

HANDOUT



Mae Mallory: Challenging Segregation

As you listen to the podcast clip, sketch elements of the school Mallory describes. Add notes on what inequality looked like in segregated New York City schools in the 1950s.

Mae Mallory was born in 1927 and grew up in Macon, Georgia. In 1939, her family joined the Great Migration North in search of greater safety and opportunity. In 1957, Mallory was a parent living in the New York City neighborhood of Harlem. Three years after the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, she was angry about the segregation and poor conditions that continued in her local schools. She organized eight other mothers, and together they filed a lawsuit against the New York City Board of Education. The “Harlem Nine” argued that zoning policies controlling which children went to which schools were unfair. They staged a boycott of several Harlem schools. The “Harlem Nine” won their case, and the right to transfer their children to schools outside their district. However, the New York City school system has never put into action a desegregation plan for all students.



Mallory and her daughter, Patricia. *New York Times*, July 18, 1957.

