**Durham & Race**

**Background:** As of the 2010 census, there were 228,330 people living in the city. The racial composition of the city was: 42.45% White, 40.96% Black or African American, 5.07% Asian American, 0.51% Native American, 0.07% Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, 8.28% some other race, and 2.66% two or more races; 14.22% were Hispanic/Latino of any race. About 13.1% of families and 18.6% of the population were below the poverty line.

Unemployment: North Carolina: 5.5%; Black: 9.4%; Latino: 4.4%; White: 4.4%

In 1910, North Carolina Central University (NCCU) was founded as the first public liberal arts college for African Americans. The North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company was founded in 1898 in Durham as the largest and oldest African-American-owned life insurance company, and M&F Bank became one of the most profitable African-American-owned banks. Parrish St. became known as the “Black Wall Street”; a nationally known economic hub for African-Americans. Durham was praised for strong racial relations by both W.E.B. DuBois and Booker T. Washington.

**Public Schools:** Historically, the City and the County of Durham had two public school districts. Under court order, they were formally desegregated in 1970, triggering some White flight from the city to the county and establishing essentially two parallel systems. In 1992, the two districts merged. According to the 2010 census, 40% of Durham County’s population is White. As of 2015, only 18% of Durham Public School students were White.

Researchers at Duke University have pointed out that 20% of all charter schools in the state are 90% or more White. Durham, a district with less than 40,000 school-aged children, now has 14 charter schools with number 15 approved. Four Durham charter schools are 54-67 percent White. Since the growth of charter schools beginning in the 2007-08 school year, [approximately 1200 White students have ‘disappeared’ from Durham Public Schools](http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/fbs/accounting/data/).

Both [research](http://www.slate.com/articles/life/education/2016/07/when_white_parents_have_a_choice_they_choose_segregated_schools.html) and anecdotal evidence demonstrate that White parents prefer schools where their child will be in the majority, often as a more important factor than school quality. Research by Helen Ladd at Duke University on White parents in the state found that a 20% Black population was the threshold for White parents.

[Testing data](http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/data/reports/) shows that the four majority White charter schools do no better than most, and worse than a few, Durham public schools. None of those 4 charter schools provides a specialized curriculum that is not already available within the district schools.

Durham Public Schools now has a 65% free- and reduced-lunch rate as well as higher concentrations of students with disabilities and English-language learners.[[1]](#endnote-1)

Results of the 2015-16 End-of-Grade and End-of-Course tests indicate that 44.9% of students were proficient or passed the state tests in reading, math and science, compared to 44% in 2014-15. About 78.6% of white students passed the tests, compared to 37.1 percent of Hispanic/Latino students and 34.% of Black students.

The public schools that received the lowest scores – C.C. Spaulding Elementary (28), Neal Middle (30) and Eastway Elementary (34) – have free or reduced-lunch populations of 81.66% to 100%.[[2]](#endnote-2)

**Criminal Justice:** In Durham County,Black motorists are more than 200% more likely to be searched by law enforcement as a result of a routine traffic stops for speeding, seat belt, and stop sign violations. Black suspects are nearly nine times more likely to be incarcerated for criminal conduct than White suspects. (Note: This statistic on racial incarceration in Durham comes from a study conducted by the Racial Justice Task Force at the North Carolina Advocates for justice. The Task Force’s analysis of June 30, 2011, data, collected from the North Carolina Department of Correction’s Research and Planning Division, show that African Americans make up 57% of North Carolina’s prison population, but only 22% of the State’s population. [[3]](#endnote-3)

Blacks arrested for drug crimes are nine times more likely to be incarcerated than White suspects. Hispanics are 3.8 times more likely to be incarcerated for drug crimes than White residents. Blacks are 13.6 times more likely to be designated as a habitual felon.[[4]](#endnote-4)

In April 2014, the Durham Human Relations Council, responding to community outcry, “found the existence of racial bias and racial profiling practices in the Durham Police Department practices.”

Since 2016 there has been a decline in searches, but racial disparities remain.

1. Marijuana arrests remain high, even increasing, with racial disparity hardly changed.[[5]](#endnote-5)

2. A superficial racial equity training model focusing narrowly on “implicit bias’ is being used instead of models addressing deep‐seated structural and cultural issues.

3. The Civilian Review Board remains limited in its oversight and incapable of addressing issues of police misconduct.

4. While data on police activity is being reported in a timely manner, the implications of the data‐‐ that police behavior remains largely unchanged ‐‐ is not being addressed.[[6]](#endnote-6)

1. <http://educationpost.org/why-durham-public-schools-need-integration/> [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. [http://www.newsobserver.com/news/local/community/durhamnews/article99303992.html#storylink=cpy](http://www.newsobserver.com/news/local/community/durham-news/article99303992.html#storylink=cpy) [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. [http://www.ncaj.com/file\_depot/0-10000000/0-10000/9208/folder/109511/Race+and+Ethnic+Task+Force+Summary+Jan+12+2012+(BC).pdf](http://www.ncaj.com/file_depot/0-10000000/0-10000/9208/folder/109511/Race+and+Ethnic+Task+Force+Summary+Jan+12+2012+%28BC%29.pdf); <http://www.ncaj.com/file_depot/0-10000000/0-10000/9208/folder/109511/NC+Prison+Population+june+2011+data.pdf> [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. <http://www.meecelawfirm.com/end-racial-profiling-in-durham-now/> [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. <https://www.self-help.org/docs/default-source/PDFs/shcu-policerep11-18finallow-res.pdf?sfvrsn=2> [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Fostering Alternatives to Drug Enforcement (FADE) “Then and Now” report February, 2016 [↑](#endnote-ref-6)