

How-To Narrative for Bridges Collaborative Interactive Map (and Other Tools)



About AIR and the Bridges Collaborative

AIR has worked with the Century Foundation and the member organizations of the Bridges Collaborative (the Collaborative) to learn more about how the school districts, housing organizations, and charter management organizations involved in the Collaborative have been working to counteract the impact of racial segregation in their schools and neighborhoods and share best practices. Connecting many facets of our work is an interactive map that describes the environments in which the member organizations operate, contrasts those environments with the environments in surrounding states, and allows readers to interpret the descriptive data in the context of a theory of change and interpret qualitative data from the indicator reports and member profiles. For a description of each deliverable, please [explore our project page](#).

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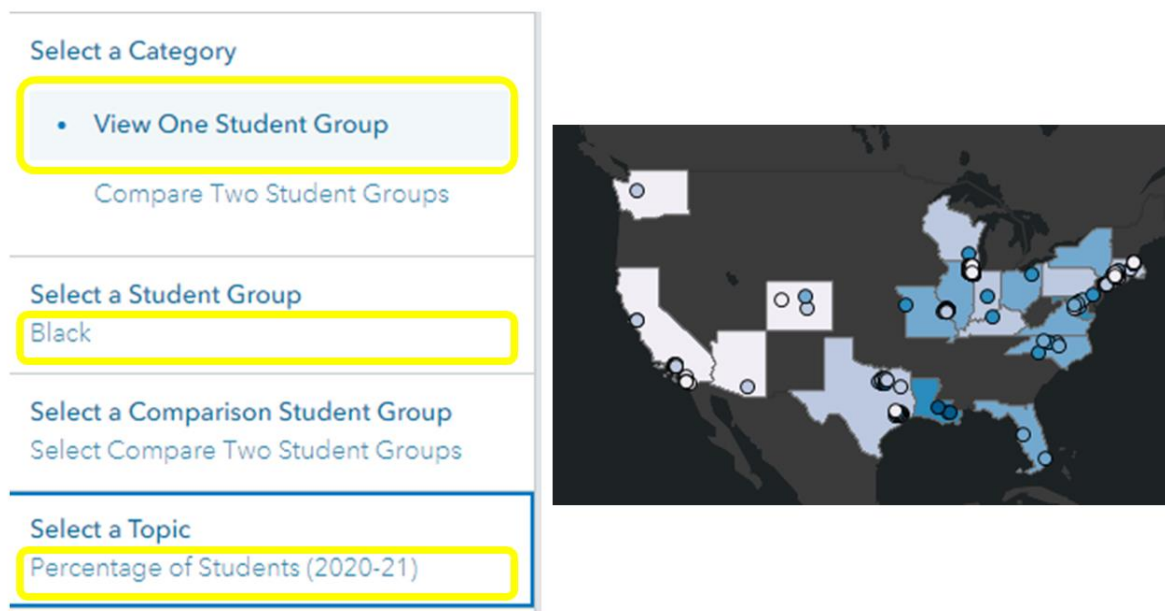
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About the Data

The *Demographic Characteristics* outcomes presented on the map are from data that predate the formation of the Collaborative, and so the map should be interpreted as presenting *the context for the members' current efforts* rather than *how much the members have accomplished thus far*. The racial compositions of local schools are drawn from the National Center for Education Statistics' 2020–21 Common Core of Data, while the data about course-taking and disciplinary outcomes are from the Office of Civil Rights' 2017 Civil Rights Data Collection.

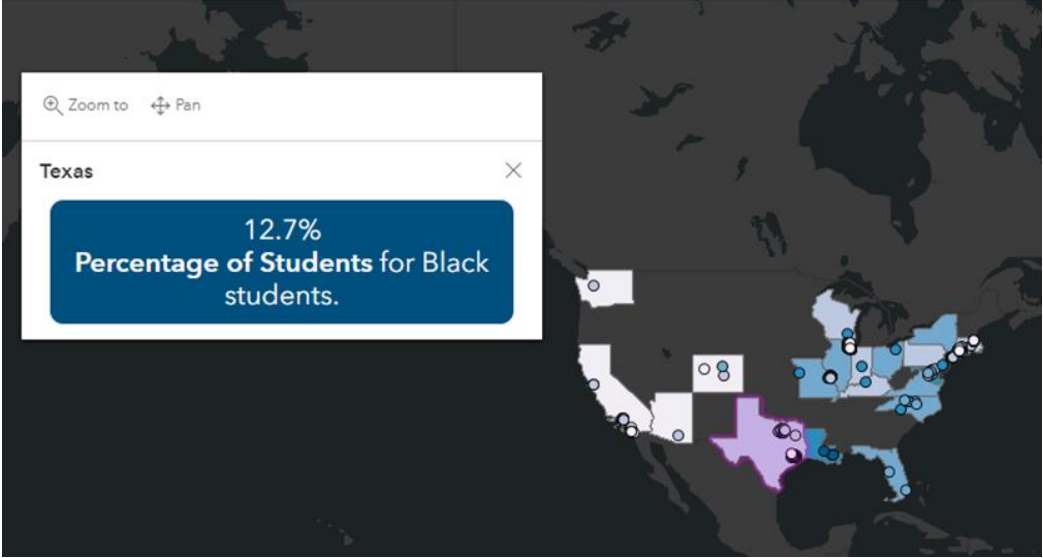
To get started with the map, use the panel on the left side of the screen to select a student group and a topic of interest. To provide context for the other topics, it may help to start with Percentage of Students as the first topic.

If we select Black as the student group and Percentage of Students as the topic, the map will show the percentage of students in each state or district who are Black, with darker shades corresponding to higher percentages of students.



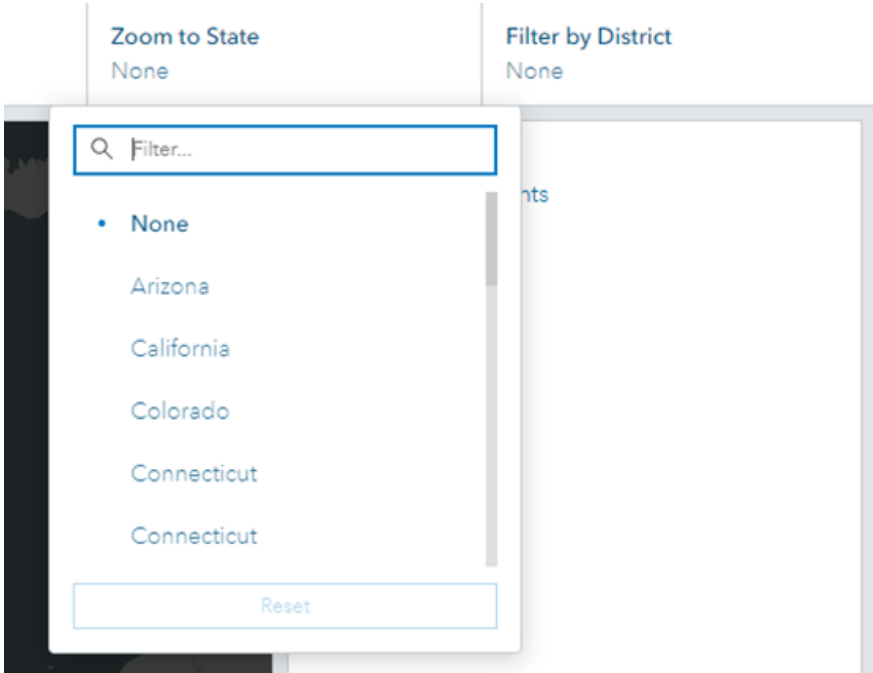
With both district data and state data shown on the map, it is easy to see how districts may differ demographically from their states. For instance, the dark dot in the Wisconsin portion of the map represents Milwaukee Public Schools (50% Black), and the light color of the state indicates the percentage of Blacks in all public schools in Wisconsin (9%). The light dot in the Louisiana portion of the map represents Lycée Française de la Nouvelle Orléans (21% Black), and the dark color of the state indicates the percentage of Blacks in all public schools in Louisiana (42% Black).

Clicking on a state will open a pop-up window with that state’s value for the measure being mapped; clicking on a dot will open a pop-up window that can be used to toggle between the state’s value and the district’s value for the variable being mapped.



Changing the student group or the topic will refresh the map so that it presents the new measure for the set of students.

The user may also narrow results to a state or district of interest using the Zoom and Filter features at the top of the map.



To learn more about data presented for each topic, view the [descriptions of interactive map variables](#). This information is also shown for each topic at the lower right of the screen, under “Definition.”

Comparing Outcomes Across Student Groups

The next step in using the map is to compare outcomes for two groups of students in the same district or state. Click on “Compare Two Student Groups” under “Select a Category” on the panel at the left side of the screen, and then choose a student group, a comparison student group, and a topic.

For example, select Black as the first student group, Hispanic as the second student group, and Gifted Referral Rate as the topic.

Select a Category

View One Student Group

- Compare Two Student Groups

Select a Student Group

Black

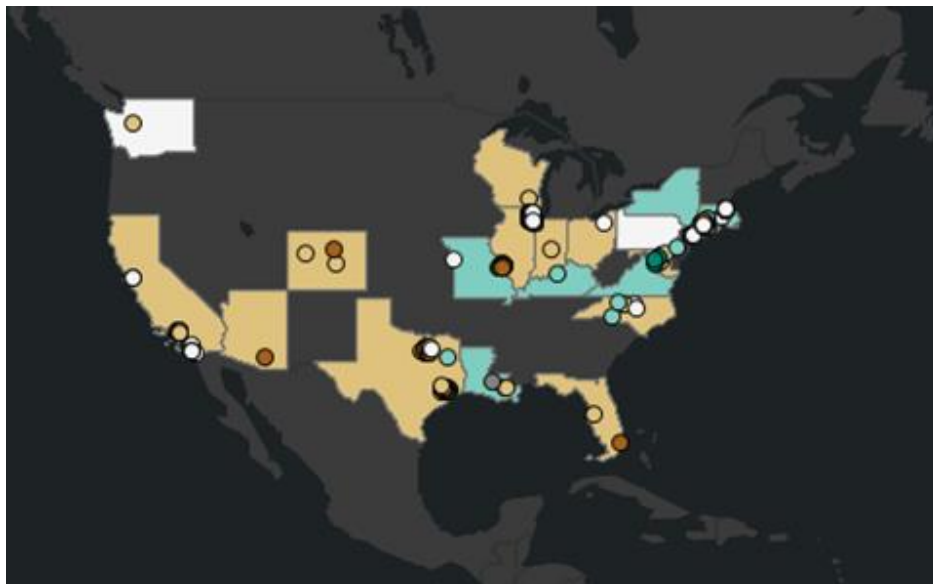
Select a Comparison Student Group

Hispanic

Select a Topic

Gifted Referral Rate (2017)

The map will then present the difference between the percentage of Black elementary-school students referred for gifted education and the percentage of Hispanic elementary-school students referred for gifted education, in percentage points.



Green indicates that the value of the underlying measure is larger for the first group, while red indicates that the value of the underlying measure is larger for the second group; darker shades correspond to larger differences. In this case, as of 2017, Black students were more likely than Hispanic students to be referred for gifted education in Missouri, Kentucky, Louisiana, and several Northeastern states; Hispanic students were more likely than Black students to be referred for gifted education in the Midwest, Southeast, and Southwest; and the two groups were referred for gifted education at roughly equal rates in Washington and Pennsylvania.

Interpreting the Dissimilarity Index

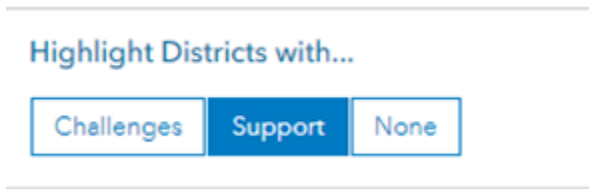
While most of the measures and comparisons are fairly self-explanatory, the dissimilarity index—which can only be chosen when comparing two student groups—requires a bit more context to interpret. The *dissimilarity index is only calculated for school districts that contain multiple schools at one or more grade levels, and it is not calculated for entire states*. Additionally, it is symmetrical, so the map is the same for a combination of two student groups regardless of which group is chosen first and which group is chosen second. Essentially, the **dissimilarity measure compares the representation of two groups in district schools individually against the groups' representation in the district as a whole and then assigns a value from 0 (evenly distributed) to 100 (completely segregated) to the district**, based on how similar the demographics of the schools are to the overall demographics of the district. For example, if the enrolled student body in Eastern Public Schools was 40% Black and 30% Hispanic, and all of the district's schools were 40% Black and 30% Hispanic, it would receive a Black–Hispanic dissimilarity index of 0; it would receive a Black–Hispanic dissimilarity index of 100 if no Black students and Hispanic students attended school together; and it would receive values closer to 0 as the schools became more demographically similar to the district overall.

See [this tutorial](#) from Dr. Rodney Green at Howard University for a more thorough introduction to the dissimilarity index. Note that many users specify the index on a scale from 0 to 1, while this map uses 100 in place of 1.

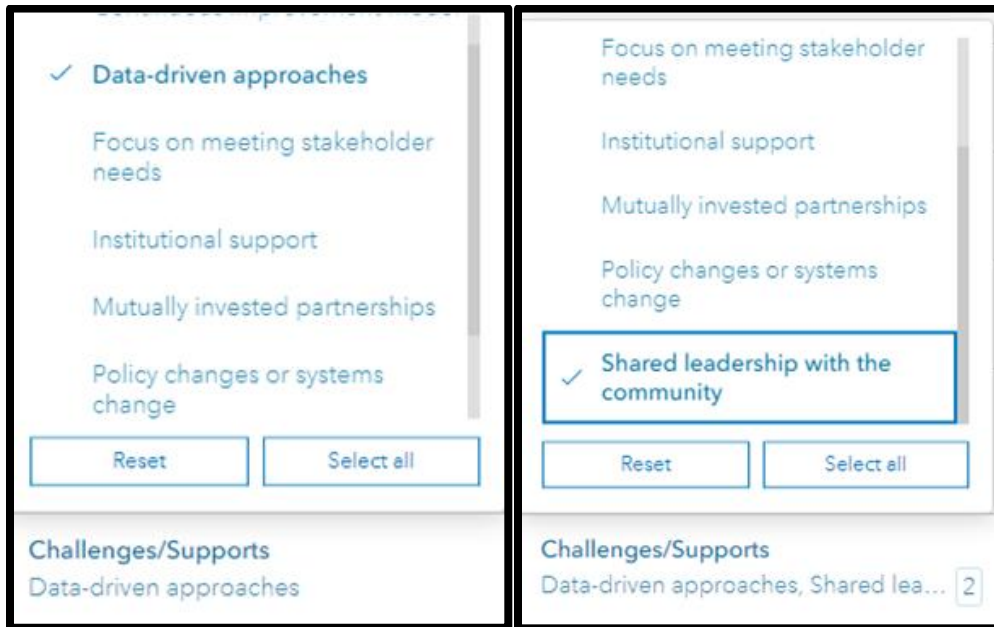
Challenges and Supports From Member Profiles

AIR compiled member profiles for a selected sample of school districts, charter management organizations, and housing organizations that participated in the Bridges Collaborative. Many of the profiled organizations faced similar challenges and provided common supports to the populations that they serve. The interactive mapping tool highlights some of the common challenges and supports that are elaborated upon further in the member profiles.

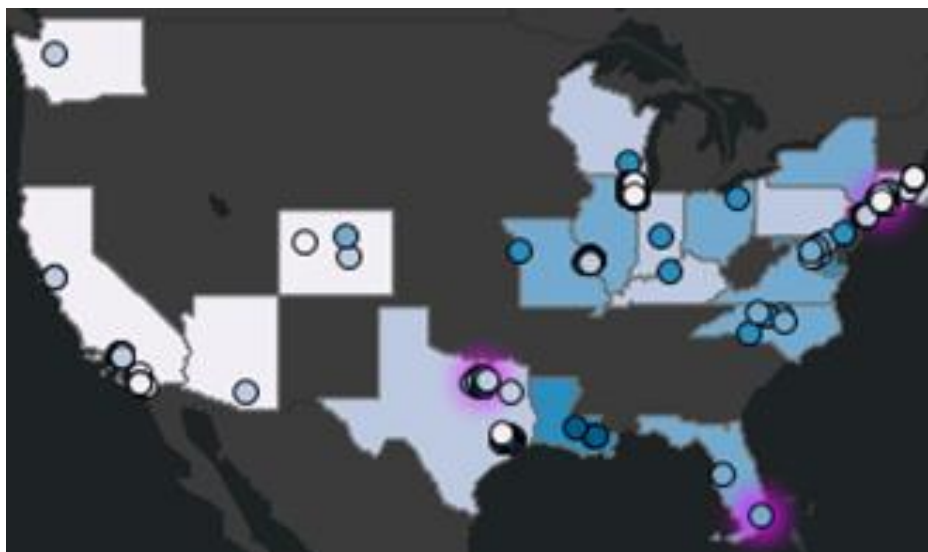
At the bottom left of the screen, users may select “Challenges,” “Support,” or “None” for “Highlight Districts with ...” If “Challenges” or “Support” is selected, a drop-down menu will appear with a set of boxes that the user may check. For instance, selecting “Support”



... and then checking “Data-driven approaches” and “Shared leadership with the community”



... will place a pink ring around each dot representing a district whose member profile mentions one or both of those supports.



The underlying data will still be displayed on the map as before. For instance, if the AP course-taking rate for Latino students had been selected, each state's and district's AP course-taking rates for Latino students will still appear after selecting the supports, but the dots representing AP course-taking rates for Latino students will be highlighted in districts providing those supports.

Note that not all members of the Bridges Collaborative were subjects of member profiles, and not all topics were discussed in every member profile. If no pink ring appears around a dot representing a member after selecting a particular challenge or support, it may mean that the selected member was not profiled or that the profile for that member did not focus on or find evidence for the selected challenge or support.

Other Resources From AIR and the Bridges Collaborative

The interactive map interfaces with other products created by the AIR team working with the Bridges Collaborative.

Interactive Theory of Change Tool

[This tool](#) equips researchers and technical assistance providers at AIR and practitioners in communities around the country to conceptualize the link between residential and school segregation and how to respond to it.

The tool was designed to further illuminate how systems and their elements, context, and interconnections may aid or hinder change. The examples included in the interactive tool, which are largely drawn from the housing and educational sectors, illustrate the many ways that inequities and segregation are perpetuated and the various considerations that are required to disrupt and mitigate their harms.



Indicator Report

The indicator report is designed to share literature-informed concepts to help districts and schools plan, implement, and sustain desegregation and integration initiatives. Using research literature and interviews with Bridges Collaborative members, AIR has identified a set of foundational cross-cutting “constructs” or elements that may support successful school integration efforts at the organizational level. These constructs are: Local Context, Readiness, Communication, Engagement, Cross-System Collaboration, Implementation and Adoption, Resource Expenditure, and Sustainability. The indicator report summarizes the research on each construct and highlights specific examples of emerging

strategies from the field. *The indicator report is currently being finalized. Check back soon for a link to the report!*

Member Profiles

These are in-depth single-organization resources designed to elevate innovative practices used by participating Bridges Collaborative members and provide specific examples of the processes and resources that desegregation- and integration-related work requires. The profiles were based on a content analysis of publicly available resources and on interviews with representatives at each organization. They can support organizations looking to implement desegregation and integration strategies in schools or housing organizations.

Member profiles may be accessed both from the interactive map (as described above) and [as stand-alone PDFs](#).