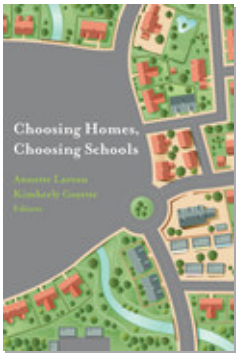
Choosing Homes, Choosing Schools

Lareau, Annette, Goyette, Kimberly



Published by Russell Sage Foundation

Chapter 10

Linking Housing Policy and School Reform

AMY ELLEN SCHWARTZ AND LEANNA STIEFEL

A common mantra in the real estate world asserts the importance of "location location location." Much of the locational advantage of residential property has to do with the quality of local public schools. Parents consider the quality of the schools their children will be able to attend when choosing where to live, although choice sets vary greatly by class and race. Teachers also weigh locational factors, including salaries, cost of living, and working conditions at local schools when deciding where to apply for jobs and when to transfer between school districts. These decisions of parents and teachers result in close ties between housing policy and educational attainment of our elementary and secondary school students. Yet, despite these ties, local, state, and federal policies that recognize and coordinate the relationship between education and housing are relatively rare.

In this chapter, we first explore the mechanisms by which housing and education are related. Although the links between education and housing affect students across the income distribution, we focus particular attention on disadvantaged students in urban areas, as these students often face a unique set of challenges that set them apart from their more advantaged or nonurban counterparts. We begin with the *housing unit* itself, describing the ways in which a child's physical home environment might impact his educational outcome. Next, we explore the relationship between education and the institutions, individuals, and overall quality of a child's residential *neighborhood.* Finally, we consider the *political economy* of public schools and the ways in which the school district links housing and education decisions, policies and outcomes. We then turn to a discussion of the implications of these mechanisms for education and housing policy, focusing on the links between schools and housing.[1]

We address, in turn: policies that govern school choice within districts; policies that affect student mobility; policies that create neighborhood support for children in low-income housing; and policies regarding the siting of low-income housing. We highlight recent efforts to strengthen the ties between education and housing policy and discuss how the lessons learned from these efforts might be brought to bear as policymakers consider new education and housing initiatives.

Impact of Housing Unit on Children's Education

Adequate housing is critical to a child's ability to learn in myriad ways. Children are affected not only by the physical amenities and layout of their housing unit, but also by the stability that comes with secure and constant housing. What seems particularly critical today is the way in which housing instability leads to student mobility across schools, neighborhoods, and school districts. This mobility, particularly when it occurs frequently or within a school year, is more harmful to a child's education than is commonly understood. Although some mobility can improve academic performance if it is made strategically to provide a good match between student and school, and occurs at appropriate times, such strategic moves are often unavailable to low-income families, who often do not make joint decisions regarding residential and school mobility (see chapter 5, this volume). Mobility can, and often does, negatively affect a student's learning by rupturing the continuity of his curriculum and social relationships (Coleman 1988; Kerbow 1996). Mobility can also hurt teachers and the nonmovers in the student mover's new classroom if the new student arrives midyear and is unprepared for the curriculum of the new school.

A significant body of literature suggests that particularly high levels of mobility have a negative impact on student learning. Highly mobile students perform significantly worse in school, and are more likely to drop out, than less mobile students (Crowley 2003; Astone and McLanahan 1994; Rumberger 2003; Swanson and Schneider 1999). Children who switch schools four or more times before sixth grade are about one year behind those who have not changed schools (Kerbow 1996). Further, mobility varies by class and race. In our work at the Institute for Education and Social Policy, we find that poor students are approximately twice as likely as wealthier students to switch schools in the middle of a school year and that by eighth grade, black students have, on average, attended a greater number of schools than white students. Of students who switched schools, most blacks moved to new schools with lower test scores than their old schools, whereas most whites moved to new schools with higher test scores than their old schools (Schwartz, Stiefel,

and Chalico 2007). Moreover, students who switch schools after the academic year begins are particularly likely to suffer academically and to harm fellow classmates (Schwartz and Stiefel 2013; Schwartz, Stiefel, and Whitesell 2013; Gibbons and Talej 2011; Raudenbush, Jean, and Art 2009). Similarly, Eric Hanushek, John Kain, and Steven Rivkin (2004) find that though student turnover has a negative impact on movers and their nonmover classmates, the impact is greatest for lower income and minority students because they typically attend higher turnover schools and move more frequently. Taken as a whole, these findings suggest policies aimed at ameliorating the impact of high family mobility due to housing instability on student outcomes.

In addition to questions of mobility and housing stability, the physical design of a child's housing unit and the configuration of the living space may have an important effect on student educational outcomes. For example, a student who has his or her own bedroom may have an easier time finding a quiet place to study within the housing unit than a student who shares a bedroom with other family members. For those children without their own bedroom, an important question then becomes whether there is another quiet place for studying within the housing unit. Health and safety concerns, though less directly related to academic achievement, may have an indirect effect on student outcomes—students who live in unhealthy or unsafe conditions may suffer from attendance problems as a result or find it more difficult to concentrate on schoolwork at home and in the classroom. Finally, a relationship between the household unit and the way it is used by its residents is likely. For example, the number of people in the housing unit, the household age distribution, and the density of space usage are all likely to be important. Students who are crowded into small housing units with numerous other residents may well face challenges, such as difficulty finding space and time to study and sleep, beyond those of other students.

Research on the relationship between the housing unit and student academic outcomes is, however, relatively thin. Researchers often take a broader approach, focusing on housing quality, which may include crowding and physical conditions, but also frequently includes neighborhood characteristics, access to amenities, home values, and issues related to housing tenure and home ownership (see the following section for a discussion of neighborhood characteristics). Most research on physical housing conditions as they relate to school performance focuses on the effect of crowding. Students who have less dedicated space for school work tend to perform less well in school (Gaux and Maurin 2005; Currie and Yelowitz 2000; Maxwell 2003). Notably, although public opinion surrounding the quality of public housing is often negative, Janet Currie and Aaron Yelowitz (2000) find that after controlling for the endogeneity of project participation, crowding, and the likelihood of being held back

in school are less likely in public housing projects. Opposite-sex siblings who may have to share a bedroom in a private housing unit are more likely to have their own bedrooms in public housing because of housing unit assignment rules. Consequently, residents entitled to a larger housing unit based on family sex composition are 24 percent more likely to live in public housing (Currie and Yelowitz 2000).

A tangential body of research looks at the relationship between housing conditions and physical and mental health. A significant amount of this literature focuses on the relationship between housing conditions and asthma, the most common chronic condition among children. The studies consistently show that substandard housing conditions, particularly water intrusion and inadequate ventilation, contribute to increased occurrences of asthma and other chronic respiratory symptoms among children (for a review of literature on housing and health, see Krieger and Higgins 2002). Although the majority of these studies go beyond the scope of this paper, Lisa Harker (2007) notes that substandard housing units, such as those with mold and moisture, a lack of heat, or crowded conditions, have a negative impact a child health, thus affecting student absenteeism.

Finally, students with stable housing are less likely to experience the frequent moves between schools that can negatively impact the academic performance of their more mobile counterparts. Thus just as the layout and use of the housing unit is tied to a student's ability to study at home, simply having a permanent unit can affect academic performance and other school-related outcomes such as attendance, by the consequent attachment to one school over time. Next, we turn to a discussion of the mechanisms by which a child's neighborhood may impact his educational achievement.

Impact of Neighborhoods on Children

A family's housing choices extend beyond the selection of a particular housing unit. Each housing unit is situated within a neighborhood that brings with it a certain set of institutions, individuals and issues. In their 1997 review of the literature on neighborhood effects, Ingrid Ellen and Margery Turner identify "six mechanisms through which neighborhood conditions may influence individual outcomes: quality of local services, socialization by adults, peer influences, social networks, exposure to crime and violence, and physical isolation and distance" (836). Here we turn our attention to these and other mechanisms through which neighborhoods might specifically influence children's educational outcomes.

A considerable amount of research explores how a child's neighborhood shapes academic performance, and these studies consistently find that children growing up in more affluent neighborhoods outperform

children from poorer neighborhoods (Ellen and Turner 1997). This relationship might not be causal—it has been difficult for researchers to demonstrate that neighborhoods have an effect, ceteris paribus—but we can still discuss why there might be a strong correlation. One plausible reason is that children in less affluent communities have less access to the kinds of local services and amenities that benefit children in wealthier areas. A child's housing situation places him within a set of neighborhood institutions that can influence his educational opportunities and achievement. Middle- and high-income neighborhoods regularly provide students with out-of-school supports that may contribute to their educational success. For example, these neighborhoods commonly have community centers that provide students with a safe place to congregate after school or participate in extracurricular enrichment activities. Similarly, students in more affluent neighborhoods may have greater access to after-school sports, tutoring, arts, dance and other neighborhood programs that support and complement the education they receive in school. Middle- and high-income neighborhoods are also more likely to have libraries with high-speed Internet connections, reference librarians, children's reading hours, and quiet space for homework or research. In a study of four Philadelphia-area neighborhoods, Susan Neuman and Donna Celano (2001) find that the quality and condition of public and school libraries improve with neighborhood income level. Additionally, they find that children's access to print reading materials varies widely by neighborhood income level; children in middle-income neighborhoods benefit from greater access to and a wider variety of print materials than their low-income counterparts.

Although local enrichment activities may provide academic benefits to student participants, these activities and services are also important because they provide students with an opportunity to interact with adults who can serve as role models and mentors. These figures can provide students with valuable advice and assistance as they progress through their academic careers. To the extent that students in lower-income neighborhoods have less access to local extracurricular opportunities and thus adult role models, they may find themselves at a disadvantage in the classroom.

Neighborhoods also influence the peer groups with whom students interact in and outside of school. Children are likely to form friendships with other children who live in their neighborhoods and school zoning regulations, which means that neighborhood peers are also likely to be school peers. Several studies find a link between a student's academic performance and the performance or behavior of his classmates (see Boozer and Cacciola 2001; Zimmer and Toma 2000; Hanushek et al. 2003). Therefore, students who live in neighborhood with a higher concentration of high-achieving, school-oriented peers may have a greater chance

of academic success. This relationship is complicated by the fact that students are not randomly assigned to classrooms; thus, it may be the case that a lower-achieving student with high-achieving neighborhood peers may be placed in a different course track than the higher achievers, as occurred among students in public housing units sited in low-poverty neighborhoods in Montgomery County (Schwartz 2010). Nonetheless, students who live in neighborhoods with more academically oriented peers may find more academic support from peers in after-school hours, such as study groups, and less pressure to engage in other activities. This is supported by evidence from the literature, which finds a positive relationship between neighborhood socioeconomic status and school attainment such as high school graduation and college attendance, and stronger relationships among white than among black students (Brooks-Gunn et al. 1993; Duncan 1994; Halpern-Felsher et al. 1997; Wodtke, Harding, and Elwert 2011). Other research using data from the Moving to Opportunity (MTO) experiment has found positive effects on achievement for adolescent males who move from high- to low-poverty neighborhoods, which is partially explained by increased time spent on homework and school safety (Leventhal and Brooks-Gunn 2004).[2] Conversely, students who are surrounded by negative peer influences may face pressure to engage in activities, such as skipping school, that are detrimental to academic achievement. For example, Jonathan Crane (1991) finds evidence for an "epidemic" model of peer effects, whereby neighborhood social problems are contagious and spread through peer influence. Specifically, he finds sharp increases in the probability of dropout among white and black students who live in the poorest neighborhoods. Further evidence of the negative consequences of neighborhood disadvantage on student performance is demonstrated by Robert Sampson, Patrick Sharkey, and Stephen Raudenbush (2008), who find that among African American children in Chicago, living in severely disadvantaged neighborhoods leads to a 4-point reduction in verbal abilities—an effect equivalent to missing a year or more of school.

Children in certain neighborhoods must also cope with the stress and insecurity that comes from being surrounded by higher levels of crime and violence (Sharkey et al. 2013; Lacoe 2013). These problems are often exacerbated by a lack of local employment opportunities and corresponding high levels of unemployment. Parents and teenage students may have trouble finding employment and turn instead to alternative (and possibly illegal) means of earning income. These factors, though not directly linked to a child's education, are likely to make for a more difficult home life that may spill over into a student's educational performance.

In the end, because schools tend to draw students from the local neighborhood due to school zoning policies, they often reflect and even reinforce local socioeconomic patterns. Research continues to show that the price of

housing is higher in neighborhoods and school districts with high-quality schools (Black 1999; Schwartz and Voicu 2007; Hayes and Taylor 1996). Sandra Black (1999) finds that parents are willing to pay 2 percent more for homes located in school zones that have test scores 5 percent higher than the mean test scores for that particular district. Additionally, neighborhood quality is often an important factor in a teacher's decision about where to work, making it more challenging for troubled neighborhoods to attract high-quality teachers. In the following section, we expand on the ways in which the existence of school districts, and more broadly, the political economy of public schools, may affect a child's education.

The Political Economy of Public Schools

The school district provides perhaps one of the most important links between housing, neighborhoods, and schools. Housing and education are jointly chosen and institutionally linked through a reliance on place-based assignment rules for local elementary schools, and in most districts, local middle and high schools; children are assigned to a local public school based on the school zone in which they reside. Thus, a family's decision to reside within a particular neighborhood is also a decision about the school district to which children will be assigned, and within that district, which zone school children will attend. These decisions also have important financial implications for families, school districts, and the local economy. Schools are funded through a combination of local, state, and some federal funds. Local school districts currently rely on a combination of local property taxes and state aid, with small amounts of federal funds; states, on average, fund over 50 percent of K–12 education and local property taxes account for the majority of local funding. A typical urban area is likely to include many school districts, differentiated by their size, quality, and spending. Given these relationships, how might the political economy of public schools affect a child's education?

School resources often reflect the economic circumstances of local residents and, despite equalizing state aid, on average a tie remains between school funding and local property values. Higher home values in more affluent neighborhoods often translate into increased funding and more educational opportunities in local schools. In turn, higher-quality schools in middle- and high-income neighborhoods attract residents who can afford high home prices and come with academically prepared students, creating a cycle that perpetuates school quality differences across districts. In addition, parents in these neighborhoods may place higher demand on their local schools to provide high-quality resources and educational opportunities for students. Families balance the quality of schools and cost of housing when choosing a place to live, and many families are willing to pay more to live near higher-performing schools (Black

1999; Hayes and Taylor 1996). Funding inequalities across districts have decreased in recent decades, in large part because of state-level efforts to use income and sales tax revenues to increase state shares and reduce the reliance on local property taxes (Corcoran, Romer, and Rosenthal 2008). David Card and Abigail Payne (2002) find that redistribution efforts lead to more equal spending across districts and a modest decrease in the test score gap among high school students from different family background groups. Local property taxes, however, continue to serve as the source of local school funding in most districts and policies that erode the property tax base may have the unintended consequence of reducing school spending overall in a state (on California, see Downes and Shah 2006).

The relationship between local property taxes and school funding is of particular importance as city officials decide where to site new subsidized housing. Ingrid Ellen and her colleagues (2007) examine the impact of the construction of new subsidized housing units in New York City on local school quality and find that the construction of subsidized rental housing is associated with significant school change, including an increase in attendance rates and teacher turnover and a modest decline in academic performance several years later. New subsidized housing units are also likely to increase the demands on local public schools by creating an influx of children, many of whom may need supplementary support services. The implication is that the cost of education will rise. If the district is not provided with adequate additional funds through state or federal aid, the strain on the local budget may have a secondary, pernicious effect as higher income families move out in response to the higher cost of education, ultimately reducing the property tax base and with it, school funding.

Unfortunately, further decoupling school spending and local finance, as has been done over the past three decades through increases in state aid, may not provide a fully satisfying solution for equity issues. State and federal efforts to delink local funding and school spending can lead some students to exit the public school system or decrease per-pupil spending for all students. For example, state education finance reforms in California led to an increase in the state's share of education funding from 46.25 percent in 1975 to 73.85 percent in 1985 (Downes and Shah 2006). Subsequently, this state has witnessed a decrease in per-pupil expenditures and a substantial increase in the number of students enrolled in private schools. In addition, efforts to loosen the ties between school funding and local property taxes may be constrained by a lack of political support from residents of more affluent neighborhoods, who fear that such measures will decrease the quality of their local schools.

Similarly, within-district segregation can lead to substantial differences in neighborhood resources, including the quality of local schools—due at least in part to inequality in social, economic, and political resources and

perhaps to the difficulties of attracting high-quality teachers to challenging positions. Indeed, the low quality of public schools in poor neighborhoods is well documented, often in sharp contrast to high-quality schools elsewhere in the city or district (Kozol 2012). That said, some recent reforms have disproportionately benefited low-income neighborhoods with struggling schools, perhaps most visibly in the nationwide charter school movement (for example, in New Orleans where all public schools were turned over to charter management organizations after Katrina). As another example, the Gates-funded new small schools in New York City and Chicago are disproportionately sited in low-income neighborhoods (Schwartz et al. 2012). Due to the attention focused on low-quality schools in high-poverty neighborhoods, low-quality schools in middle- to high-income districts may be largely ignored.

Finally, even if financial resources are equalized, the family backgrounds and peers can remain differentiated across districts and schools, leading to disparate outcomes. For example, in a simulation exercise, Thomas Nechyba (2004) finds that as long as housing prices and family background characteristics are positively related, students from poor neighborhoods attend lower quality schools even under a scheme where all schools receive equal amounts of funding.

Implications for Policy

Our discussion thus far has focused on the mechanisms through which housing and education are related at the home, neighborhood, and school district levels. These relationships suggest that increased coordination of education and housing policies could benefit students and schools. In this section, we discuss some of the implications of these relationships for policymakers and highlight policies that have attempted to bridge the gap between housing and education policy.

Polices for Increasing School Choice

Giving students choices of schools outside their residentially zoned area has become a popular policy in urban districts, although few policies allow crossing of district boundaries.[3] The within-district choices take several forms. One is publicly financed charter schools that have freedoms beyond traditional public schools to choose their staff, mission, length of day and year, uniform and parental involvement policies, but are accountable to "chartering organizations"[4] for their students' performance. Another is voucher programs in which students are allowed to choose nonpublic schools and are given some funding to pay for the schools. A third is magnet schools that, through use of a theme such as science or math and admission criteria, try to integrate students by race or income. Last are high school or middle-school district-wide choice

programs. Few district policies allow unconstrained school choice to students regardless of background, notably high school choice in New York City and Boston and the newly implemented voluntary transfer program in Philadelphia. Rather, in most districts, the majority of students will attend a zoned, comprehensive school, with a limited supply of seats in alternative "choice" schools that are allocated on a first-come basis or by either lottery or admissions criteria.

Research is considerable on the effects of these various choice programs for the students who use them. Overall, little evidence indicates that this choice harms student performance, but the evidence of a positive effect is mixed (on charters, see Davis and Raymond 2012; Bifulco and Ladd 2006; Sass 2006; on Milwaukee voucher choice, Witte 1998; on vouchers in New York City, Washington, D.C., and Dayton, Howell et al. 2002). However, because choice comes in many variations, some research finds positive effects for specific types. Part of the explanation for these mixed findings is that some types or choice appear to be more effective than others. For example, KIPP charter schools appear to result in improved performance for students (Angrist et al. 2010; Tuttle et al. 2010) and some unpublished evidence suggests that the early charters in New York City had positive performance effects (Hoxby and Murarka 2009). Therefore, there may be some evidence that offering choices (or at least certain types of choices) may help to decouple housing and education. On the other hand, because choices occur primarily within districts, and urban districts educate very high proportions of poor and minority students (71 percent of students in New York City public schools and 83 percent of students in Chicago public schools qualify for free or reduced-price lunch), it is often not possible for these programs to change peers of students significantly. For example, in a recent study on the New York City high school choice program, Sean Corcoran, Lori Nathanson, and Christine Baker-Smith (2013) find that vast majorities of students ultimately attend a school close to home, and that the first choice schools indicated by low-achieving students tend to have higher concentrations of low-achieving, minority, and low-income peers. Some researchers have hypothesized that school choice can work well only if parents and students are informed about the quality of the schools from which they choose. Studies have looked at the effects on choices made when additional information is provided and have found some changes in choices (Hastings and Weinstein 2008). But, again, these studies look at the effects for individual students and not for the system as a whole. Only if informed choice leads to a better quality of school supply (thus providing all students with better schools) would these policies improve district-wide performance. In an analysis of the small school reform strategy in New York City, whereby large failing schools were closed and small themed ones opened, we found evidence of system-wide improvement in performance (Schwartz et al. 2012), but such scaling effects have not often been found.

Although opportunities for school choice are increasing, reliance is still heavy on school attendance zones and few students attend schools outside their home district. School choice policies that do not result in large numbers of students crossing district boundaries to access "better schools" can affect large student performance gains only if the supply of the high-quality schools increases dramatically. Thus far, evidence that this is happening is scant, or at least not in the decade or more that the policies have been in effect. Thus without more residential choice (to move to good neighborhoods or good school districts), school choice is unlikely to provide the same quality choices as residential choice offers to middle- and upper-income families.

Strategies for Reducing Student Mobility and Its Impact on Schools

Strategies to reduce student mobility seem particularly important given the relationship between high levels of mobility and student outcomes. One way to reduce mobility is to allow students to remain in the same school even if their families switch housing. This can be done by loosening constraints of traditional catchment zones and allowing a student who moves to remain at his or her old neighborhood school. Some schools and districts—for example, most charter schools in New Orleans—have experimented with guarantees that students will be bused to their schools from anywhere in the city. In New York City and Charlotte-Mecklenberg, students who move within the city are entitled to remain in the school they were previously attending, even if they no longer live within that school's attendance zone, until they have completed the school's terminal grade. This appears to be a promising policy response, especially in urban areas, where student mobility occurs largely within the school district (Kerbow 1996; Family Housing Fund 1998). Providing students with transportation to their existing school from their new location, possibly in the form of public transit, is a critical component of this policy response (Kerbow 1996). The federal government has implicitly acknowledged the benefits of this approach in the McKinney-Vento Act, which guarantees homeless students the right to remain in their existing schools regardless of where they live currently (Lovell 2008).

Another possible response is to directly address the problem of student mobility through housing subsidies. Such a solution specifically targets those prospective movers for whom current housing costs are the main determinant of a move. For example, the Schools Families Housing Stabilization Program (SFHSP) in Portland, Oregon, provided $5,000 annual housing assistance and a year of case management services to 143 student families identified as high risk for moving during the school year. The money could be used for rent, mortgages, deposits, and move-in costs. SFHSP achieved measurable reductions in student

mobility and improved academic performance among participants, with 76 percent of the program students improving their performance relative to their peers in math and reading. The program was funded by the City of Portland, which was able to recoup a significant part of its outlay by retaining about $5,000 in state education funds for those pupils who would have otherwise left the city school system (Ledezma 2008). Although these results are promising, the program has been in place only for a year, and aggregate data will give a better indication of how the program works in the long term.

The Genesee Scholars Program, a similar pilot initiative in Flint, Michigan, provided $100 monthly rent subsidies for two years to the families of selected classrooms of second graders. Participating classrooms also kept the same teachers for the two years of the program. Before the program began, the two participating schools had intrayear student mobility rates of 75.3 percent and 58.9 percent, respectively—meaning that the majority of students who started the year at each school left by the end of the school year. Classrooms in which the program was implemented consistently showed major reductions in student mobility and increases in student performance compared to nonparticipating classrooms during the program's first cycle of students (Cook 2006). The first cycle of the program isolated all the Genesee scholars in one classroom, but the second selected students throughout the various second-grade classrooms to counteract any effects one particular teacher may have had on performance. Subsequently, the results of the second cycle were more ambiguous, finding inconsistent changes in mobility and academic performance between Genesee scholars in the different schools.

At the federal level, subsidies are also being used to address housing instability. The Homelessness Prevention Program, part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009, provides assistance to currently housed individuals and families at risk of homelessness in the form of rental and utility assistance or support for relocating to a more affordable space. This $1.5 billion program is not focused on lessening student mobility, but will likely reduce residential mobility among many families with school-age children. This type of program presents an opportunity for housing and education officials to draw attention to the negative effects of school mobility as families are faced with the possibility of a housing transition.

In an effort to reduce mobility in a single school in St. Paul, Minnesota, the East Side Housing Opportunity Program (HOP) has used financial support, in the form of a revolving loan fund, and school-based staff to assist families with housing needs (Metropolitan Housing Coalition 2004). In 2008, this integrated approach resulted in more than two dozen families completing housing plans and finding placement in stabilized housing, more than fifty families in case management, and staff contact

with seventy-three landlords (East Side Neighborhood Development Company 2009). The use of specialized staff within the schools to provide housing assistance for students' families, as well as identify students at risk of moving, is a well-regarded strategy for addressing mobility (Rumberger 2002).

Yet other ways to reduce the negative impacts of frequent mobility are to develop a common curriculum across schools serving highly mobile students, develop programs to help incoming students adjust to new schools and help schools assimilate new students, closely track and monitor educational progress of highly mobile students, and train teachers to better meet needs of highly mobile students.

Creating Neighborhood Support for Children in Low-Income Housing

Improving local support for children and their families in low-income housing is another way to address student mobility and potentially improve student academic outcomes. Research in Great Britain has reinforced this approach finding that the highest use of school resources by community members takes place in poorer areas where "the school effectively acted as a key public resource at the hub of the community" (PricewaterhouseCoopers 2003, 27). The resources most often used by the community included information technology, child-care facilities, auditoriums, and athletic facilities, which led the authors of the study to conclude that investment in these areas would provide the greatest community benefits. Efforts by the Gates Foundation to expand library and internet access to impoverished areas provide an example of such targeted community investment (Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation 2009). The 21st Century Community Learning Centers program, administered by the U.S. Department of Education, is also an example of an effort to bolster the support system in low-income neighborhoods. Specifically, centers are established in schools with high-poverty and low performance for academic enrichment during out-of-school time (U.S. Department of Education 2004).

Some low-income housing developers have used new housing development as an opportunity to create new schools and community centers, and to increase the capacity of existing neighborhood infrastructure more generally. When the firm McCormack Baron Salazar began to redevelop housing around the Washington University Medical Center in St. Louis, it also used innovative financing strategies to rehabilitate the historic Adams School in the neighborhood, which is now classified as a school of excellence within the public school system. McCormack went further, and created a new gymnasium, ball field, and a community center offering recreational programs for youth, adult education, and day care (Matthews 2004).

In Georgia, the East Lake Foundation redeveloped a public housing development to include mixed-income housing, a YMCA, a public golf

course, and a charter school that has dramatically outperformed the prior local school (Markiewicz 2008). The New Columbia Development in Portland used an amalgamation of housing and education to redevelop a downtrodden community. Columbia Villa, a low-income housing development that was a center for gang activity, was redeveloped with the conscious goal of reattracting families and rejuvenating the area. To that end, the city set aside two blocks for a new public school, built a park and a community center, and gave out contracts to local businesses to encourage them to relocate to the area (Center for Cities and Schools 2007). Similar examples, often using HOPE VI money to redevelop public housing units, exist nationwide.[5]

Skeptics argue that no firm data shows that place-based social programs are especially effective at altering educational outcomes for children. For instance, a comprehensive effort to rehabilitate the blighted Sandtown-Winchester neighborhood in Baltimore with far-reaching social programs produced only mixed results. Although educational gains were made, high student mobility is cited as a limiting factor to further improvement (Olsen 2003). Nonetheless, the circumstances under which place-based social programs are more effective than individual-based programs remain an open question.

Siting Low-Income Housing and Supporting Local Schools

Low-income housing developments, which often include high-density housing and many school-age children, can also have a significant financial impact on local school districts. New developments can add many children to local school rolls very quickly. Further, low-income students may be more likely to require special education and other high-cost educational services. Finally, low-income developments often provide lower property tax revenues than market rate housing to fund the local share of schools. For these reasons, as mentioned, some developers have decided simply to build new schools. More generally, advocates have proposed subsidizing local school districts for the costs of educating new low-income students.

The federal government already provides some additional funding to schools with high percentages of low-income students through Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and funds some special education services through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Most states also provide additional funds for poor and disabled students. These programs could be expanded to more fully cover the marginal costs of poor or disabled students. In addition, funds could be more directly tied to new low-income housing in an effort to fully offset the effects of new developments. One such model could be the Impact Aid program, intended to subsidize the costs to local school districts of educating military children, who do not proportionately expand the tax

base (Buddin, Gill, and Zimmer 2001). Using a complex funding formula, the Impact Aid program provides about $900 million annually to approximately 1,400 local education agencies nationwide.

Local land use regulations, which often set minimum lot sizes and many other requirements for new housing, can limit the socioeconomic and racial composition of a community. When local regulations and local opposition prevent the construction of new low-income housing in middle-income and wealthy communities, the poor and often minority children who might have lived there are denied access to what tend to be high-quality schools. But historically, when low-income housing is introduced, and those schools are forced to educate poorer students who provide fewer local tax receipts, some families have left for neighboring communities, or private schools, where they need not subsidize the education of low-income students. Research further suggests that when provided with school choice, the outflow of students from public schools tends to increase the racial and economic segregation of the remaining students (Lankford and Wyckoff 2001).

Massachusetts seeks to resolve this tension by providing low-income students more access to quality schools while offsetting their financial impact on local school systems, through its 40R and 40S statutes. Chapter 40R allows some Smart Growth developments (incorporating mixed land use, affordable housing, compact design, community aesthetics, the conservation of open space, transportation choices, and the rebuilding of communities) to bypass otherwise applicable local land use regulations. Simultaneously, the state passed Chapter 40S, creating a Smart Growth School Cost Reimbursement Fund. The fund provides reimbursement for any net new education costs that result from housing units built under 40R, where those costs are not already covered by the property and excise taxes paid by the new households (Rollins 2006). Although the programs do not currently have a reliable funding source, together 40R and 40S may provide a conceptual model for how to allow more poor children access to excellent schools while reducing incentives for incumbent families to abandon the public school system.

Further, it is not clear that such a tension need always exist. Montgomery County, Maryland, operates one of the oldest inclusionary zoning programs in the country. Introduced in the early 1970s, the policy mandates that 12 to 15 percent of all homes in subdivisions of thirty-five homes or greater be sold or rented at below-market prices. Further, the housing authority maintains the right to purchase up to one-third of these homes in any subdivisions. The result is that children in public housing in Montgomery County experience a range of neighborhood poverty levels (Schwartz 2010). It should be noted that Montgomery County may be a special case, however, as the overall poverty rates are below the national average so that concentration of children in public housing is relatively low.

Conclusions

In the previous section, we discussed education policies and housing interventions that recognize the relationship between education and housing and may serve to improve student outcomes. More ambitious, but politically and social difficult, would be to address directly the poverty of many of the nation's children and to economically and racially integrate America's communities.

We thank Vicki Been and Ingrid Gould Ellen for their guidance on this project and Jaclene Begley, Alan Biller, Abigail Conover Carlton, Sarah Cordes, Todd Ely, Andrea Halpern, and John Tye for their assistance.

Notes

1. In this chapter we do not discuss the large set of issues and policies related to improving schools (for an overview of school reform, see Darling-Hammond 2010).
2. The Moving to Opportunity demonstration provided 4,600 participating families living in public housing in Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, and New York City with housing vouchers. These families were then randomly assigned to three conditions. In the experimental condition, families were assigned vouchers that could only be used to move to low-poverty neighborhoods, whereas in the two control conditions families were assigned unrestricted vouchers and no vouchers, respectively. Although neighborhood advocates hoped that MTO would provide strong evidence of the impact of neighborhoods on child and family outcomes—including children's educational outcomes—the results fell short. Impacts on educational outcomes were, overall, insignificant due, in part to both low compliance rates and the small sustained change in neighborhood and school environments actually realized by families in the experimental group (see Sanbonmatsu et al. 2006).
3. The Boston METCO program and busing program in Ann Arbor, Michigan, are two of the oldest and best known that allow students to cross district boundaries (when there are spaces open outside the urban area). There is some evidence that participants in METCO perform better than similar students who do not participate (see Angrist and Lang 2004) but because such programs are so few and the ones that exist are limited to so few students, we do not discuss them further.
4. Often the local school district, the state, a nonprofit such a university.
5. The HOPE VI program, active since 1992, is an effort to reshape and revitalize public housing projects administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

References

Angrist, Joshua D., Susan M. Dynarski, Thomas J. Kane, Parag A. Pathak, and Christopher R. Walters. 2010. "Inputs and Impacts in Charter Schools: KIPP Lynn." *American Economic Review* 100(2): 239–43.

Angrist, Joshua D., and K. Lang. 2004. "Does School Integration Generate Peer Effects? Evidence from Boston's METCO Program." *The American Economic Review* 94(5): 1613–634.

Astone, Nan M., and Sara S. McLanahan. 1994. "Family Structure, Residential Mobility, and School Dropout: A Research Note." *Demography* 31(4): 575–84.

Bifulco, Robert, and Helen F. Ladd. 2006. "The Impacts of Charter Schools on Student Achievement: Evidence from North Carolina." *Education Finance and Policy* 1(1): 50–90.

Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. 2009. "Libraries." Available at: http://www.gatesfoundation.org/topics/Pages/libraries.aspx# (accessed March 31, 2009).

Black, Sandra E. 1999. "Do Better Schools Matter? Parental Valuation of Elementary Education." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 114(2): 577–99.

Boozer, Michael, and Stephen E. Cacciola. 2001. "Inside the 'Black Box' of Project Star: Estimation of Peer Effects Using Experimental Data (June 2001)." Yale Economic Growth Center Discussion Paper No. 832.

Brooks-Gunn, Jeanne, Greg J. Duncan, Pamela Kato Klebanov, and Naomi Sealand. 1993. "Do Neighborhoods Influence Child and Adolescent Development?" *American Journal of Sociology* 99(2):353–95.

Buddin, Richard, Brian P. Gill, and Ron W. Zimmer. 2001. *Impact Aid and the Education of Military Children.* MR-1272-OSD. Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND National Defense Research Institute. Available at: http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monograph_reports/2007/MR1272.pdf (accessed November 10, 2013).

Card, David, and A. Abigail Payne. 2002. "School Finance Reform, the Distribution of School Spending, and the Distribution of Student Test Scores." *Journal of Public Economics* 83(1): 49–82.

Center for Cities and Schools. 2007. "Planning for Families: The Housing and Education Nexus." Proceedings Summary. Berkeley: University of California. Available at: http://citiesandschools.berkeley.edu/reports/CCandS_2008_planning_for_families.pdf (accessed March 31, 2009).

Coleman, James S. 1988. "Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital." *American Journal of Sociology* 94: Supplement S95–S210.

Cook, J. 2006. "Genesee Scholars make the grade with stable living arrangements." Department of Human Services, Flint, Michigan. http://www.michigan.gov/dhs/0,1607,7-124-5458_7691_7752-151915—,00.html (accessed June 2009).

Corcoran, Sean P., Lori Nathanson, and Christine Baker-Smith. 2013. "High School Choice in NYC: A Report on the School Choices and Placements of Low-Achieving Students." New York: The Research Alliance for New York City Schools and the Institute for Education and Social Policy.

Corcoran, Sean P., Thomas Romer, and Howard L. Rosenthal. 2008. "The Troubled Quest for Equality in School Finance." In *What Do We Owe Each Other? Rights and Obligations in Contemporary American Society,* edited by Howard L. Rosenthal and David J. Rothman. Piscataway, N.J.: Transaction Publishers.

Crane, Jonathan. 1991. "The Epidemic Theory of Ghettos and Neighborhood Effects on Dropping Out and Teenage Childbearing." *American Journal of Sociology* 96(5): 1226–259.

Crowley, Sheila. 2003. "The Affordable Housing Crisis: Residential Mobility of Poor Families and School Mobility of Poor Children." *Journal of Negro Education* 72(1): 22–38.

Currie, Janet, and Aaron Yelowitz. 2000. "Are Public Housing Projects Good for Kids?" *Journal of Public Economics* 75(1): 88–124.

Darling-Hammond, Linda. 2010. *The Flat World and Education: How America's Commitment to Equity Will Determine Our Future.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Davis, Devora H., and Margaret E. Raymond. 2012. "Choices for Studying Choice: Assessing Charter School Effectiveness Using Two Quasi-Experimental Methods." *Economics of Education Review* 31(2): 225–36.

Downes, Thomas A., and Mona P. Shah. 2006. "The Effect of School Finance Reforms on the Level and Growth of Per-Pupil Expenditures." *Peabody Journal of Education* 81(3): 1–38.

East Side Neighborhood Development Company. 2009. "East Side Housing Opportunity Program." Available at: http://www.esndc.org/EHOP.html#Anchor-Case-14210 (accessed March 31, 2009).

Ellen, Ingrid G., Amy E. Schwartz, Leanna Stiefel, and C. Chellman. 2007. "Does Subsidized Housing Affect Local Schools?" Chicago: MacArthur Foundation.

Ellen, Ingrid G., and Margery A. Turner. 1997. "Does Neighborhood Matter? Assessing Recent Evidence." *Housing Policy Debate* 8(4): 833–66.

Gaux, Dominique, and Eric Maurin. 2005. "The Effect of Overcrowded Housing on Children's Performance at School." *Journal of Public Economics* 89(6–5): 797–819.

Gibbons, Stephen, and Shqiponja Telhaj. 2011. "Pupil Mobility and School Disruption." *Journal of Public Economics* 95(9–10): 1156–167.

Hanushek, Eric A., John F. Kain, Jacob M. Markman, and Steven G. Rivkin. 2003. "Does Peer Ability Affect Student Achievement?" *Journal of Applied Econometrics* 18(5): 527–44.

Hanushek, Eric A., John F. Kain, and Steven G. Rivkin. 2004. "Disruption Versus Tiebout Improvement: The Costs and Benefits of Switching Schools." *Journal of Public Economics* 88(9–10): 1721–746.

Harker, Lisa. 2007. "The Impact of Housing on Children's Life Chances." *Journal of Children's Services* 2(3): 43–51.

Hastings, Justine S., and Jeffrey M. Weinstein. 2008. "Information, School Choice, and Academic Achievement: Evidence from Two Experiments." *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 123(4): 1373–414.

Hayes, Kathy J., and Lori L. Taylor. 1996. "Neighborhood School Characteristics: What Signals Quality to Homebuyers?" *Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas Economic Review,* 4th quarter: 2–9.

Howell, William G., Patrick J. Wolf, David E. Campbell, and Paul E. Peterson. 2002. "School Vouchers and Academic Performance: Results from Three Randomized Field Trials." *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* 21(2): 191–217.

Hoxby, Caroline M., and Sonali Murarka. 2009. "Charter Schools in New York City: Who Enrolls and How They Affect Their Students' Achievement." *NBER* working paper no. 14852). Cambridge, Mass.: National Bureau of Economic Research.

Kerbow, David. 1996. "Patterns of Urban Student Mobility and Local School Reform." *Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk* report no. 5. Chicago: University of Chicago.

Kozol, Jonathan. 2012. *Savage Inequalities: Children in America's Schools.* New York: Broadway Paperbacks.

Krieger, James, and Donna L. Higgins. 2002. "Housing and Health: Time Again for Public Health Action." *American Journal of Public Health* 92(5): 758–68.

Lacoe, Johanna. 2013. "Too Scared to Learn? The Academic Consequences of Feeling Unsafe at School." *IESP* working paper no. 02–13. New York: Institute for Education and Social Policy.

Lankford, Hamilton, and James Wyckoff. 2001. "Who Would Be Left Behind by Enhanced Private School Choice?" *Journal of Urban Economics* 50(2): 288–312.

Ledezma, D. 2008. *School Families Housing Stabilization Program Year One Report.* Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Housing and Community Development.

Leventhal, Tama, and Jeanne Brooks-Gunn. 2004. "A Randomized Study of Neighborhood Effects on Low-Income Children's Educational Outcomes." *Developmental Psychology* 40(4): 488–507.

Markiewicz, David A. 2008. "Program Puts Students on Post-High School Path." *Atlanta Journal-Constitution,* June 26, 2008, p. 4JE.

Matthews, Sherrie V. 2004. "Building a Community, Not Just Housing." *Planning* 70(3): 10–13.

Maxwell, Lorraine E. 2003. "Home and School Density Effects of Elementary School Children: The Role of Spatial Density." *Environment and Behavior* 35(4): 566–78.

Metropolitan Housing Coalition. 2004. "Moving On: Student Mobility and Affordable Housing." Louisville, Ky.: MHC. Available at: http://www.metropolitanhousing.org/pdf/mhcdoc_32.pdf (accessed November 10, 2013).

Nechyba, Thomas J. 2004. "Prospects for Achieving Equity or Adequacy in Education: The Limits of State Aid in General Equilibrium." In *Helping Children Left Behind: State Aid and the Pursuit of Educational Equity,* edited by John Yinger. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

Neuman, Susan B., and Donna Celano. 2001. "Access to Print in Low-Income and Middle-Income Communities: An Ecological Study of Four Neighborhoods." *Reading Research Quarterly* 36(1): 8–26.

Olsen, J. 2003. "The Hundred-Million Dollar Question: Can Inner-City Neighborhoods Be Transformed?" *Next American City,* June.

PricewaterhouseCoopers. 2003. "Building Better Performance: An Empirical Assessment of the Learning and Other Impacts of Schools Capital Investment." Report no. RR407. Nottingham, UK: DfES Publications.

Raudenbush, Stephen, Marshall Jean, and Emily Art. 2009. "Year-by-Year and Cumulative Impacts of Attending a High-Mobility Elementary School on Children's Mathematics Achievement in Chicago 1995–2005." In *Whither Opportunity,* edited by Greg J. Duncan and Richard J. Murnane. New York and Chicago: Russell Sage Foundation and Spencer Foundation.

Rollins, D. 2006. "An Overview of Chapters 40R and 40S: Massachusetts' Newest Housing Policies." *New England Public Policy Center* policy brief no. 06–1. Boston, Mass.: Federal Reserve Bank of Boston.

Rumberger, Russell W. 2002. *Student Mobility and Academic Achievement.* ED466314. Champaign, Ill.: ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education.

———. 2003. "The Causes and Consequences of Student Mobility." *Journal of Negro Education* 72(1): 6–21.

Sampson, Robert J., Patrick Sharkey, and Stephen W. Raudenbush. 2008. "Durable Effects of Concentrated Disadvantage on Verbal Ability Among African American Children." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 105(3): 845–52.

Sanbonmatsu, Lisa, Jeffrey R. Kling, Greg J. Duncan, and Jeanne Brooks-Gunn. 2006. "Neighborhoods and Academic Achievement Results From the Moving to Opportunity Experiment." *Journal of Human Resources* 41(4): 649–91.

Sass, Tim R. 2006. "Charter Schools and Student Achievement in Florida." *Education Finance and Policy* 1(1): 91–122.

Schwartz, Amy E., and Leanna Stiefel. 2013. *Mobility Matters.* Draft manuscript.

Schwartz, Amy E., Leanna Stiefel, and Luis Chalico. 2007. "The Multiple Dimensions of Student Mobility and Implications for Academic Performance: Evidence from New York City Elementary and Middle School Students." New York: Education Finance Research Consortium.

Schwartz, Amy E., Leanna Stiefel, and E. Ruble Whitesell. 2013. "The Impact of Mid-Year Movers on Stable Students." Paper presented at the Association for Education Finance and Policy 38th Annual Conference. New Orleans (March 14–16, 2013).

Schwartz, Amy E., and I. Voicu. 2007. "Which Schools Matter? Disentangling the Impact of Zones Schools and Unzoned Schools on House Prices in New York City." Unpublished paper.

Schwartz, Amy E., Matthew Wiswall, Leanna Stiefel, and Elizabeth Debraggio. 2012. "Does High School Reform Lift Urban Districts? Evidence from New York City." *Wagner* research paper no. 1996702. Prepared for National Center on Scaling Up Effective Schools (NCSU) Conference, Vanderbilt University (June 2012).

Schwartz, Heather. 2010. "Housing Policy Is School Policy: Economically Integrative Housing Promotes Academic Success in Montgomery County, MD." New York: The Century Foundation.

Sharkey, Patrick, Amy E. Schwartz, Ingrid G. Ellen, and Johanna Lacoe. 2013. "High Stakes in the Classroom, High Stakes on the Street: The Effects of Community Violence on Students' Standardized Test Performance." *IESP* working paper no. 03–13. New York: Institute for Education and Social Policy.

Swanson, Christopher B., and Barbara Schneider. 1999. "Students on the Move: Residential and Educational Mobility in America's Schools." *Sociology of Education* 72(1): 54–67.

U.S. Department of Education. 2004. *When Schools Stay Open Late: The National Evaluation of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program New Findings.* Washington, D.C.: Institute for Education and Social Policy.

Witte, John F. 1998. "The Milwaukee Voucher Experiment." *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 20(4): 229–51.

Wodtke, Geoffrey T., David J. Harding, and Felix Elwert. 2011. "Neighborhood Effects in Temporal Perspective." *American Sociological Review* 76(5): 713–36.

Zimmer, Ron W., and Eugenia F. Toma. 2000. "Peer Effects in Private and Public Schools Across Countries." *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management Volume 19*(1): 75–92.