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WASHINGTON (NNPA) – In 2060 America will become a true melting pot of ethnicities and races, the U.S. Census Bureau projects.

According to the first set of projections released based on the 2010 Census, minorities – including Asians, African Americans, Hispanics and Native Americans – are expected to comprise 57 percent of the population, 20 points higher than their current population.

The projections show that the Hispanic population will more than double and represent a third of the 2060 U.S. population. Today, Hispanics represent about one in six Americans.

"The projections indicate that the population will be much more diverse particularly in terms of the Asian and Hispanic populations," says Margaret Simms, a fellow at the Urban Institute and an expert on the economic well being of African Americans. "One of the bigger issues will be how the nation and state and local governments view the diversity of the population under 21."

According to an Urban Institute research article, co-authored by Simms, by 2023 American children will be majority minority, giving state and local governments just 10 years to address what Simms says is the greatest issue effecting U.S. children—education.

"The Hispanic, African American, and Asian populations are some of the more disadvantaged populations in America," says Simms. "If the children being educated are majority African American and Hispanic and those groups are disproportionately disadvantaged."

Black children are currently more likely to live in poverty than any other race with a poverty rate of 38.2 percent, according to the Census Bureau. Hispanic children aren't far behind with a poverty rate of 32.3 percent.

According to a 2010 Urban Institute study, persistent childhood poverty leads to increased chances of dropping out of high school, being a poor adult, having children as a teen, and being unemployed between 25 and 29-years-old.

Does this mean a majority minority population is more likely to be poor and uneducated?

Possibly, Simms says.

"Since [minority children] are more likely to live in low income families than their non-Hispanic White counterparts, they will likely bear the brunt of poor schools and limited opportunity for education beyond high school," she says. "State and local governments, with an assist from the federal government would need to make commitments to improve the schools and provide more educational opportunities."

Although the achievement gap between poor and wealthy students remains twice as high as the achievement gap between Black and White students, there are measures being implemented across the country to narrow the disparities.

In Maryland, lawmakers have approved a housing program that may do just that.

The District Court of Maryland settled a 17-year-old case in November, granting low-income housing residents the ability to choose housing in mixed-income areas with better educational opportunities and access to a variety of services.

If programs like this are implemented all over the country by 2023, Simms says future generations will have a better shot.

"I think one of the critical decisions that needs to be made involves investing in children," she says. "And it needs to start sooner rather than later effect change."