When Mayors Use School Choice as a Reform Strategy

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I. INTRODUCTION

All political scientists who study education policy start their analysis with a similar premise: "educational reform does not take place in political vacuum."[1] Studies of the politics of school choice have focused primarily on state-level political dynamics (Mintrom 2000, Henig, et. al. 2002, Wong & Shen 2004). This line of research makes sense since the charter school market is initially created and subsequently altered by the state legislature. In this paper, however, we break from this trend and focus our attention on *local* government and the politics of school choice. Specifically, we examine the relationship between school choice and big city mayors. Our preliminary analysis finds that mayoral positions on school choice is influenced not only the existing legislation governing school choice in their city, but also by their city's size and racial composition.

Although the state legislature writes the charter school or voucher laws, mayors play important roles in the legislative and policy enactment process. At the legislative level, mayors can influence the type of laws that are enacted by working with state legislators and lobbying for more choice options. At the policy enactment level, mayors can determine how choice options play out in their city. From school location to financial support, city government and the city school district can have large impacts on how school choice operates.

A first preliminary question is defining "school choice" for the purposes of this study? Our definition is important because school choice is a phrase that encompasses a variety of reforms which are not homogenous. Mayors diverge on these different strands of school choice. Many mayors, for instance Mayor Menino in Boston and Mayor Murphy in Pittsburgh, are in

[1] Stone, et. al., p. 20.

favor of charter schools but opposed to public school vouchers. In this study, we look for support for *any* reform or policy proposal that increases choice options for families living in the city. Expansion of choice options occur chiefly through three means: (1) improved partnerships with private school options, (2) more charter school options, and (3) school vouchers. We use the term "school choice" as a convenient way to refer to all three policies, though we recognize that they may not be so easily lumped together.

A second preliminary question about mayoral involvement in school choice is whether mayors desire to be involved in education issues generally, and further whether mayoral desire lines up with formal powers in the mayor's office to manage the schools. The traditional mode of education governance, with school districts insulated from city government, is still the most common arrangement in the United States. In the past decade, however, mayoral appointed school boards have taken hold in some of the nation's largest cities, e.g. Chicago, Boston, New York, and Cleveland. Today, other underperforming urban school districts are looking at mayoral appointed school boards as a policy reform that may turn around their schools.

In order to contextualize mayoral interest in school choice, it is useful to provide a brief review of recent developments in mayoral governance and urban education.[2] The 1990s saw the emergence of a revolutionary new style of mayor, interested in taking a strong leadership role in their city's school system. Two mayors, Chicago's Mayor Richard M. Daley and Boston's Mayor Thomas Menino, have been on the forefront of this revolution. On October 25, 1996, Mayor Daley visited the city of Boston and made a joint appearance with Mayor Menino. The topic was public education. Both mayors made it clear where they stood on the mayor's role. "As

[2] For more detailed analysis, see Wong, et. al. 2006, Henig & Rich 2004, and Cuban & Usdan 2003.

President of The U.S. Conference of Mayors, I believe that education is the greatest challenge facing our cities today," Daley said.[3] Menino agreed:

> "Mayor Daley and I share a very important philosophy. Neither one of us is willing to wash our hands of public education. We refuse to let our schools fall by the wayside and join the chorus of politicians saying the failure of the schools isn't their fault. No, Mayor Daley and I believe that when it comes to educating our kids, *the buck stops in the mayor's office.*"[4]

Nearly a decade has passed since Mayors Daley and Menino made these proclamations. In that decade, many U.S. mayors have followed suit by stepping up their role in public education. Some cities, such as Cleveland and New York, have adopted the Chicago/Boston model: granting the mayor the power to appoint a majority of the city's school board members.

Across the nation, other mayors are also discussing their role in education. In Ohio, the Ohio Mayors' Education Roundtable has met five times, and expanded from the 8 to the 21 largest districts in the state.[5] In the 2005 Minneapolis mayoral race, education was center-stage, with the challenger Peter McLaughlin saying he "would have an Education Cabinet and seek a nonvoting mayoral appointment to the School Board."[6] Education was a major issue in the 2005 New York City mayoral race as well. Mayor Bloomberg's first attack on his opponent was on the topic of education.[7] Education was also center stage in the 2005 mayor's race in Cincinnati.[8] During the 2005 mayoral campaign, one of the candidates (a sitting Ohio state senator)

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[3] Quoted in: Brown, Mike. 1996. "Boston: Daley, Menino Say Mayors Key to Better Public Schools," Press Release, The United States Conference of Mayors. Online: http://www.usmayors.org/uscm/us_mayor_newspaper/documents/10_28_96/documents/Boston__Daley__Menino_Say_Mayors_Key_to_Better_Public_Schools_111396.html.

[4] Id. Emphasis added.

[5] Edelstein, Fritz. 2005. "Ohio Mayors' Education Roundtable Meets for Fifth Time," U.S. Mayors Newspaper, U.S. Conference of Mayors. Online: http://www.usmayors.org/USCM/us_mayor_newspaper/documents/09_12_05/add_roundtable.asp

[6] Russell, Scott. 2005. "Schools become big issue in mayor's race," *Southwest Journal*, Friday, September 23, 2005. Online: http://www.swjournal.com/articles/2005/09/23/news/news13.txt.

[7] Cardwell, Diane & Mike McIntire. 2005. "Mayor Accuses His Opponent of Wavering on Education Policy Over the Years," *New York Times*, September 26, 2005.

[8] Pierce, Margo. 2005. "A City That's Good for Kids: Mayoral candidates discuss education and youth," Cincinnati City Beat. Online: http://www.citybeat.com/2005-08-03/news2.shtml.

introduced a bill in the state senate to allow for mayoral appointed school boards in Cincinnati.[9]

To be sure, not all mayors are interested in taking on education as a top priority. Martin O'Malley, elected Mayor of Baltimore in 1999, focused more on public safety and improving city services.[10] This serves as a caution that, "contemporary mayors do not necessarily have to construct a school-focused electoral coalition or governing coalition."[11]

But even if mayors are not initially interested in education, in this new climate of accountability voters may begin to expect mayoral involvement. In the 2005 Cleveland Mayoral race, education was a central issue, "often competing with voters' questions about job creation and crime."[12] This suggests that once the role of the mayor is institutionalized, schools become a central issue regardless of the individual in the mayor's seat. Mayors may have little choice but to confront the education question: "What are you going to do about the schools if you win in November?"[13] Faced with questions like this from voters, and faced with school districts in dire need of improvement, urban politicians and policymakers may find school choice options an attractive path for reform. The analysis in the paper is devoted to assessing, both theoretically and empirically, when it is mayors may be most likely to support school choice reform.

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[9] The bill was introduced as Ohio S. B. 146, "To amend section 3311.71 of the Revised Code to require that management and control of any school district that has an average daily membership exceeding forty thousand students, has a relatively high poverty index, and has been in academic emergency at least one of the four previous school years be assumed by a nine-member board of education appointed by the mayor of the municipal corporation containing the greatest portion of the district's territory." Text of original bill online: http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=126_SB_46.

[10] Orr, Marion. 2004. "Baltimore: The limits of mayoral control," in J. Henig & W. Rich (eds.) *Mayors in the Middle: Politics, race, and mayoral control of urban schools*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, pp. 27-58. Also see: Cibulka, James G. 2003. "The city-state partnership to reform Baltimore's public schools," in L. Cuban & M. Usdan (eds.) *Powerful Reforms with Shallow Roots: Improving America's schools*. New York: Teachers College Press. p. 125-146. Orr, Marion. 1999. *Black Social Capital: The politics of school reform in Baltimore, 1986-1998*. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas.

[11] Orr, p. 29. For more on Baltimore, see: Introduction: The Evaluation of Baltimore's City-State Partnership to Reform BCPSS: Framing the Context, National Trends, and Key Findings. By: Cibulka, James G.. Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk, Jan 2003, Vol. 8 Issue 1, p1-14. Westat. 2001. "Report on the Final Evaluation of the City-State Partnership," Westat, Rockville, MD, December 3, 2001.

[12] Perkins, Olivera & Janet Okoben. 2005. "Candidates say persuasion key in controlling Cleveland schools," Cleveland Plain Dealer, October 02, 2005.

[13] Ibid.

Mayors who gain control over school system may choose not to exclude school choice from their strategic thinking. Instead, they can use choice to create internal competition to push the system to perform more efficiently. Chicago's Mayor Daley is clearly using this strategy in his Renaissance 2010 plan. An alternative explanation is that mayors include choice because African American parents may see choice as a way to improve the schooling quality for their children in the inner city setting. We find some support for this in our empirical analysis. Yet a third reason is the political security (incumbency) of mayors. When they are in office for multiple terms, mayors may be more willing to take risks, including potentially alienating themselves from union support. Conversely, mayors who are opposed to choice may be subject to strong union politics. In fiscally stressed districts, mayors may also see choice as siphoning resources from the public school district.

To begin exploring these and related hypotheses, we organize the paper into five sections. Following this introduction, in Section II we build a theory about what factors would make a mayor more likely to embrace school choice options. Drawing on the urban politics and politics of education literatures, we argue that mayoral positions on school choice can be understood as a combination of the city's political economy and the mayor's leadership style. In Section III, we present our analytical approach for empirical analysis. We discuss the need for an index to measure mayoral support for school choice, and conduct analysis on one aspect of this index: public support for school choice or private school options as observed in recent state of the city speeches. We employ a rare events logistic regression model to analyze the relationship between support for school choice and a host of demographic, political, and economic factors. In Section IV of the paper we present the results of our preliminary analysis, and draw on qualitative evidence from cities in our sample in order to help interpret the findings. We find that mayors are

more likely to announce support school choice when their city school districts are larger and have greater percentages of African-American students. This is consistent with the hypothesis that mayors may see charter schools as a means to improve education for traditionally underserved populations. In Section V, we conclude the paper by discussing potential policy implications of our findings and mapping out directions for future research.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW & THEORY BUILDING

In this section, we first consider the historical context of mayors and urban education, and then synthesize the options that mayors have in either supporting or opposing school choice. Based on these first two sections, we develop a series of hypotheses about the demographic, political, and economic factors that we believe will influence mayoral support for charter schools, vouchers, and other private school alternatives.

A. Historical Context

Understanding mayors and schools at the start of the 21st century requires a look at mayors and schools at the start of the 20th century.[14] Urban school governance in the 20th century was dominated by reform efforts that kept mayors and other political leaders from interfering in public schools. Over the past 80 years, school governance has gone through three phases, each of which can be broadly differentiated by the degree of mayoral control.[15] The

[14] Tyack, D.B. (1974). *The One Best System: A history of American urban education*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. See also: Ravitch, Diane. 2000. *Left back : a century of failed school reforms*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

[15] For background on how the field's understanding of school district politics has evolved, see: Eliot, T. 1959. "Toward an understanding of public school politics," *American Political Science Review*, 82, 1065-1087. Katz, M. B. 1987. *Reconstructing American Education*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Callahan, R. 1962. *Education and the Cult of Efficiency*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. Peterson, P. E. 1976. *School Politics, Chicago Style*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. Bidwell, C. 1965. "The school as a formal organization," in J. March (ed.) *Handbook of Organziations*. Skokie, IL: Rand McNally, pp. 972-1022. Weick, K. 1976, "Educational organizations as loosely coupled systems," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 21, pp. 1-89. Rogers, D. 1968. *110 Livingston St.* New York: Random House.

Progressive reform of the 1920s was designed to use "scientific management" to keep partisan (mayoral) politics out of the school sector. By the 1960s, school boards and superintendents allied with the mayor to manage intense conflicts over educational issues, many of them further complicated by racial and income inequities in big cities. The emergence of accountability-based reform during the 1990s created a new set of political realities for a more active mayoral role.[16] While reforms adopted in each of the three phases take on a process of incremental accumulation, where previously enacted reforms were slightly modified and then layered onto the current ones the role of the mayor has become increasingly visible and assertive over time.

The progressive-corporate governance paradigm dominated the reform phase that roughly spanned the period from the 1920s to the mid 1960s. During the first quarter of the 20th century, urban centers were growing rapidly as the manufacturing and industrial sectors created job opportunities for waves of working class immigrants. The urban population, according to the 1920 U.S. Census, exceeded its rural counterpart for the first time in American history. In this context of social and economic changes, public schools became a contested terrain. Political scientists Edward Banfield and James Wilson (1966) characterized the reform politics as a conflict between "private regarding" and "public regarding" civic culture. The working class and immigrant groups, according to these authors, relied on community networks and precinct captains of the political machines to gain access into the political and economic mainstream for jobs, services, and other tangible benefits. Middle and upper income class groups, in contrast, wanted an efficient governmental system accountable to the taxpayers at large. By the 1920s, businesses and their progressive allies were able to institute far-reaching reforms to insulate the school system from partisan intrusion.

[16] To see how the older view was challenged, readers can see: Layton 1982. Burlingame 1988. Boyd 1976. Peterson 1976. Wirt & Kirst 1982. Mitchell 1988. Scribner 1977. LaNoue 1982.

The new model that originated from the Progressive era continues to dominate many districts even today. The main features that are traceable to the reform of the 1920s include: the school district is governed by a citywide, non-partisan, elected board that appoints the school superintendent as its professional chief executive; its administrative hierarchy and delivery of services are led by a professionally credentialed school superintendent and his/her professional cabinet; its personnel policy is codified in details to guard against political interference; schooling services (such as instructional time) are organized in terms of age-specific grade level and subject matter knowledge; and its taxing authority is autonomous from city hall. In 1969, Gittell observed that, "the most significant trend in education in New York City has been the isolation of school administration from city government."[17]

To be sure, the formal separation of school systems and city governments does not mean that mayors were never involved in school matters. Scattered throughout Jeffrey Mirel's (1993) history of the Detroit school system, for instance, are examples of informal mayoral influence.[18] In the 1930s, when the city had to address fiscal crisis, the mayor created a committee to specifically address how to cut back teacher salaries. In preparing the school board for the cuts in 1932, the mayor "met informally" with school board members to gain their support for the budget cuts.[19] In a system where the mayor had little institutionalized power over the school board, the mayor had to place more reliance on these informal means. But even with informal contact, this insulated school system was able to build and maintain its own institutional rules.

Throughout the 1960s up through the 1980s, changing urban school politics created new opportunities for mayors to mediate competing demands. Among the key factors contributing to

[17] Gittell, Marilyn. 1969. "Professionalism and public participation in educational policy-making: New York city, a case study," in M. Gittell & A. G. Hevesi, (eds.) *The Politics of Urban Education*. New York: Praeger. P. 158
[18] Mirel, Jeffrey. 1993. *The Rise and Fall of an Urban School System*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
[19] Mirel, p. 100.

heightened school conflicts were racial tension over the pace of integrating schools, taxpayers dissatisfaction with local property tax burden, readiness of teacher's unions to strike when collective bargaining failed, and the declining political influence of the urban population in the state legislature. These challenges clearly outmatched the capacity of an independent school board and its professional superintendent. As a result, mayors found themselves in a new role, namely crisis managers. For example, Chicago's mayor Richard J. Daley repeatedly involved himself in bargaining with the teachers union to keep labor peace during the 1960s and the early 1970s (Grimshaw 1979). New York's mayor John Lindsey was instrumental in decentralizing the city's school system. Mayors also lobbied on behalf of the autonomous school districts for additional funding at the state capital. Intergovernmental agreements over an increasingly complex federal grants-in-aid system often benefited from mayoral guidance. In other words, mayors began to re-enter the realm of school governance during this second politically contentious phase of reform.

By the 1990s, big city mayors began to see public education as an important investment to improve the city's overall quality of social and economic life. Evidence from a study by Hopkins (2004) suggests that mayoral control is more likely to arise in cities that are lagging in retail sales.[20] Mayors, perhaps working with the business community, see schools as a key to improving overall city performance. They want to improve safety, parks, schools, and recreational services for families who live in the city. From a broader policy context, mayors are increasingly skeptical of traditional strategies to turn around declining schools and depressed neighborhoods. Instead, they are willing to take political risks and move away from their own political party policy platforms. While mayors in previous decades wanted to control the school

[20] Hopkins, Dan. 2004. "Risky Business: The role of economic insecurity in fostering mayoral control of schools," Working Paper, Harvard University. Online (accessed October 2005): http://www.people.fas.harvard.edu/~dhopkins/.

district for patronage purposes, an increasing number of mayors in the 1990s focused primarily on raising the performance of the schools. To improve academic and management performance, some mayors are willing to lead the school district themselves. In other cases, mayors are supportive of charter schools and are mobilizing a broader reform coalition to circumscribe the influence of the teachers union. In short, with the emergence of formal mayoral control over schools in the 1990s, the boundary between mayors and schools has now been redrawn. Clearly, the 1920s model of insulating school governance from mayoral influence has been significantly revised.

B. Mayoral Options for Involvement

Mayors have a number of options when thinking about promoting any school reform, including school choice. In Table 2, we categorize these options into five categories:

- Explicit / formal support
- Implicit / informal support
- Neutral
- Implicit / informal opposition
- Explicit / formal opposition

How a mayor chooses to frame their support for school choice will depend upon a number of contextual factors. Strong pubic support, such as that offered by Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson, signals a desire on the mayor's part to make charter schools an increasingly important option for city residents. Mayor Peterson's support is also likely tied to the legislative authority given to his office to authorize charter schools.

In cities where the mayor does not have as much power, or where other interests make it difficult for the mayor to be effective in the realm of school policy, the mayor may choose to

support school choice in more informal ways. Clarence Stone has emphasized the need for "civic capacity" to enable successful reform. Civic capacity "involves mobilization by a broader array of community interests to remove policy-making authority from subperforming policy subsystems."[21] In relation to school choice, mayors may informally help to build civic capacity by bringing together powerful interests in support of the reform.

While we emphasize mayoral involvement, it remains the case that many mayors may stay neutral on school choice, and more generally stay neutral on education issues entirely. Mayoral non-involvement can be seen as a continuation of the historical separation of city hall and the school district.

At the other end of the spectrum, Mayors may also find themselves with an interest in actively opposing school choice. This may be the case when mayors believe that choice efforts could harm the public schools, or when political incentives align with interests that are opposed to choice reforms. The mayor's choice to make this opposition explicit or implicit will depend upon the level of concern about choice and the political capital the mayor has to expend.

How a mayor should approach education policy remains an issue in tension. On one hand, most cities maintain the traditional city / school district governance boundaries. On the other hand, we see much evidence of mayors who are interested in becoming more involved in the operation of their city's school systems. We present both sides of this tension, and discuss whether or not it is sustainable in the long run.

Despite maintaining traditional governance boundaries and not listing education as a core city service, districts nevertheless have made many attempts to improve city services. We find evidence that a number of the non-mayoral control cities are attempting to develop joint projects with the district. In some cases, this partnership starts with regular meetings. In Abilene, Texas

[21] Stone (2001), p. 7.

there are regular special meetings of the Abilene City Council and Abilene Independent School District Board of Trustees.[22]

A set of case studies conducted by the National League of Cities as part of their Municipal Leadership in Education Project emphasize the point that even when mayors do not have formal power over their city's school district, they can still be effective education partners.[23] In both State of the City addresses, and in some additional speeches, we find examples of the same sentiment projected by mayors. For instance, in Savannah, GA, Mayor Otis Johnson stated that the city, county, school district and additional stakeholders engage in a collaborative effort to improve Savannah's education. He went to argue that, "if we do not willingly accept the responsibility for producing positive outcomes, we are expecting someone else to accept responsibility for the future of our children and to me, that's insane. Nobody is responsible for our children but us."[24]

Many cities have a "Department of Youth Services" or its equivalent. These departments are frequently tied to programs such as tutoring and after-school enrichment. Some of these bodies have also moved in the direction of being advisory committees for the mayor. In Seattle, there exists an "Office for Education" which works on the Families and Education Levy, City/School Partnerships, and Community Partnerships.[25] In St. Louis, Mayor Slay has formed a, "Mayor's Commission on Children, Youth and Families," on which he placed representatives from local government, education, philanthropic, business and community agencies.[26] The

[22] See: (2002) minutes: http://www.abilenetx.com/Minutes/Council/2002/2002-07-22.htm.
[23] Hutchinson, Audrey M. and Van Wyngaardt, Denise. 2004. *Stronger Schools, Stronger Cities*. Institute for Youth, Education and Families, National League of Cities. Online (accessed June 2005): http://www.nlc.org/content/Files/IYEF-StrongerCitiesReport.pdf.
[24] Johnson, Otis. 2005. *Education Rituals in the Savannah Community: A Position Paper*. City of Savannah Town Hall Meeting on Public Education. July 25, 2005. http://www.ci.savannah.ga.us/cityweb/townhallmtgs/schoolreform/town_hall_school_speech_final.pdf
[25] http://www.cityofseattle.net/neighborhoods/education/
[26] http://stlcin.missouri.org/education/commission.cfm

Commission meets quarterly, and offers recommendations for policy changes. Up the Mississippi River, Mayor Kelly in St. Paul has done a very similar thing in establishing the Capital City Education Initiative. The Initiative is designed to "provide the framework for the Kelly administration to work with the school district and other public and nonpublic K-12 schools, Saint Paul's higher education institutions, teachers, parents, businesses, non-profits, arts organizations, foundations, and other stakeholders to meet Saint Paul's education needs."[27]

Many cities provide support services to the school district in the form of construction aid. In San Diego, for instance, "The San Diego Model School Development Agency's vision is to enhance the positive affect of building new schools in City Heights by developing -- on at least one such site -- not just an elementary school but also for-sale and for-rent homes, new or revitalized retail businesses, recreation areas, improved open space, and family services."[28] In Huntsville, AL, where a former teacher is mayor, the city has made creative use of Tax Increment Finance (TIF) districts to help fund their city schools.[29] In Syracuse, Mayor Driscoll worked with the state legislature to pass a $600M School Facilities Renovation Project.[30]

In other cities, new liaison positions have been created. In Portland, the Mayor assigns the "Education Advocate," and in Akron, a position has been created for a "Deputy Mayor for Intergovernmental Relations" in order to work with the school district more effectively. Akron has also been a leader in partnering with the school district to share revenues and jointly help the city's economic development.[31] In October 2001, the Mayor of Akron jointly signed a "Contract with the Community" with the Akron Public Schools.[32]

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[27] http://www.stpaul4schools.org/actionplan.htm
[28] http://www.sdmodelschool.net/
[29] http://www.hsvcity.com/508/mayor_index.html
[30] http://www.syracuse.ny.us/mayorBio.asp
[31] In 1997, the city and school district made an agreement in which, "the Akron school board agreed to allow the city's economic development office to offer TIF to new projects. The agreement also provides that Akron schools may not expand the school district into townships. In exchange for these commitments, Mayor Plusquellic agreed to

The reasons for these forays into district governance are varied. In Nashville, Mayor Purcell may be looking to the schools to establish his legacy. One expert observer has noted that, "If the test scores continue to improve, as mayor [Purcell] would take credit for the good things that have happened. But his legacy as being the education mayor has a cloud over it right now."[33] Mayor Purcell's political motives in this situation would seem to be aligned with school performance. Portland Mayor Vera Katz comes at the issue with a citywide interest and global competitiveness mindset: "The public schools system is truly the lifeline of the city. Without quality education, a city cannot create and sustain a workforce capable of being competitive in the global workforce of the 21st century."[34]

As Sassen (2001) has argued, we are now viewing the "global city".[35] It is now commonplace for local businesses to contract directly with corporations and governments in foreign nations. Research has found connections between "quality of life" and the attraction of new capital.[36] Even cities such as Fargo, North Dakota have put international business and global trade on their agenda.[37] In its Legislative Agenda for 2005, the Fargo – Moorhead Chamber of Commerce included as a goal: "Support legislation that encourages entrepreneurship in the state and improves the state's (global) economic competitiveness, including tax incentives for

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share revenues received from the Joint Economic Development Districts (JEDDs) with Akron Public Schools." City of Akron, Press Release. "Mayor Brings $2 Million To Weekly News Conference," March 25, 2005. http://www.ci.akron.oh.us/News_Releases/2005/0325.html.

[32] City of Akron, Press Release. "School District, City Sign Contract With The Community," http://ci.akron.oh.us/News_Releases/2001/101501.html.

[33] Quote from Pat Nolan, a political analyst, in: Kerr, Gail. 2005. "Purcell has two years left to shape his legacy," The Tennessean, November 6, 2005. Online (accessed November 2005): http://www.tennessean.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?Date=20051106&Category=COLUMNIST0101&ArtNo=511060390&SectionCat=&Template=printart.

[34] 1996 speech quoted in: Pittman, Alan. 2002. "Child Support," Eugene Weekly, February 7, 2002. Online (accessed June 2005): http://www2.eugeneweekly.com/2002/02_07_02/coverstory.html.

[35] The global city : New York, London, Tokyo / Saskia Sassen. Princeton, N.J. : Princeton University Press, c2001.

[36] Title: QUALITY OF LIFE AND CITY COMPETITIVENESS , By: Rogerson, Robert J., Urban Studies, 0042-0980, May 1, 1999, Vol. 36, Issue 5/6

[37] http://www.fmchamber.com/government/update.html. Almost every city we looked at had resources for international economy or trade. As just one additional example, Nashville: http://www.nashvillechamber.com/business/international/assistance.html.

(venture) capital formation." At the same time, the Chamber of Commerce saw the connection between this priority and education, noting their desire to support legislation that would, "Support adequate funding and programs that help to provide a contemporary workforce development system for the nation's business community." These goals are shared by city after city in the United States. Recognizing that they are now competing in a global marketplace, the issue of urban school district underperformance is not just a desire for redistributive justice: it is an effort to improve overall economic competitiveness of the city.

C. Hypothesizing About Mayoral Support for School Choice

In this context of global and regional competitiveness, school choice options may appear an attractive options for mayors to consider. Our goal is to translate the foregoing discussion into an empirical model that can be used to specify the factors that lead mayors to support (or oppose) school choice. The two primary challenges of carrying out this analysis are quantifying mayoral support for school choice, and identifying a set of variables that are likely to explain that support. We discuss our measure of mayoral support in Section III (Data & Methods), and focus here on hypotheses about the factors that are likely to affect that support. We consider (1) demographic, (2) political, and (3) economic factors.

1. Demographics

One of the arguments made by proponents of school choice is that it provides more options for parent-consumers in the education marketplace (Chubb & Moe, 1990). When that market is larger, it is likely that there are more diverse demands made on the system. In such cases, mayors may be more supportive of choice options as a way to appeal to multiple constituencies. **Hypothesis #1, therefore, is that larger city school districts will be positively associated with mayoral support for education.**

One of the constituencies that may be of particular important in the politics of school choice in urban education is that of the African-American community. In several cases, most notably Detroit and Washington D.C., mayoral control in education has been sharply opposed by some in the African-American community. State takeovers of school districts have also raised racial questions.[38] In both instances, there is a concern that centralized control will lead to cuts in minority opportunities in the name of 'efficiency'. Beyond the context of mayoral control, there remain many underlying racial tensions in America's schools. Many districts have taken steps to try and address the race issue. In Austin in 2005, for instance, the city partnered with the school district to create two joint Task Forces "to address the quality of life, specifically education, of African American and Hispanic citizens."[39]

We can see significant racial differences in public opinion data from New York. In 2001, when 24% of white respondents thought mayoral control was a good idea, only 11% of the black community felt similarly. In 2002, the split was greater – 30% of black respondents supported mayoral control, compared to 51% of whites. To explain these differences along racial lines, we turn to Henig's (2004) argument that for the African-American community, the city school system is not simply an education production facility, but also a source of solid, middle-class jobs. There is a that if a central, mayoral-led administration took over the district, the security of those jobs would be threatened. Henig's argument is crystallized in a 1999 Op-Ed, in which Anthony Jenkins observed that, "The D.C. mayoral race was about electing someone who could put the city back on its feet, someone who could get its services back to optimum efficiency. But

[38] For a discussion and brief analysis, see "Racial Issues Cloud State Takeovers," *Education Week*, January 14, 1998. Available on-line at: http://www.edweek.org/ew/1998/18minor.h17. See also, "African-American group opposes school district takeover," *Kansas City Star*, March 2, 2001.

[39] Austin Independent School District, Press Release. 2005. "City School District Create Two Task Forces to Address Quality of Life of African American and Hispanic Citizens," November 22, 2005. Online (accessed November 2005): http://www.austinisd.org/newsmedia/releases/index.phtml?more=0971&lang=.

to many blacks, still the majority population in the city, that objective should not be accomplished at our expense."[40]

In response to these racial tensions, mayors may see school choice as a way to provide resources targeted toward the African-American community. There are several reasons why this might be the case. First, charter schools, with site-based autonomy and the ability to focus on a target student population, provide a particularly convenient vehicle for the community to engage in more local control. Second, there is evidence to suggest that choice programs provide academic benefits to the African-American community (Howell & Peterson 2002). Finally, in an environment where private school choice options are generally not available to poor, black residents, the opportunity to receive financial support for private school attendance could be particularly appealing to the African-American community. In light of these rationales, our **Hypothesis #2 is that greater proportions of African-American students in the city school district will be positively related to mayoral support for school choice**.

Charter schools have also been used to serve students with disabilities. In light of the potential for charter schools to be tailored to this segment of the student population, we generate **Hypothesis #3, that greater proportions of students with disabilities in the city school district will be positively related to mayoral support for school choice.**

2. Politics

One of the most important factors in determining mayoral support is the governance structure in which the mayor sits. If the mayor has little to no formal power over the school system, mayors are likely to be less inclined to get involved in education issues, including school choice. In thinking about measuring mayoral power in determining education outcomes, the ideal

[40] Jenkins, Anthony. 2005. "Black enough: Some People Wonder Whether D.C.'s Mayor Really Is. Here's One of Them," *Washington Post*, January 17, 1999; Page B1.

measure would be the "actual amount of power and influence the mayor has on the city school system." Such a measure, however, cannot be readily constructed. The "power literature" in political science and sociology, which has since faded from view, struggled with a similar dilemma. To solve the problem, we use "formal, legal authority" as a proxy for 'actual' or 'real' power/authority.[41]

Looking at formal powers has several benefits. First, it is a measure that is available for each district. Printed in black and white statutes, institutional governance can be readily coded. Second, it is the formal powers that state legislatures and city residents (via charter amendments) can directly change. From a policy perspective, these are the legal tools available. Finally, focusing on formal powers avoids the methodological issues that arise survey-based measures of influence or power. These issues have been discussed at length within the context of the aforementioned power literature.[42]

We focus on four key dimensions in which mayoral control can be institutionalized: the presence of a new style mayor, formal authority for that mayor to appoint a majority or all of the school board, and whether the appointive power is legally restricted in any way. In the analysis for this paper, we use an index variable (summing over all 4 measures), and a dichotomous (0-1) variable to measure majority appointment power. The measures are:

[41] We understand that there may be some slippage between formal vs. actual power. Just because a mayor is given the institutional mechanisms to take a greater role in governing the schools, it does not necessarily follow that he will in fact become a new style education mayor. In examining the case of Baltimore, Cibulka (2005) calls attention to differences among mayoral aspiration, ambition, attention priority, and style. Mayor O'Malley of Baltimore was less interested in education, and gave higher priority to financial solvency. This is in contrast to Chicago's Mayor Daley, who integrates education with his overall focus on quality of life.

[42] The community power structure literature is synthesized well in two edited volumes: Aiken and Mott (1970) and Clark (1968). Aiken, M. and Mott, P. E., eds. (1970). The structure of community power. New York: Random House.

1) *MAJORITY*: A dichotomous variable, coded as 1 if the mayor has the power to **appoint a majority** of the school board. The variable is coded 0 if the mayor can appoint zero or any sub-majority of the board.
2) *MAYOR_INDEX*: An index variable that sums over the four dimensions. This variable has a low value of 0, and a high value of 4.

Hypothesis #4 holds that mayors with majority appointive power and mayors with greater control (as measured by the composite control index) are more likely to be supportive of school choice.

It should be noted that one important missing variable from our current analysis is a measure of the strength of citywide political opposition to school choice. This might take the form of a measure of local strength of the teacher's union, or opinion data of city residents. Presently no such comparable measure exists. Opposition to choice has been based on concerns over equal educational opportunities and self-selection. Choice programs are likely to "cream off" better students and take other resources out of neighborhood schools. Local residents may perceive that the conversion of their neighborhood school to a choice program deprives them of direct access to their community-based service institution. Questions have been raised about the implementation of a system-wide choice plan, with regard to distribution of school information to all parents, transportation costs, and compliance with civil rights provisions. In short, choice programs may come into conflict with other restructuring efforts in public schools and may destabilize school governance.

One way we try to get at these additional interests is through a measure of the school board's governance structure. School boards may be either elected at-large (where all city residents vote for a member) or single-member (where board members are assigned to a

particular geographic district). School board members tied to particular geographic areas may be less willing to promote school choice options because it could mean a loss of students and services in their part of the city. Further, they may also be wary of mayoral-led reforms. As a consequence, mayors may be reluctant to provide support for choice options since they expect their support to be met with significant opposition. **We generate Hypothesis #5, that the greater the percentage of school board members elected as single-members, the less likely mayors will be to support school choice.**

3. Economics

Local schools remain an important neighborhood institution. For high-poverty neighborhoods, schools serve as social buffers that create opportunities for children and parents of low-income backgrounds to connect to the social and economic mainstreams (Wilson 1987). In neighborhoods that are marred by constant warfare among rival gangs, schools offer signs of stability and provide an accessible safe haven for the local students. Increasingly, urban politicians are willing to allocate funds to build up schools as community centers for local activities, such as after school and summer recreational programs. Mayors may see school choice as a way to improve both the lives of its poorest residents and to generate overall economic growth. **Hypotheses #6 and #7 are that when there are higher poverty levels and lower income levels in a city, mayors will be more likely to support school choice.**

Finally, integrating city and education services requires the city to see itself as a provider of education services. From the perspective of the city as a service provider, education remains one of the most important issues that voters want their local leaders to address. Consequently, mayors see the bureaucratized school system as their next key challenge for service improvement (Wong, Jain and Clark 1997). City school systems are competing with private schools for high-

achieving students, and when private school competition is greater, we expect that mayors may be more supportive of choice options. **Hypothesis #8 is that mayors in cities with greater proportions of school-aged children enrolled in private schools will be more likely to support school choice.**

III. DATA & METHODS

In this section, we discuss our approach for testing our eight hypotheses. We discuss: (A) sample selection, (B) measuring mayoral support for school choice, and (C) our statistical methods.

A. Sample Selection

In determining the population of interest, we narrow our focus to large, urban school districts whose school district boundaries are co-terminus with city government boundaries. With this in mind, we took the following steps toward developing a purposeful sample of all such districts in the United States. Using data from the National Center for Education Statistics' Common Core of Data, and a series of decision rules, we identified districts in the nation that: (1) are not a component of a supervisory union, (2) primarily serve a central city of a Metropolitan Core Based Statistical Area (CBSA), (3) have at least 40 schools, (4) receive at least 75% of their students from a principal city, and (5) send at least 75% of their city's public school students to the same school district.

The first three decision rules restrict our analysis to large districts serving big population centers. To be sure, there are now some small and medium-sized cities that have mayoral appointed school boards. Trenton and Harrisburg, each considerably smaller than the rest of the

mayoral control cities, are not included in our sample.[43] The application of mayoral control in small and medium-sized cities is an interesting topic for future research, but in this study we focus on big cities. There can be, of course, some debate as to how "large" a city must be in order to be included in the sample.[44] When looking at the size of school districts in the United States, we used New Haven (with 48 schools) as a point of reference. We established a floor at 40 schools, to produce a sample of urban districts that are at least the size of New Haven. New Haven has the added benefit of being a central city in the study of urban politics (e.g. Dahl 1961).

The last two decision rules are designed to address the requirement of a coterminus city/district boundary. Mayoral appointed school boards are not an appropriate policy reform when the boundaries of the school district vary significantly from those of the mayor's city. To briefly summarize, this disconnect between district and city can arise in one of two ways. First, a single city may be served by multiple school districts. Dallas and Indianapolis are examples of this situation.[45] Second, a single school district may serve students coming from multiple cities. This is a more common, as large city districts may also serve some smaller, surrounding municipalities. When the percentage of students in the district gets too small, the mayor may have less influence because the district will be listening to officials in those other municipalities as well. We chose 75% for each of these decision rules because it is generally accepted as a high, supermajority bar. Ratification by three-fourths of the states are required for amending the U.S. constitution, and often 75% of shareholder votes are required to approve corporate takeovers.

[43] Trenton has only 24 schools, and Harrisburg only 15 schools. One additional district, Hartford, has 33 schools and is excluded from our sample. Hartford, however, was under partial state control for the entire duration of 1999-2003. Hartford did not return to full mayoral control until 2005.

[44] This is a version of Sorites' paradox about when a "heap" of stones becomes a heap, or evaluation of a color spectrum as to when orange becomes red. As with those cases, the problem is an intractable one that requires (as a practical matter) researchers to make reasoned assumptions.

[45] See: http://imaps.indygov.org/schools/options.asp

We put our decision rules into action using the 2002-03 Common Core of Data (CCD), district-level database.[46] In Table 3, we present the number of school districts remaining in our sample after each decision rule was implemented. The CCD district level data set includes a variable named "TYPE" which designates whether a school district is a "Local school district that is not a component of a supervisory union."[47] Filtering on the TYPE variable left us with 12,827 districts. The CCD file also includes a variable named MSC, which is the NCES classification of "the agency's service area relative to a Metropolitan Statistical Area."[48] When we limited our sample to those school districts that "primarily serve a central city of an MSA," our sample size narrowed down to 735.

We crafted Rule #3 in an effort to focus our attention on the largest school districts in the nation. While mayoral involvement may also be beneficial in smaller districts, the first wave of mayoral appointed school boards has emerged most frequently in the context of large urban districts. We limited our sample to districts with at least 40 schools, as recorded in the CCD database for 2002-03. This reduced the sample to 139.

To operationalize Rules 4 and 5, we first had to take some preliminary steps, requiring use of an additional CCD database: the Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey

[46] Although we used the 2002-03 year of data, the size of the districts and their boundaries do not appear to change significantly over the five year period (1999-2003) that we examine. All Common Core of Data data files were accessed via the Internet over the months of January through June 2005. (National Center of Education Statistics, http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/ccddata.asp, accessed 6/2005).

[47] The other values that the TYPE variable can take are: (2) Local school district component of a supervisory union sharing a superintendent and administrative services with other local school districts. (3) Supervisory union administrative center, or a county superintendent serving the same purpose. (4) Regional education services agency, or a county superintendent serving the same purpose. (5) State-operated institution charged, at least in part, with providing elementary and/or secondary instruction or services to a special need population. (6) Federally-operated institution charged, at least in part, with providing elementary and/or secondary instruction or services to a special need population. (7) Other education agencies that do not fit into the first six categories.

[48] The three values this variable can take are: (1) Primarily serves a central city of an MSA, (2) Serves an MSA but not primarily its central city, and (3) Does not serve an MSA.

Data.[49] We started with a dataset of every school in the 137 districts remaining after Rule #3 was implemented. Using this school level data, we noted the city that the school was located in, and compared that to the school district the school was assigned to. Aggregating up from this school-level data for each district, and then for each city, we were able to construct two measures.

First, we generated the percentage of the school district's students who come from the central city, e.g. the percentage of Richmond County students from the City of Augusta.[50] Second, we calculated the percentage of the city's students who attend the major district, e.g. the percentage of Phoenix students in Paradise Valley Unified District.[51] In the vast majority of cases, these two measures were identical. Every student in a school in the City of Chicago, for instance, is assigned to the Chicago Public Schools. But in some cases, as we noted in the first two chapters, there is a disconnect between city and district. Two problems arise: (1) either the city is served by more than one district, or (2) the district serves more than one city. We discussed why in these situations, the model of mayoral appointed school boards does not seem

[49] The Common Core of Data provides data at both the school and district level. We had to employ the school-level database here since we were making connections between individuals schools and cities, not districts.

[50] We proceeded in three steps. First, for each school, the CCD database listed a school district and a city in which the school was located. This allowed us to aggregate up to the city level and create a measure of, "Number of students in schools that are in District A and City A". Second, we used the district level CCD database to measure the total number of students in District A. Third, we used these two measures to calculate the ratio: Percentage of students in District A whose school is in City A.

[51] We proceeded in three steps. First, for each regular school, the CCD database listed a city in which the school was located. This allowed us to aggregate up to the city level and create a measure of, "Number of students in schools in City A." We excluded non-regular schools, such as "Governor's School of the Arts." Second, we also knew whether or not those schools in City A were in School District A (the corresponding major district associated with the city). This allowed us to calculated a measure of, "Number of students in schools in City A who are *not part of* School District A." Third, using these two measures, we calculated the ratio: Percentage of students going to school in City A who are actually a part of School District A. In some cases, the city listed for a school in the Common Core of Data data file did not correspond to the political municipality the school was actually situated in. For example, a school in the town of Webster Groves was listed (correctly) as being in the Webster Groves School District, but had "St. Louis" listed as its location city. In fact, the school was located in Webster Groves. In these cases, we validated school location by using the American Fact Finder address lookup tool. We looked at school addresses and the "Place" listed to see if they were in fact part of the city, or if it was simply a case of mis-labeling in the dataset. We used the Census' on-line tools (http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/AGSGeoAddressServlet) to look up each school individually and noting its actual location for verification purposes.

as applicable.[52] In setting up our sample of comparison districts, we dropped school districts and cities that exhibited significant types of one of these two problems.

In regards to districts taking in more than just the students from the major city, we stipulated that districts must have at least 75% of their students coming from the major city. The rationale here is that the percentage of students from the major city must be large enough to make the mayor's voice in that district a powerful one. If the mayor's city accounts for only 50% of the district's students, he/she is less likely to be able to push through reforms. In regards to cities sending their students to more than one district, the districts that we excluded were situated in areas where school districts cut across cities. This type of arrangement does not readily facilitate mayoral appointed school boards.

When we implemented these final two rules, we cut 22 districts, leaving us with a sample size of 104 school districts.[53] For these 104 cities, we then attempt to measure mayoral support for school choice.

B. Measuring mayoral support for school choice

In measuring mayoral support and allowing for cross-city comparison, we look for objective, quantifiable measures. Although in this paper's analysis we consider only one of the following factors (support voiced in state of the city addresses), we are working to construct a "mayoral support index" which includes the following components:

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[52] Although they have not developed yet in many instances, it is possible that a regional planning board or committee might be formed in situations such as these. We consider this possibility in greater length in Chapter 9.

[53] *Rule #4* led to the exclusion of the following districts (with cities in parantheses): Pinellas County School District (Largo), Charleston County School District (Charleston), St. Lucie County School District (Ft. Pierce), Richardson ISD (Richardson), Orange Unified(Orange), Round Rock ISD (Round Rock), Guilford County Schools (Greensboro), Washoe County School District (Reno), Forsyth County Schools (Winston Salem), Carrollton-Farmers Branch (Carrollton), Lafayette Parish School Board (Lafayette), Paradise Valley Unified District (Phoenix). *Rule #5* led to the exclusion of the following districts: Spring Branch ISD (Houston), Alief ISD (Houston), North East ISD (San Antonio), San Antonio ISD, San Jose Unified, Northside ISD (San Antonio), Bakersfield City Elementary, Ysleta ISD (El Paso), Indianapolis Public Schools, Colorado Springs 11, El Paso ISD, Houston ISD, Kansas City 33, Oklahoma City, Stockton City Unified, Sacramento City Unified, Adams-Arapahoe 28j (Aurora), Omaha Public Schools, Riverside Unified, Tucson Unified Dist., Corpus Christi ISD.

- Public support as voiced in state of the city speeches
- Public support appearing in local media outlets
- Testimony or other formal lobbying to state legislatures
- Mayoral in-kind financial support for charter schools / vouchers
- Commissions, panels, or other bodies formed by mayor to explore choice options

In this paper, however, we examine only state of the city addresses. We were successful in gathering 80 speeches, which are listed in Table 4.[54] We employ this approach primarily as a pilot project for the larger indexed analysis to follow, and acknowledge its limitations. First, we recognize that it is not complete (we're missing 24 districts), and more fundamentally that it is only one 'snapshot' in the life of the mayor's public life and the city's history. In Alaska, for instance, Mayor Mark Begich made school vouchers a part of his campaign, but in the State of the City address we analyze, there is no mention of the topic.

In Fresno, we see differences between the 2005 State of the City address (which we code in our analysis since it is the most recent), and the 2004 address. In 2004, Fresno Mayor Alan Autry looked to vouchers as a solution to the city's education problems. He also was a staunch supporter of legislation that would allow colleges and universities to oversee charter schools- also hopes himself to open a military-style school. In his 2005 speech, however, there was not similar attention given to the topic. Mayor Daley in Chicago also did not mention school choice directly in 2005, though he has in previous years.

[54] In several cities, we used what amounted to the functional equivalent of the State of the City speech. In Fort Collins, we used the "City of Fort Collins 2004 Report to the Community". In Tacoma, the City Manager gave the speech. In Charlotte, it's called the "Corporate Performance Report," and is jointly submitted by Mayor, City Council, and City Manager. In Madison, we used the Mayor's "Mid-Term Speech to the Downtown Rotary Club" as our text for comparison. In San Bernadino, we used the City of San Bernardino, 2004 Report Card. In Lexington we used the, "State of the Merged Government".

This alerts us to the biases in the present analysis, and reinforces our desire to construct more indicators of support over a longer time period. Some cities may have had one-time policy issues rise up in the year we examine. Since we have only one year of data, we are limited in the inferences we can make. Still, we code each speech and perform basic statistical analysis to examine the relationship between new style mayors and public positions on education policy. Looking at the text of each speech, we create eight dichotomous variables. Of interest to our analysis here is one variable in particular: Does the mayor discuss private schools, charter schools, or private choice options in the speech? In St. Louis, for instance, Mayor Slay announced that, "Through my educational liaison, I plan to work with community groups and businesses to create more, and better charter schools in the City; and to increase the number of private schools." We look for similar sentiments in other speeches in the sample cities.[55]

C. Statistical approach and model specification

We use regression analysis to analyze the relationship between our set of city-specific explanatory variables and mayoral position on school choice. Our dependent variable is a dichotomous 0-1 variable (whether or not the mayor mentioned school choice or private school options). As can be seen in Table 4, this is a "rare event" (happening in only 10% of speeches). We therefore use a Rare Events Logistic regression model, following the procedures discussed by King & Zeng (1999a, 1999b).[56] We conducted our analysis in Stata, using the ReLogit

[55] We note that there are also mayors in cities not included in our sample who have vocalized support for school choice. In Anaheim, for instance, Mayor Curt Pringle has sponsored failed bills which would have created voucher programs, and even donated $10,000 of his own money to a private voucher fund.

[56] Gary King and Langche Zeng. 1999a. "Logistic Regression in Rare Events Data," Department of Government, Harvard University, http://GKing.Harvard.Edu. Gary King and Langche Zeng. 1999b. "Estimating Absolute, Relative, and Attributable Risks in Case-Control Studies," Department of Government, Harvard University, available from http://GKing.Harvard.Edu.

command written by Michael Tomz, Gary King, and Langche Zeng.[57] Our statistical model takes the form of:

$$[1] \quad SCHOOL\_CHOICE\_SUPPORT_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 ENROLL_i + \beta_2 PCT\_SPECIAL\_ED_i + \beta_3 PCT\_AFRICAN\_AMERICAN_i + \beta_4 MAYOR\_CONTROL_i + \beta_5 PCT\_SINGLE\_MEMBER_i + \beta_6 PER\_CAP\_INCOME_i + \beta_7 PCT\_KIDS\_POVERTY_i + \beta_8 PCT\_PRIVATE\_ + \varepsilon_i$$

where $SCHOOL\_CHOICE\_SUPPORT_i$ is a dichotomous variable indicating whether or not the mayor mentions school choice or private school options in his state of the city speech; $ENROLL_i$ is the district student enrollment; $PCT\_SPECIAL\_ED_i$ is the percentage of district students who have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) in 2003; $PCT\_AFRICAN\_AMERICAN_i$ is the percentage of African-American students in the district in 2003;[58] $MAYORAL\_CONTROL_i$ is one of our two measures of mayoral control; $PCT\_SINGLE\_MEMBER_i$ is the percentage of city school board seats that are voted on in a single-member fashion as of 2005; $PER\_CAP\_INCOME_i$ is per-capita income in the city measured in 1999; $PCT\_KIDS\_POVERTY_i$ is the percentage of city residents, age 3-18, who were living below the poverty level in 2000;[59] and $PCT\_PRIVATE_i$ is the percentage of K-12 students in the city enrolled in private schools as of 2000.

[57] Michael Tomz, Gary King, and Langche Zeng. 1999. RELOGIT: Rare Events Logistic Regression, Version 1.1 Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, October 1, http://gking.harvard.edu/.

[58] We use the Common Core of Data to calculate the percentage of African-American and Special Education students in each district. The most recent year for which data is available is 2003.

[59] In this study, we utilize a measurement of child poverty using data from the Census 2000 School District Demographics System. Raw data files downloaded from: http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sdds/index.asp (June 2005). We measure the percentage of children living with the school districts boundaries who are identified as living beneath the poverty line. We do not use the related percentage of district students eligible for reduced/free priced lunch because the measure was not found to be reliable across time and districts. In its report on the 100 Largest School districts, the National Center of Education Statistics itself had difficulty accurately assessing this figure. In their note to Table 9 in the 2002 report on the 100 Largest School Districts, the NCES writes that, "Whereas table 8 deals with the number of schools in each district having a minority presence of any kind, table 9 presents the percentage of students in each district by specific racial/ethnic categories. This table illustrates that some school districts are made up of many minority groups while others have high concentrations of one minority group. For example, the New

Table 5 summarizes our set of independent variables, presenting unweighted means, standard deviations, and min/max. The mean in this table is the average for each variable over the 80 districts included in our present analysis. In our sample, there is wide variation on a number of the demographic measures. The percentage of children beneath the poverty line, for instance, varies from a low of under 5% to a high of 45%. The range of children in private schools also ranges greatly, from under 4% to over 23%. To see how these, and other variations in the independent variables affect mayoral support for school choice, we turn to our statistical analysis.

IV. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The first thing to is that our results remain preliminary, and that this analysis examines only one of many possible measures of mayoral support for school choice. Indeed, throughout this section and in our concluding remarks, we discuss the many ways in which we might improve upon our measure of support. Nonetheless, we believe that the analysis is promising in showing that an empirical analysis can be credibly carried out regarding this question. We also believe that our preliminary results suggest some interesting policy and research implications.

Finding 1: Most mayors remain neutral

Returning for a moment to Table 4, our first finding is that most mayors (less than 10%) do not mention school choice at all in their State of the City speeches. This might be understood as in keeping with the traditional barriers between city hall and the city school district. It might also be the result of policy uncertainty surrounding school choice. Recent surveys of the impact

York City Public Schools have 38 percent Hispanic students and 35 percent Black students while the Philadelphia City School District has a much higher percentage of Black students (65 percent) than any other minority group.

of charter schools on achievement outcomes remain inconclusive.[60] Policymaking communities remain ambivalent about embracing charters. In the *School Planning & Management* magazine (designed for policymakers), the magazine notes that "even experienced researchers can have trouble summarizing the results of dozens of students attempting to quantify results in this politically charged undertaking," and that "most discussions of charter school performance feature political undercurrents."[61] Another trade magazine, *District Administration*, which is published monthly and "reaches more than 72,000 top-level decision makers in virtually every school district in the United States," had a June 2005 small half-page blurb titled, "Charter Schools Still in Question," which mentioned a few recent studies and the ensuing disputes over their findings.[62] In light of these lingering doubts about the efficacy of the reform, mayors may continue to remain policy neutral.

Finding 2: Mayors support most frequently in form of partnerships with private schools

In our sample, when mayors voice their support for school choice, it is not generally in the form of advocating for whole-scale school voucher programs, but rather a more middle-ground approach of looking to partner with existing private schools. In 2004, Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick's said that:

> "As we work on this issue, we also need to keep in mind that only 63 percent of children in Detroit go to a public school. The remaining 37 percent go to charter or parochial or private school. Education – both public and private – as we know it is changing. Last week's announcement by the Archdiocese that they were closing so many Catholic schools underscored the profound changes underway in

[60] See: Hassel, Bryan. *Charter School Achievement: What We Know*. Prepared for the Charter School Leadership Council. Available on-line at: http://www.charterschoolleadershipcouncil.org/PDF/paperupdate.pdf. Vanourek, Gregg. *State of the Charter School Movement 2005*. Charter School Leadership Council. Available on-line at: http://www.uscharterschools.org/cs/r/view/uscs_rs/2018. (Accessed June 2005).

[61] Fickes, Michael. (2005). "Dueling Charter School Research," *School Planning & Management*, March 2005, 44 (3), p20-23. See: http://www.peterli.com/spm/about/aboutspm.shtm. (Accessed June 2005).

[62] See: http://www.districtadministration.com/page.cfm?p=12 (Accessed June 2005). Silverman, Fran. (2005). "Charter schools still in question," *District Administration*, June 2005, p. 27.

> education. Our efforts must recognize and reflect that change." Kilpatrick's sentiment – that the city must partner with private schools – was echoedy by Newport News Mayor Joe Frank who also recognizes the reality that, "Our private schools, which now educate approximately one-fourth of Newport News' school children, continue to expand and diversify."

Two cases in which mayors have pushed harder and for more specific reforms in their speeches are St. Louis Mayor Francis Slay and D.C. Mayor Anthony Williams. Mayor Francis Slay offers some of the strongest support for expanding private school options within the city's boundaries:

> "I intend to ask the Board of Education to provide priority placement for neighborhood residents in all public schools, including magnet schools. And, I have already asked them to consider a return to K-through-8 neighborhood schools in our City. We have also worked with the Archdiocese to keep as many parochial schools open as their parishes can afford and to consolidate weak schools to increase the viability of all schools. … We will continue those efforts with public and parochial educators, but they will not be enough. Through my educational liaison, I plan to work with community groups and businesses to create more, and better charter schools in the City; and to increase the number of private schools. At the end of this year, I want to have increased the number of good choices city parents have for their kids."

Mayor Anthony Williams has also voiced clear support for school choice in 2005, stating that: "This year, Congress approved my plan for school choice in the District of Columbia. This program has brought $40 million of new federal funding to our public education system -- $13 million for scholarships, $13 million for DCPS and $13 million for charter schools. There are currently 1,015 scholarship students attending 53 non-public schools." The rhetoric of Mayors Kilpatrick, Slay, and Williams suggest that mayors are cognizant of the ways in which they frame the issue of private schools and school choice. Careful to avoid mention of competition between the two systems, mayors emphasize partnership and providing quality services to city parents.

Finding 3: Some mayors enjoy unique positions relative to school choice

While the majority of mayors are not very involved in school choice issues, a few mayors stand out for the uniqueness of their situations. Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett is in a unique position because Milwaukee has been home to one of the longest running school voucher programs in the nation. The salience of school choice in Milwaukee can be seen in the attention given to the subject in Mayor Barrett's 2005 speech:

> "From our public and private schools to our vocational and higher educational institutions, we must set the standards high and our goals higher. **We have already created a new education system in our city, one that includes both MPS schools and choice schools, and I will strengthen both of these important systems.** It's time we find common ground for choice schools and MPS. Rhetoric will not educate and prepare the students currently caught in this crossfire of debate. **Where a student gains his or her skills is not as important as the fact that they are truly gained.** Neither students nor their parents can be losers when it comes to our educational system.
>
> Our city cannot afford another 13 percent levy increase from MPS, and any adjustment in the School Choice Cap must be fair to city taxpayers. So let's come to the table and negotiate increasing caps, MPS school aids, and accountability standards for all. Let's fix the flaw in the state's school aid formula. I support raising the School Choice Cap, and I challenge legislators to ensure that Milwaukee taxpayers no longer get penalized for paying for two educational systems."

Mayor Barrett's speech reminds us that mayoral positions on school choice can be heavily influenced by the pre-existing school choice climate in the city. No other mayor is in quite the same position, and as a consequence no other mayor can make such a bold pronouncement about school choice.

A second unique mayor is Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson. The 2001 Indiana charter school law gives Mayor Peterson the authority to charter schools within Indianapolis. Since enactment of the law, Mayor Peterson has chartered 13 charter schools and frequently voiced his

support for increasing choice options. Mayor Peterson's support for charters has been recognized by the charter school community, and he served as a co-chair of the 2005 "National Charter Schools Week."[63] which is observed May 2-6, 2005. Mayor Peterson's support of charters, like that of Mayor Barrett's for vouchers, is heavily influenced by the state's grant of power. These examples suggest that state-level factors can go a long way in determining mayoral positions on issues of school choice. We look now to see if local factors, as modeled in our empirical analysis, turn out to be significant as well.

Finding 4: Enrollment size positively related to mayoral support for school choice

The results of our statistical analysis, presented in Table 6, suggest that there is a positive, statistically significantly relationship between the enrollment in the city school district and mayor's mentioning school choice in their state of the city speeches. Why might larger cities be more interested in school choice? One reason, setting aside politics, is that the larger the city, the more the choice program signals a change from traditional school arrangements. In a smaller city, even if school choice were introduced, the small overall number of schools might limit options. This is the case in larger cities.

In larger cities, there may also be a greater need for building support and partnerships across public and private school communities. This was the sentiment voiced by Cincinnati Mayor Charlie Luken in 2004: "I invited students from private schools, parochial schools, suburban schools—even Kentucky schools. Your success is critical as well. You will serve our community, maybe, I hope, live in the City one day with your family." Mayor Luken recognizes that families may be able to live in Cincinnati, even without their children attending the city's public schools.

[63] Press Release. May 3, 2005. "Peterson signs on as national co-chair of 2005 'National Charter Schools Week'" http://www.indygov.org/eGov/Mayor/Education/Charter/PR/2005/20050503a.htm

Finding 5: Mayors may see choice as important for their African-American city residents

Our statistical results indicate a positive, statistically significantly relationship between mayoral support for school choice and the percentage of African-American students in the school district. This is consistent with a wide body of survey and case study research suggesting that African-American families desire school choice options. In Minneapolis, for instance, the movement of poor, Black families to charter schools has been described as a "black exodus".[64] The same *Wall Street Journal* article quoted "Louis King, a black leader who served on the Minneapolis School Board from 1996 to 2000," as observing that: "Today, I can't recommend in good conscience that an African-American family send their children to the Minneapolis public schools. The facts are irrefutable: These schools are not preparing our children to compete in the world. The best way to get attention is not to protest, but to shop somewhere else."
Mr. King's sentiment in Minneapolis is seen in other cities as well. In 1995 in Milwaukee, for instance, the Wisconsin Policy Research Institute found that 95% of African-Americans in that city supported school choice.[65]

The strong support of the minority community for increased school choice options can lead to greater mayoral support in at least two ways. First, given the increased demand for choice, mayors may feel a greater need to push for choice-based reforms. Second, African-American support for school choice may create a political climate in which it is more feasible for mayors to vocalize their support for choice programs.

V. CONCLUSIONS & FUTURE RESEARCH

[64] Kersten, Katherine. 2006. "Black Flight: The exodus to charter schools." *Wall Street Journal*. March 2, 2006.
[65] Wisconsin Policy Research Institute. 1995. "Black Public Opinion in Milwaukee." (Sammis White) February 1995 (Vol.8 No.2)

From a research perspective, much remains to be explored about the relationship between mayors and support for school choice. Our research design can be improved by examining a greater number of cities, and looking over time at mayoral positions on school choice. We can generate a more complete and accurate measurement of an index of "mayoral support for school choice". Such an index can be plugged into the empirical analysis framework we have set up.

While our preliminary analysis is not entirely conclusive, it suggests that often mayors maintain distance from issues of school choice. When mayors do become involved, they seem to think about school choice in relation to the constituencies that they are serving in their cities. Mayors may see school choice as a reform they can use to enhance city services and retain/attract families. At the same time, however, mayors are influenced by state legislation that empowers (or restricts) their ability to personally enact or govern school choice policies. When mayors are given more responsibility, they are more likely to take a positive stand on issues of choice.

Looking at the future of mayors and school choice, we believe that choice issues may become increasingly important to city government. Based on our present study, as well as our broader work, we suggest that mayors who are interested in promoting school choice consider two themes: **timing** and **partnership**. Timing must first be considered within each stage, e.g. When should evaluation be conducted? Should public pronouncements be made before or after securing state legislative support? How long will the campaign for more school choice be run? But timing must also be considered for transitioning between the stages: at what point should the legislation be introduced and the political strategy enacted? How quickly should there be a move into implementation?

The introduction more choice options might spark resistance. But mayors can minimize that resistance, and improve partnerships, if they keep in mind the following principles:

- **Be sensitive to the concerns of current school board members.** Using words such as "failure" can mistakenly place emphasis on individual board members. Instead, emphasis should be placed on the institutional context in which the school board is operating. This is not a story about "bad apples," but about systemic challenges.
- **Emphasize partnerships.** Opponents of mayoral control may paint it as a power-grab or one-person show. It should be emphasized by proponents that the mayor will work *in partnership* with the district, providing the political leverage required to allow the educators to do what they do best – educate the city's children.
- **Be careful about negotiating in the media**. Although there are not formal negotiations with the school board or teachers' unions, successfully changing to a mayoral control system will involve informal negotiations with both of these groups to gain their support (or at least minimize their dissatisfaction). Like many other contexts, conducting these negotiations in the media can lead to miscommunication and increased tension.
- **Coordinate efforts with state legislature and civic leadership**. Mayoral control involves many actors, and it is important that all proponents of mayoral control be in communication with each other regarding their goals, timelines, and challenges. Without this coordination, the possibility exists for mixed signals and missed opportunities for mutually beneficial partnerships.

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Table 1. Options for mayoral support of school choice					
	Explicit / formal support	**Implicit / informal support**	**Neutral**	**Implicit / informal opposition**	**Explicit / formal opposition**
Description	Announces support for / interest in school choice in public forums. Lobbies for more school choice options. Uses political capital to encourage school choice. Enacts formal policy designed to encourage school choice.	Although not announcing formal support, in meetings with civic elite and policy leaders, encourages school choice reforms. May encourage third-party groups to push for school choice.	Mayor generally takes no position on school choice issues, and likely no position on the city's public schools generally. No mention of school choice in speeches; mayor is not involved in policy discussions concerning school choice.	Mayor is slow to pursue school choice options, and does not make school choice a priority. Mayor may work behind the scenes to slow school choice options.	Mayor publicly announces opposition toward school choice. Mayors works with others to block school choice efforts, or actively lobbies against legislation promoting school choice.
Rationale	View choice options as a way to provide for under-served populations. See choice options as a way to compete for middle class families. Have a personal interest in promoting school choice options.	Want to encourage more school choice, but do not have enough political capital to publicly push for the issue. May be busy with other policy issues, but still want to encourage school choice.	Mayor may be more interested in other policy domains (e.g. crime, economy). Mayor may not see any political gain (or see too much political risk) in entering school choice debate. Other political interests may already dominate school choice discussions.	Mayor may align with interests that are skeptical of choice options. Mayor may want to keep focus on other types of school reform. Mayor may believe that school choice options will ultimately hurt city's schools.	Mayor may be closely tied to interests that are opposed to school choice reform. Mayor may believe deeply that school choice is not a promising reform option.

Table 2. Decision Rules and Sample Size

Rule	No. of Districts Remaining [a]
Baseline (no rules implemented)	16,416
Rule #1. Local school district that is not part of a supervisory union. [b]	12,827
Rule #2. Principally serves the central city of a CBSA	735
Rule #3. Has at least 40 schools in the district.	137
Rule #4. School district must receive at least 75% of its students from the major city that it serves.	125
Rule #5. City must send at least 75% of its students to the same school district.	104
Final Size of Purposeful Sample	104 districts
Sample cities with State of the City speeches analyzed	*80 districts*

NOTES: [a] This is the number of *non-charter school only* districts. Since some states treat charter schools as independent school districts, there are 1,345 charter schools included in the 2002-03 CCD district-level file. These were excluded as a preliminary matter for sample selection. [b] Supervisory unions typically provide services for groups of small districts. Vermont is the state that chiefly uses supervisory unions, which are run by superintendents and extend over several nearby towns.

Table 3. Analysis of Education Content of 2005 State of the City Speeches in Sample Districts

City	ST	Mayor	Date	Top Priority	Active Role	Financial / Capital Support	Accountability	Outcome Measures	Management	Public Confidence	Private / Charter Options
OVERALL SUMMARY				*50.6%*	*57.8%*	*65.1%*	*25.3%*	*26.5%*	*30.1%*	*16.9%*	*9.6%*
Akron	OH	Don Plusquellic	Feb-05	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Albuquerque	NM	Martin J. Chavez	Aug-05	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Anchorage	AK	Mark Begich	Jul-05	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Arlington	TX	Robert Cluck	Jan-04	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Atlanta	GA	Shirley Franklin	Jan-05	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Austin	TX	Will Wynn	Jan-05	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Baltimore	MD	Martin O'Malley	Jan-05	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Birmingham	AL	Bernard Kincaid	Jan-04	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Boise	ID	David H. Bieter	Sep-05	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Boston	MA	Thomas M. Menino	Jan-05	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Brownsville	TX	Eddie Trevino, Jr	Jan-05	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Buffalo	NY	Anthony M. Masiello	Jan-05	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Charlotte	NC	Patrick McCrory	Sep-05	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Chicago	IL	Richard M. Daley	Feb-05	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Cincinnati	OH	Charlie Luken	Feb-05	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cleveland	OH	Jane L. Campbell	Feb-05	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Columbia	SC	Bob Coble	Feb-05	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Columbus	OH	Michael B. Coleman	Feb-05	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Dallas	TX	Dallas City	Jun-05	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No

Table 3. Analysis of Education Content of 2005 State of the City Speeches in Sample Districts

City	ST	Mayor	Date	Top Priority	Active Role	Financial / Capital Support	Accountability	Outcome Measures	Management	Public Confidence	Private / Charter Options
		Council									
Dayton	OH	Rhine McLin	Feb-05	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Denver	CO	John W. Hickenlooper	Jul-05	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
Detroit	MI	Kwame M. Kilpatrick	Mar-05	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes
Durham	NC	William V. "Bill" Bell	Feb-05	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
Eugene	OR	Kitty Piercy	Jan-05	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Evansville	IN	Jonathan Weinzapfel	Mar-05	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Fayetteville	NC	Marshall B. Pitts, Jr.	Jun-05	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Flint	MI	Donald J. Williamson	Feb-05	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Fort Collins	CO	Ray Martinez	Jun-05	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Fort Wayne	IN	Graham Richard	Feb-05	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Fort Worth	TX	Michael J. Moncrief	Feb-05	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Fremont	CA	Bob Wasserman	Apr-05	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Fresno	CA	Alan Autry	May-05	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Grand Rapids	MI	George Heartwell	Jan-05	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
Huntsville	AL	Loretta Spencer	Oct-05	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Jacksonville	FL	John Peyton	Jul-05	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Lansing	MI	Tony Benavides	Jan-05	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Lexington	KY	Teresa Isaac	Jan-05	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Lincoln	NE	Coleen J. Seng	Jun-05	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Little Rock	AR	Jim Dailey	Feb-05	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Long Beach	CA	Beverly	Jan-05	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No

Table 3. Analysis of Education Content of 2005 State of the City Speeches in Sample Districts

City	ST	Mayor	Date	Top Priority	Active Role	Financial / Capital Support	Accountability	Outcome Measures	Management	Public Confidence	Private / Charter Options
Los Angeles	CA	O'Neill James Hahn	Apr-05	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Lubbock	TX	Marc McDougal	Jan-05	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Madison	WI	David Cieslewicz	Apr-05	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Mesa	AZ	Keno Hawker	Jan-05	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Milwaukee	WI	Tom Barrett	Feb-05	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Minneapolis	MN	R.T. Rybak	Apr-05	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Nashville	TN	Bill Purcell	May-05	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
New Haven	CT	John Destefano, Jr.	Feb-05	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
New Orleans	LA	Ray Nagin	May-05	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
New York	NY	Michael Bloomberg	Jan-05	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Newark	NJ	Sharpe James	Jan-03	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Newport News	VA	Joe S. Frank	Jan-05	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
Norfolk	VA	Paul D. Fraim	Feb-05	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Oakland	CA	Jerry Brown	Jan-04	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Odessa	TX	Larry Melton	Jan-05	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Peoria	IL	David P. Ransburg	Jan-05	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
Plano	TX	Pat Evans	Dec-04	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Pomona	CA	Edward S. Cortez	Jun-05	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Providence	RI	David N. Cicilline	Feb-05	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Rochester	NY	William A. Johnson, Jr	Mar-05	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Rochester	MN	Ardell F. Brede	Jan-05	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Rockford	IL	Doug Scott	Aug-04	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Salem	OR	Janet Taylor	Feb-05	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No

Table 3. Analysis of Education Content of 2005 State of the City Speeches in Sample Districts

City	ST	Mayor	Date	Top Priority	Active Role	Financial / Capital Support	Accountability	Outcome Measures	Management	Public Confidence	Private / Charter Options
Salt Lake City	UT	Ross C. Anderson	Jan-05	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
San Bernardino	CA	Judith Valles	Jun-05	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
San Diego	CA	Dick Murphy	Jan-05	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
San Francisco	CA	Gavin Newsom	Oct-05	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Seattle	WA	Greg Nickels	Feb-05	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Sioux Falls	SD	Dave Munson	Mar-05	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Spokane	WA	James West	Jan-05	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Springfield	MO	Thomas J. Carlson	Mar-05	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Springfield	MA	Charles V. Ryan	Jan-05	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
St Louis	MO	Francis Slay	Apr-05	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
St. Paul	MN	Randy Kelly	Apr-05	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Syracuse	NY	Matthew J. Driscoll	Mar-05	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Tacoma	WA	James L. Walton	Jan-05	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Tallahassee	FL	John Marks	Mar-04	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Toledo	OH	Jack Ford	Jan-05	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Tulsa	OK	Bill Lafortune	Sep-05	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Virginia Beach	VA	Meyera E. Oberndorf	Mar-05	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Washington	DC	Anthony A. Williams	Dec-04	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Worcester	MA	Timothy P. Murray	Jan-04	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No

NOTES: Categories are defined as: **Top Priority:** In the State of the City speech, does the mayor communicate that education as a top priority for the city? **Active Role:** Does the mayor discuss an active role for the city in educating children, e.g. after-school programs? **Financial/Capital:** Does the mayor see a role for city in education in terms of either finance or capital? **Accountability:** Does the mayor emphasize accountability for the school system? **Test Scores or Standards:** Does the mayor use test score data or make explicit reference to standards or other numeric data in his speech? **Management:** Is the mayor looking to get involved in management decisions of the school district? **Public Confidence:** Does the mayor voice concern about improving public confidence in the school system? **Private or Charter Schools:** Does the mayor discuss private schools, charter schools, or private choice options in the speech? :: The

Table 3. Analysis of Education Content of 2005 State of the City Speeches in Sample Districts

City	ST	Mayor	Date	Top Priority	Active Role	Financial / Capital Support	Accountability	Outcome Measures	Management	Public Confidence	Private / Charter Options

mayor listed is the mayor who gave the speech that was analyzed and coded. It may not necessarily be the sitting mayor now. For example, San Diego Mayor Dick Murphy has since been replaced by Jerry Sanders, and Mayor Cortez passed away in September 2005. In Los Angeles, James Hahn was defeated in 2005 by Antonio Villaraigosa. In Fremont, the Mayor is now Bob Wasserman

Table 4. Summary of variables used in empirical analysis of 80 state of the city speeches

	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max
Mayor Mentions School Choice or Private School Options	0.075	0.265	0	1
K-12 Enrollment	76,434	147,423	15,736	1,077,381
% Special Education	14.2	3.8	7.8	25.5
% African American	23.4	19.5	0.2	81.0
Mayoral Control Index	0.300	0.920	0	4
Mayor Has Majority School Board Appointive Power	0.075	0.265	0	1
% Single Member	28.0	41.1	0.0	100.0
% K-12 Students in Private Schools	12.4	4.6	3.7	23.8
Per Capita Income	$20,151	$4,667	$9,762	$36,514
% Children in Poverty	24.0	9.6	4.9	45.3

NOTES: Data sources are U.S. Census and NCES Common Core of Data. See text for data details. N=80.

Table 5. Results from Rare Events Logistic Regression Analysis of Mayors' Interest in School Choice in Most Recent State of the City Speeches, Coefficient and (Standard Errors) reported

	Base Demographics	*+ Governance*	*+ Market Forces*	*With alt. mayoral control measure*
Enrollment ('000s)	0.007 ***	0.007 ***	0.006 ***	0.006 ***
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
% Special Ed	15.465 *	15.537	9.515	9.846
	(9.006)	(10.677)	(10.439)	(10.667)
% Afr. American	6.512 ***	6.204 ***	5.738 *	5.541 *
	(2.221)	(2.338)	(3.017)	(2.975)
Majority		-0.095	-0.119	-0.216
		(0.412)	(0.352)	(1.17)
% Single Member		0.159	-0.242	-0.136
		(1.401)	(1.62)	(1.607)
% Private			10.481	10.293
			(11.936)	(12.064)
Income ($000)			0.068	0.062
			(0.129)	(0.13)
% Poverty			0.012	0.149
			(7.074)	(7.116)
Constant	-7.222 ***	-6.957 ***	-8.215	-8.173
	(2.286)	(2.679)	(6.199)	(6.324)
N	80	80	80	80

NOTES: Analysis conducted in Stata using the ReLogit command developed by Michael Tomz, Gary King, and Langche Zeng. The program is based on the procedures suggested in Gary King and Langche Zeng, "Logistic Regression in Rare Events Data," and "Estimating Absolute, Relative, and Attributable Risks in Case-Control Studies" (Harvard University, 1999). Robust standard errors are produced by clustering on states. Two-tailed significance denoted as: *** for p<.01, ** for p<.05, * for p<.1.