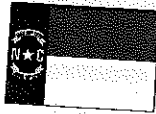


# NORTH CAROLINA FACES CLAIMS OF RESEGREGATION

BY TONY DOKOUPIL



AS EDUCATION SECRETARY Arne Duncan begins his review of equality in the nation's schools—he recently called it the “civil-rights issue of our generation”—he may want to take a close look at North Carolina. Previously a model of desegregation, the state's classrooms have begun to divide again along racial lines. In Charlotte, federally mandated busing ensured balance until 1999, when a court ruled that integration had been accomplished. Since then the number of 90 percent-minority schools has jumped almost fivefold. In Wayne County, one high school is now 99 percent African-American, which prompted the NAACP to file a federal complaint alleging “apartheid education.” And last month in Wake County, a newly elected school board voted to end an income-based diversity program that has been copied across the country. “I think it's intentional race discrimination,” says Mark Dorosin, a senior attorney at the University of North Carolina's Center for Civil Rights. (A spokesperson for Gov. Bev Perdue says the state is committed to “a sound, basic education for every child.”)

Whatever the cause—one factor is parental complaints about longer bus rides—the results are mirrored throughout the South. “We're back to 1967,” says Gary Orfield, codirector of the Civil Rights Project at UCLA, who commends Duncan's plan to spot-check for civil-rights infractions. “We haven't done anything positive for a long time.”



Charlotte, N.C., 1972.

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