geographic relationship files, and the number of parents in each district is estimated using American Community Survey data spanning 2009 to 2018.

Table A2. Attitude and policy index PCA factor loadings

Survey Question	**Factor Loadings**				
	Component 1	Component 2	Component 3	Component 4	Component 5
A. Attitude Index					
Important Issue	0.51	0.22	-0.78	0.29	
Support Reducing	0.53	-0.27	-0.03	-0.8	
Positive/Negative	0.49	-0.61	0.34	0.52	
Problem	0.47	0.71	0.53	0.05	
Variance Explained	0.67	0.15	0.1	0.08	
Observations	1,623				
B. Policy Index					
Attendance Boundaries	0.47	-0.07	-0.14	-0.24	-0.83
New School	0.45	-0.16	-0.5	0.71	0.14
Magnet School	0.43	-0.56	0.69	0.05	0.15
Budget Increase	0.46	0	-0.35	-0.64	0.5
Government Responsibility	0.43	0.81	0.36	0.15	0.07
Fraction of Variance Explained	0.7	0.09	0.08	0.07	0.06
Observations			1,623		

Note: Results from principal components analyses of two groups of survey items related to school segregation. The first principal component from Panel A is used as our General Attitudes index, and the first principal component from Panel B is used as our Policy Preferences index. See the Experimental Items section for the exact wording of each survey item.

Table A3. Predicting general attitudes/policy preferences using individual- and district-level covariates

	(1) Attitude Index	(2) Policy Index	(3) Additional Travel Time (Minutes)	(4) Tax Increase
Female	-0.04	-0.14	-3.41	-192.20
	(0.07)	(0.07)	(4.89)	(129.49)
Black	0.05	0.04	-16.05	446.18
	(0.11)	(0.10)	(19.45)	(277.18)
American Indian	0.31	0.08	19.19	208.49
	(0.24)	(0.18)	(12.00)	(664.99)
Asian	-0.15	-0.21	5.08	-81.11
	(0.15)	(0.15)	(7.16)	(209.75)
Other	-0.04	-0.12	-0.01	-293.46
	(0.15)	(0.16)	(5.64)	(330.54)
Hispanic	-0.00	0.10	6.75	447.09
	(0.10)	(0.09)	(5.52)	(280.92)
Age	-0.02***	-0.02***	0.25	-8.02
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.22)	(4.59)
ln(Household Income)	0.06	0.07*	4.45	60.13
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(3.93)	(58.77)
High School	0.13	0.30*	24.50	-244.41
	(0.12)	(0.13)	(26.40)	(212.88)
Two-Year Degree	0.14	0.16	21.62	-268.46
	(0.17)	(0.16)	(24.17)	(238.98)
Four-Year Degree	0.25*	0.42**	21.94	-184.04
	(0.13)	(0.13)	(24.13)	(226.03)
Graduate Degree	0.71***	0.78***	20.95	46.14
	(0.13)	(0.13)	(21.05)	(246.36)
Republican	-0.41***	-0.39***	0.73	-88.05
	(0.08)	(0.08)	(4.06)	(132.42)
Independent	-0.49***	-0.50***	-13.85	101.81
	(0.08)	(0.08)	(15.73)	(196.09)
Midwest	0.01	-0.06	1.80	-152.49
	(0.15)	(0.16)	(9.19)	(191.26)
South	0.04	0.09	3.42	-107.29
	(0.15)	(0.16)	(9.31)	(204.60)
West	0.07	-0.02	4.21	10.02
	(0.18)	(0.18)	(8.67)	(266.68)
Economic School Segregation	0.35	-0.00	17.74	-879.36
	(0.43)	(0.44)	(21.31)	(940.37)
Percent FRPL	0.11	0.10	-9.00	887.83
	(0.37)	(0.38)	(11.90)	(497.03)
ln(District Enrollment)	0.01	0.01	-3.85	49.94
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(2.69)	(60.78)
Number of Charter Schools	0.00	0.00	0.02	-2.24
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.04)	(2.19)
Per-Pupil Total Expenditure ($1,000)	0.03	0.06	-1.28	146.53
	(0.05)	(0.05)	(2.85)	(87.41)
Per-Pupil Total Revenue ($1,000)	-0.02	-0.05	1.13	-122.05
	(0.05)	(0.05)	(2.82)	(85.51)
District SES	-0.03	-0.02	-4.07	133.09

	(0.09)	(0.09)	(3.84)	(93.06)
Constant	-0.46	-0.57	-31.05	-736.91
	(0.51)	(0.52)	(46.47)	(828.10)
R-squared	0.280	0.296	0.035	0.069
Adjusted *R*-squared	0.258	0.275	0.006	0.040
Observations	816	816	816	816

Note: This table displays results from four linear regressions using only observations from the control group. Robust standard errors are in parentheses. Omitted reference categories are male, White, household income below median, less than high school education, Democrat, and Northeast.
*$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$; ***$p < 0.001$.

Table A4. Distribution of perceived and actual levels of segregation, by race, ethnicity, political party, and income

	Actual		Perceived			Actual		Perceived	
	Fraction of Parents	Standard Error	Fraction of Parents	Standard Error		Fraction of Parents	Standard Error	Fraction of Parents	Standard Error
Race									
White					*Hispanic*				
A	0.18	{0.011}	0.35	{0.013}	A	0.12	{0.023}	0.36	{0.033}
D	0.18	{0.011}	0.19	{0.011}	D	0.17	{0.026}	0.21	{0.028}
C	0.26	{0.012}	0.16	{0.010}	C	0.22	{0.029}	0.13	{0.024}
D	0.34	{0.013}	0.11	{0.009}	D	0.42	{0.034}	0.11	{0.021}
E	0.04	{0.005}	0.07	{0.007}	E	0.07	{0.017}	0.06	{0.017}
F	0	{0.000}	0.12	{0.009}	F	0	{0.000}	0.13	{0.023}
Observations	1,264				Observations	208			
					Political Party				
Black					*Democrat*				
A	0.08	{0.020}	0.28	{0.032}	A	0.14	{0.012}	0.36	{0.017}
D	0.15	{0.025}	0.16	{0.026}	D	0.15	{0.012}	0.18	{0.013}
C	0.27	{0.032}	0.13	{0.024}	C	0.25	{0.015}	0.15	{0.012}
D	0.43	{0.035}	0.13	{0.024}	D	0.42	{0.017}	0.1	{0.011}
E	0.07	{0.018}	0.12	{0.023}	E	0.05	{0.007}	0.08	{0.010}
F	0	{0.000}	0.19	{0.028}	F	0	{0.000}	0.13	{0.012}
Observations	196				Observations	827			
American Indian					*Republican*				
A	0.15	{0.082}	0.25	{0.099}	A	0.2	{0.018}	0.33	{0.022}
D	0.2	{0.092}	0.2	{0.092}	D	0.2	{0.018}	0.2	{0.018}
C	0.35	{0.109}	0.4	{0.112}	C	0.28	{0.021}	0.18	{0.018}
D	0.2	{0.092}	0	{0.000}	D	0.29	{0.021}	0.1	{0.014}
E	0.1	{0.069}	0.05	{0.050}	E	0.03	{0.008}	0.07	{0.011}
F	0	{0.000}	0.1	{0.069}	F	0	{0.000}	0.13	{0.016}
Observations	20				Observations	470			
Asian					*Independent*				
A	0.16	{0.042}	0.29	{0.051}	A	0.19	{0.022}	0.28	{0.025}
D	0.24	{0.048}	0.26	{0.050}	D	0.24	{0.024}	0.21	{0.023}
C	0.29	{0.051}	0.17	{0.043}	C	0.28	{0.025}	0.18	{0.021}
D	0.25	{0.049}	0.1	{0.034}	D	0.24	{0.024}	0.13	{0.019}
E	0.06	{0.027}	0.04	{0.021}	E	0.05	{0.012}	0.07	{0.014}
F	0	{0.000}	0.14	{0.039}	F	0	{0.000}	0.12	{0.018}
Observations	80				Observations	326			
					Household Income				
Other					*Below Median*				
A	0.14	{0.044}	0.3	{0.058}	A	0.19	{0.021}	0.26	{0.023}
D	0.19	{0.050}	0.17	{0.048}	D	0.25	{0.023}	0.17	{0.020}
C	0.22	{0.053}	0.17	{0.048}	C	0.27	{0.023}	0.19	{0.020}
D	0.4	{0.062}	0.11	{0.040}	D	0.25	{0.023}	0.13	{0.017}
E	0.05	{0.027}	0.06	{0.031}	E	0.04	{0.010}	0.07	{0.014}
F	0	{0.000}	0.17	{0.048}	F	0	{0.000}	0.17	{0.020}
Observations	63				Observations	368			
Ethnicity									
Non-Hispanic					*Above Median*				
A	0.17	{0.010}	0.33	{0.012}	A	0.16	{0.010}	0.35	{0.014}
D	0.18	{0.010}	0.19	{0.010}	D	0.16	{0.010}	0.2	{0.011}
C	0.27	{0.012}	0.17	{0.010}	C	0.26	{0.012}	0.16	{0.010}
D	0.34	{0.013}	0.11	{0.008}	D	0.38	{0.014}	0.1	{0.009}
E	0.04	{0.005}	0.08	{0.007}	E	0.05	{0.006}	0.07	{0.007}
F	0	{0.000}	0.13	{0.009}	F	0	{0.000}	0.12	{0.009}
Observations	1,415				Observations	1,255			

Note: This tables displays the fraction of individuals who perceived their local segregation levels to be in a given segregation category, alongside the actual number of individuals in that group.

Table A5. Predicting perceptions of segregation levels and differences between perceived and actual segregation

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Perception of Segregation Level		**Difference Perceived & Actual Segregation**	
Female	0.04	0.06	0.23*	0.08
	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.11)	(0.10)
Black	0.45**	0.40**	0.00	0.34*
	(0.15)	(0.15)	(0.17)	(0.15)
American Indian / Alaska Native	-0.15	-0.17	-0.28	-0.20
	(0.34)	(0.34)	(0.51)	(0.36)
Asian / Pacific Islander	-0.02	-0.02	-0.07	-0.01
	(0.20)	(0.19)	(0.23)	(0.20)
Other / Prefer not to answer	0.35	0.33	0.27	0.28
	(0.27)	(0.27)	(0.31)	(0.27)
Hispanic	-0.29	-0.30	-0.48**	-0.25
	(0.15)	(0.15)	(0.18)	(0.15)
Age	-0.01	-0.01	0.01	-0.01
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Household Income (Log)	-0.08	-0.08	-0.20***	-0.07
	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)
High School	0.09	0.09	0.15	0.17
	(0.18)	(0.18)	(0.20)	(0.18)
Two-Year Degree	-0.05	-0.02	0.05	0.05
	(0.22)	(0.22)	(0.25)	(0.22)
Four-Year Degree	0.05	0.06	-0.10	0.09
	(0.18)	(0.19)	(0.21)	(0.19)
Graduate Degree or More	-0.06	-0.06	-0.33	-0.02
	(0.19)	(0.19)	(0.21)	(0.19)
Republican	0.04	0.06	0.17	0.06
	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.12)	(0.11)
Independent	0.04	0.06	0.20	0.07
	(0.11)	(0.12)	(0.13)	(0.12)
Midwest	0.02	0.25	0.43**	0.23
	(0.13)	(0.20)	(0.16)	(0.21)
South	0.02	0.24	-0.22	0.23
	(0.12)	(0.23)	(0.13)	(0.23)
West	0.11	0.39	-0.20	0.32
	(0.13)	(0.24)	(0.15)	(0.24)
FRPL School Segregation		0.18		-7.14***
		(0.64)		(0.64)
Percent FRPL		-0.01		0.22
		(0.52)		(0.53)
District Enrollment (Log)		0.01		-0.20***
		(0.05)		(0.05)
Number of Charter Schools		-0.00		0.00

		(0.00)		(0.00)
Per-Pupil Total Expenditure		0.00		0.00
		(0.00)		(0.00)
Per-Pupil Total Revenue		-0.00		-0.00
		(0.00)		(0.00)
District SES		-0.11		-0.02
		(0.13)		(0.13)
Constant	3.77***	3.16***	1.74**	6.05***
	(0.51)	(0.72)	(0.60)	(0.72)
R-squared	0.019	0.024	0.069	0.228
Adjusted *R*-squared	0.009	0.009	0.059	0.217
Observations	1,623	1,623	1,623	1,623

Note: This table displays results from four linear regressions using the analytic sample of observations. Robust standard errors are in parentheses. Omitted reference categories are male, White, less than high school education, Democrat, and Northeast. District SES indicates district socioeconomic status.
*$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$; ***$p < 0.001$.

Table A6. Experimental treatment effects of information on full sample

	(1) **Attitude Index**	(2) **Policy Index**	(3) **Additional Travel Time**	(4) **Tax Increase**
Treatment	0.05	0.02	-5.06	-52.65
	(0.04)	(0.04)	(6.99)	(76.01)
Adjusted *R*-squared	0.241	0.248	0.037	0.033
Observations	1,720	1,720	1,720	1,720

Note: This table displays results from four linear regressions using the full sample of observations (n = 1,720). Robust standard errors are in parentheses. Included respondent-level controls are gender, race/ethnicity, age, income (ln), education, political party, and geographic region. No district-level controls are included (as they are missing for certain members of the full sample).
*$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$; ***$p < 0.001$.

Table A7. Experimental treatment effects of information on individual policy preference survey items

	(1) **Attendance Boundaries**	(2) **New School**	(3) **Magnet School**	(4) **Budget Increase**	(5) **Government Responsibility**
Treatment	0.06	0.03	-0.01	0.08	0.07
	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.08)
Adjusted *R*-squared	0.202	0.185	0.152	0.261	0.145
Observations	1,623	1,623	1,623	1,623	1,623

Note: This table displays results from four linear regressions using the analytic sample of observations. Robust standard errors are in parentheses. Included respondent-level controls are gender, race/ethnicity, age, income (ln), education, political party, and geographic region. Included district-level controls are economic school segregation, percent FRPL, district enrollment (ln), number of charter schools, per-pupil total expenditure, per-pupil total revenue, and district SES.

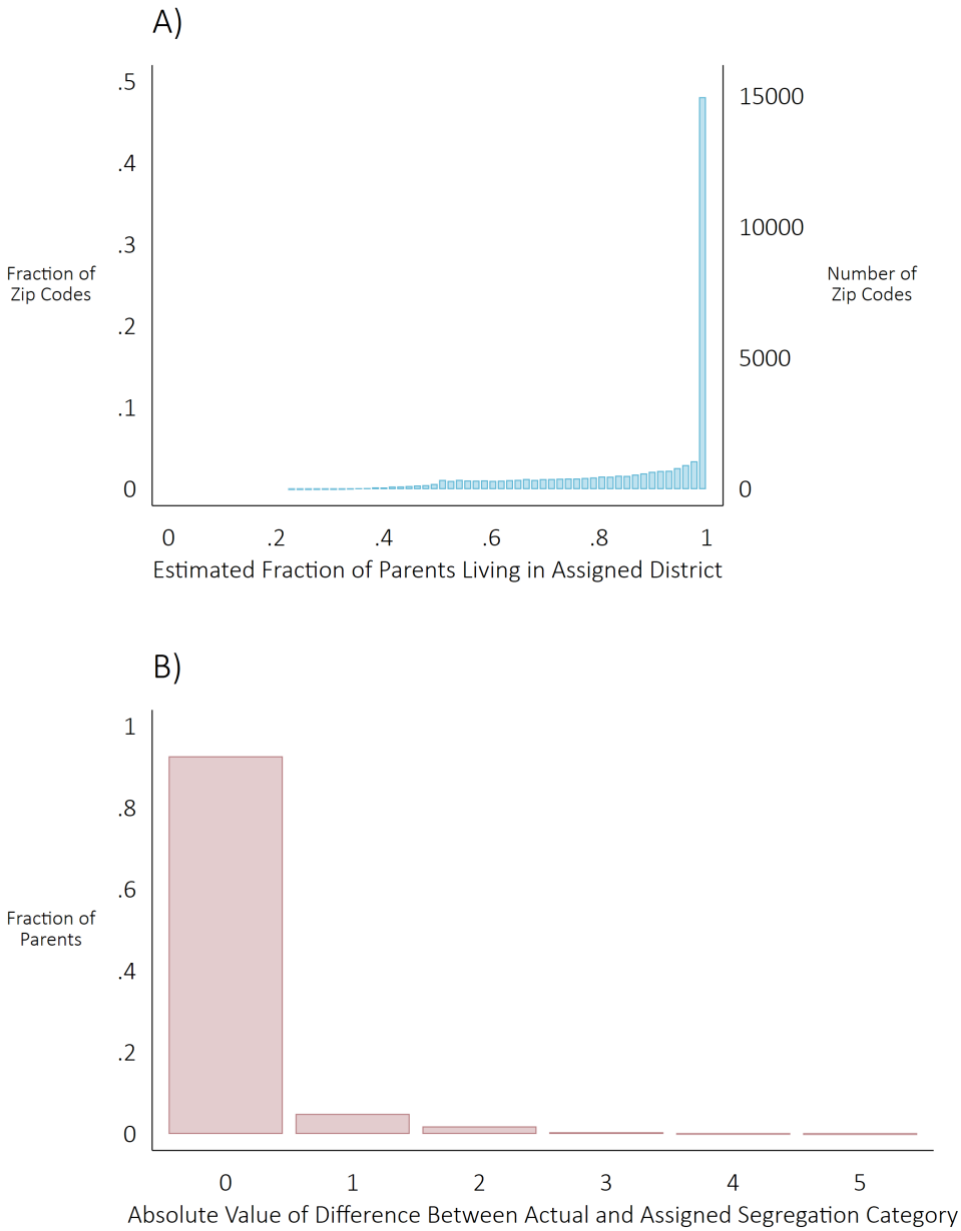
Table A8. Experimental treatment effects of information on dichotomous measures of additional travel time and tax increases

	(1)	(2)
	Additional Travel Time >= 5	Tax Increase >= 5
Treatment	-0.04	-0.00
	(0.02)	(0.02)
Adjusted *R*-squared	0.036	0.073
Observations	1,623	1,623

Note: This table displays results from two linear regressions using the analytic sample of observations. Robust standard errors are in parentheses. Included respondent-level controls are gender, race/ethnicity, age, income (ln), education, political party, and geographic region. Included district-level controls are economic school segregation, percent FRPL, district enrollment (ln), number of charter schools, per-pupil total expenditure, per-pupil total revenue, and district SES.

SUPPLEMENT FIGURES

Figure A1. Accuracy of school district to zip code assignment procedure

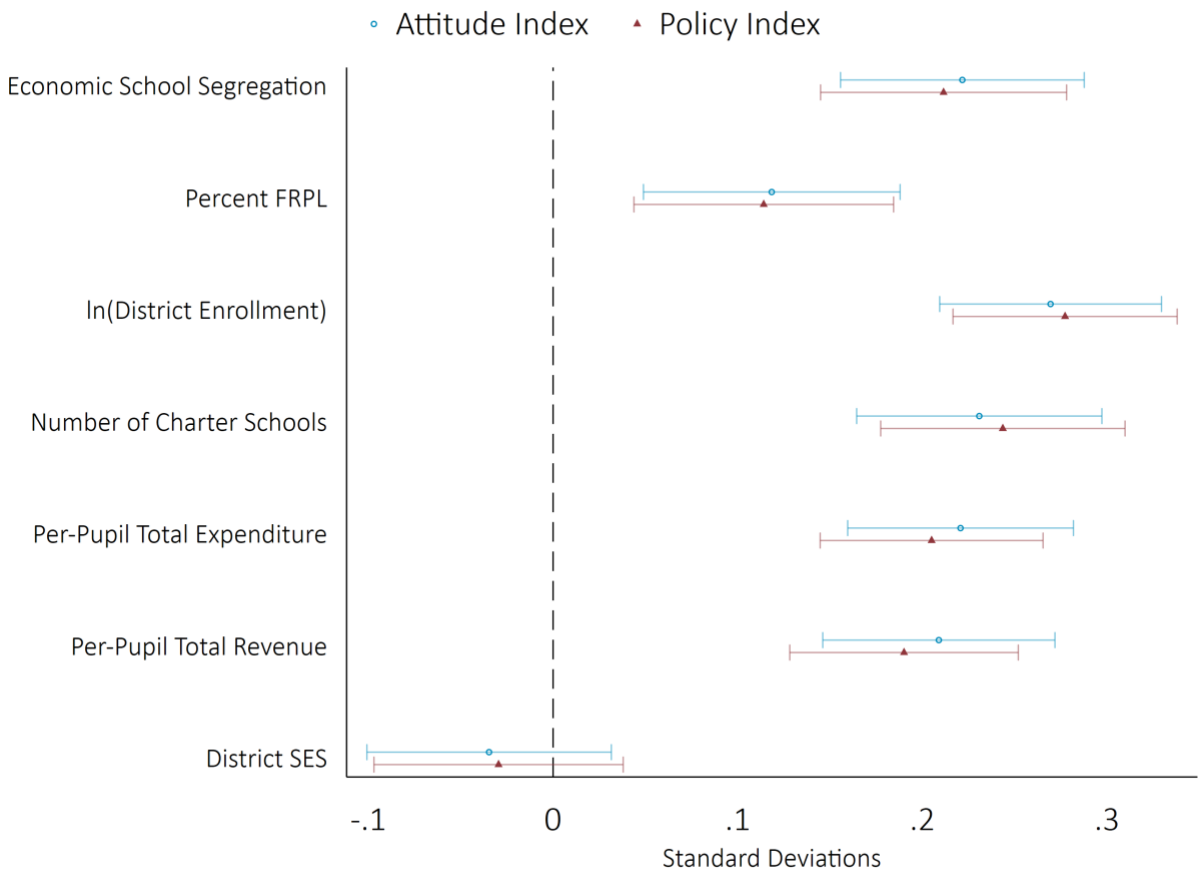


Note: Zip code–school district intersections are derived from the U.S. Census 2019 geographic relationship files; the number of parents in each district is estimated using American Community Survey data spanning 2009 to 2018.

Figure A2. Distribution of experimental outcomes

Note: The right tails on Panels A and B represent the ceiling of each of the indices, which comprises respondents who selected the maximum level of support or agreement for each of the underlying survey items. To more clearly display the underlying data, the *x*-axis of Panel C is top-coded at the variable's 95th percentile. Similarly, the *x*-axis of Panel D is bottom- and top-coded at the variable's 5th and 95th percentiles.

Figure A3. Bivariate associations between school district characteristics and general attitudes/policy preferences



Note: This figure displays bivariate regression coefficients using only observations from the control group (n = 816); multivariate regression results are displayed in Table A3.

Figure A4. Full distribution of difference between perceived and actual levels of segregation

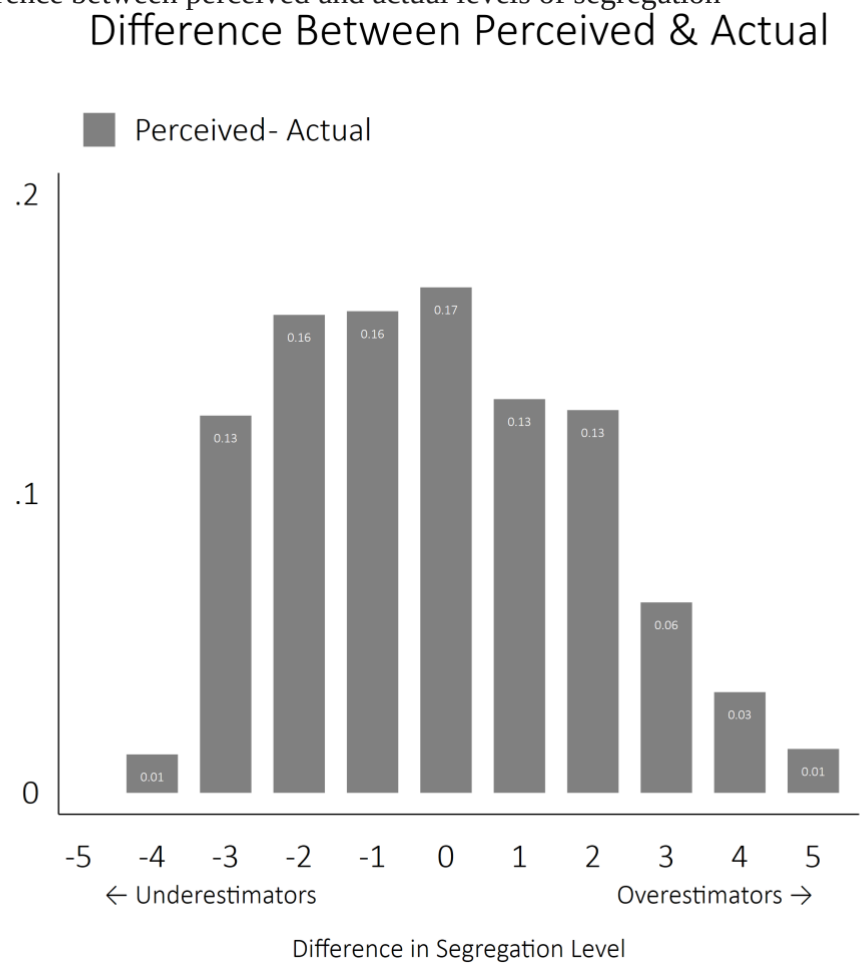
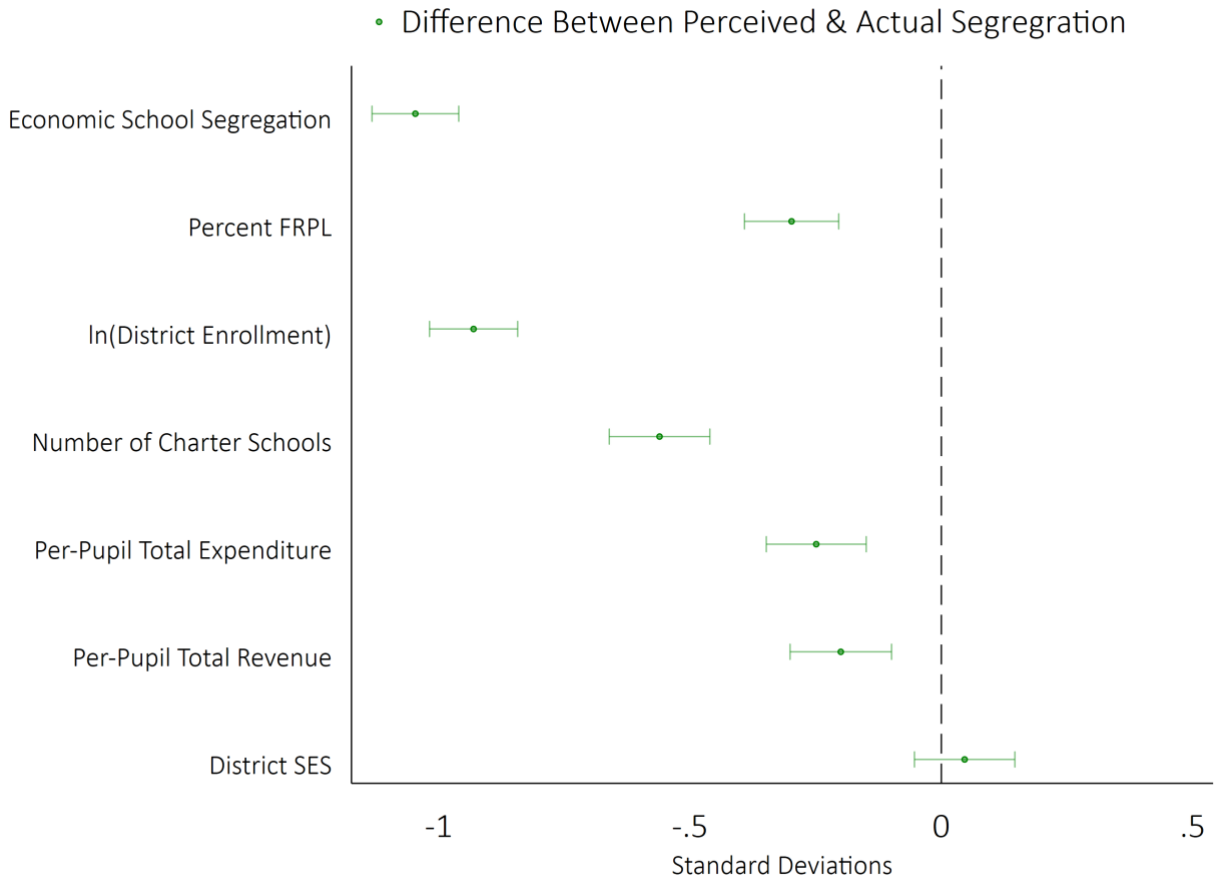


Figure A5. Bivariate associations between school district characteristics and differences between perceived and actual segregation



Note: This figure displays bivariate regression coefficients using the analytic sample of observations (n = 1,623); multivariate regression results are displayed in Table A5.

References

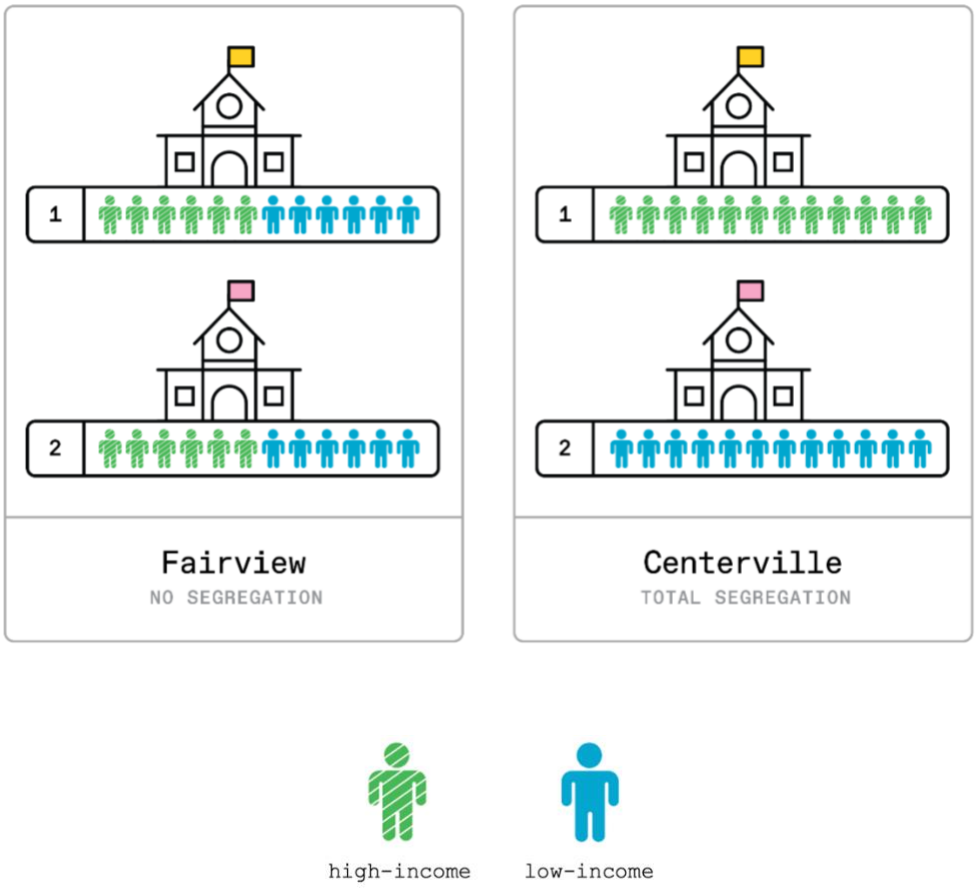
National Center for Education Statistics. 2019. “Education Demographic and Geographic Estimates.”
U.S. Census Bureau. 2010. “Zip Code Tabulation Areas.”
U.S. Census Bureau. 2019. “American Community Survey.”

Experimental Items

i) Segregation Information (All Respondents):

Economic school segregation is the degree to which students from high-income families and students from low-income families in the **same school district** attend **different schools.** A school district has high levels of economic segregation when students tend to have schoolmates mainly of their own family income level; that is, high-income students tend to go to schools with more high-income students and low-income students tend to go to schools with more low-income students.

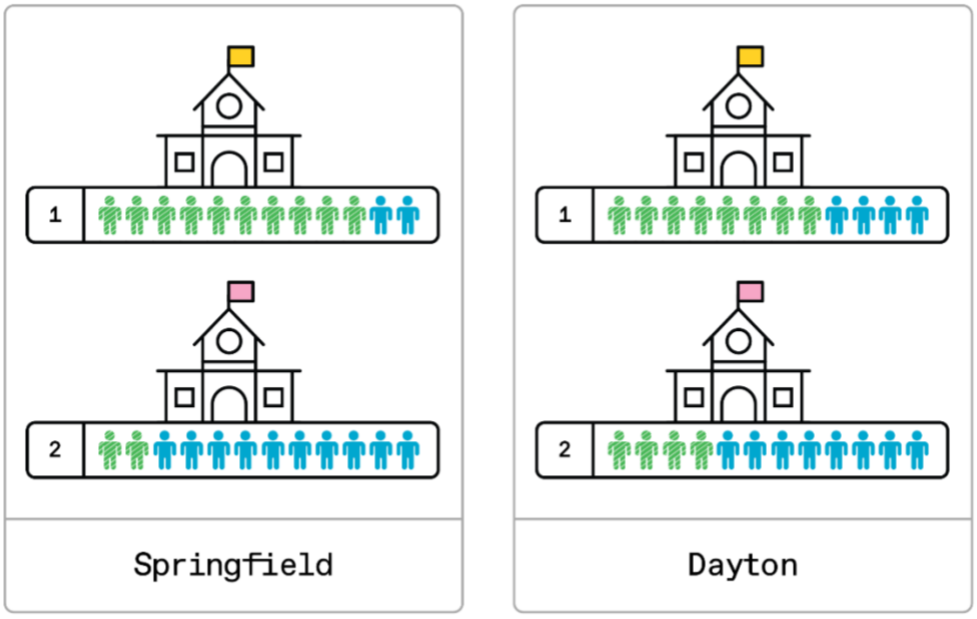
For example, the figure[2] below shows two school districts, Fairview and Centerville. Each district has just two schools, School 1 and School 2. The economic composition of each school is represented by a row of students, with the top row representing School 1 and the bottom row representing School 2. Here, we define student income using eligibility for free or reduced-price lunch at school.



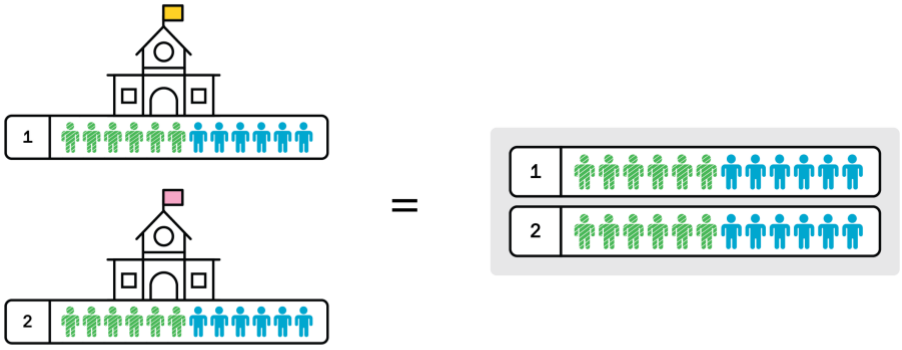
[2] This figure (and all subsequent survey images) appears in black and white in print versions of this study. However, all images were displayed to survey respondents in color.

Both Fairview and Centerville are comprised of **half low-income students and half high-income students.** However, they differ in how students are assigned to schools. Fairview represents a school district with **no segregation** (low-income and high-income students are **equally distributed among the two schools**). On the other hand, Centerville represents a school district with **total segregation** (low-income and high-income students attend **entirely separate schools**). While it is possible for a school district to be totally segregated (like Centerville) or not segregated at all (like Fairview), most school districts are somewhere in between.

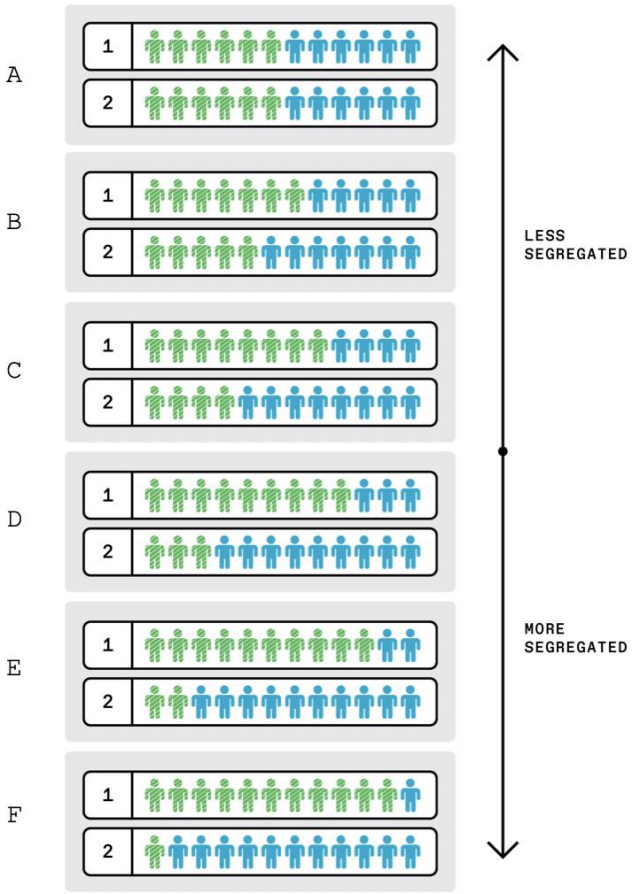
1. Using the information in the figure **<u>below</u>**, which school district is more segregated?
   - o Springfield
   - o Dayton



We can graphically represent a school district's segregation in multiple ways. For example, the two images displayed below both show the same district and the same amount of school segregation.



2. We are interested in how much schools are segregated in the public school district that children in your neighborhood attend. Of the example districts A through F below, which do you think corresponds to the amount of economic school segregation in **your school district**?
   - o District A
   - o District B
   - o District C
   - o District D
   - o District E
   - o District F

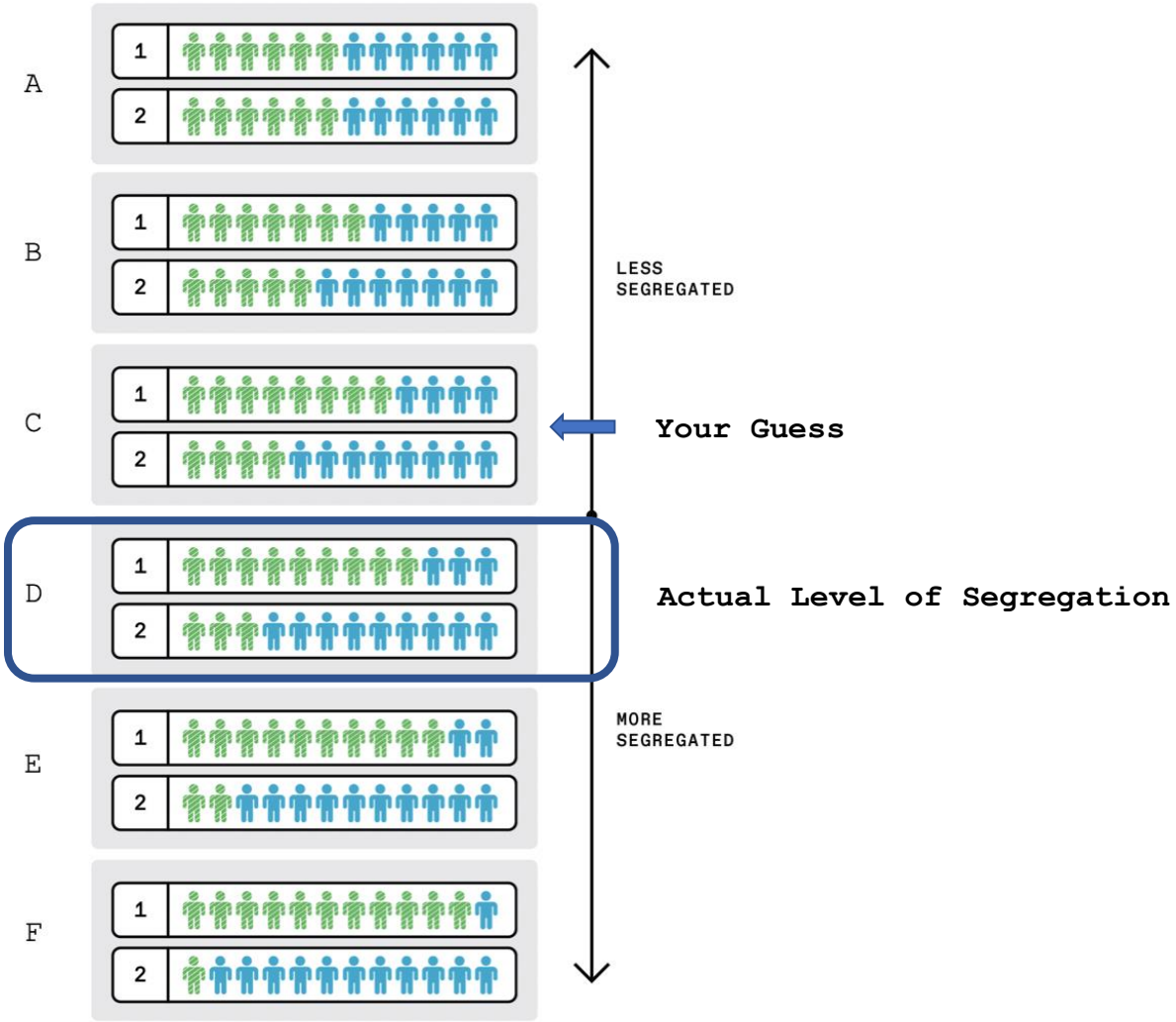


ii) Information Stimuli (Treatment Condition Only)

Your District's Segregation

You responded that District [ ] most closely matches the economic segregation in your district.

In reality, based on your zip code, the actual level of economic school segregation in **your school district most closely matches District [ ] below.**



Consequences of Segregation

Economic school segregation has negative consequences for low-income students. Low-income students in less segregated districts perform better on standardized tests and are more likely to graduate high school than low-income students in more segregated districts. Furthermore, on average, U.S. school districts have become increasingly more economically segregated over time.

Fortunately, research suggests that reducing economic segregation would not hurt high-income students. High-income students perform similarly on standardized tests and graduate high school at similar rates in districts with both low and high levels of economic segregation.

iii) Self-Reported Outcomes (All Conditions)

3. How important of an issue do you think the reduction of school segregation is in your local area?

   o Not at all important
   o Slightly important
   o Somewhat important
   o Very important
   o Extremely important

4. When attending school in-person, about how much time, in minutes, do your children spend traveling to school in the morning?
   [number entry]

Imagine that administrators in your local school district want to reduce school segregation and are considering several plans.

[All items below in randomized order]

5. With one of the hypothetical new plans, administrators are considering changing attendance zones to reduce segregation. Under this plan, some children might have to attend different schools within their district. Sometimes, this is the school that is closest to their house, but sometimes it is a bit further away.

   If this plan were to pass in your district, what is the furthest, in minutes, that you would allow your child to travel to school?

   [Entry form] Minutes

6. How likely are you to support changing attendance boundaries to reduce school segregation?

- o Not at all likely
- o Slightly likely
- o Somewhat likely
- o Very likely
- o Extremely likely

7. Imagine that, under a different potential plan, administrators hope to change the schools that some students attend so that there is less segregation. Under this plan, the proportion of low-income students in your child's school will be closer to the district average.

   Consider your child who attends school closest to your home. If your child currently attends a school with very few students from low-income families, it is likely that there will be as high as a 20% increase in the number of students from low-income families in your child's school. If your child currently attends a school with a large number of students from low-income families, it is likely that there will be up to a 20% decrease in the number of low-income students in your child's school.

   How likely would you be to support this plan?

   - o Not at all likely
   - o Slightly likely
   - o Somewhat likely
   - o Very likely
   - o Extremely likely

8. Imagine that administrators in your district are considering opening a new magnet school, which will offer high-quality academic programs to students in your district and in nearby districts. Such a policy would make it so that students are not necessarily attending the school closest to them. Approximately half of the students in the school will be from low-income families. How likely would you be to send your child to this school?

   - o Not at all likely
   - o Slightly likely
   - o Somewhat likely
   - o Very likely
   - o Extremely likely

9. Imagine that administrators in your local government have decided to change the school district budget so that more money will be used to pay for the costs of reducing local school segregation. This money will come from other parts of the school district budget, such as teaching aides, sports, field trips, and/or extracurricular activities. How likely would you be to support this plan?

   - o Not at all likely
   - o Slightly likely
   - o Somewhat likely

- o Very likely
- o Extremely likely

10. To pay for the costs of reducing local school segregation without reducing funding for other school district budget areas, imagine that local officials have proposed a raise in property taxes in your area. Imagine that the exact amount of the property taxes increase has yet to be decided and the officials has asked for your input. How much, if any, would you feel is a reasonable annual increase?

    [text entry]

11. How positive or negative do you feel about the following statement?
    The government has a responsibility to reduce school segregation.

    - o Extremely negative
    - o Somewhat negative
    - o Slightly negative
    - o Equally positive and negative
    - o Slightly positive
    - o Somewhat positive
    - o Extremely positive

12. How likely are you to support reducing school segregation in your local area?

    - o Not at all likely
    - o Slightly likely
    - o Somewhat likely
    - o Very likely
    - o Extremely likely

13. In general, how negative or positive do you feel about plans to reduce school segregation?
    - o Extremely negative
    - o Somewhat negative
    - o Slightly negative
    - o Equally positive and negative
    - o Slightly positive
    - o Somewhat positive
    - o Extremely positive

14. Imagine you and your family are moving to a new town. When deciding what neighborhood to live in, how likely are you to consider the economic diversity of your child's school?

- o Not at all likely
- o Slightly likely
- o Somewhat likely
- o Very likely
- o Extremely likely

15. How much of a problem is economic school segregation **in your school district?**

- o Not at all
- o A little
- o Somewhat
- o Quite a bit
- o A great deal