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School Choice, Opportunity and Access: A Geographic Analysis of Public School Enrollment in New Orleans

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School Choice, Opportunity and Access: A Geographic Analysis of Public School Enrollment in New Orleans

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Abstract

The primary objective of this study is to identify the extent to which the current school choice policy in New Orleans has afforded students in underserved neighborhoods (defined as city planning districts) the opportunity to attend quality schools elsewhere in the city. Though all students in New Orleans have access to schools outside their neighborhood, more than two-thirds (68 percent) of public school students attended a school within their planning district or in the adjacent planning district in the 2011-12 school year. In staying close to home, just one-fifth (22 percent) of students attended a quality school. A clear relationship existed between a planning district's service level and its socio-economic and racial make-up as well as the performance level of its students' schools. The results of this analysis suggest that the lack of quality schools in low-income and minority areas significantly limits those families' access to quality schools even under New Orleans' far-reaching school choice policy.

School Choice, Parental Choice, Public Education, School Quality, Charter Schools, Policy

Executive Summary

Introduction

Since Hurricane Katrina and the subsequent flooding upended New Orleans' public school system in 2005, all public schools in the city—both charter and traditional—have been citywide access schools, allowing parents to select among a variety of schools and school types regardless of where they live. Proponents of school choice argue that low-income families, in particular, benefit from school choice policies because, unlike more affluent families, poor families cannot choose to buy homes in communities that have good schools. Opponents, on the other hand, worry that certain types of parents are more likely to exercise choice and leave their neighborhood schools, creating a stratified system where the least savvy parents are relegated to the worst schools. This study explores the relationship between where families live and what schools—and kinds of schools—they see as being available to them, with New Orleans serving as a prime example of an open enrollment public school system. Because of New Orleans' unique context in which all parents must choose, the findings offer key context to the debate around school choice as a policy for urban education reform.

Access to Quality Schools under School Choice Policies

Studies of parental preferences in school selection generally report that all parents, regardless of demographic, value a school's proximity to home, in addition to school performance, though proximity may be somewhat more important for disadvantaged families (Teske, Fitzpatrick, & Kaplan, 2007; Fiske, 2002; Stewart, Wolf, & Cornman, 2005). Looking at New Orleans specifically, the Cowen Institute's survey (2011) and recent focus groups with public school parents suggest that issues of transportation and proximity are central in parents' decision-making along with school quality (Scott S. Cowen Institute for Public Education Initiatives, 2013). Though numerous studies reveal the importance of proximity as an important school choice factor for low-income parents in urban school districts, little research has explored the relationship between the location of higher-performing schools in urban school districts and students' access to these schools under a school choice policy.

Significantly contributing to the literature on the relationship between where students live and their access to quality schools is a series of studies by IFF, a nonprofit community development finance institution based in Chicago. IFF has analyzed the location, enrollment, and academic performance of public, charter, and other schools in urban school districts with choice initiatives, including Chicago, St. Louis, Milwaukee, Kansas City, Denver, and Washington, DC. These studies illustrate that high-performing schools are often unequally distributed throughout school districts and that, even with school choice initiatives, where a student lives largely determines whether they attend a high-performing school and that there is a relationship between poverty and access to high-performing schools (IFF, 2012). This study of New Orleans considers the extent to which IFF's findings hold true within the unique post-Katrina context.

Public School Choice in New Orleans

Hurricane Katrina and the subsequent flooding in 2005 served as the catalyst for a dramatic transformation of public education in New Orleans. The Recovery School District (RSD), already in place before the storm to turnaround a small number of chronically failing public schools, became the vehicle for reform. Following Katrina, the Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) placed almost all public schools in New Orleans under the oversight of the RSD, while the local Orleans Parish School Board (OPSB) retained fewer than 20 schools which reported relatively high performance before the storm. The vast majority of schools in both districts (RSD and OPSB) became charter schools which faced somewhat reduced state and local regulations. Attendance zones were abolished. Parents who had returned to New Orleans could "vote with their feet" and choose any public school in the city. In the 2011-12 school year, nearly 80 percent of public school students enrolled in charter schools (Louisiana Department of Education). According to a report by the Brown Center for Education Policy at Brookings, New Orleans' school choice policy is the most expansive among large school districts in the United States (Whitehurst & Whitfield, December 2012).

Research Design

The primary objective of the study is to identify the extent to which the current school choice policy in New Orleans has afforded students in underserved neighborhoods or planning districts the opportunity to attend quality schools elsewhere in the city. The study first uses enrollment and capacity data for the 2011-12 school year, the most recent year for which data are available, to identify which of New Orleans 13 city planning districts are "underserved," meaning they have more school-age children than capacity at higher performing public schools. An assessment of the overall performance of schools, where they are located, and where school-age children reside identifies the geographic areas in New Orleans where further reforms and resources will have the greatest value. Second, the study considers which students are currently being served by the city's quality schools and where those schools are located. This, along with an analysis of student commute patterns from underserved neighborhoods, illustrates how location and performance together shape access to and enrollment in high quality schools, and can help to inform the kinds of reforms and resources most appropriate to improve access to quality schools in underserved areas.

The Relationship between Location, Performance, and Choice in Post-Katrina New Orleans

Though all students in New Orleans have the opportunity to attend schools outside their planning district, more than two-thirds (68.60 percent) of public school students attended a school within their planning district or in the adjacent planning district in the 2011-12 school year. In staying close to home, just one-fifth (21.60 percent) of students attended a quality school. To serve all 36,604 public school students in the city in 2011-12, the districts needed an additional 23,198 seats at quality schools, including 10,132 for pre-kindergarten through fifth grades; 3,829 for sixth through eighth grades; and 2,757 for ninth through twelfth grades. A relationship existed between a planning district's service level and its socio-economic and racial make-up as well as the performance level of its students' schools, illustrating that underserved districts tended to serve low-income and minority students and those students were less likely to attend a quality school.

Because students tend to attend a school close to their home, the district in which they live largely determines whether they attend a performing school. Students in underserved districts, therefore, were less likely to attend a quality school despite New Orleans' school choice policy. When these students did travel beyond their adjacent planning district, they were significantly more likely to attend a quality school. Nonetheless, only one-third of students in underserved districts traveled beyond their adjacent planning district to attend school, leaving the majority of students with insufficient access to quality schools.

Moving Toward Equitable School Choice Policy

School choice policies have been a subject of controversy since the 1950s, when the conservative economist Milton Friedman introduced the idea. Central to this debate is whether choice initiatives give all children access to better schools, or if some children benefit more than others. While school choice advocates argue that choice gives students from disadvantaged families a means of escaping under-performing public schools, critics caution that other inequities may prevent low-income families from engaging in school choice to select a higher performing school.

The enrollment patterns that exist in New Orleans today are an important indicator of where education investments and reforms in the coming years should be targeted. Furthermore, these patterns have implications for school choice policies and the extent to which they truly offer better school options for low-income families. Even if, as some proponents suggest, school choice helps to improve school quality in the long term, urban school districts nonetheless need real solutions for today. As school districts across the country consider school choice as a reform mechanism, New Orleans offers valuable lessons nearly seven years after its open enrollment policy was put in place. Thus, though school choice is a valuable opportunity for those families who use it to access schools in other areas of the city, the policy is not sufficient to provide students in underserved planning districts with access to quality public schools. This is not to suggest that school choice is not a relevant or useful policy solution for urban school districts, but rather that a multi-level approach is warranted to ensure all children have a real opportunity to attend a quality public school.

Chapter 1

An Introduction to School Choice, Location, and Performance in New Orleans

Since Hurricane Katrina and the subsequent flooding upended New Orleans' public school system in 2005, all public schools in the city—both charter and traditional—have been citywide access schools, allowing parents to select among a variety of schools and school types regardless of where they live. In recent years, school choice and open enrollment programs have played a growing role in public school reform policies across the country. Charter schools, vouchers programs, and other school choice initiatives have proliferated in some states and large cities with the goal of providing children with alternatives to the poor-performing neighborhood schools to which they would be otherwise assigned. In post-Katrina New Orleans, school choice is a central component of what is known as "the New Orleans reform model" (Horne, 2011). In the 2011-12 school year, over 80 percent of public school students in New Orleans attended charter schools and more than 40 percent of students attended a school outside their neighborhood (Louisiana Department of Education; Scott S. Cowen Institute for Public Education Initiatives, 2013).

Proponents of school choice argue that low-income families, in particular, benefit from school choice policies because, unlike more affluent families, poor families cannot choose to buy homes in communities that have good schools. Opponents, on the other hand, worry that certain types of parents are more likely to exercise choice and leave their neighborhood schools, creating a stratified system where the least savvy parents are relegated to the worst schools. Rarely considered but critical to this debate is the fact that, when given the option, most families prefer that their child attend a school close to home (Teske, Fitzpatrick, & Kaplan, 2007). Though school choice and open enrollment policies undoubtedly increase access to better schools for

families in underserved neighborhoods in the short term, such policies cannot and do not replace the need for every neighborhood to have a quality public school option.

Urban school districts across the country, including Boston, New York, and Milwaukee, are experimenting with school choice policies that offer parents the opportunity to opt out of their neighborhood school. In New Orleans, the disaster caused by Hurricane Katrina and the levee failures, and the subsequent rebuilding of the public school system, resulted in a citywide open enrollment policy in which students have access to all public schools regardless of where they live. Researchers and policymakers continue to debate the value and impact of school choice in urban public school districts.

This study explores the relationship between where families live and what schools—and kinds of schools—they see as being available to them, with New Orleans serving as a prime example of an open enrollment public school system. The primary objective of the study is to identify the extent to which the current school choice policy in New Orleans has afforded students in underserved neighborhoods or planning districts the opportunity to attend quality schools elsewhere in the city. Under an expansive school choice policy, what relationship exists between where students live and the quality of schools they attend? Do students in underserved districts benefit from the increased number of school options? When students do travel beyond their district boundaries to attend school, what kinds of schools do they attend? Because of New Orleans' unique context in which all parents must choose, the findings offer key context to the debate around school choice as a policy for urban education reform.

The study first uses enrollment and capacity data for the 2011-12 school year, the most recent year for which data are available, to identify which New Orleans neighborhoods are "underserved," meaning they have more school-age children than capacity at higher performing public schools. An assessment of the overall performance of schools, where they are located, and

where school-age children reside identifies the geographic areas in New Orleans where further reforms and resources will have the greatest value. Second, the study considers which students are currently being served by the city's quality schools and where those schools are located. This, along with an analysis of student commute patterns from underserved neighborhoods, illustrates how location and performance together shape access to and enrollment in high quality schools, and can help to inform the kinds of reforms and resources most appropriate to improve access to quality schools in underserved areas.

School choice policies have been a subject of controversy since the 1950s, when the conservative economist Milton Friedman introduced the idea. Central to this debate is whether choice initiatives give all children access to better schools, or if some children benefit more than others. While school choice advocates argue that choice gives students from disadvantaged families a means of escaping under-performing public schools, critics caution that other inequities may prevent low-income families from engaging in school choice to select a higher performing school. This study will contribute to the literature on school choice and equity by evaluating the distribution of quality schools and access to those schools in a city that has actively sought to better serve low-income and minority families through choice policies.

The issues of proximity, neighborhoods, school quality, location, and capacity have not yet played a significant role in the longstanding conversation on urban school choice. Despite evidence that parents often prioritize proximity to home when selecting their child's school, school choice policies focus on expanding opportunities for children in high poverty areas to attend quality schools elsewhere rather than improving access to quality schools within high poverty areas (Teske, Fitzpatrick, & Kaplan, 2007; Fiske, 2002; Stewart, Wolf, & Cornman, 2005). This study tests the hypothesis that, despite a policy of school choice, students living in

neighborhoods with limited quality school options continue to attend poor performing schools at a higher rate than students in better-served neighborhoods.

New Orleans' school choice policy is the most expansive among large school districts in the United States (Whitehurst & Whitfield, December 2012). Like many urban school districts, the city's public schools predominantly serve low-income, minority children, though a handful of high performing magnet schools enroll predominantly white students from moderate- and upper-income households. School performance, as measured by the state's standardized tests, is improving, though not all schools are improving at the same rate and some are not improving at all. As a result, a large proportion (32 percent in the 2011-12 school year) of public school students in New Orleans attend failing schools (Scott S. Cowen Institute for Public Education Initiatives, 2012). Recognizing potential inequities in the school choice system, school district leaders in New Orleans are working to streamline the application and enrollment process, provide parents with better information on school options, and prioritize students' access to neighborhood schools. Understanding the extent to which this system has afforded students in underserved neighborhoods better access to high quality schools can inform school choice policies in urban school systems across the country.

The underlying assumption in this analysis is that all elementary and high school students should have the option of attending a good school near where they reside. An October 2011 survey of public school parents in New Orleans found that 82 percent of respondents felt it was important that their child be able to attend their neighborhood school, with higher income parents less concerned about access to a neighborhood school than lower income parents (Scott S. Cowen Institute for Public Education Initiatives, 2011). Recent parent focus groups with parents of school-age children in New Orleans confirmed that, all other things being equal, parents

strongly prefer a school close to home. Parents with limited financial means, in particular, were likely to choose only among schools that were conveniently located. Studies of parent preferences in Washington, D.C., Milwaukee, Denver, and Cambridge have reported similar findings (Teske, Fitzpatrick, & Kaplan, 2007; Fiske, 2002; Stewart, Wolf, & Cornman, 2005). Given this assumption, the study focuses on identifying neighborhood-based solutions to quality school access for underserved populations in New Orleans. This is not to suggest that school choice is not a relevant or useful policy solution for urban school districts, but rather that a multi-level approach is warranted to ensure all children have a real opportunity to attend a quality public school.

The remaining chapters in this study seek to address the role of proximity, neighborhoods, school quality, location, and capacity in students' access to quality public schools in New Orleans. Chapter 2 summarizes the research and literature relevant to school choice and students' access to quality schools. Chapter 3 provides a brief background on New Orleans' school choice policy and the city's geography as it relates to choice. Chapter 4 explains the research methods used in this study. Chapter 5 presents the study findings and discusses their meaning. Chapter 6 concludes the study, including the implications and suggestions for future research.

Chapter 2

Access to Quality Schools under School Choice Policies

School choice has the potential to improve the educational opportunities of children from low-income and minority families who are unable to move to neighborhoods with higher-performing public schools. Low-income and minority children are disproportionately concentrated in low-performing schools; they are more likely to attend schools with fewer resources and inexperienced teachers than other children, and are often forced to contend with learning distractions associated with resource inequities such as disruptive classrooms and unsafe schools (Orfield & Lee, 2005; Carey, 2005; Wirt, et al., 2004). These poor educational experiences are a major contributor to the huge inequalities in educational attainment across income and racial/ethnic groups in the United States.

Researchers have long studied the relationship between public schools and racial/ethnic and socioeconomic disparities, and more recent research has considered how school choice initiatives might impact public school segregation and access to quality schools for disadvantaged populations. Though numerous studies reveal the importance of proximity as an important school choice factor for low-income parents in urban school districts (Teske, Fitzpatrick, & Kaplan, 2007; Fiske, 2002; Stewart, Wolf, & Cornman, 2005), little research has explored the relationship between the location of higher-performing schools in urban school districts and students' access to these schools under a school choice policy. In addition, much of the research in this area focuses on survey, interview, or focus group data collected from parents and students, rather than an analysis of actual school choice patterns through enrollment data. This research identifies the many factors that influence parents' school selection decisions,

including proximity to home, as well as academic performance, race and demographics, transportation, and after-school activities, among others (Schneider & Buckley, 2002; Kleitz, Weiher, Tedin, & Matland, 2000), but does not evaluate the spatial outcomes of these school choice preferences.

Race, Income, and Access to Quality Schools

Several studies point to the relationship between the housing market and academic performance. Logan's (2011) recently published study of standardized test scores across the country illustrates that black, Hispanic, and Native American students attend schools that are on average at the 35th to 40th percentile of performance compared to other schools in the same state, while white and Asian children attend schools close to the 60th percentile. Furthermore, residentially segregated large metropolitan areas tend to exhibit the most unequal school quality among racial groups (Logan, 2011). Other literature explicitly links educational opportunity and success to metropolitan and neighborhood housing characteristics. For example, Card and Rothstein (2007) report that somewhere between 25 percent and 60 percent of the SAT test score gap between black and white students can be explained by residential segregation. In another study, Cutler and Glaeser (1997) illustrate that segregation can account for 100 percent of the black-white gap in educational outcomes among young adults. Black (1999) suggests that families with financial resources are willing to pay up to 2.5 percent more in housing costs for a 5 percent increase in student test scores, a pattern that could cause a residential achievement gap. In a recent analysis of housing costs, zoning, and access to high-performing schools, Rothwell (2012) finds that housing costs alone are not to blame by identifying a correlation between exclusionary zoning policies in metropolitan areas and income test-score gaps. As American

income inequality has risen in American communities, so too has the socioeconomic achievement gap (Reardon, 2011).

If limited access to neighborhoods with higher-performing schools is to blame for racial/ethnic and socioeconomic achievement gaps, then one solution is to provide disadvantaged families the opportunity to live in more affluent communities with better schools. This concept first gained credibility with studies of the effects of the 1976 Supreme Court case *Hills v. Gautreaux*, which caused the relocation of some Chicago public housing families to affluent suburban settings. A 1989 survey of those families who moved to suburbs because of *Gautreaux* suggested that there were substantial, positive effects on the children's school outcomes (Rubinowitz & Rosenbaum, 2000). However, the results of the *Gautreaux* relocation were subsequently challenged. The Moving to Opportunity experiment, which similarly integrated low-income families into integrated neighborhoods in several cities across the country, yielded less encouraging results, in part perhaps because students saw only minor changes in school poverty levels (Sanbonmatsu, Kling, Duncan, & Brooks-Gunn, 2006).

In general, families living in federally subsidizing housing are more likely to live near low-performing schools than other households (Ellen & Horn, 2012). Interestingly, Ellen and Horn (2012) find that Housing Choice Voucher holders do not generally live near higher performing schools than households receiving other forms of housing assistance, even though the voucher program was created, in part, to help low-income households reach a broader range of neighborhoods and schools. On the other hand, a recent examination of data on low-income families randomly selected to live in various affordable housing projects in Montgomery County, Maryland illustrated that moving to an affluent neighborhood with higher-performing schools did result in higher student test scores (Schwartz, 2010). Nonetheless, many low-income families

do not have the resources to move to more affluent or integrated neighborhoods. Without school choice policies, these families generally have few options but to send their children to low-performing neighborhood schools.

The Solution: School Choice Policies in Urban Districts

While studies of *Gautreaux*, Moving to Opportunity, and Montgomery County focus on moving families to neighborhoods with higher-performing schools, studies of school choice consider the impact of policies that allow students to attend higher-performing schools without relocating. School choice emerged as a prominent education reform policy in the late 1980s and early 1990s, beginning with Minnesota's choice plan in 1987 and followed shortly by laws in Michigan and Ohio in 1993 (Boyer, 1993). In 2001, the No Child Left Behind Act required districts to offer students in low-performing schools the opportunity to switch schools (RAND Education). In 2011, more states passed school choice legislation than in any previous year, and, today, 18 states and Washington, D.C., have some form of school choice (Burke & Sheffield, 2012). Although the term "choice" can also encompass voucher programs, which provide public subsidies for students to attend private schools, various forms of public school choice, such as traditional busing, magnet schools, open-enrollment programs, and, more recently, charter schools, provide the main form of school choice in the United States today.

Equity in School Choice

As school choice policies expand, one notable point of contention is whether choice policies give all children access to better schools and opportunities, or if some children benefit more than others. Proponents of school choice argue that choice policies improve access by empowering parents to select the best school for their children, leading to increased student engagement and performance (Fuller, Elmore, & Orfield, 1996). In addition, while affluent

families can select a quality school for their children by moving to better-resourced neighborhoods or enrolling in private schools, many families do not have these options (Holme, 2002). Critics of school choice, on the other hand, worry about creating a stratified system where less savvy parents are relegated to the worst schools, and the already struggling low-performing schools will suffer further from the loss of funding (Fuller, Elmore, & Orfield, 1996; Lyons, 1995). A large body of research seeks to address these questions by looking at who participates in choice programs and parent preferences in school selection. These studies suggest that school choice policies do not always serve to improve access to higher performing schools for low-income or disadvantaged families.

Who Participates in School Choice Programs and Why

Much of the literature on both sides of the choice debate has considered the extent to which disadvantaged families participate in choice. In theory, choice provides more options to minority and/or low-income parents, who in a traditional school assignment paradigm are more likely to be assigned to a low-quality public school. In a survey of families in Detroit, Strate and Wilson (1991) observe that low-income families on average favor school choice policies. Indeed, in a comprehensive analysis of school choice programs in San Diego Unified School District, Betts et al. (2006) find nonwhite students are generally more likely to participate than whites, particularly at the high school level.

On the other hand, the literature suggests that some school choice policies favor white and higher income students. A 2003 study of school choice in Massachusetts finds that lower-income and minority populations are under-represented in alternate schooling options; statewide, 89.8 percent of students that participated in inter-district choice were white compared with 75 percent of the state's total public school population (McDermott, Bowles, & Churchill, 2003).

The limited minority and low-income participation in choice may be related to access to resources and information. Schneider et al. (1998) find that, on average, low-income parents have very little accurate information about objective conditions in schools. Even with accurate information, low-income and minority parents may not select high-performing schools because they are more likely to consider other factors besides academic quality (The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2002). Smrekar and Goldring (1999) find that low-income parents are more likely to consider transportation issues when choosing schools than middle-class parents. To the extent that low-income parents are concerned with issues unrelated to school performance, school choice may not be effective at increasing those families' access to high-performing schools.

Parental Preferences

A large body of research investigates the role of information, preferences, and constraints. The success of school choice as a policy for reform centers on the ability of all parents to be informed, rational consumers. Research into parental preferences generally rests on this assumption that parents are rational actors who weigh their preferences and constraints in order to arrive at a final school selection (Bast & Walberg, 2004; Hanushek et al, 2005). The literature suggests that, in addition to considerations of academic quality, parents prefer schools that are safe (Armor & Peiser, 1997), are convenient (Hamilton & Guin, 2005; Hastings, Kane, & Staiger, 2005; Theobald, 2005), and contain fewer poor children and children of color (Henig, 1990; Schneider & Buckley, 2002). How these non-academic factors are balanced with school quality is a central theme of school choice factors.

Parental preferences vary by race and income, particularly around the importance of academic performance. As previously mentioned, Schneider et al. (1998) highlight the

importance of academic performance in parent decision-making, but recognize that low-income and minority parents might value other factors above academic performance. Based on their analysis of parent choices in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School district in North Carolina, Hastings, Kane, and Staiger (2012) report that the weights parents place on key school characteristics are very heterogeneous, with high-income parents of high-achieving students placing the largest weights on test scores when selecting schools. They find that the preference attached to a school's mean test score is substantially lower for low-income students (those qualifying for the federal free or reduced-price lunch program) and for those living in low-income neighborhoods, but that black and white families have very similar preferences over school test scores after controlling for preferences over racial composition of schools. In a related study, Hastings, Van Weelden, and Weinstein (2007) provide evidence that simplified information on school average test scores would increase low-income family's preference for academic performance in school selection. Differences in parental preferences by socioeconomic status might also result from the different contexts in which parents choose; for example, poor parents may rank safety a little higher because they are surrounded by schools in which safety cannot be taken for granted (Bell, 2009). Factors such as convenience, transportation, and afterschool care may also play into low-income family's relative preferences around academic performance.

Location, Proximity and Choice

Studies of parental preferences in school selection generally report that all parents, regardless of demographic, value having a school that is close to home, in addition to school performance, though proximity may be somewhat more important for disadvantaged families. Based on surveys and interviews with low-income families in Washington, DC, Denver, CO, and

Miluakee, WI, Teske, Fitzpatrick, and Kaplan (2007) report that white parents were significantly less likely to say that location mattered to them than black and Hispanic parents. In addition, almost 60 percent of the parents with a high school education or less choose only on the basis of location compared to less than 30 percent of the college-educated parents (Teske, Fitzpatrick, and Kaplan, 2007). A 1998 survey of kindergarten parents in the school choice program in Cambridge, MA similarly finds that most parents considered whether a school was "close to home" when selecting a school (Fiske, 2002). In a study that employs statistical modeling, Chumaceroa, Gómez, and Paredes measure the distance between homes and schools and find that most parents make trade-offs between school quality and proximity (Chumaceroa, Gómez, & Paredes, 2011).

Looking at New Orleans specifically, the Cowen Institute's survey (2011) and recent focus groups with public school parents suggest that issues of transportation and proximity are central in parents' decision-making along with school quality (Scott S. Cowen Institute for Public Education Initiatives, 2013). Based on this research, parents value proximity for its convenience, but this preference does not play the same role for every parent, nor is the role of proximity stable over the course choice process. For example, one parent said, "I'm willing to drive her [across town], but for me to do that I have to think that the school is really much, much better than something I could get closer to home" (Scott S. Cowen Institute for Public Education Initiatives, 2013). This effort to balance school quality and convenience was reflected throughout the parents' dialogue, though the notion of convenient varied depending on the individual family's circumstances. Geography also played a role in parent decision making in that parents relied almost entirely on the advice of their friends and family as well as a particular school's reputation in the community.

Though a large body of research explores parental preferences related to geography, proximity, and convenience, few studies explore how geography might impede or support access to quality school choices. This is likely related to the fact that New Orleans is the first city in the United States to institute such a wide-ranging school choice policy across all schools and grade levels.

Significantly contributing to the literature on the relationship between where students live and their access to quality schools is a series of studies by IFF, a nonprofit community development finance institution based in Chicago. IFF has analyzed the location, enrollment, and academic performance of public, charter, and other schools in urban school districts with choice initiatives, including Chicago, St. Louis, Milwaukee, Kansas City, Denver, and Washington, DC. These studies illustrate that high-performing schools are often unequally distributed throughout school districts and that, even with school choice initiatives, where a student lives largely determines whether they attend a high-performing school and that there is a relationship between poverty and access to high-performing schools (IFF, 2012).

Outside of the IFF studies, little research has been done connecting residential location and access to public schools under choice models. In New Orleans, as in other urban school districts across the country, only a relatively small number of schools are performing at an acceptable level, leaving parents competing for the limited number of seats at these schools. As policymakers and education stakeholders consider school improvement plans, understanding which neighborhoods are being least served under the current system can help inform more strategic investments. In addition, as urban districts across the country turn to school choice as a reform mechanism, this study will offer key insights.

This study explores the relationship between where families live and what schools—and kinds of schools—they see as being available to them under New Orleans' expansive school choice policy. Under such a policy, do students in underserved districts benefit from the increased number of school options? When students do travel beyond their district boundaries to attend school, what kinds of schools do they attend? How do parents in low-income neighborhoods select schools, and what role might geography play in their schooling decisions? While these questions have been asked and answered in some prior studies as well, this analysis is able to compare quantitative data on student enrollment and commute patterns to self-reports, from a series of recent focus groups in which New Orleans public school parents were asked how they make school choices (Scott S. Cowen Institute for Public Education Initiatives, 2013). Because of New Orleans' unique context in which all parents must choose, the findings offer key context to the debate around school choice as a policy for urban education reform.

Chapter 3

Public School Choice in New Orleans

Hurricane Katrina served as the catalyst for public education reform and provided the opportunity for fundamental changes in the structure and governance of public schools in New Orleans. Following the storm, charter schools began to dominate the portfolio of schools operated by both the local Orleans Parish School Board (OPSB) and the state-run Recovery School District (RSD) in New Orleans. Given the nature of both the flood damage and the sporadic return of residents to their neighborhoods following the storm, public school attendance zones were abolished for all schools, creating a system of citywide school choice (Scott S. Cowen Institute for Public Education Initiatives, 2012). With the exception of a handful of selective admissions charter schools, all traditional and charter public schools in New Orleans instituted an open enrollment policy, accepting students and providing them with free transportation to and from school regardless of where they live (Scott S. Cowen Institute for Public Education Initiatives, 2013).

New Orleans School Geography

In addition to these policy changes, Katrina geographically impacted the city and the public school landscape. Schools in the relatively undamaged neighborhoods Uptown and Algiers reopened quickly and include many of the relatively high performing OPSB schools. In more heavily damaged parts of the city such as New Orleans East, the Lower Ninth Ward, Gentilly, and parts of Mid-City and Central City, rebuilding the schools has taken some time. Newer schools in these parts of the city may be lower performing because they have not had the time to reach the achievement levels of longstanding programs.

While the city is no longer opening many brand new schools, it is physically rebuilding the public school infrastructure through the School Facilities Master Plan for Orleans Parish (Master Plan). The goal of the Master Plan, which is funded by nearly $2 billion in federal recovery aid, is to provide a new or renovated building for every student in New Orleans by 2020 (Recovery School District and Orleans Parish School Board, 2008). The Master Plan will provide additional school capacity in many of the hard-hit neighborhoods currently without a sufficient number of seats.

Public School Options in New Orleans

In the 2011-12 school year, over 80 percent of public school students in New Orleans attended charter schools and more than 40 percent of students attended a school outside their neighborhood (Louisiana Department of Education; Scott S. Cowen Institute for Public Education Initiatives, 2013). Under OPSB and RSD, families have access to a range of options and, as low-performing schools close and new charter schools open, the options are continually changing. Eighty-one open enrollment public schools, five selective admissions public schools, and five statewide charter schools were open in the 2011-12 school year. The OPSB directly operated six traditional public schools and provided oversight to 11 charter schools. Five OPSB schools are magnet schools, meaning students must meet certain academic criterion in order to enroll. The RSD directly operated 16 schools and provided oversight to 49 charter schools. Two-thirds of the RSD charter schools were operated by charter management organizations (CMOs) and belonged to a charter network. Often the schools within a network share a common culture and curriculum. Appendix A provides an organizational chart of public schools in New Orleans in the 2011-12 school year.

School Performance

The Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) annually assigns public schools a School Performance Score (SPS) between 0 and over 200 based on student performance on the state's standardized tests, dropout rates, attendance, and a graduation index (Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2012). The LDOE and state school board use the SPS to inform critical decisions, including charter reauthorization and RSD takeovers.

In the 2011-12 school year, the SPS was primarily based on the state's standardized tests: LEAP (grades 4 and 8), iLEAP (grades 3, 5, 6, 7, and 9), and End of Course (grades 9, 10, and 11). High school scores also included a graduation index, which was based on a cohort of students that entered the ninth grade in a given year and assigns points based on students' graduation outcomes. Elementary and middle school scores were based 90 percent on student test scores and ten percent on attendance and dropout rates; high school scores were based 70 percent on student test scores and 30 percent on a graduation index (Scott S. Cowen Institute for Public Education Initiatives, 2012). A baseline SPS is based on two years of data, which is the score the LDOE used to assign schools a corresponding letter grade A-F. Table 1 illustrates the letter grade scale for the 2011-12 school year and corresponding test performance. In 2012, schools had to earn a score of at least 75 to avoid receiving an F, up from 65 in 2011.

Table 1: 2012 Letter Grade Scale

Grade	SPS Range	Approx. % of Students at Grade Level
A	120.0 or above	88-100%
B	105.0-119.9	76-87%
C	90.0-104.9	64-75%
D	75.0-89.9	39-63%
F	0.0-74.9	0-38%

Source: Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education Bulletin 11, §1101.

Based on the 2012 SPS, seven New Orleans schools (8%) earned an A, 11 schools (12%) earned a B, nine schools (10%) earned a C, 20 schools (22%) earned a D, and 32 schools (35%)

earned an F (Louisiana Department of Education, 2012). Twelve schools did not receive an SPS or a letter grade because they were new schools or were slated to close (Louisiana Department of Education, 2012). Because the SPS calculation does not include any indication of growth, the letter grades portray just one aspect of school performance.

Public School Student Demographics

Public schools in New Orleans predominantly serve black and low-income students, as indicated by eligibility for the federal free or reduced-price lunch program. According to the October 2011 public school student enrollment count, nearly 90 percent of public school students in New Orleans were black and over 80 percent were eligible for the federal free or reduced-price lunch program (Louisiana Department of Education). These demographics are similar to the pre-Katrina student population, which in October 2004 was 93 percent black and had 77 percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (Louisiana Department of Education, 2004). The 2011-12 percentage of students that were black in New Orleans is twice the Louisiana public school average of 45 percent and five times the national average of 17 percent (Louisiana Department of Education, 2011; National Center for Education Statistics, 2009–10). The racial and ethnic makeup of the student population in New Orleans does not mirror that of the city as a whole, which, according to the 2010 U.S. Census, is about 60 percent black (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). The various school types differ somewhat in their ethnic distribution, with OPSB charter schools enrolling a smaller percentage of black and minority students than the other school types (Scott S. Cowen Institute for Public Education Initiatives, 2012).

New Orleans' School Application, Admissions, and Enrollment Process

The public school application, admissions, and enrollment processes have evolved in the years since citywide open enrollment was first implemented following Hurricane Katrina.

Initially, individual schools managed their own application process, meaning applications and deadlines varied across the system. In February 2008, RSD and OPSB streamlined the system somewhat through a common application form, used by all but a handful of OPSB charter schools (Simon, 2008). Nonetheless, parents were still required to complete a separate application for each school of their choice, and schools made their own admissions decisions and held their own lotteries (Simon, 2008). This system remained in place through the 2011-12 school year.

Chapter 4

Research Design

This study analyzes public school enrollment in the 2011-12 school year in order to explore the relationship between where families live and what schools—and kinds of schools—they see as being available to them. The primary objective is to identify the extent to which the current school choice policy in New Orleans has afforded students in underserved neighborhoods the opportunity to attend quality schools elsewhere in the city. Therefore, the study begins with an analysis of school performance and capacity in order to identify underserved city planning districts in New Orleans. An assessment of the overall performance of schools, where they are located, and where school-age children reside identifies the geographic areas in New Orleans where further reforms and resources will have the greatest value. Second, the study considers which students are currently being served by the city's quality schools and where those schools are located. This, along with an analysis of student commute patterns from underserved neighborhoods, illustrates how location and performance together shape access to and enrollment in high quality schools, and can help to inform the kinds of reforms and resources are most appropriate to improve access to quality schools in underserved areas.

The study represents a point-in-time analysis of the school-age population, school performance, and school enrollment in New Orleans during the 2011-12 school year. The neighborhood units of analysis for this study are city planning districts, which are designated by the New Orleans city government for community planning purposes and generally align with U.S. Census boundaries. There are 13 planning districts in the city of New Orleans, illustrated in Appendix B. Planning districts, which are significantly larger than the 73 neighborhoods

frequently referenced in New Orleans, provide both advantages and disadvantages as a unit of analysis. While the city's 73 neighborhoods are so small that many students did not have a single public school serving their grade level within their neighborhood or an adjacent neighborhood, the planning districts are so large that they may fail to capture fairly long commutes even within a planning district. Additionally, the 13 planning districts are not equal in size or convenience to other parts of the city. Despite these limitations, planning districts serve a relevant and meaningful geographic designation in New Orleans and are regularly used in city planning decisions.

The analysis includes only open enrollment public schools. Three magnet schools in New Orleans that only admit those students who meet academic admissions criteria (Lusher Charter School; Lake Forest Elementary Charter School; and Benjamin Franklin High School) are excluded, as well as two alternative schools that only accept students who have been expelled or incarcerated (Youth Study Center and Alternative Learning Institute). Two magnet schools have restrictive admissions requirements, but, because these programs are open to all school-age children at the beginning of their education, they are included in the analysis. The study also excludes five state-run charter schools that were located in New Orleans in the 2011-12 school year but enrolled students from across the region, including many students from nearby Jefferson Parish. These exclusions omit approximately 4,500 students from the study.

Needs Assessment: Supply and Demand of Quality Schools by Neighborhood

The first part of this analysis identifies underserved neighborhoods in New Orleans by assessing the demand (i.e., the number of school-age children) and the supply (i.e., the number of seats in schools relatively high-performing schools) using information on location, enrollment,

capacity, and performance. The goal of this analysis is to identify which planning districts in New Orleans have the greatest need for additional capacity at quality schools.

Data on student addresses were accessed through the Scott S. Cowen Institute for Public Education Initiatives at Tulane University (Cowen Institute) in coordination with the RSD and OPSB. Gregory C. Rigamer & Associates (GCR, Inc.), a contractor of the RSD and OPSB that carries out school population projections, collected student address data from the school districts and individual charter schools between October and November 2011. The data provided by GCR indicate students' Census block and block-group, as well as their grade, school, and the school's location. The data do not include any other student-level information such as race/ethnicity, free or reduced-price lunch eligibility, English proficiency, and academic performance.

Supply

Supply refers to the number of seats at quality public schools in New Orleans during the 2011-12 school year. Identifying the number of performing seats begins with defining "quality" schools, measuring the capacity of quality schools, and mapping the geographic distribution of those schools across New Orleans. Quality schools are defined as those open enrollment schools earning a School Performance Score (SPS) of 90.0 or above under Louisiana's public school accountability system in 2012, which correlates to an A, B, or C letter grade. In 2012, approximately 30 percent of the 81 public schools in New Orleans included in this analysis earned an A, B, or C. The LDOE does not assign an SPS to schools that closed at the end of the school year; all of the schools in this study that did not receive a 2012 SPS closed due to poor performance and therefore are considered F schools for the purposes of this analysis.

A school's SPS does not capture the complexity of what contributes to performance in schools. Indeed, experts in the field of education continue to debate the best way to evaluate the performance of public schools. In particular, SPS does not include a measure of growth, meaning

this study does not distinguish between a "quality" C school that has seen declining performance and a D school that is quickly improving. Additionally, the difference between a C school and an A school is significant, but this analysis treats all schools with a C or better as quality schools. Nonetheless, annual test scores, and the school performance scores and letter grades that are based on test scores in Louisiana, are both easy to measure and give real-time feedback. For this reason, researchers and policymakers for the most part rely on these measures to assess school performance. Although they are clearly imperfect, school performance scores are often the most salient pieces of information that households have on their local school as well as the most widely available measure of performance. Therefore, this study relies on school performance scores as a measure of school performance throughout the analysis.

Quality school capacity is the capacity or number of seats available in schools with an SPS of 90.0 or above for each grade division (PK-5, 6-8, 9-12). School capacity is based on a school's October 1, 2011 student enrollment count, which is publicly reported by the Louisiana Department of Education. Though student enrollment fails to capture the total capacity of a school program that was under-enrolled, it was used as the capacity measure in this study for a number of reasons. First, at least five RSD schools operated in modular campuses in 2011-12, making capacity flexible. In addition, because RSD charter schools often have growth plans that include adding one grade each year as they take over a low-performing RSD directly-operated school, school enrollment more accurately reflects total capacity for these schools than building size. Some RSD schools choose to remain small, using only a portion of their total building space. OPSB schools, on the other hand, are in high demand and typically enroll the maximum capacity of their building space. Though student enrollment is an inexact measure of capacity, it provides a reliable approximate for New Orleans schools in the 2011-12 school year.

School capacity is used to determine the number of quality school seats available by grade division in each city planning district. The study also considers the number of seats at D and F schools by grade division in each city planning district.

Demand

Demand is the number of public school students in New Orleans based on where students live, not where they attend school. The OPSB, RSD, and charter school operators provided student home address data to GCR, Inc. This data set is similar to but not the same as the October 2011 audited enrollment data, and therefore will be slightly different from published enrollment counts that rely on the school-wide audited enrollment. The demand in each city planning district is equal to the sum total of public school students living in each planning district enrolled in each grade division (PK-5, 6-8, 9-12).

Identifying Underserved Planning Districts

Underserved planning districts are those with a large service gap between the number of public school students living in the district and the number of quality school seats available in the district. A service gap is calculated for each grade division and overall. Planning districts are then ranked according to their service gaps. The analysis also considers the relationship between total capacity and quality school capacity in each planning district. The goal of this analysis is to understand the relative need among the different parts of the city.

Student Location and Access to Quality Schools

The second part of this analysis is intended to assess the current geographic and demographic distribution of quality schools in New Orleans and the extent to which the school choice policy in New Orleans has afforded students in underserved districts to nonetheless access quality schools. Demographic indicators in the planning districts add context to student commute

trends. The 2010 U.S. Census and 2007-2011 American Community Survey provide data on race and household poverty levels. A correlation analysis is used to determine the relationship between these demographic variables and the service gap in planning districts.

To determine which students are being served by quality schools, student commute patterns are analyzed to calculate the sum total of students commuting to each quality school from each of the other planning districts. Next, planning districts are examined to determine where students in each district are enrolled, the performance and operator of the school they attended, and the distance they commuted to the school. The distance a student commuted to school is grouped into three categories: “stay in district,” “travel to adjacent district,” and “travel beyond adjacent district.” Chi-square tests reveal the relationships between student commute patterns, service gaps, and school performance.

Chapter 5

The Relationship between Location, Performance, and Choice in Post-Katrina New Orleans

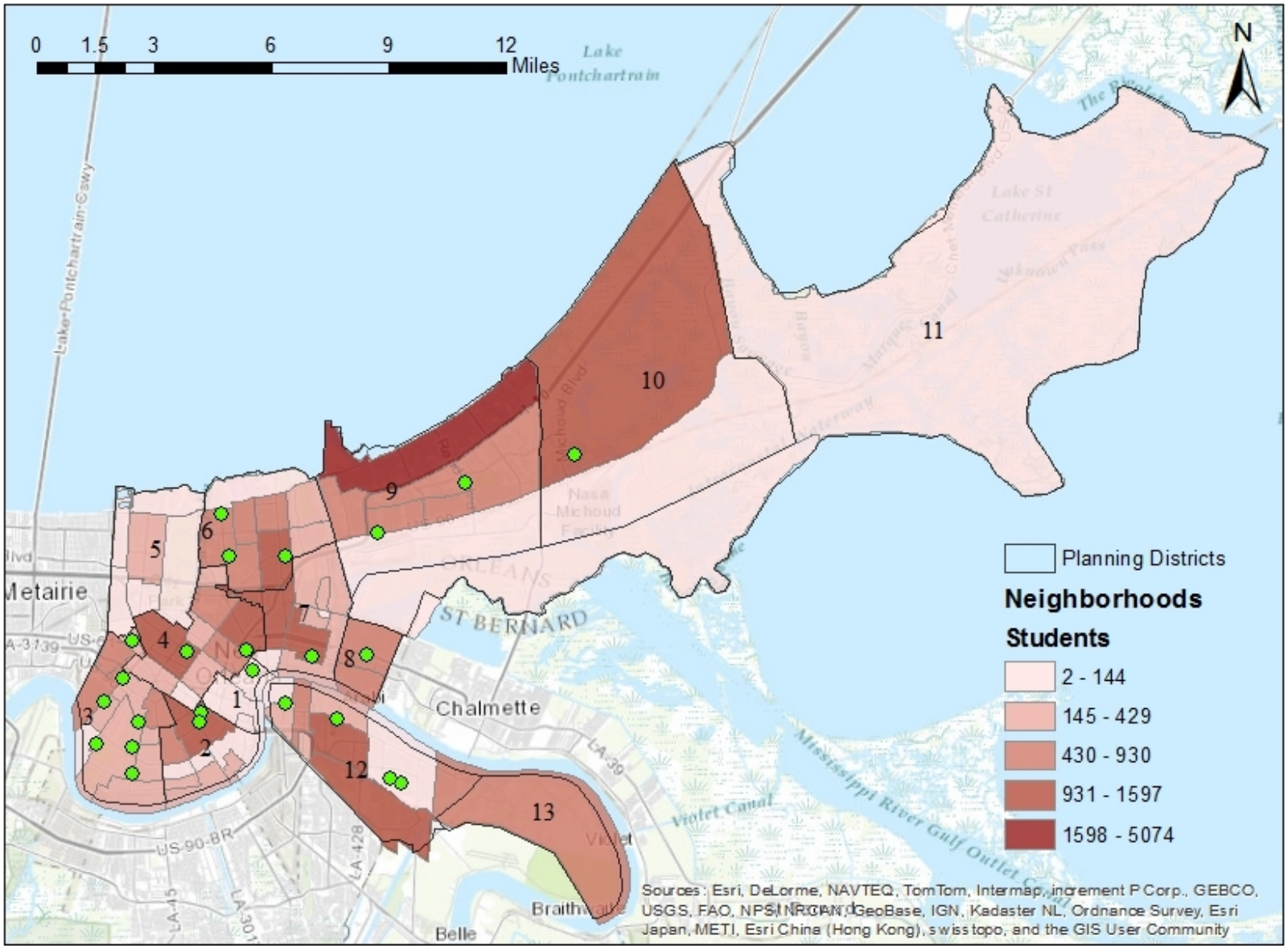
While schools that performed at the A, B, or C level in 2011-12 are located throughout the city, they are not evenly distributed: most quality schools are in the uptown area. (The Appendix includes a detailed description of each of the planning districts.) This unequal distribution results in unequal access to quality schools despite New Orleans' far-reaching school choice policy. School choice as an urban education reform mechanism is intended to benefit historically disadvantaged low-income and minority students living in underserved neighborhoods. However, the findings presented in this study suggest these underserved students are likely to remain close to home and therefore have limited access to quality schools.

The following sections identify school capacity at all schools and at quality schools by planning district, describe the underserved districts, and determine the relationship between underserved districts and students' access to quality schools.

Analysis of Supply and Demand: Identifying Underserved Planning Districts

In the 2011-12 school year, "quality schools," or those earning an A, B, or C based on their 2012 School Performance Score, were located throughout the city. However, they were not equally distributed nor in sufficient number to serve all the students in New Orleans. As illustrated in Figure 1, the majority of quality schools were located uptown in Planning District 3, but the public school student population was heavily concentrated in Planning Districts 4, 9, and 12.

Figure 1: Distribution of Public School Student Population and Quality Schools, 2011-12



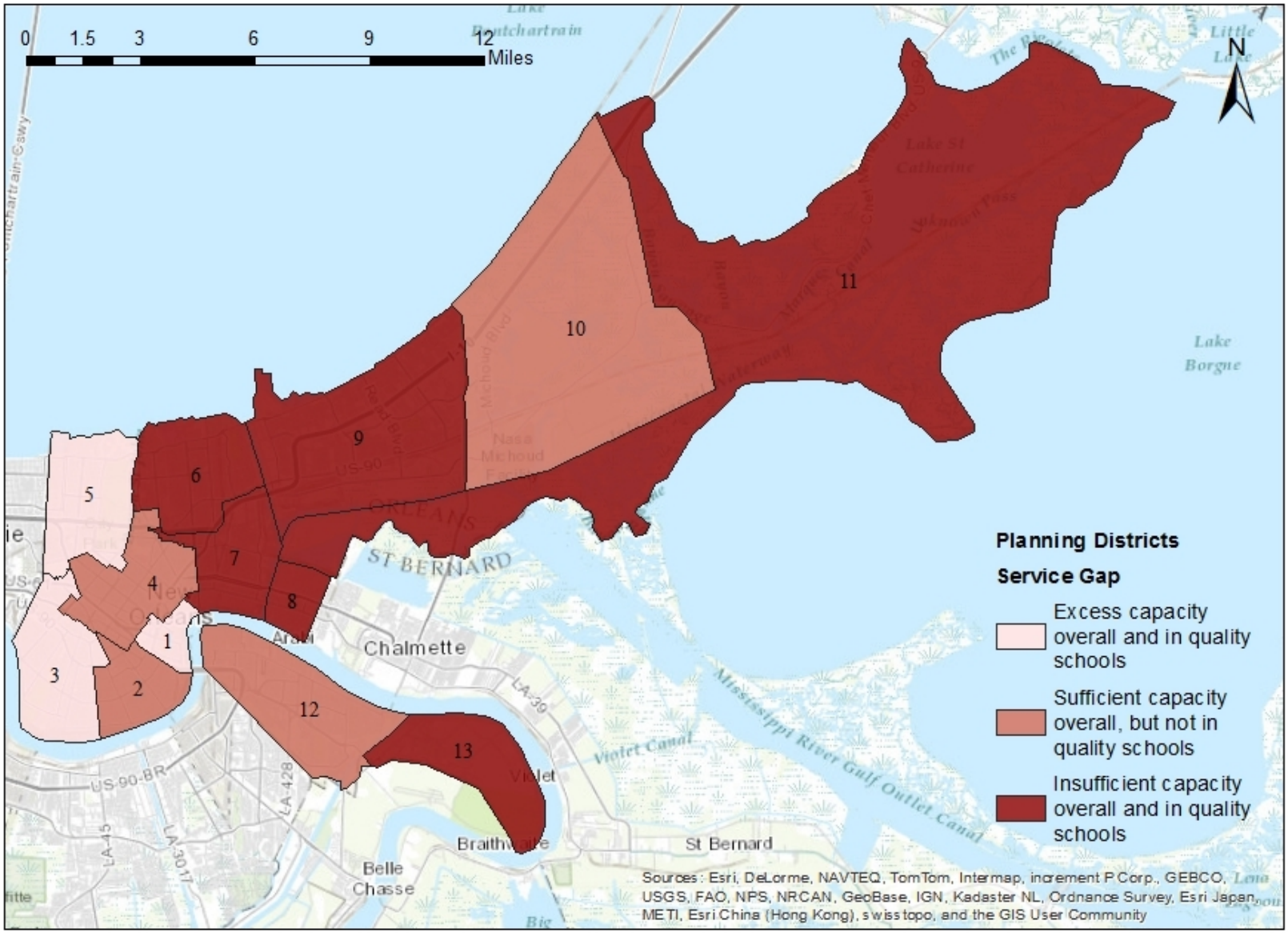
Among the 81 public, open enrollment schools open in 2011-12, New Orleans had 13,406 seats in 25 quality schools. These schools enrolled 35.10 percent of the 36,604 students in grades PK-12, compared to 22.57 percent of students in D schools and 42.33 percent of students attending F schools. Table 2 illustrates the unequal distribution and capacity of quality, D, and F schools among the 13 city planning districts compared to the number of public school students living in those districts. Some planning districts were short public school seats in general, regardless of school performance, suggesting that even if school quality improves in those areas, additional school facilities will be needed. On the other hand, Planning Districts 2, 4, and 6 generally have sufficient capacity but not in quality schools, meaning school improvement could benefit those areas. Figure 2 maps the planning districts and their school capacity, coding them as: having excess capacity overall and in quality schools, having sufficient capacity overall but not in quality schools, or having insufficient capacity all around and in quality schools.

Table 2: Total Public School Students, Schools, and Seats by Planning District and School Performance, 2011-12

Planning District	Quality Schools (A, B, C)			D Schools			F Schools			Total School Capacity			Students	
	#	Seats	%	#	Seats	%	#	Seats	%	#	Seats	%	#	%
1	1	354	2.64%	1	98	1.14%	0	0	0.00%	2	452	1.21%	38	0.10%
2	2	492	3.67%	4	1,664	19.38%	6	2,829	18.37%	12	4,985	13.33%	2,800	7.65%
3	7	4,084	30.46%	3	1,550	18.05%	2	813	5.28%	12	6,447	17.24%	3,227	8.82%
4	2	1,750	13.05%	4	1,668	19.43%	10	3,506	22.76%	16	6,924	18.52%	5,392	14.73%
5	1	583	4.35%	0	0	0.00%	1	421	2.73%	2	1,004	2.68%	362	0.99%
6	3	1,005	7.50%	2	994	11.58%	3	710	4.61%	8	2,709	7.24%	3,571	9.76%
7	1	203	1.51%	3	822	9.57%	5	1,694	11.00%	9	2,719	7.27%	3,164	8.64%
8	1	646	4.82%	0	0	0.00%	0	0	0.00%	1	646	1.73%	977	2.67%
9	2	657	4.90%	1	504	5.87%	4	2,376	15.43%	7	3,537	9.46%	8,098	22.12%
10	1	482	3.60%	0	0	0.00%	2	872	5.66%	3	1,354	3.62%	1,049	2.87%
11	0	0	0.00%	0	0	0.00%	0	0	0.00%	0	0	0.00%	109	0.30%
12	4	3,150	23.50%	2	996	11.60%	6	2,182	14.17%	12	6,328	16.92%	5,916	16.16%
13	0	0	0.00%	1	290	3.38%	0	0	0.00%	1	290	0.78%	832	2.27%
N/A*													1,069	2.92%
Total	25	13,406	100.00%	21	8,586	100.00%	39	15,403	100.00%	85	37,395	100.00%	36,604	100.00%

* These students did not have a planning district identified because their home address was either outside of Orleans Parish or unidentifiable.
Source: Louisiana Department of Education, Multiple Statistics By SiteCode For Total Reported Public School Students - October 2011; Louisiana Department of Education, 2012 School Performance Scores/Letter Grades – Alphabetical by District, March 2012; and GCR 2011-12 Public School Student Home Addresses.

Figure 2: Planning District Public School Capacity Overall and in Quality Schools, 2011-12



The distribution of schools and students can be further broken out by grade level. As shown in Table 3, grades 9-12 provided relatively more quality school seats than grades PK-5 or 6-8. Just 28.49 percent of the seats in grades PK-5 were at quality schools, compared to 30.33 percent in grades 6-8 and 55.53 percent in grades 9-12. Thus, high school students had a better chance at getting into a quality school than elementary and middle school students.

Table 3: School Capacity by Performance and Grade Level, 2011-12

School Performance	PK-5		6-8		9-12	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Quality Schools (A, B, C)	5,553	28.49%	2,512	30.33%	5,341	55.53%
D Schools	5,507	28.25%	2,000	24.15%	1,079	11.22%
F Schools	8,433	43.26%	3,771	45.53%	3,199	33.26%
Total Capacity	19,493	100.00%	8,283	100.00%	9,619	100.00%

Source: Louisiana Department of Education, Multiple Statistics By SiteCode For Total Reported Public School Students - October 2011; Louisiana Department of Education, 2012 School Performance Scores/Letter Grades – Alphabetical by District, March 2012.

Comparing school capacity with student enrollment, New Orleans needed an additional 23,198 seats at quality schools, including 10,132 for pre-kindergarten through fifth grades; 3,829 for sixth through eighth grades; and 2,757 for ninth through twelfth grades. Table 3 indicates the service gap between school capacity and student enrollment by planning district in the 2011-12 school year. The planning districts are ranked based on their average service gap across all three grade levels. Three districts had surplus seats at quality schools overall: 1 – French Quarter/CBD, 3 – Uptown, and 5 – Lakeview. The quality schools in these three districts had more capacity than the number of students residing in the boundaries of these districts. The districts with surplus quality school seats differed by grade level; Planning Districts 4 and 12 were both short on quality school seats in grades PK-5 and 6-8 but had surplus quality school seats in grades 9-12. On the other end of the spectrum, 93.47 percent of the need for quality school seats was in the top six most underserved districts. As indicated in Table 4, the total

service gaps in these districts ranged from a need for 2,308 quality school seats up to 7,441 quality school seats.

Table 4: Service Gap by Planning District and Grade Level, 2011-12

Planning District	Service Gap Rank	PK-5	6-8	9-12	Total
9 - New Orleans East	1	3,292	1,557	1,595	7,441
7 - Bywater	2	1,562	471	683	2,961
6 - Gentilly	3	1,393	734	231	2,566
4 - Mid-City	4	2,710	834	-393	3,642
2 - Central City/Garden District	5	1,025	150	582	2,308
12 - Algiers	6	788	298	-388	2,766
13 - New Aurora/English Turn	7	205	102	203	832
10 - Village de L'Est	8	36	46	311	567
8 - Lower Ninth Ward	9	138	43	97	331
11 - Venetian Isles	10	54	25	15	109
5 - Lakeview	11	-199	-69	36	-221
1 - French Quarter/CBD	12	-336	6	8	-316
3 - Uptown	13	-536	-368	-223	-857
Total		10,132	3,829	2,757	23,198

Source: Louisiana Department of Education, Multiple Statistics By SiteCode For Total Reported Public School Students - October 2011; Louisiana Department of Education, 2012 School Performance Scores/Letter Grades – Alphabetical by District, March 2012; and GCR 2011-12 Public School Student Home Addresses.

Students living in underserved planning districts were less likely to attend quality schools and more likely to attend F schools. As indicated in Table 5, just over a third (35.34 percent) of all public school students in New Orleans attended a quality school in 2011-12. However, just 32.93 percent of students in the six most underserved planning districts attended a quality school. The relationship between a planning district's service gap rank and its students' school performance levels was significant, X^2 (24, N = 36,604) = 1,143.16, $p < .001$. Students living in planning districts with large service gaps were less likely to attend quality schools and more likely to attend D and F schools than students living in planning districts with sufficient or excess quality school capacity.

Table 5: Percentage of Students in Quality, D, and F Schools by Planning District and Service Gap Rank, 2011-12

Planning District	Service Gap Rank	Quality Schools (A, B, C)	D Schools	F Schools	Total
9 - New Orleans East	1	32.64%	22.26%	45.10%	100.00%
7 - Bywater	2	26.49%	28.51%	45.01%	100.00%
6 - Gentilly	3	38.64%	26.74%	34.61%	100.00%
4 - Mid-City	4	27.84%	22.87%	49.30%	100.00%
2 - Central City/Garden District	5	27.64%	27.39%	44.96%	100.00%
12 - Algiers	6	40.48%	17.38%	42.14%	100.00%
13 - New Aurora/English Turn	7	41.95%	22.96%	35.10%	100.00%
10 - Village de L'Est	8	43.47%	11.63%	44.90%	100.00%
8 - Lower Ninth Ward	9	42.58%	22.42%	35.01%	100.00%
11 - Venetian Isles	10	37.61%	16.51%	45.87%	100.00%
5 - Lakeview	11	75.69%	8.84%	15.47%	100.00%
1 - French Quarter/CBD	12	39.47%	21.05%	39.47%	100.00%
3 - Uptown	13	45.77%	21.07%	33.16%	100.00%
Total		35.34%	22.39%	42.26%	100.00%

Source: Louisiana Department of Education, Multiple Statistics By SiteCode For Total Reported Public School Students - October 2011; Louisiana Department of Education, 2012 School Performance Scores/Letter Grades – Alphabetical by District, March 2012; and GCR 2011-12 Public School Student Home Addresses.

Notably, underserved planning districts tend to be predominantly low-income and minority areas in comparison to the rest of the city. (Appendix C includes demographic information for each city planning district.) As indicated in Table 6, a statistically significant relationship exists between a planning district's service gap and its population's socio-economic and racial makeup. A low service gap rank (meaning a large gap between quality school seats and demand) has a strong correlation with a large black and minority population and a moderate to strong correlation with a large percentage of the population living below poverty. These results suggest that the underserved planning districts tend to serve a population that is predominantly black and living in poverty, compared to the more advantaged populations in planning districts with sufficient or excess capacity at quality schools.

Table 6: Correlations between Planning District Service Gaps and Demographics, 2011-12

	Service Gap Rank	Percent Black	Percent Minority	Percent below Poverty
Service Gap Rank	--	-.738**	-.665**	-.512*
Percent Black	-.738**	--	.887**	.633*
Percent Minority	-.665**	.887**	--	.747**
Percent below Poverty	-.512*	.633*	.747**	--

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed)
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed)

Source: Analysis of data from U.S. Census 2010 Summary File 1 (SF1); 2007-2011 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (S1701); Louisiana Department of Education, Multiple Statistics By SiteCode For Total Reported Public School Students - October 2011; GCR 2011-12 Public School Student Home Addresses.

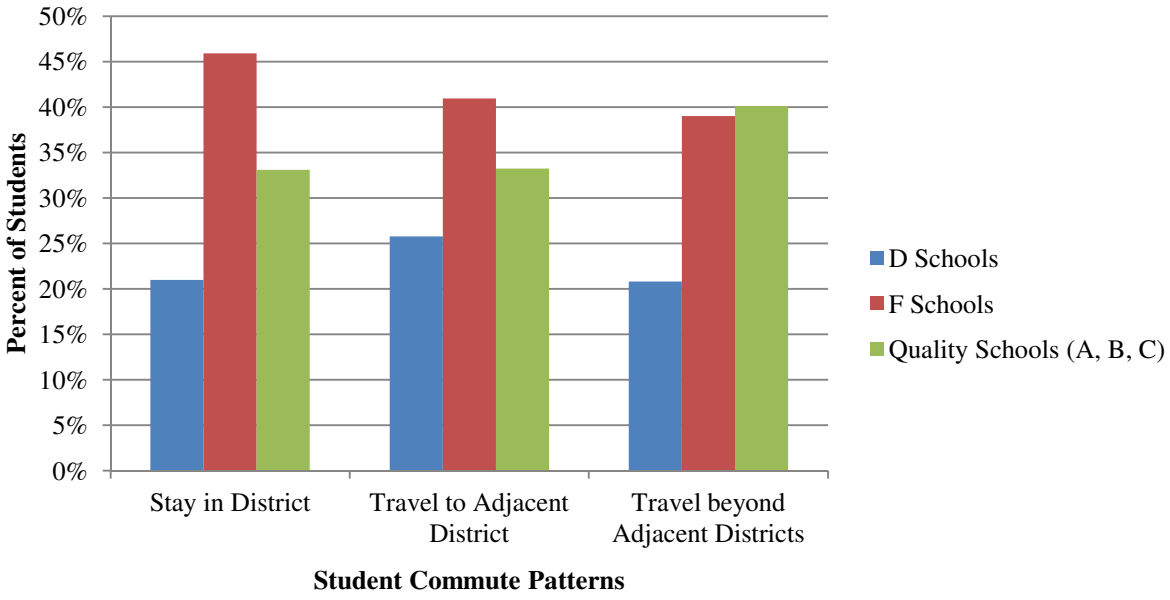
This analysis of public school capacity, performance, and enrollment illustrates the disparity in quality school locations in New Orleans. Students who lived in underserved planning districts, particularly Planning Districts 9, 3 and 4, had fewer quality school options close to home than those students living uptown where quality schools were most concentrated. Students in underserved districts were also less likely to attend quality schools and more likely to attend F schools. New Orleans' school choice policy is intended to benefit students in these underserved districts, allowing them to access quality public schools farther away from home. The following section considers the extent to which students in underserved districts use choice to access quality schools in other areas of the city.

Access to Quality Schools for Students in Underserved Districts

In order to assess the impact of school choice on students in underserved districts, it is critical to determine the extent to which students leave their planning districts for school and the quality of schools they attend. Though students have a range of options, more than two-thirds (68.60 percent) of public school students attended a school within their planning district or in the adjacent planning district in the 2011-12 school year. Of the 12,848 students enrolled in a quality school, about one-third (4,441) stayed within their planning district, another one-third (3,634)

attended a school in an adjacent district, and one-third (4,484) traveled beyond an adjacent district. The relationship between student commute patterns and school quality is significant, X^2 (4, N = 36,604) = 257.83, $p < .001$, suggesting that the farther a student travels outside his or her planning district, the more likely he or she is to attend a high performing school. As illustrated in Figure 3, students who stayed within their planning district or an adjacent district were more likely to attend D and F schools than those who traveled beyond an adjacent district. However, even among students who traveled beyond their adjacent planning district, 39.00 percent attended an F school. This is indicative of New Orleans' need for more seats in quality schools overall.

Figure 3: Student Commute Patterns and School Quality, 2011-12



Source: Analysis of data from GCR 2011-12 Public School Student Home Addresses and Louisiana Department of Education, 2012 School Performance Scores/Letter Grades – Alphabetical by District, March 2012.

Students in underserved districts stand to benefit the most from traveling to other areas of the city to attend schools, and indeed they are the most likely to do so. As seen in Table 7, students in underserved districts were less likely to attend a school within their planning district or an adjacent district and more likely to travel beyond an adjacent district. Two-thirds (67.39

percent) of students in the six most underserved districts attended school within their district or an adjacent district compared to nearly three-quarters (73.52 percent) of students in the remaining seven planning districts. The relationship between the size of a planning district's service gap and student commute patterns is significant, X^2 (24, N = 36,604) = 8799.22, $p <$ .001. The larger the service gap (meaning the lower the service gap rank) in a student's planning districts, the farther that student traveled outside of his or her planning district to attend school. Thus, students in underserved districts more often took advantage of school choice to seek school options farther away from home.

Table 7: Student Commute Patterns and Service Gap Rank, 2011-12

Planning District	Service Gap Rank	Stay in District	Travel to Adjacent District	Travel Beyond Adjacent District	Total
9 - New Orleans East	1	26.06%	22.91%	51.04%	100.00%
7 - Bywater	2	19.97%	49.84%	30.18%	100.00%
6 - Gentilly	3	22.32%	41.64%	36.04%	100.00%
4 - Mid-City	4	36.29%	48.31%	15.39%	100.00%
2 - Central City/Garden District	5	47.00%	38.96%	14.04%	100.00%
12 - Algiers	6	67.38%	1.52%	31.10%	100.00%
13 - New Aurora/English Turn	7	2.04%	69.59%	28.37%	100.00%
10 - Village de L'Est	8	37.94%	20.59%	41.47%	100.00%
8 - Lower Ninth Ward	9	25.08%	16.07%	58.85%	100.00%
11 - Venetian Isles	10	0.00%	39.45%	60.55%	100.00%
5 - Lakeview	11	52.76%	38.40%	8.84%	100.00%
1 - French Quarter/CBD	12	5.26%	44.74%	50.00%	100.00%
3 - Uptown	13	54.85%	33.28%	11.87%	100.00%
Total		37.77%	30.76%	31.47%	100.00%

Source: Analysis of data from GCR 2011-12 Public School Student Home Addresses.

Students in underserved, typically low-income and minority planning districts were more likely to travel far from home; however, when they did, they were still unlikely to attend a quality school. Indeed, no matter how far they traveled, students in underserved districts were

more than half as likely to attend a quality school as students in the three districts with a surplus of quality school seats. As Figure 4 illustrates, just one-fifth (19.73 percent) of the students in the top six most underserved districts attended a quality school in or adjacent to their planning district compared to one-third (35.85 percent) of students in the remaining seven planning districts. Thus, when students in underserved districts attended a school in or adjacent to their planning district, which 67.38 percent of them did, they were nearly two times less likely to attend a quality school as their peers in the remaining seven clusters. Nonetheless, if students in the top six districts traveled beyond their adjacent district, their chances of attending a quality school were slightly more likely (13.19 percent) than students in the remaining seven planning districts (10.06 percent).

Table 8: Student Commute Patterns by Performance and District Service Gap Ranking, 2011-12

Student Commute Pattern	Service Gap Rank	Quality Schools (A, B, C)		D Schools		F Schools		Total
		#	%	#	%	#	%	
Stay in District	Top 6 Underserved Districts	2,683	24.85%	2,418	22.39%	5,697	52.76%	10,798
	Remaining 7 Districts	1,758	67.02%	397	15.14%	468	17.84%	2,623
Travel to Adjacent District	Top 6 Underserved Districts	3,028	34.78%	2,306	26.49%	3,371	38.72%	8,705
	Remaining 7 Districts	606	27.24%	510	22.92%	1,109	49.84%	2,225
Travel beyond Adjacent Districts	Top 6 Underserved Districts	3,820	40.47%	1,964	20.81%	3,654	38.72%	9,438
	Remaining 7 Districts	664	38.03%	363	20.79%	719	41.18%	1,746

Source: Analysis of data from GCR 2011-12 Public School Student Home Addresses and Louisiana Department of Education, 2012 School Performance Scores/Letter Grades – Alphabetical by District, March 2012.

Because students tend to attend a school close to their home, the district in which they live largely determines whether they attend a performing school. Students in underserved districts, therefore, were less likely to attend a quality school despite New Orleans' school choice policy. When these students did travel beyond their adjacent planning district, they were significantly more likely to attend a quality school. Nonetheless, only one-third of students in underserved districts traveled beyond their adjacent planning district to attend school, leaving the majority of students with insufficient access to quality schools.

Discussion

Though all students in New Orleans have the opportunity to attend schools outside their planning district, more than two-thirds (68.60 percent) of public school students attended a school within their planning district or in the adjacent planning district in the 2011-12 school year. In staying close to home, just one-fifth (21.60 percent) of students attended a quality school. To serve all 36,604 public school students in the city in 2011-12, the districts needed an additional 23,198 seats at quality schools, including 10,132 for pre-kindergarten through fifth grades; 3,829 for sixth through eighth grades; and 2,757 for ninth through twelfth grades. A relationship existed between a planning district's service level and its socio-economic and racial make-up as well as the performance level of its students' schools, illustrating that underserved districts tended to serve low-income and minority students and those students were less likely to attend a quality school.

Proponents of school choice argue that low-income families, in particular, benefit from choice policies because, unlike more affluent families, poor families cannot choose to buy homes in communities or neighborhoods that have good schools. The results of this analysis suggest that the lack of quality schools in low-income and minority areas significantly limits those

families' access to quality schools even under New Orleans' far-reaching school choice policy. Thus, though school choice is a valuable opportunity for those families who use it to access schools in other areas of the city, the policy is not sufficient to provide students in underserved planning districts with access to quality public schools.

Previous research in both New Orleans and across the country confirms that parents prefer to send their children to schools close to home (Teske, Fitzpatrick, & Kaplan, 2007). Low-income parents, in particular, are likely to select schools close to home according to a survey of public school parents in New Orleans in 2011 (Scott S. Cowen Institute for Public Education Initiatives, 2011). In a series of focus groups with New Orleans parents of school-age children, parents said they valued proximity because it allowed them to easily access the school when needed and shortened the trip to and from school for their children, alleviating transportation challenges (Scott S. Cowen Institute for Public Education Initiatives, 2013). Parents also discussed the importance of the sense of community that comes with attending school in the neighborhood (Scott S. Cowen Institute for Public Education Initiatives, 2013). The focus groups also revealed the difficulties of navigating New Orleans' many school options and complex application process and found that misinformation was widespread (Ayers, 2013). These findings suggest that if parents had access to quality schools close to home, they would choose those schools. Additionally, less savvy parents or those without the time or resources to adequately navigate the complex system may be less likely to send their children to higher performing schools outside their immediate neighborhood.

Closing the service gap necessitates a coordinated effort between the Orleans Parish School Board (OPSB) and the Recovery School District (RSD), as well as the numerous non-profit charter operators. Though the districts are working to build facilities in the grossly

underserved areas, particularly New Orleans East (Planning District 9), a planning district specific strategic plan is needed to accelerate performance and improve access to quality schools across the city. In particular, the school districts should invest in facilities and programs to accelerate performance in D schools, especially in Planning Districts 2, 4 and 12 where schools have sufficient capacity overall but not in quality schools and have high concentrations of D schools. Accelerating performance in D schools in underserved districts, especially 2, 4, and 12, will relieve overcrowding elsewhere; currently more than one-third of students in Uptown schools commute from these three neighborhoods, as their parents seek a better education for their children. Providing local options for students in the northeast will shift current commute patterns.

Another district-specific approach to strategic planning is in the school closure and charter approval processes. As the RSD closes low-performing schools and identifies new operators, it should consider the specific needs of the surrounding neighborhood. For example, charter operators opening in the most underserved planning districts should be committed to recruiting and serving students in the neighborhood. While school choice and open enrollment policies undoubtedly increase access to better schools for families in underserved neighborhoods in the short term, such policies cannot and do not replace the need for every neighborhood to have a quality public school option.

Chapter 6

Moving toward Equitable School Choice Policy

School choice policies have been a subject of controversy since the 1950s, when the conservative economist Milton Friedman introduced the idea. Central to this debate is whether choice initiatives give all children access to better schools, or if some children benefit more than others. While school choice advocates argue that choice gives students from disadvantaged families a means of escaping under-performing public schools, critics caution that other inequities may prevent low-income families from engaging in school choice to select a higher performing school. In New Orleans, the disaster caused by Hurricane Katrina and the levee failures, and the subsequent rebuilding of the public school system, resulted in the most expansive school choice policy in the country (Whitehurst & Whitfield, December 2012). However, the evidence presented in this study suggests the policy's impact on access to quality schools for disadvantaged students may be limited.

Through an evaluation of the distribution of quality schools and access to those schools in a city that has actively sought to better serve low-income and minority families through choice policies, this study finds that New Orleans' school choice policy is not sufficient to provide students in underserved planning districts with access to quality public schools. Students living in the predominantly low-income and minority neighborhoods with limited quality school options continue to attend poor performing schools at a higher rate than students in better-served neighborhoods. These findings reinforce the school choice critique that certain types of parents are more likely to exercise choice and leave their neighborhood schools, creating a stratified system where the least savvy parents are relegated to the worst schools.

This study's findings, however, are not without limitations. Because the study focuses on a single school year, it is limited in its ability to compare trends over time. As the New Orleans education landscape continues to morph and transition each year, with low-performing charter schools losing their contracts to operate and new charter organization taking their place, it is difficult to anticipate what schools will be open in five or ten years. These changes have had a positive impact on school performance thus far, with fewer schools deemed failing and more students meeting grade level standards each year. In addition, school quality is indicated by School Performance Scores (SPS), a static measure that does not capture a school's growth trajectory, positive or negative. Future research that considers both current and projected enrollment, as well as schools' change in performance over time, could add value to the existing findings. Appendix C provides a snapshot of how the School Facilities Master Plan could impact service gaps, particularly in planning districts that have limited school capacity due to destruction caused by Hurricane Katrina and the subsequent flooding.

This study is also limited in that it relies only on student enrollment data and not school application data. Thus, the analysis focuses only on the outcomes of choice decision-making. However, attendance and enrollment data may not fully capture demand. If a school does not have enough space for all who apply, then attendance data will understate the actual demand. For example, parents in underserved districts may actively seek to enroll their students in quality schools outside their district but fail to gain admission to those schools. An analysis of parent preferences in the application process would add context to this study's findings.

Lastly, as indicated in the description of the research design in Chapter 4, the variables used in this analysis have limitations. Again, a school's SPS does not capture the complexity of what contributes to performance in schools. Additionally, though city planning districts provide a

relevant and meaningful picture of the distribution of schools and students, the districts' relatively large size may mask some more nuanced student commute patterns. However, an analysis of student commute patterns based on distance traveled to school produced similar results to those presented in this study (Harris, Larsen, Zimmerman, & Vaughan, 2013).

The enrollment patterns that exist in New Orleans today are an important indicator of where education investments and reforms in the coming years should be targeted. Furthermore, these patterns have implications for school choice policies and the extent to which they truly offer better school options for low-income families. Even if, as some proponents suggest, school choice helps to improve school quality in the long term, urban school districts nonetheless need real solutions for today. As school districts across the country consider school choice as a reform mechanism, New Orleans offers valuable lessons nearly seven years after its open enrollment policy was put in place. Thus, though school choice is a valuable opportunity for those families who use it to access schools in other areas of the city, the policy is not sufficient to provide students in underserved planning districts with access to quality public schools. This is not to suggest that school choice is not a relevant or useful policy solution for urban school districts, but rather that a multi-level approach is warranted to ensure all children have a real opportunity to attend a quality public school.

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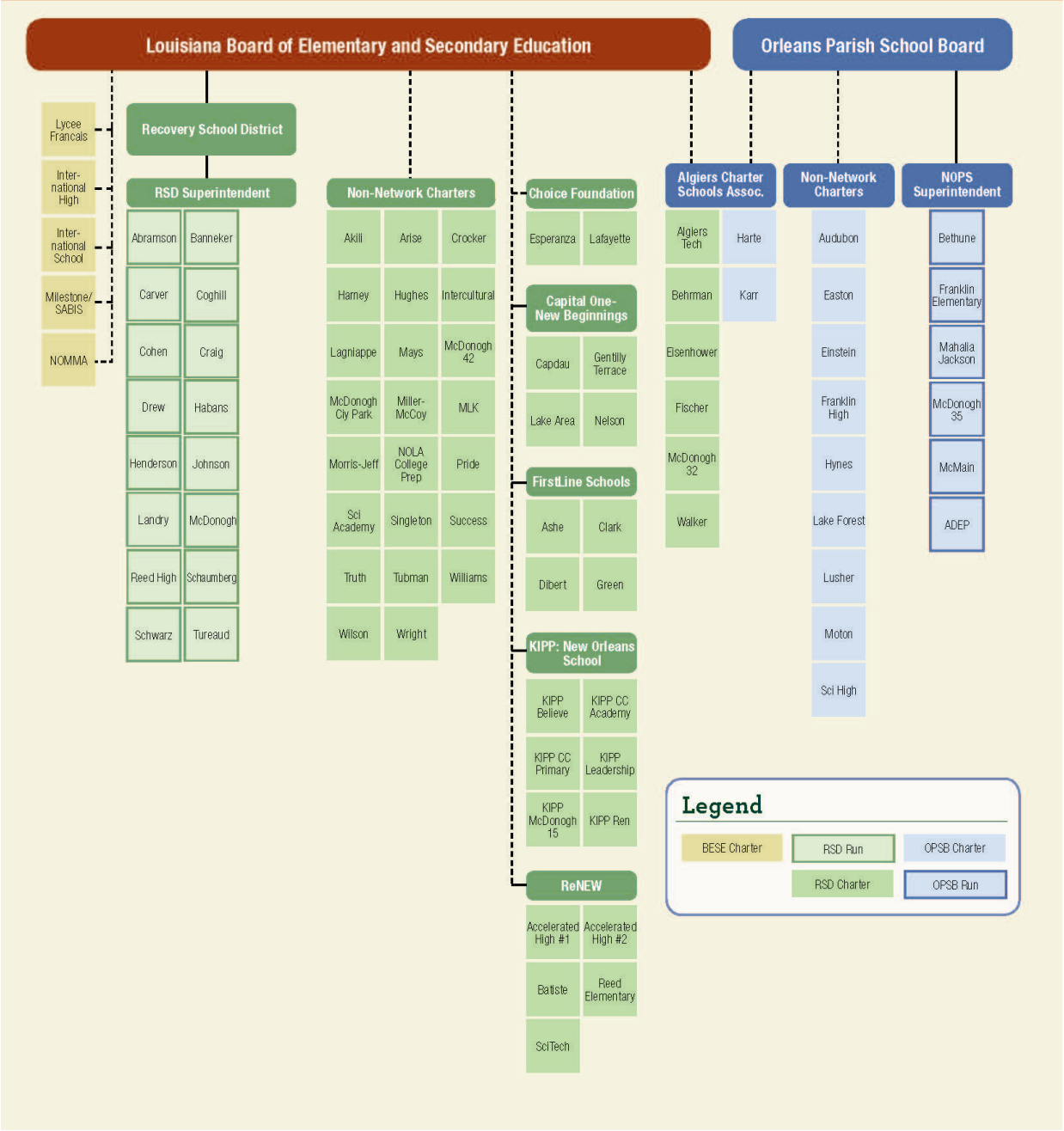
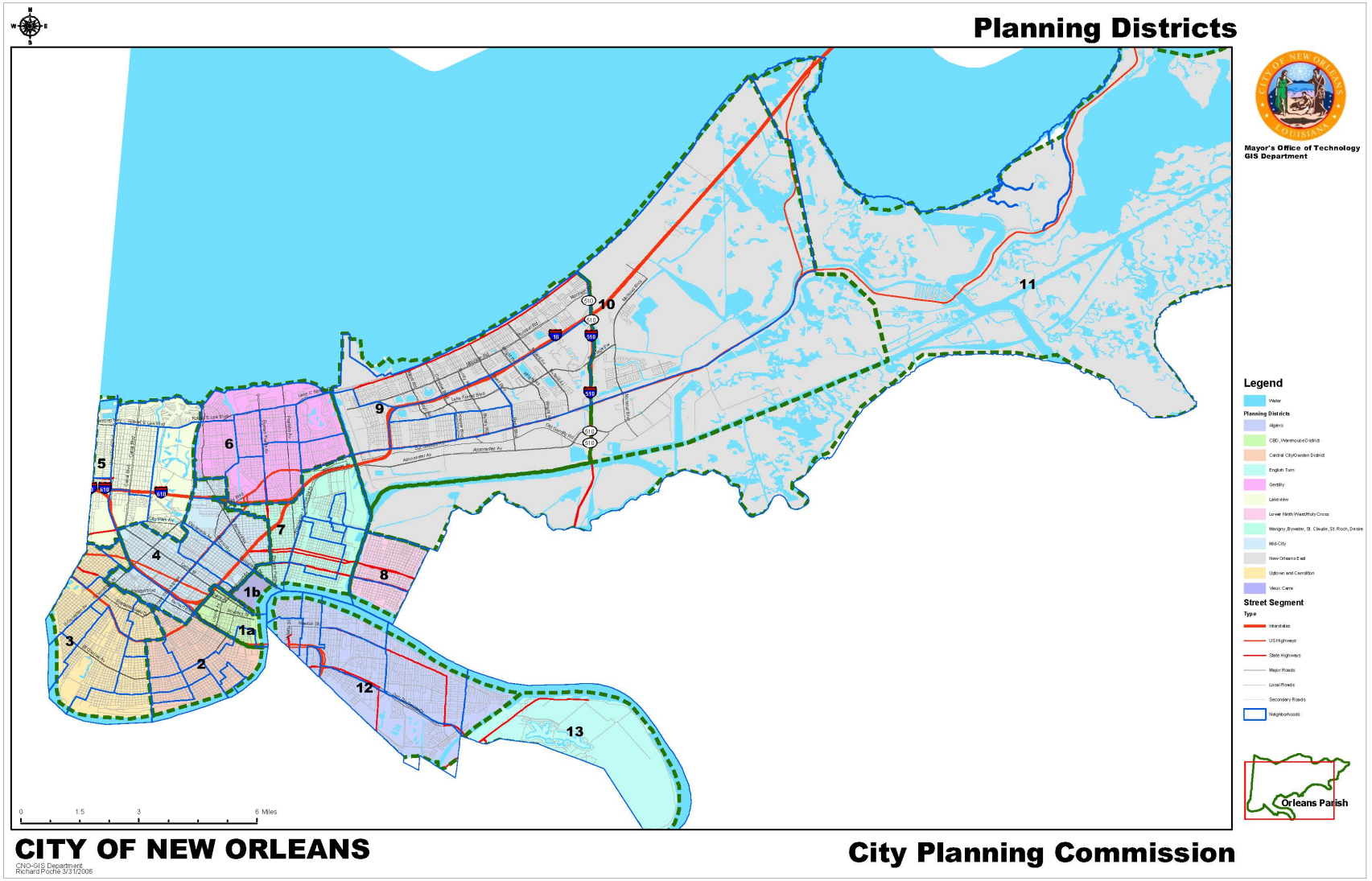
Appendices

Appendix A: New Orleans Public Schools Organizational Charter, 2011-12 School Year



Source: Scott S. Cowen Institute for Public Education Initiatives, State of Public Education in New Orleans, July 2012.

Appendix B: Map of New Orleans City Planning Districts



Appendix C: Impact of the School Facilities Master Plan on Planning District Capacity

Assuming schools continue to perform at their 2011-12 level and continue to serve the same numbers and grade levels of students, and assuming that the number and distribution of where students live remains constant, the School Facilities Master Plan for Orleans Parish would have only a small impact on the service gap rankings. Planning District 9, New Orleans East, will benefit the most from the relocation of a high performing elementary and middle school in Planning District 3 (Uptown).

Planning District Service Gaps in 2011-12 and 2020

Planning District	2011-12					2020				
	Service Gap Rank	PK-5	6-8	9-12	Total	Service Gap Rank	PK-5	6-8	9-12	Total
1 - French Quarter/CBD	12	-336	6	8	-316	11	18	6	8	38
2 - Central City/Garden District	5	1,025	150	582	2,308	4	1,025	150	582	2,308
3 - Uptown	13	-536	-368	-223	-857	13	-436	-85	-223	-474
4 - Mid-City	4	2,710	834	-393	3,642	5	2,710	834	-393	3,642
5 - Lakeview	11	-199	-69	36	-221	12	-199	-69	36	-221
6 - Gentilly	3	1,393	734	231	2,566	3	1,600	451	231	2,490
7 - Bywater	2	1,562	471	683	2,961	2	1,302	627	683	2,857
8 - Lower Ninth Ward	9	138	43	97	331	9	138	43	97	331
9 - New Orleans East	1	3,292	1,557	1,595	7,441	1	2,891	1,401	1,595	6,884
10 - Village de L'Est	8	36	46	311	567	7	36	46	311	567
11 - Venetian Isles	10	54	25	15	109	10	54	25	15	109
12 - Algiers	6	788	298	-388	2,766	8	788	298	-388	2,766
13 - New Aurora/English Turn	7	205	102	203	832	6	205	102	203	832
Total		10,132	3,829	2,757	23,198		10,132	3,829	2,757	23,198

Source: Louisiana Department of Education, Multiple Statistics By SiteCode For Total Reported Public School Students - October 2011; Louisiana Department of Education, 2012 School Performance Scores/Letter Grades – Alphabetical by District, March 2012; GCR 2011-12 Public School Student Home Addresses; and Recovery School District, Long-Term Home Proposals For Temporarily Located Schools, November 2011.

Planning District 1 – French Quarter/Central Business District
Service Gap Rank: 12 of 13

Overview and Demographics

- Planning District 1 had 38 public school students from PK-12, or less than 1 percent of all public school students in New Orleans in the 2011-12 school year.
- The racial/ethnic makeup of Planning District 1 is: 11 percent black; 78 percent white; 4 percent Asian; and 5 percent Hispanic (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).
- Sixteen percent of households in Planning District 1 live in poverty, compared to 24 percent in New Orleans as a whole (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011).

Enrollment and Service Gap Findings

- Just 5 percent of the students living in Planning District 1 attended one of the 2 schools located in the district. Forty-five percent traveled to an adjacent planning district, and 50 percent traveled beyond an adjacent district.
- Forty percent of students living in Planning District 1 attended a quality school. Of those students, 20 percent attended a quality school within the district or an adjacent district and 80 percent attended a quality school beyond an adjacent district.
- The service gap is -316 seats, meaning the district has surplus quality school seas. Zero percent of seats in schools serving the planning district are in underperforming schools.

Public Schools in Planning District 1, 2011-12

School Performance Level	School Name	School Type	Grades Served	Total Enroll-ment
Quality Schools	KIPP New Orleans Leadership Primary	RSD Charter	K	98
	KIPP McDonogh 15 School for the Creative Arts	RSD Charter	K-4	354

Source: Louisiana Department of Education, Multiple Statistics By SiteCode For Total Reported Public School Students - October 2011; Louisiana Department of Education, 2012 School Performance Scores/Letter Grades – Alphabetical by District, March 2012.

Planning District 2 – Central City/Garden District
Service Gap Rank: 5 of 13

Overview and Demographics

- Planning District 2 had 2,800 public school students from PK-12, or 8 percent of all public school students in New Orleans in the 2011-12 school year.
- The racial/ethnic makeup of Planning District 2 is: 47 percent black; 43 percent white; 2 percent Asian; and 7 percent Hispanic (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).
- Twenty-seven percent of households in Planning District 2 live in poverty, compared to 24 percent in New Orleans as a whole (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011).

Enrollment and Service Gap Findings

- Nearly half (47 percent) of the students living in Planning District 2 attended one of the 12 schools located in the district. Thirty-nine percent traveled to an adjacent planning district, and 14 percent traveled beyond an adjacent district.
- Six percent of students living in Planning District 2 attended a quality school. Of those students, 80 percent attended a quality school within the district or an adjacent district and 20 percent attended a quality school beyond an adjacent district.
- The service gap is 2,308 seats. Ninety percent of seats in schools serving the planning district are in underperforming schools, and 10 percent are in quality schools.

Public Schools in Planning District 2, 2011-12

School Performance Level	School Name	School Type	Grades Served	Total Enroll-ment
Quality Schools	KIPP Central City Academy	RSD Charter	5-8	397
	Mahalia Jackson Elementary School	OPSB Direct-Run	PK-1	95
D Schools	Arthur Ashe Charter School	RSD Charter	K-8	426
	KIPP Central City Primary	RSD Charter	K-3	421
	NOLA College Prep	RSD Charter	K-10	817
F Schools	Crocker Arts and Technology School	RSD Direct-Run	PK-5	244
	Batiste Cultural Arts Academy at Live Oak	RSD Charter	PK-8	628
	E. P. Harney Spirit of Excellence Academy	RSD Charter	K-8	366
	James M. Singleton Charter School	RSD Direct-Run	PK-8	714
	SciTech Academy at Laurel	RSD Charter	PK-8	620
	Walter L. Cohen High School	RSD Direct-Run	10-12	257

Source: Louisiana Department of Education, Multiple Statistics By SiteCode For Total Reported Public School Students - October 2011; Louisiana Department of Education, 2012 School Performance Scores/Letter Grades – Alphabetical by District, March 2012.

Planning District 3 – Uptown
Service Gap Rank: 13 of 13

Overview and Demographics

- Planning District 3 had 3,227 public school students from PK-12, or 9 percent of all public school students in New Orleans in the 2011-12 school year.
- The racial/ethnic makeup of Planning District 3 is: 34 percent black; 57 percent white; 2 percent Asian; and 5 percent Hispanic (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).
- Twenty-one percent of households in Planning District 3 live in poverty, compared to 24 percent in New Orleans as a whole (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011).

Enrollment and Service Gap Findings

- More than half (55 percent) of the students living in Planning District 3 attended one of the 12 schools located in the district. Thirty-three percent traveled to an adjacent planning district, and 12 percent traveled beyond an adjacent district.
- Forty-six percent of students living in Planning District 3 attended a quality school. Of those students, 88 percent attended a quality school within the district or an adjacent district and 12 percent attended a quality school beyond an adjacent district.
- The service gap is -857 seats, meaning that the district has surplus seas. Thirty-seven percent of seats in schools serving the planning district are in underperforming schools and 63 percent are in quality schools.

Public Schools in Planning District 3, 2011-12

School Performance Level	School Name	School Type	Grades Served	Total Enrollment
Quality Schools	Audubon Charter School	OPSB Charter	PK-8	544
	Eleanor McMain Secondary School	OPSB Direct-Run	7-12	741
	Franklin Elementary	OPSB Direct-Run	PK-6	607
	KIPP Believe College Prep	RSD Charter	4-8	383
	Lafayette Academy of New Orleans	RSD Charter	PK-7	818
	Mary Bethune Elementary School	OPSB Direct-Run	PK-6	376
	New Orleans Charter Science and Math	OPSB Charter	9-12	370
D Schools	Andrew H. Wilson Charter School	RSD Charter	K-8	556
	S.J. Green Charter	RSD Charter	K-8	518
	Sophie B. Wright Inst.of Academic Excellence	RSD Charter	6-12	476
F Schools	Benjamin Banneker Elementary School	RSD Direct-Run	PK-8	505
	James Weldon Johnson School	RSD Direct-Run	PK-8	308

Source: Louisiana Department of Education, Multiple Statistics By SiteCode For Total Reported Public School Students - October 2011; Louisiana Department of Education, 2012 School Performance Scores/Letter Grades – Alphabetical by District, March 2012.

Planning District 4 – Mid-City
Service Gap Rank: 4 of 13

Overview and Demographics

- Planning District 4 had 5,392 public school students from PK-12, or 15 percent of all public school students in New Orleans in the 2011-12 school year.
- The racial/ethnic makeup of Planning District 4 is: 70 percent black; 19 percent white; 1 percent Asian; and 8 percent Hispanic (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).
- Thirty-eight percent of households in Planning District 4 live in poverty, compared to 24 percent in New Orleans as a whole (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011).

Enrollment and Service Gap Findings

- Thirty-six percent of the students living in Planning District 4 attended one of the 17 schools located in the district. Forty-eight percent traveled to an adjacent planning district, and 15 percent traveled beyond an adjacent district.
- Twenty-eight percent of students living in Planning District 4 attended a quality school. Of those students, 85 percent attended a quality school within the district or an adjacent district and 15 percent attended a quality school beyond an adjacent district.
- The service gap is 3,642 seats. Seventy-five percent of seats in schools serving the planning district are in underperforming schools, and 25 percent are in quality schools.

Public Schools in Planning District 4, 2011-12

School Performance Level	School Name	School Type	Grades Served	Total Enrollment
Quality Schools	McDonogh 35 High School	OPSB Direct-Run	7-12	869
	Warren Easton High School	OPSB Charter	9-12	881
D Schools	A.P. Tureaud Elementary School	RSD Direct-Run	PK-6	305
	Langston Hughes Academy Charter	RSD Charter	K-8	617
	Morris Jeff Community School	RSD Charter	PK-3	261
	Nelson Elementary School	RSD Charter	PK-8	485
F Schools	Esperanza Charter School	RSD Charter	K-8	421
	John McDonogh Senior High School	RSD Direct-Run	9-12	271
	Joseph A. Craig School	RSD Direct-Run	PK-8	550
	Joseph T. Clark High	RSD Charter	9-12	436
	Lagniappe Academy Charter	RSD Charter	K-1, 5-6	115
	McDonogh 28 City Park Academy	RSD Charter	K-8	400
	McDonogh 42 Elementary Charter School	RSD Charter	PK-8	527
	New Orleans Accelerated HS: City Park Campus	RSD Charter	8-12	155
	Sojourner Truth Academy	RSD Charter	9-12	251
	Success Preparatory Academy	RSD Charter	K-5	380
	Youth Study Center	RSD Direct-Run	7-11	22

Source: Louisiana Department of Education, Multiple Statistics By SiteCode For Total Reported Public School Students - October 2011; Louisiana Department of Education, 2012 School Performance Scores/Letter Grades – Alphabetical by District, March 2012.

Planning District 5 – Lakeview
Service Gap Rank: 11 of 13

Overview and Demographics

- Planning District 5 had 362 public school students from PK-12, or 1 percent of all public school students in New Orleans in the 2011-12 school year.
- The racial/ethnic makeup of Planning District 5 is: 5 percent black; 85 percent white; 2 percent Asian; and 6 percent Hispanic (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).
- Eight percent of households in Planning District 5 live in poverty, compared to 24 percent in New Orleans as a whole (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011).

Enrollment and Service Gap Findings

- Fifty-three percent of the students living in Planning District 5 attended one of the two schools located in the district. Thirty-eight percent traveled to an adjacent planning district, and 9 percent traveled beyond an adjacent district.
- Seventy-six percent of students living in Planning District 5 attended a quality school. Of those students, 96 percent attended a quality school within the district or an adjacent district and 4 percent attended a quality school beyond an adjacent district.
- The service gap is -221 seats, meaning the district has excess quality school capacity. Forty-two percent of seats in schools serving the planning district are in underperforming schools, and 58 percent are in quality schools.

Public Schools in Planning District 5, 2011-12

School Performance Level	School Name	School Type	Grades Served	Total Enrollment
Quality Schools	Edward Hynes Elementary School	OPSB Charter	K-8	583
F Schools	John Dibert Community School	RSD Charter	K-8	421

Source: Louisiana Department of Education, Multiple Statistics By SiteCode For Total Reported Public School Students - October 2011; Louisiana Department of Education, 2012 School Performance Scores/Letter Grades – Alphabetical by District, March 2012.

Planning District 6 – Gentilly
Service Gap Rank: 3 of 13

Overview and Demographics

- Planning District 6 had 3,571 public school students from PK-12, or 10 percent of all public school students in New Orleans in the 2011-12 school year.
- The racial/ethnic makeup of Planning District 6 is: 75 percent black; 16 percent white; 2 percent Asian; and 4 percent Hispanic (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).
- Twenty-three percent of households in Planning District 6 live in poverty, compared to 24 percent in New Orleans as a whole (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011).

Enrollment and Service Gap Findings

- Twenty-two percent of the students living in Planning District 6 attended one of the eight schools located in the district. Forty-two percent traveled to an adjacent planning district, and 36 percent traveled beyond an adjacent district.
- Thirty-nine percent of students living in Planning District 6 attended a quality school. Of those students, 50 percent attended a quality school within the district or an adjacent district and 50 percent attended a quality school beyond an adjacent district.
- The service gap is 2,566 seats. Sixty-three percent of seats in schools serving the planning district are in underperforming schools, and 37 percent are in quality schools.

Public Schools in Planning District 6, 2011-12

School Performance Level	School Name	School Type	Grades Served	Total Enrollment
Quality Schools	Akili Academy of New Orleans	RSD Charter	K-4	307
	KIPP Believe Primary	RSD Charter	K	95
	Lake Area High School	RSD Charter	9-12	603
D Schools	Mary D. Coghill Elementary School	RSD Direct-Run	PK-8	654
	P. A. Capdau School	RSD Charter	K-8	340
F Schools	F.W. Gregory Elementary School	RSD Direct-Run	PK	27
	Gentilly Terrace School	RSD Charter	PK-8	435
	Pride College Preparatory Academy	RSD Charter	K-4	248

Source: Louisiana Department of Education, Multiple Statistics By SiteCode For Total Reported Public School Students - October 2011; Louisiana Department of Education, 2012 School Performance Scores/Letter Grades – Alphabetical by District, March 2012.

Planning District 7 – Bywater
Service Gap Rank: 2 of 13

Overview and Demographics

- Planning District 7 had 3,164 public school students from PK-12, or 9 percent of all public school students in New Orleans in the 2011-12 school year.
- The racial/ethnic makeup of Planning District 7 is: 69 percent black; 24 percent white; 1 percent Asian; and 4 percent Hispanic (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).
- Thirty-eight percent of households in Planning District 7 live in poverty, compared to 24 percent in New Orleans as a whole (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011).

Enrollment and Service Gap Findings

- Twenty percent of the students living in Planning District 7 attended one of the nine schools located in the district. Fifty percent traveled to an adjacent planning district, and 30 percent traveled beyond an adjacent district.
- Twenty-seven percent of students living in Planning District 7 attended a quality school. Of those students, 66 percent attended a quality school within the district or an adjacent district and 34 percent attended a quality school beyond an adjacent district.
- The service gap is 2,961 seats. Ninety-three percent of seats in schools serving the planning district are in underperforming schools, and 7 percent are in quality schools.

Public Schools in Planning District 7, 2011-12

School Performance Level	School Name	School Type	Grades Served	Total Enrollment
Quality Schools	Arise Academy	RSD Charter	K-4	311
	KIPP McDonogh 15 Middle School	RSD Charter	5-8	203
D Schools	KIPP New Orleans Leadership Academy	RSD Charter	K, 5-6	313
	KIPP Renaissance High School	RSD Charter	9-10	296
F Schools	Architecture Design and Engineering School	OPSB Charter	9-12	195
	Benjamin E. Mays Preparatory	RSD Charter	K-5	313
	Dr. Charles Richard Drew Elementary School	RSD Direct-Run	4-8	186
	G.W. Carver High School	RSD Direct-Run	9-12	335
	William J. Fischer Elementary School	RSD Direct-Run	PK-8	665

Source: Louisiana Department of Education, Multiple Statistics By SiteCode For Total Reported Public School Students - October 2011; Louisiana Department of Education, 2012 School Performance Scores/Letter Grades – Alphabetical by District, March 2012.

Planning District 8 – Lower Ninth Ward
Service Gap Rank: 9 of 13

Overview and Demographics

- Planning District 8 had 977 public school students from PK-12, or 3 percent of all public school students in New Orleans in the 2011-12 school year.
- The racial/ethnic makeup of Planning District 8 is: 92 percent black; 4 percent white; 0 percent Asian; and 2 percent Hispanic (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).
- Thirty-four percent of households in Planning District 8 live in poverty, compared to 24 percent in New Orleans as a whole (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011).

Enrollment and Service Gap Findings

- Twenty-five percent of the students living in Planning District 8 attended the one school located in the district. Sixteen percent traveled to an adjacent planning district, and 59 percent traveled beyond an adjacent district.
- Forty-three percent of students living in Planning District 8 attended a quality school. Of those students, 61 percent attended a quality school within the district or an adjacent district and 39 percent attended a quality school beyond an adjacent district.
- The service gap is 331 seats. None of seats in schools serving the planning district are in underperforming schools, and 100 percent are in quality schools.

Public Schools in Planning District 8, 2011-12

School Performance Level	School Name	School Type	Grades Served	Total Enroll-ment
Quality Schools	Dr. M.L.K. Charter School for Science & Tech.	RSD Charter	PK-12	646

Source: Louisiana Department of Education, Multiple Statistics By SiteCode For Total Reported Public School Students - October 2011; Louisiana Department of Education, 2012 School Performance Scores/Letter Grades – Alphabetical by District, March 2012.

Planning District 9 – New Orleans East
Service Gap Rank: 1 of 13

Overview and Demographics

- Planning District 9 had 8,098 public school students from PK-12, or 22 percent of all public school students in New Orleans in the 2011-12 school year.
- The racial/ethnic makeup of Planning District 9 is: 92 percent black; 3 percent white; 2 percent Asian; and 2 percent Hispanic (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).
- Thirty-four percent of households in Planning District 9 live in poverty, compared to 27 percent in New Orleans as a whole (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011).

Enrollment and Service Gap Findings

- Twenty-six percent of the students living in Planning District 9 attended one of the seven schools located in the district. Twenty-three percent traveled to an adjacent planning district, and 51 percent traveled beyond an adjacent district.
- Thirty-three percent of students living in Planning District 9 attended a quality school. Of those students, 29 percent attended a quality school within the district or an adjacent district and 71 percent attended a quality school beyond an adjacent district.
- The service gap is 7,441 seats. Eighty-one percent of seats in schools serving the planning district are in underperforming schools, and 19 percent are in quality schools.

Public Schools in Planning District 9, 2011-12

School Performance Level	School Name	School Type	Grades Served	Total Enroll-ment
Quality Schools	Robert Moton Charter School	OPSB Charter	PK-7	323
	Sci Academy	RSD Charter	9-12	334
D Schools	Fannie C. Williams Charter School	RSD Charter	PK-8	504
F Schools	Abramson Science and Technology School	RSD Direct-Run	K-12	549
	H.C. Schaumburg Elementary School	RSD Direct-Run	PK-8	615
	Miller-McCoy Academy	RSD Charter	5-12	562
	ReNEW at Reed Elementary	RSD Charter	PK-8	650

Source: Louisiana Department of Education, Multiple Statistics By SiteCode For Total Reported Public School Students - October 2011; Louisiana Department of Education, 2012 School Performance Scores/Letter Grades – Alphabetical by District, March 2012.

Planning District 10 – Village de L'Est
Service Gap Rank: 8 of 13

Overview and Demographics

- Planning District 10 had 1,049 public school students from PK-12, or 3 percent of all public school students in New Orleans in the 2011-12 school year.
- The racial/ethnic makeup of Planning District 10 is: 43 percent black; 2 percent white; 45 percent Asian; and 9 percent Hispanic (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).
- Thirty-eight percent of households in Planning District 10 live in poverty, compared to 27 percent in New Orleans as a whole (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011).

Enrollment and Service Gap Findings

- Thirty-eight percent of the students living in Planning District 10 attended one of the three schools located in the district. Twenty-one percent traveled to an adjacent planning district, and 42 percent traveled beyond an adjacent district.
- Forty-four percent of students living in Planning District 10 attended a quality school. Of those students, 53 percent attended a quality school within the district or an adjacent district and 47 percent attended a quality school beyond an adjacent district.
- The service gap is 567 seats. Sixty-four percent of seats in schools serving the planning district are in underperforming schools, and 36 percent are in quality schools.

Public Schools in Planning District 10, 2011-12

School Performance Level	School Name	School Type	Grades Served	Total Enroll-ment
Quality Schools	Einstein Charter School	OPSB Charter	PK-8	482
F Schools	Intercultural Charter School	RSD Charter	K-8	419
	Sarah Towles Reed Senior High School	RSD Direct-Run	9-12	453

Source: Louisiana Department of Education, Multiple Statistics By SiteCode For Total Reported Public School Students - October 2011; Louisiana Department of Education, 2012 School Performance Scores/Letter Grades – Alphabetical by District, March 2012.

Planning District 11 – Venetian Isles
Service Gap Rank: 10 of 13

Overview and Demographics

- Planning District 11 had 109 public school students from PK-12, or less than 1 percent of all public school students in New Orleans in the 2011-12 school year.
- The racial/ethnic makeup of Planning District 11 is: 33 percent black; 49 percent white; 5 percent Asian; and 12 percent Hispanic (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).
- Seven percent of households in Planning District 11 live in poverty, compared to 27 percent in New Orleans as a whole (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011).

Enrollment and Service Gap Findings

- No schools are located in Planning District 11. Forty percent of the students traveled to Planning District 10, which is adjacent, and 61 percent traveled to another district.
- Thirty-eight percent of students living in Planning District 11 attended a quality school. Of those students, 49 percent attended a quality school in adjacent Planning District 10 and 51 percent attended a quality school in another district.
- The service gap is 109 seats because there are no schools in the district.

Planning District 12 – Algiers
Service Gap Rank: 6 of 13

Overview and Demographics

- Planning District 12 had 5,916 public school students from PK-12, or 16 percent of all public school students in New Orleans in the 2011-12 school year.
- The racial/ethnic makeup of Planning District 12 is: 66 percent black; 25 percent white; 2 percent Asian; and 5 percent Hispanic (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).
- Nineteen percent of households in Planning District 12 live in poverty, compared to 27 percent in New Orleans as a whole (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011).

Enrollment and Service Gap Findings

- Sixty-seven percent of the students living in Planning District 12 attended one of the twelve schools located in the district. Two percent traveled to an adjacent planning district, and 31 percent traveled beyond an adjacent district.
- Forty percent of students living in Planning District 12 attended a quality school. Of those students, 76 percent attended a quality school within the district or an adjacent district and 24 percent attended a quality school beyond an adjacent district.
- The service gap is 2,766 seats. Fifty percent of seats in schools serving the planning district are in underperforming schools, and 50 percent are in quality schools.

Public Schools in Planning District 12, 2011-12

School Performance Level	School Name	School Type	Grades Served	Total Enrollment
Quality Schools	Alice Harte Elementary School	OPSB Charter	K-8	648
	Edna Karr Secondary School	OPSB Charter	9-12	928
	Martin Behrman Elementary School	RSD Charter	PK-8	684
	O.P. Walker Senior High School	RSD Charter	9-12	890
D Schools	Dwight D. Eisenhower Elementary School	RSD Charter	PK-8	626
	Paul B. Habans Elementary School	RSD Direct-Run	PK-6	370
F Schools	Harriet Tubman Elementary	RSD Charter	K-8	521
	Murray Henderson Elementary School	RSD Direct-Run	PK-6	222
	New Orleans Accelerated HS: Westbank Campus	RSD Charter	8-12	137
	Schwarz Alternative School	RSD Direct-Run	7-12	40
	L. B. Landry High School	RSD Direct-Run	7-11	736
	McDonogh #32 Literacy Academy	RSD Charter	PK-8	526

Source: Louisiana Department of Education, Multiple Statistics By SiteCode For Total Reported Public School Students - October 2011; Louisiana Department of Education, 2012 School Performance Scores/Letter Grades – Alphabetical by District, March 2012.

Planning District 13 – New Aurora/English Turn
Service Gap Rank: 7 of 13

Overview and Demographics

- Planning District 13 had 832 public school students from PK-12, or 2 percent of all public school students in New Orleans in the 2011-12 school year.
- The racial/ethnic makeup of Planning District 13 is: 63 percent black; 20 percent white; 2 percent Asian; and 5 percent Hispanic (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).
- Thirty-seven percent of households in Planning District 12 live in poverty, compared to 27 percent in New Orleans as a whole (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011).

Enrollment and Service Gap Findings

- Two percent of the students living in Planning District 13 attended the one school located in the district. Seventy percent traveled to Planning District 12, which is adjacent, and 28 percent traveled to another district.
- Forty-two percent of students living in Planning District 13 attended a quality school. Of those students, 81 percent attended a quality school within the district or an adjacent district and 20 percent attended a quality school beyond an adjacent district.
- The service gap is 832 seats. All of seats in schools serving the planning district are in underperforming schools.

Public Schools in Planning District 13, 2011-12

School Performance Level	School Name	School Type	Grades Served	Total Enrollment
D Schools	Algiers Technology Academy	RSD Charter	9-12	290

Source: Louisiana Department of Education, Multiple Statistics By SiteCode For Total Reported Public School Students - October 2011; Louisiana Department of Education, 2012 School Performance Scores/Letter Grades – Alphabetical by District, March 2012.

Vita

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