

## Desegregation in Delaware

**Read the primary source document provided below to identify the following: author/date of the source, reactions to desegregation (favorable, unfavorable or indifferent) and the success or failure of integration.**

In Delaware, a case that went all the way to the Supreme Court in 1980, led to the merger and full desegregation of all students in the city and suburban districts. The court order combined all the districts into one big system, which was later divided into four pie-shaped districts, each containing a part of the city and a large sector of suburbia. The court order ended in 1996, and each of the four districts has been devising assignment policies since. Under the court order the state of Delaware had been one of the nation's two most desegregated states for black students. Between 1991 and 2001, the average black student in the Brandywine district went from attending, on average, a 65 percent white school to a 55 percent white school. In the Christiana District the drop was from 64 percent to 51 percent. The Colonial district changed from 66 percent to 43 percent and the Red Clay District fell from 59 percent to 42 percent during this same ten year period. The Wilmington 1980 court decision made, not only the metropolitan area, but the entire state of Delaware one of the nation's most integrated states throughout the 1980s and 1990s, a record which this study shows continued into the 2001-2 school year.

From *Brown at 50: King's Dream or Plessy's Nightmare*

Gary Orfield and Chungmei Lee

<http://www.civilrightsproject.harvard.edu/research/reseq04/brown50.pdf>

