

**The Struggle for
Equal Terms in the 1960s
and
Engaging Historical Evidence**

March 6, 2004

Today's Plans

- The Struggle I: The Battle for Integration
- Sharing Artifacts
- On Evidence
- The Struggle II: The Blowouts
- Towards Public History Projects

Before Integration in California

California schools must be “open for the admission of all White children ... the education of children of African descent, and Indian children, shall be provided for in separate schools.”

-California education code, 1870

Ward v Flood

“though separated from the other, [students of different races should be] educated *on equal terms* with [each] other, and both at common public expense.”

--California Supreme Court, 1874

Education Code 1667, 1880

“Every school ... must be open for the admission of all children between six and twenty-one years of age residing in the district; ... Trustees shall have the power to exclude children of filthy or vicious habits, or children suffering from contagious or infectious diseases.”

Segregation for Some, 1921

The governing body of the school district shall have power to exclude children of filthy or vicious habits, or children suffering from contagious or infectious diseases, and also to establish separate schools for Indian children and for children of Chinese, Japanese or Mongolian parentage.

Education Code 1662

Before Segregation???

in LA

School	Total	"White"	Black	Asian	Mexican	Other	non English speaking
Ninth St.	891	229	139	226	278	19	273
Amelia St.	543	14	0	219	310	0	361
Hewitt St.	393	22	5	191	167	8	96
Coronel	741	92	17	21	608	3	708
San Pedro St.	893	481	87	41	271	13	241
Cornwell	1426	1313	1	17	103	0	251
Breed St.	744	607	1	37	91	8	70
Second St.	1025	657	0	4	364	6	313
Bridge St.	1299	699	14	2	577	7	515
Echandia	55	54	1	0	0	0	51
Marengo	694	559	0	0	133	2	161
First St.	841	464	93	123	158	3	273
Malabar St.	1689	1294	41	13	341	0	196
Soto St.*	(684)	238	0	0	466	6	334
Utah St.	2012	883	5	22	1102	0	958
Alpine St.	650	438	0	2	207	3	171
California	582	298	0	62	211	11	177
Castelar St.	631	226	0	9	395	1	284
Nevin	868	184	559	10	114	1	96
Staunton	582	157	95	0	330	0	246
Wadsworth	973	641	254	11	62	5	46
Murchison	679	341	1	0	324	13	213

* Figures do not add up.

Source: "Intensive Study of Representational City Churches: the City Parish," Institute of Social and Religious Research, New York, 1926, in "CAN misc. 1917-27" File, Box 56, G. Bromley Oxnam Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, DC.

Roosevelt HS 1936

- 28% American
- 26% Jewish
- 24% Mexican
- 7% Russian
- 6% Japanese
- 9% Italian, Armenian, and other ethnic

Moments of Social Equality Roosevelt in the 1930s

Students elected a Japanese student body president and an African American female vice president

Notions of (In)Equality

- “Nothing is so unequal as the equal treatment of unequals.”

-----*Los Angeles Supervisor, 1920s*

- “The doctrine that ‘all men are born free and equal’ applies to man’s political equality ... In no way can this idea of equality be applied to intellectual endowment.”

-----*Principal of ‘Mexican School’, 1920s*

“We build on a biological foundation. We cannot make a black child white, a deaf child hear, a blind baby see, nor can we create a genius from a child whose ancestors endowed him with a defective brain. Within the limits of heredity, we can do much.”

William Cooper, CA Supt of Public Instruction, 1927

Intelligence Tests as Sorting Tools

- 60% of Mexican American children in CA score in 'nonacademic' range in 1928.
- At Belvedere Jr HS, with 50% Mexican American population, 55% of all students scored below 90.
- At Lafayette Jr HS, over half of all Mexican American students channeled into non-academic track.

Contradictions in the System

“Students in the 7th grade of the Lincoln School [serving Mexican Americans] were superior scholarly to the same grade in the Roosevelt School [serving White students] and to any group of 7th graders in either of the schools in the past.”

Mendez v Westminster, 1946

Tracking in Multi-Racial Schools

“What would make you think that anyone who is sick in bed would want anyone as black as you to take care of them?”

---Response of Guidance Counselor at Belvedere Intermediate when Hope Mendoza Schechter asked to switch from home economics to academic track to pursue nursing.

Challenging Segregation

Mendez's Precedents

The record before us shows ... that the technical facilities and physical conveniences offered ... the efficiency of teachers ... and the curricular are identical and in some respects superior.

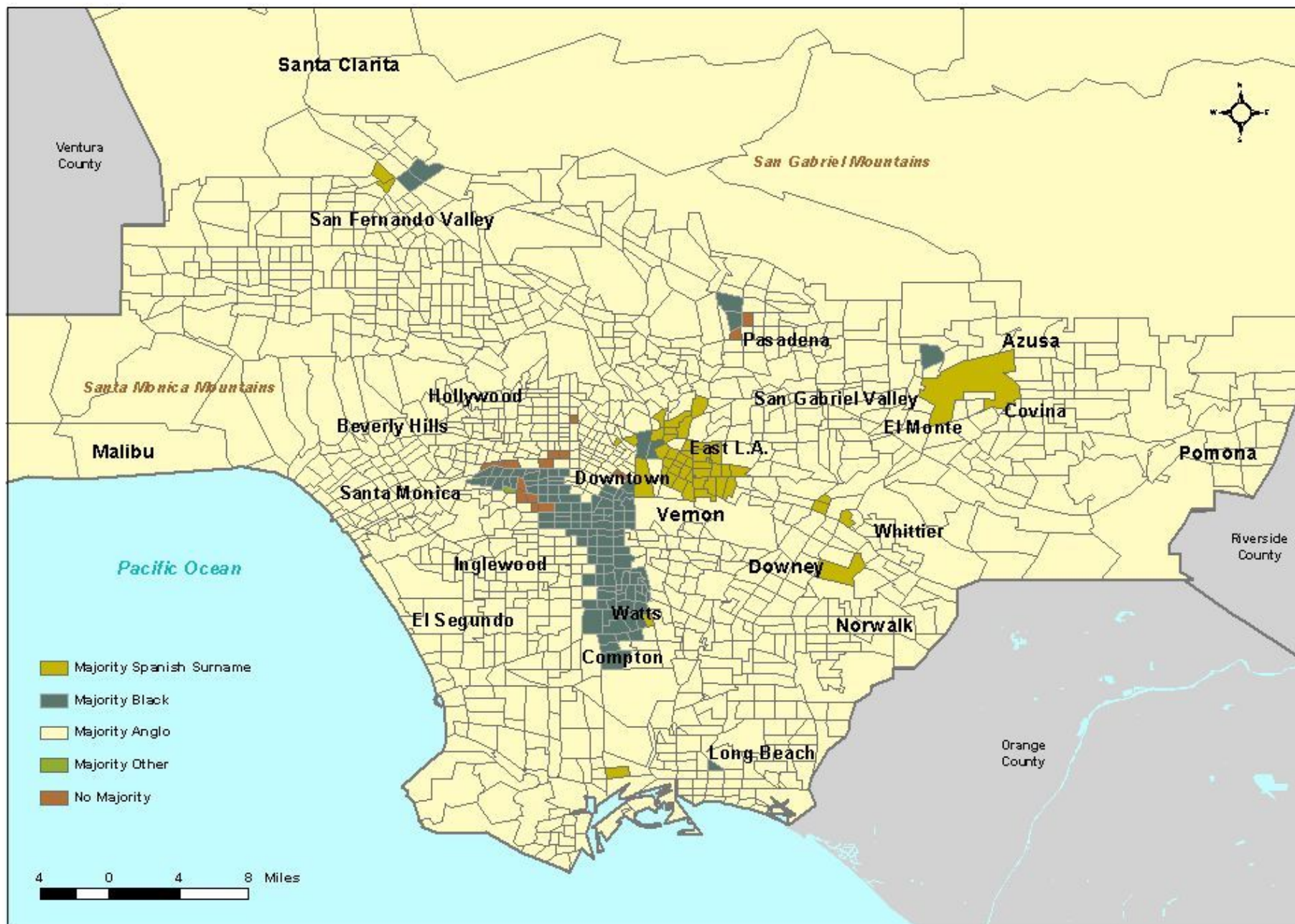
“A paramount requisite in the American system of public education is social equality. It must be open to all children of unified school association regardless of lineage.”

Brown and footnote 11

To separate them from others of similar age and qualifications solely because of their race generates a feeling of inferiority as to their status in the community that may affect their hearts and minds in a way unlikely ever to be undone.

Los Angeles: From Color Blind to ???

Los Angeles County: Racial/Ethnic Diversity 1960



Data Assembled by Michela Zonta and Paul Ong, UCLA Lewis Center for Regional Policy Studies

Seeing Color, Seeing Segregation

What would have to be done to make Los Angeles schools completely segregated? A single bus could haul away all the white students in Fremont, Jefferson, Jordan, Manual, and Riis high Schools.

John Caughey, 1967 (CP 357)

Crawford v. LAUSD--1971/1976

- Judge Gitelson --"the Los Angeles school board "knowingly, affirmatively and in bad faith...segregated, *de jure*, its students" and had drawn school boundaries "so as to create or perpetuate segregated schools."
- California Supreme Court--public school students could be involuntarily bused away from their neighborhood schools to "desegregate" racially imbalanced schools, even if that imbalance was caused by residential patterns and not school authorities.

BUSTOP--1976

Valley activists rise up

- A housewife, Bobbi Fiedler, formed Bustop in Encino, where a white teacher was about to be replaced by a black teacher.
- In months, 30,000 members throughout the city. Critics said Bustop was fueled by racism--charges its leaders denied.
- The grass-roots group helped propel Fiedler into public office in a stunning defeat of school board President Robert Docter, who favored busing. She went on to Congress.

Magnet Schools & PWT--the 1980s looking for “volunteers”

- The first magnet school opened in 1979, as part of “voluntary” court-ordered desegregation under Crawford.
- 1995 the District had a total of 132 magnet schools serving approximately 42,000 students with a waiting list of approximately 30,000 students
- only 5% of the student population in the District actually attend magnet schools
- PWT--provides transportation for students voluntarily attending schools other than resident schools.

While the Focus Lay on Crawford ...

Serrano v. Priest -- 1971; 1976

“rich schools; poor schools”

facts:

- Baldwin Park Unified School District spent \$577.49 per child
- Pasadena Unified School District spent \$840.19 per child
- Beverly Hills Unified School District spent \$1,231.72 per child”

ruling:

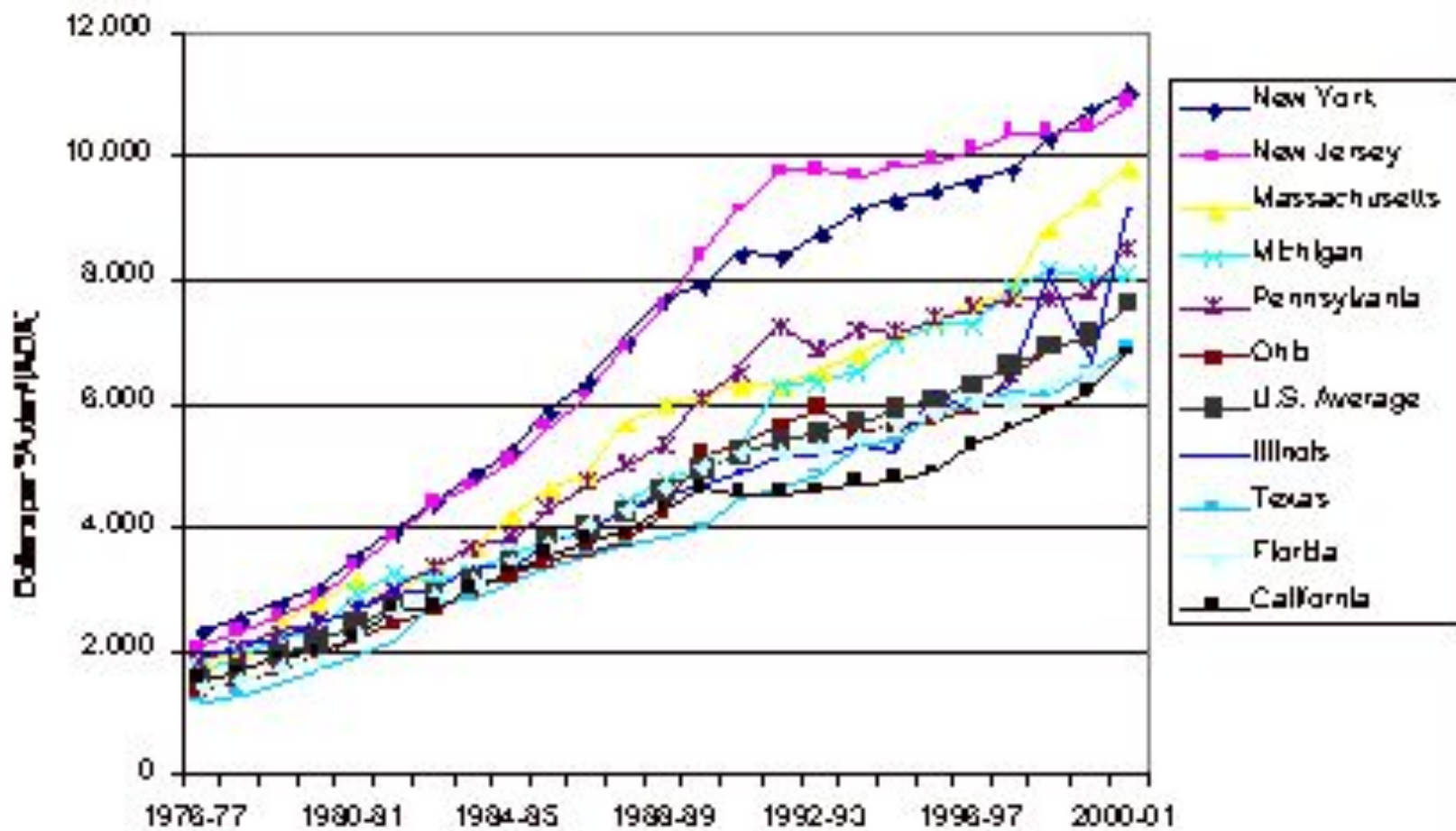
- violates the equal protection clause of the California constitution
- state must equalize funding.

Proposition 13 -- 1978

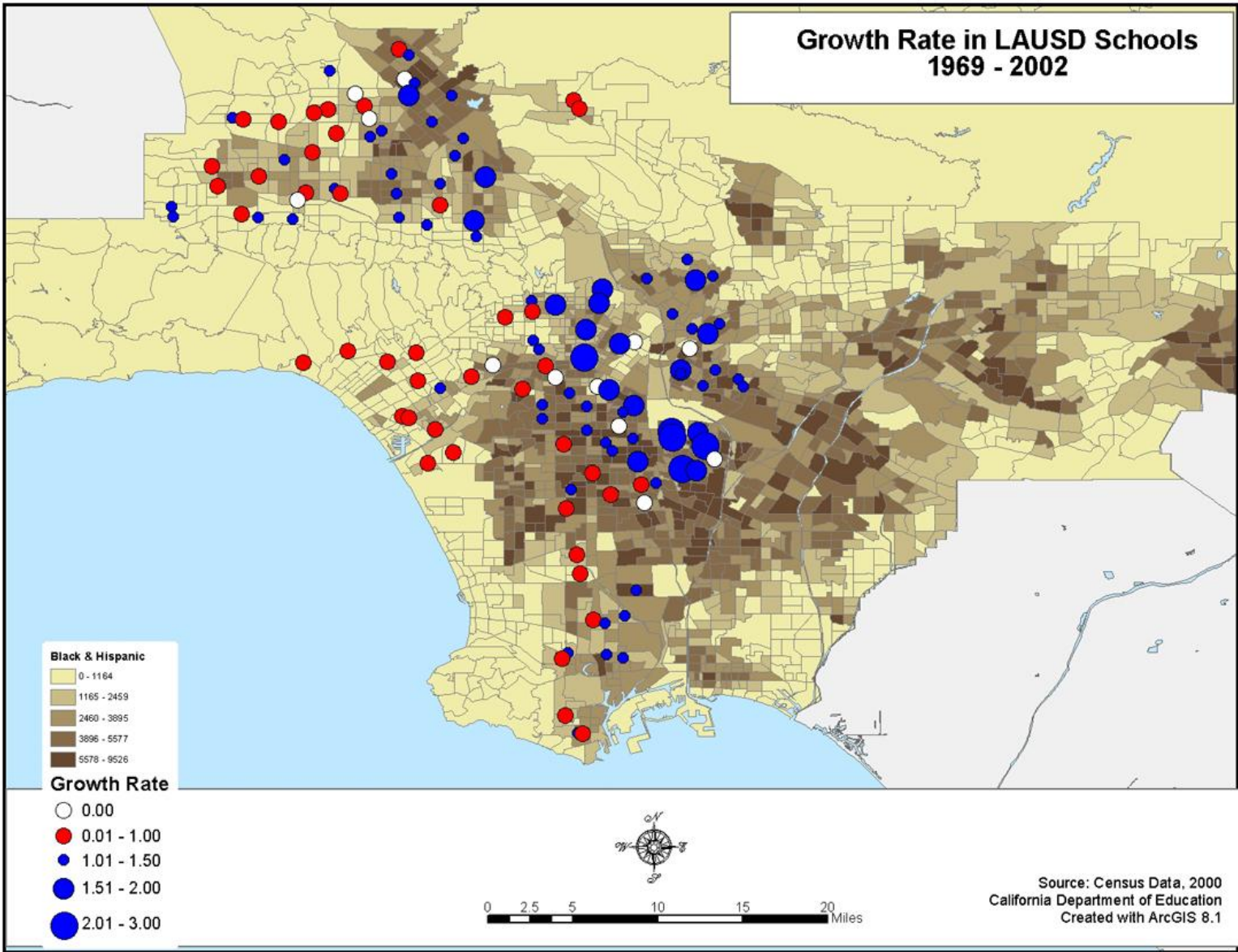
"taxpayer revolt"

- California voters passed by 65% to 35%
- reduced local property tax revenues by approximately \$6.1 billion (53 percent)
- made raising taxes more difficult
 - state tax increases requires 2/3 vote of the legislature
 - local taxes requires 2/3 vote of local citizen

California remains behind in per-pupil expenditures



Growth Rate in LAUSD Schools 1969 - 2002



What is an Integrated School and Why Should we Care???

Ethnic Representation of California Teachers/Students

1966-7

2001-2

Latino Teacher%/Students%

$$2.2/13.7 = .16$$

White Teacher%/Students%

$$91/75 = 1.2$$

Black Teacher%/Students%

$$4.2/8.2 = .51$$

API Teacher%/Students%

$$1.7/2.2 = .77$$

Latino Teacher%/Students%

$$13.5/44.2 = .30$$

White Teacher%/Students%

$$74.2/34.8 = 2.1$$

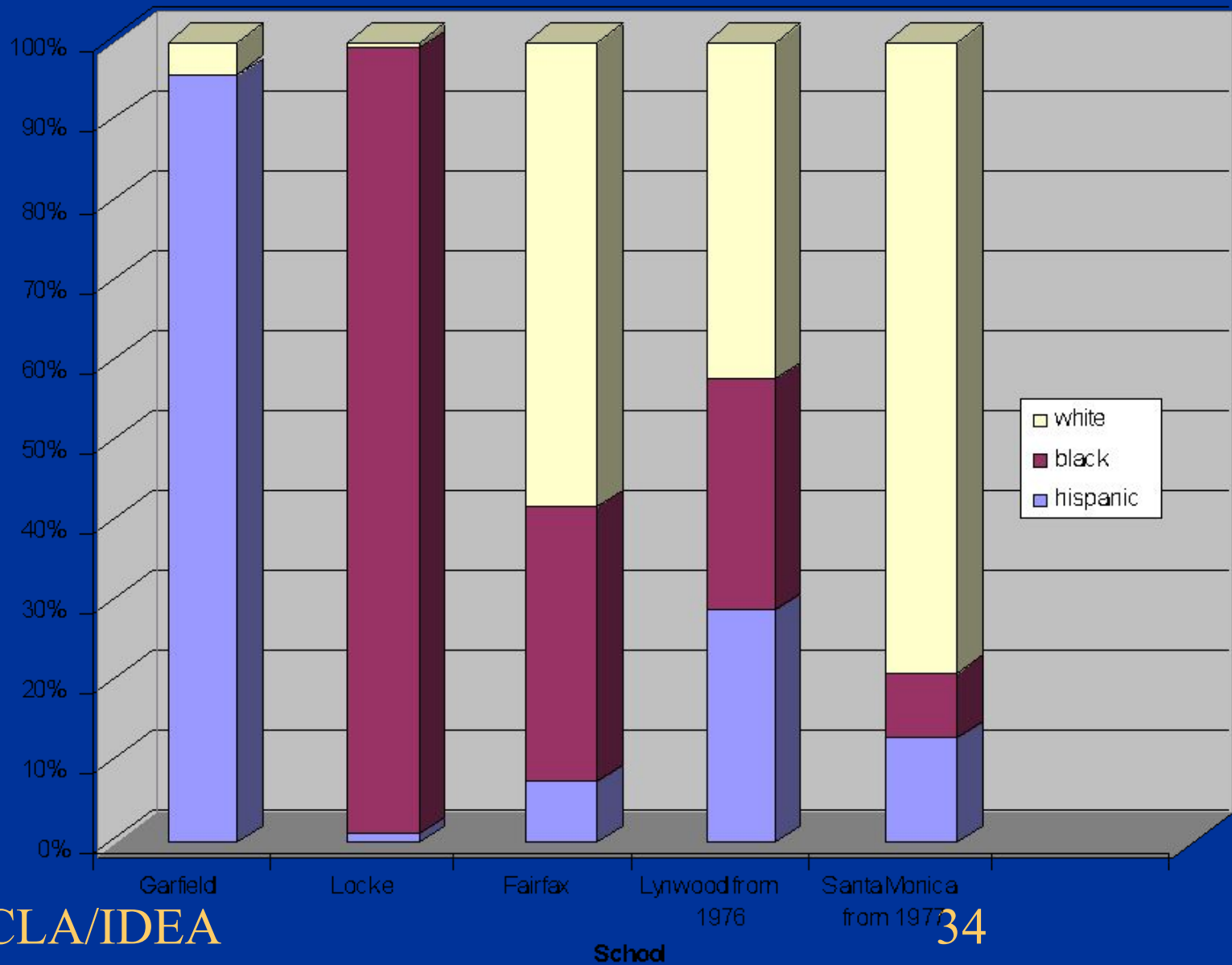
Black Teacher%/Students%

$$5.1/8.3 = .61$$

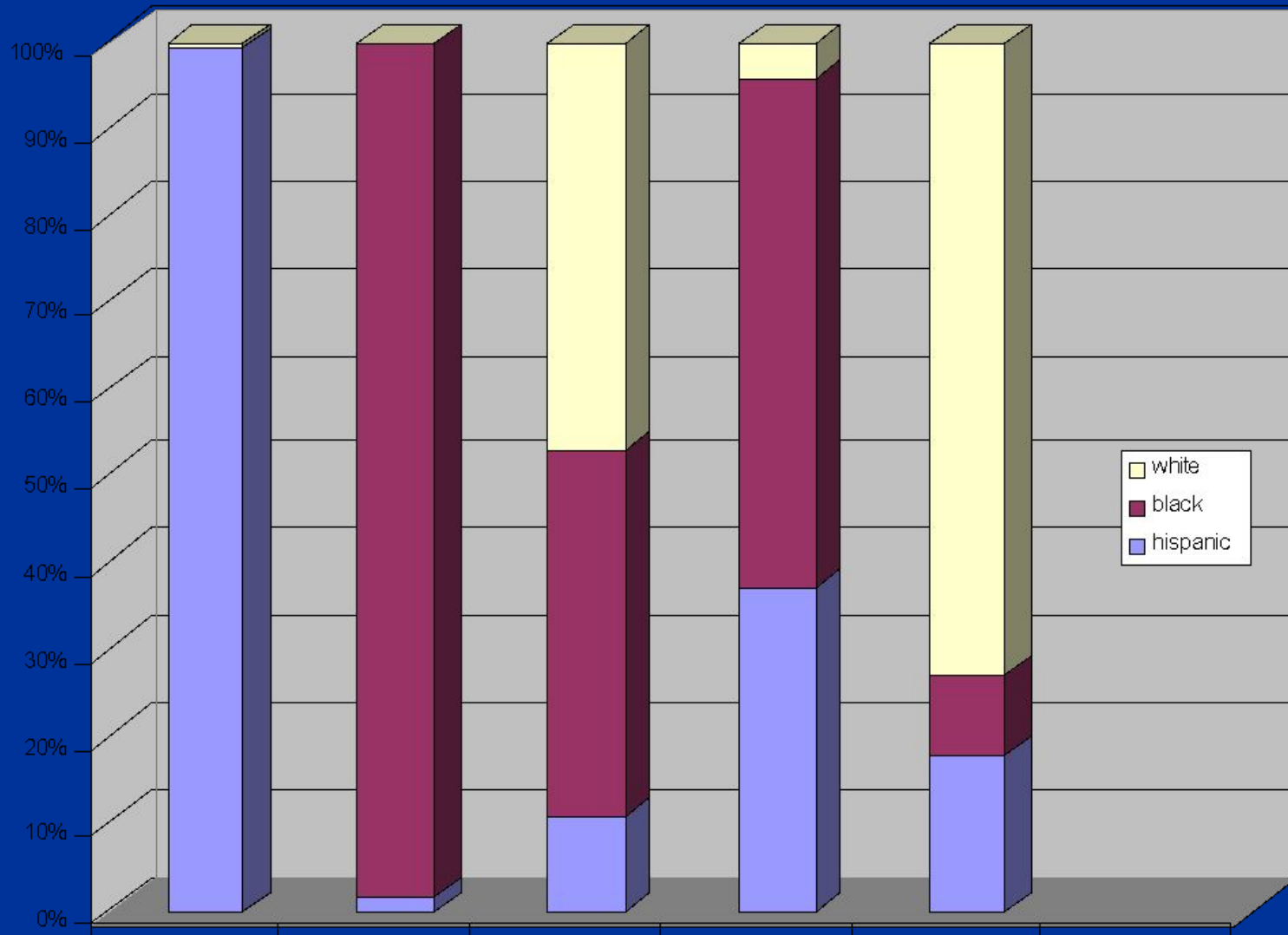
API Teacher%/Students%

$$5.7/11.2 = .50$$

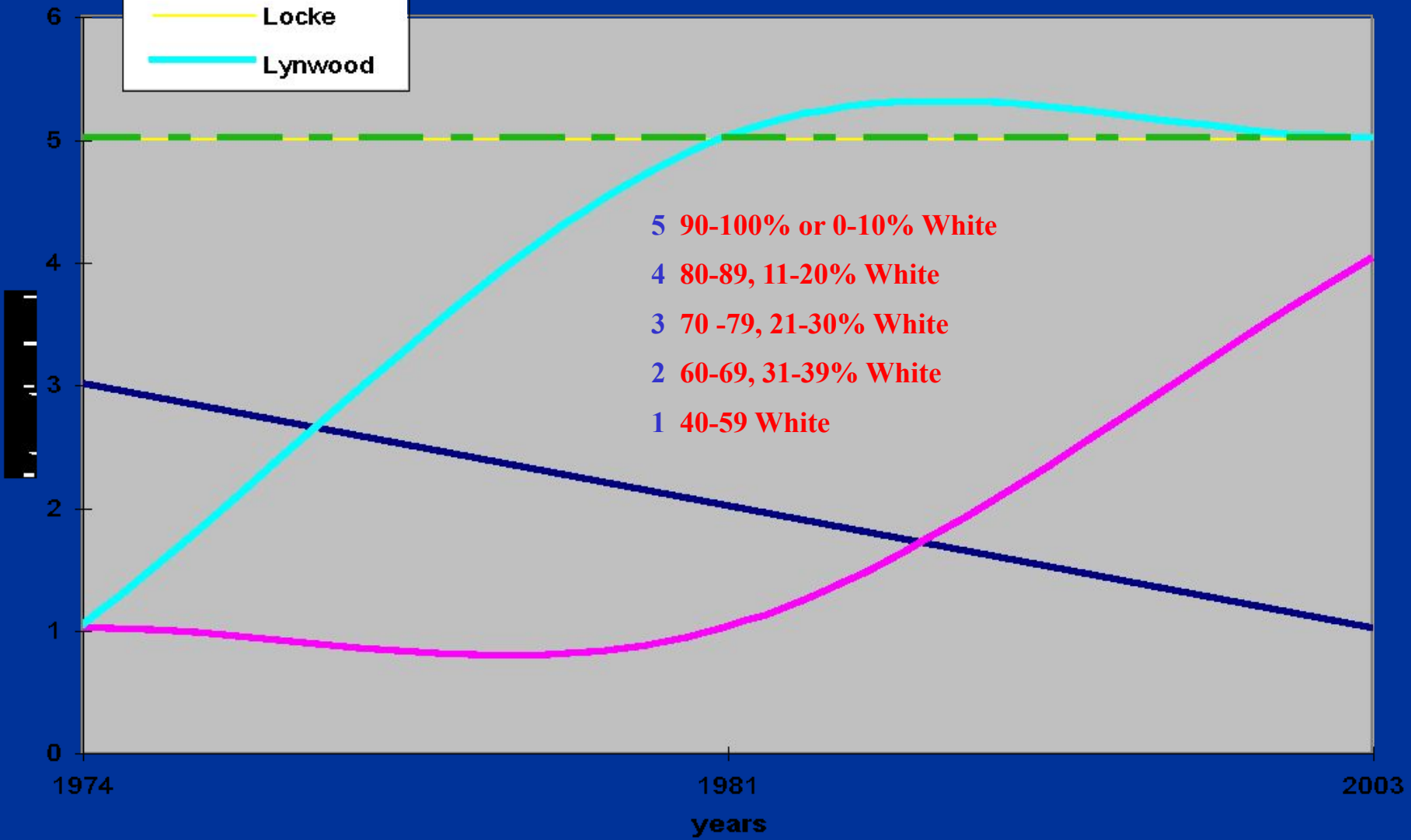
Racial breakdown by school in 1974



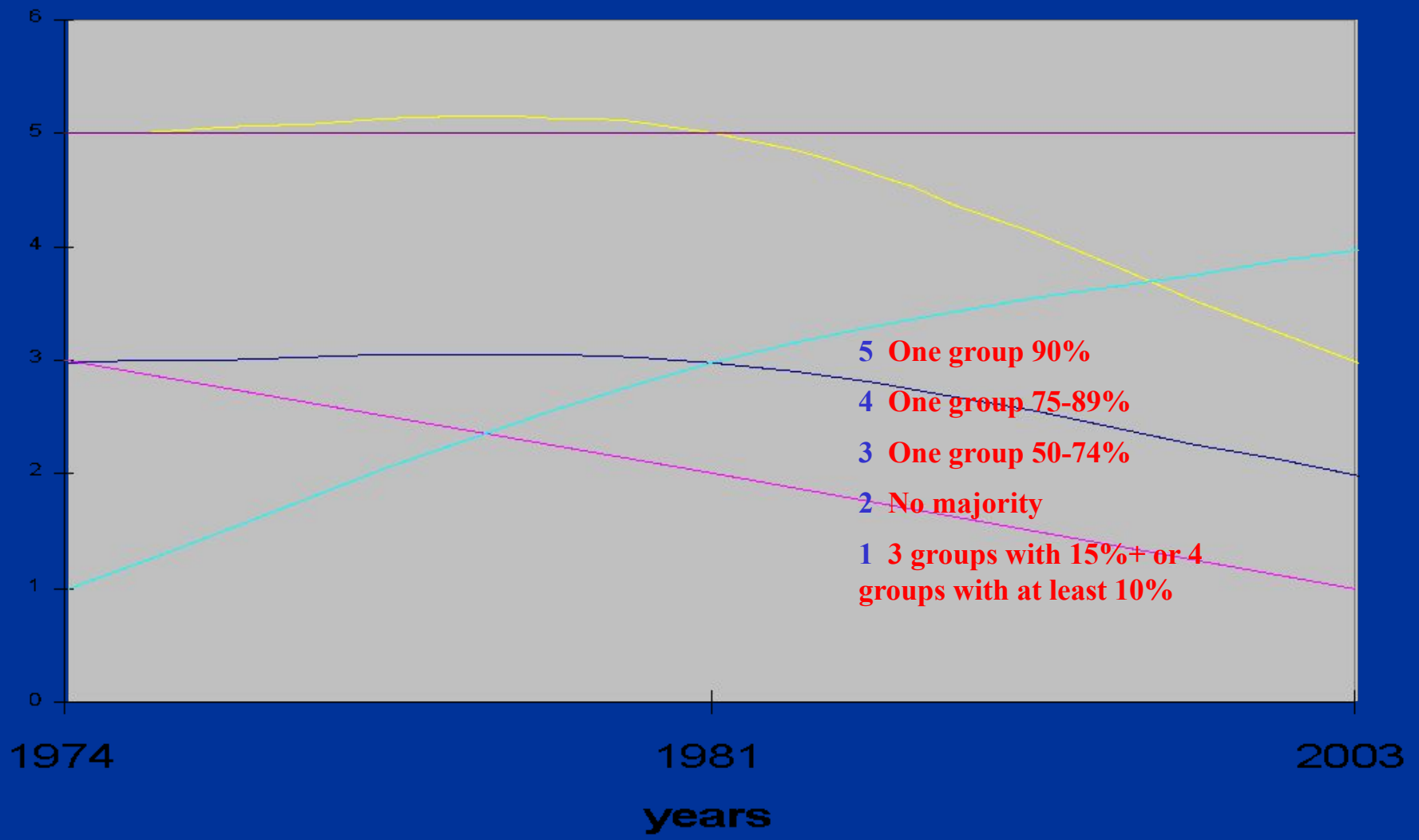
Racial Make up of schools in 1981



% white



Intergration equals racial balance



5 One group 90%
4 One group 75-89%
3 One group 50-74%
2 No majority
1 3 groups with 15%+ or 4 groups with at least 10%

Towards a Public History Project

Questions	How do answers from students interviewed today compare with students from 1968?
Activities	Seek out Interview subjects at Open House
Evidence	Yearbook pictures
Exhibitions	Display cases at school