

Fatally Flawed:
A Critique of *Fixing the Milwaukee Public Schools:*
The Limits of Parent-Driven Reform

Dick M. Carpenter II, Ph.D.*
Institute for Justice
November 2007

In October 2007, the Wisconsin Policy Research Institute released a research report on public school choice and parental involvement, *Fixing the Milwaukee Public Schools: The Limits of Parent-Driven Reform*.¹ Because the report claims that public school choice and parental involvement have little effect on student performance in Milwaukee Public Schools, a surprising conclusion from a think tank that has traditionally supported public and private school choice, the report received significant news coverage and editorial comment, particularly from those opposed to school choice programs that include private school options, such as the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program. Headlines included:

“The failure of school choice,” *Capital Times* (Madison, Wis.)²

“Choice may not improve schools, study says,” *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*³

“School choice doesn’t necessarily add up,” *The Kansas City Star*⁴

“Whoops, we goofed: School choice doesn’t work like its supporters promised. Gulp. Now what?” *Milwaukee Magazine*⁵

The Utah Democratic Party also included the study’s results in an October press release just before Utah citizens went to the polls to vote on a statewide private school choice plan.⁶ The release described it as a “study released Tuesday in Milwaukee that suggests school choice isn’t a powerful tool for driving educational improvement.”

Unfortunately, most of this coverage and commentary uncritically accepted the report’s conclusions about public school choice—and, even worse, applied them more broadly to private school choice programs. But, as this analysis finds, the WPRI report is fatally flawed, undermining both its claims about public school choice and any implications for private school choice in Milwaukee or elsewhere. Among the flaws:

1. The WPRI report studies only *public* school choice. The Milwaukee Parental Choice Program is not included. Because public school choice plans differ fundamentally from

* Carpenter serves as the director of strategic research for the Institute for Justice. He holds a Ph.D. from the University of Colorado in Educational Leadership and Innovation. His work has appeared in the *Journal of Special Education*, *The Forum*, *Education and Urban Society*, *Journal of School Choice*, *Leadership*, *Phi Delta Kappan* and the *American School Board Journal*. Before working with IJ, Carpenter worked as a high school teacher, elementary school principal, public policy analyst and professor at the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs.

choice plans that include private schools, the results from the WPRI report cannot be generalized, even though its authors have suggested otherwise.

2. There is strong empirical evidence (from far more methodologically rigorous research) that competition in Milwaukee and elsewhere that includes private school choice spurs improvement in public schools and leads to greater student performance and more satisfied parents among families who choose their children's schools.
3. The WPRI report does not actually study Milwaukee families. It uses data collected by the U.S. Department of Education for a nationwide study and attempts to extrapolate those results to Milwaukee, a process the Department of Education advises against—with good reason.
4. At no time does the WPRI report formally test the relationship or impact of public school choice or parental involvement on student performance, or any other outcome measure. It merely surmises how much parental involvement there might be in Milwaukee and how parents might make decisions about their children's schooling and then notes the poor performance of student performance in Milwaukee Public Schools, assuming but never proving a causal link between them.
5. The report's theoretical understanding and definitions of parental involvement and how parents decide on their children's schooling appears critically out of step with prior research findings. Moreover, the creation of the study's variables appears empirically unjustified.

Taken together, these limitations in WPRI's study make its conclusions utterly meaningless.

The WPRI Report

WPRI's report attempts to determine the effect of public school choice and parental involvement on Milwaukee Public Schools. The theory is that public school choice will create competition for students, improving school effectiveness, efficiency, and ultimately student outcomes. Similarly, parental involvement engages parents as partners in the educational process, thereby harnessing their considerable influence over their children's time, attitudes, effort, and engagement, which should also contribute to improved student outcomes.

WPRI finds only 10 percent of Milwaukee parents act as what the author defines as "ideal consumers" when deciding about their children's schooling. And the author claims that parents do not appear sufficiently involved in their children's education. Therefore, WPRI asserts, Milwaukee Public Schools are likely not sensing any pressure of an educational marketplace or enjoying enough parental engagement to affect significant change.

What the WPRI Report Does Not Say About Private School Choice

Key Finding: The WPRI report examines only public school choice. Because choice plans that include private options differ substantively from public school choice plans, the WPRI report results cannot be generalized to school choice in its broader definition.

Media coverage about the WPRI report and use of it by special interest groups has conveyed a message that the WPRI report's findings apply to all forms of school choice, including private school choice.⁷ That is false. The WPRI report only considered public school choice, which includes open enrollment plans within and between districts, magnet schools, and charter schools. The Milwaukee Parental Choice Program, which includes private school options, was not included. For that reason alone, the WPRI report findings cannot be generalized to school choice more broadly.

In addition, the difference between school choice plans that allow private options and those limited only to public options is so large as to make generalizations from one to the other spurious. The theory of educational marketplaces that include private options holds, in part, that competition created as a result of students leaving the public system will spur public schools to improve and to innovate as they work harder to retain and attract students (and therefore dollars).

When choice is limited only to public options, public schools do not “feel the heat” of a genuine marketplace so as to spur change, despite the WPRI report's inferences to the contrary.⁸ This is so for at least four reasons:

1. In intra-district choice the student (and the money) never leaves the district.
2. In inter-district choice, equilibrium often is created over time in that districts initially lose students but will gain others.⁹
3. As discussed in greater detail below, open enrollment (i.e., intra- and inter-district choice) fails to provide parents with attractive or viable options, severely reducing the incentive to take advantage of choice. Consider Minnesota's statewide open enrollment plan, in which students, as of 1987, can attend any public school of their choosing. Statewide, fewer than 2% of students exercise the right to attend a school outside their home district.¹⁰
4. In most localities, the capacity of charter schools and magnet schools remains too limited to accommodate a critical mass of students to leave their assigned schools. For example, a little more than 10% of Milwaukee students attend charter schools,¹¹ even though the charter law has been in effect since 1993.

In contrast to the WPRI report, rigorous research on choice plans that do include private options show public schools improve, students perform better in choice schools, and parents are more satisfied. An example of such a work specifically on Milwaukee schools comes in the form of a paper written by New York Federal Reserve Bank economist, Rajashri Chakrabarti.¹² Using data from 1987 to 2002, and a robust, empirical research design, Chakrabarti showed how

private school competition led to an improvement in public schools in Milwaukee. It is yet another paper that follows on the heels of rigorous, empirical studies by a multitude of authors demonstrating that authentic school choice—plans that include private providers—leads to positive outcomes both individually and collectively.¹³

Not only does the WPRI report have no implications for private school choice, its conclusions about public school choice are undermined by its poor methodology.

Data and Methodology

Key Finding: The most critical flaws with the WPRI report lie in its methods, which fatally undermine its findings. These flaws range from technical issues to critical data use and inference issues. It is no exaggeration to say that the report's methodological shortcomings make its findings utterly meaningless.

The data in the WPRI report came from the 2003 Parent and Family Involvement in Education survey, which is part of the National Household Education Surveys Program (NHES) funded by the U.S. Department of Education. The NHES provides descriptive data on the educational activities of the U.S. population. It covers learning at all ages through multiple surveys, one of which measures parental involvement.¹⁴

From the NHES database, WPRI pulled several variables representing its definition of an “ideal consumer” and each parent’s level of involvement, combined them mathematically, and inferred those results from a national sample to Milwaukee using a weighting system based on four demographic variables in the Census Bureau’s 2005 American Community Survey (ACS). The ACS is an annual survey designed to identify changes in an area’s population and give an up-to-date statistical picture every year, not just once in ten years with the decennial census.¹⁵

More specifically, the ACS was used to determine weights by examining the educational attainment of parents, race and ethnicity of students, household composition (single-parent vs. two-parent), and mother’s employment status for Milwaukee residents. Those weights were then applied to the data in the NHES database when calculating percentages for each of the aforementioned choice and involvement variables. The theory behind such weighting is stated on page 13 of the WPRI report: “[P]revious research has shown a variety of demographic variables to be correlated with important aspects of both parental choice and parent involvement in education.”

In other words, the theory is that people act differently based on the selected demographic characteristics; therefore, WPRI adjusted the NHES data using weights to reflect the demographic composition of Milwaukee. However, the NHES data were not from Milwaukee specifically. Rather, the NHES data included respondents from all over the country, some of whom were likely from Milwaukee but most of whom were not.

One of the implications of such a procedure is that in a nationwide sample like this the participants likely lack any direct experience with various choice options. Open enrollment (i.e., inter and intra district choice) is not available in all states, and for many with such policies,

district participation is voluntary.¹⁶ Likewise, charter schools are not available in 10 states, and even in those states with charter laws, enabling legislation is not universally strong,¹⁷ which limits the number of schools that can or do form. Finally, the presence of magnet schools is very uneven across the United States. A little more than half of the states even have magnet schools, and in those that do the numbers range widely from one or two in the entire state to more than 400 in a few others.¹⁸ Therefore, the NHES data used in this study likely includes large numbers of people for whom public school choice is limited or entirely irrelevant.

Methodological Flaw: Sampling Error

Key Finding: In all empirical research sampling is one of the most important elements of ensuring valid and reliable results. The WPRI report's sampling procedure, using a national data set rather than data directly from Milwaukee residents, makes its findings meaningless.

Unlike numerous studies of choice and parental involvement that gather data directly from the population of interest,¹⁹ the WPRI report does not gather data directly from Milwaukee residents. Instead, it infers from a national sample in the NHES to Milwaukee, a totally inappropriate procedure. In fact, an NHES website with information for researchers written in FAQ style states:

* Can I use NHES data for state- or county-level analysis?

The NHES data are intended to generate national and regional (e.g. North, East, South, Midwest, West) estimates.²⁰

The NHES technical manuals likewise state that the NHES, including the Parent and Family Involvement sub-survey, is designed to make inferences up to the population not down to city and county levels.²¹

Although it would be an ill-advised procedure, it would have been possible for the WPRI report to access data from Milwaukee residents in the NHES using data listed as “restricted.” Like most if not all of the large federal data sets, the NHES is available to researchers in a public use form, which removes means of potentially identifying survey respondents. However, researchers may apply for access to the restricted use data, which would have enabled the WPRI to sort the NHES data by zip code and look only at data from Milwaukee respondents.

Still, this alternative would not solve other problems with WPRI’s method. And it would come with its own set of significant limitations, specifically related to issues of sample weights that arise with complex sampling procedures present in surveys like the NHES.²² Thus, the value in raising this issue is not necessarily as a course of recommended action but as a further example of the WPRI report’s inadequate and uninformed research.

Acknowledging that collecting original data is difficult, time consuming, and often prohibitively expensive, a more advisable course of action could have been to use data drawn specifically from Milwaukee by other researchers. For example, John Witte and Christopher Thorn collected data from Milwaukee specifically on public school choice and parental

involvement.²³ Although the WPRI report makes no mention of attempting to access these data, it would be surprising to learn that Witte and Thorn refused access given the research custom of making data available to others.

Methodological Flaw: No Cause-and-Effect Measured

Key Finding: WPRI fails to formally test the effect of public school choice and parental involvement on MPS performance, making its cause-and-effect conclusions unfounded.

From the WPRI report, the media coverage surrounding it, and the use of the report by special interest groups, one is left with the impression that the report examines the relationships between public school choice, parental involvement, and some outcome, or dependent measure related to performance in the Milwaukee Public Schools. In other words, the report gives the impression that its methods test for a causal link between public school choice and parental involvement on one side of the equation and the performance of MPS on the other. This is false.

In fact, in this study there is no dependent variable, or effect. Only possible causes are measured, with no attempt to see if those presumed causes actually produce a change in the outcome variable, MPS performance. At no time does the report ever formally test the relationship between choice and involvement on any outcome, despite cause-and-effect conclusions like, “Taken as a whole, these numbers indicate significant limits on the capacity of public school choice and parental involvement to improve school quality and student performance within MPS.”²⁴

Moreover, the exact research question driving the study is not entirely clear. Much of the study seems to focus on the relationships between public school choice, parental involvement, and student performance, but late in the report this head-scratcher appears:

As noted in the text, previous research has shown a variety of demographic variables to be correlated with important aspects of both parental choice and parent involvement in education. The intent of this study was to explore the impact of those variables on choice and involvement in a specific education context—the MPS system.²⁵

If this is so, then that makes public school choice and parental involvement outcome, or dependent variables, unless, of course, the intent is to examine them as mediating variables between the demographics and student performance. If so, the study’s design is even more inadequate. Unfortunately, the study’s research question is so muddled one is left only with guesses.

Methodological Flaw: Improper Creation of Variables

Key Finding: The variables used to measure public school choice and parental involvement lack any empirical footing. There is little reason to trust the validity of WPRI’s measures.

In the WPRI report, both public school choice and parental involvement were constructed variables using multiple indicators from the NHES data. This is a common and accepted

procedure, since phenomena like choice and involvement are multidimensional and should not be represented by a single indicator. However, the standard procedure in creating variables from multiple indicators using large datasets like NHES is to utilize a process called factor analysis—something the WPRI report apparently did not use.²⁶

Factor analysis takes a large number of indicators or variables and statistically determines the interrelations among them. This provides a researcher with an idea of which indicators “hang together” or share some commonality so as to combine them into one variable. Indicators that do not share the required amount of commonality are not combined.

Consider the parental involvement variables used in this study for students aged 10 to 14:

1. established rules regarding television viewing and completion of homework;
2. discussed with the child his or her experiences at school “often” (as opposed to “sometimes” or “never”);
3. participated in at least one of a series of activities with the child in the preceding month;
4. regularly checked to see if the student had completed his or her homework; and
5. assisted with homework at least one or two days per week.

A factor analysis might show that indicators four and five share much in common with each other but not with any of the other variables. Moreover, none of the other three may show any commonality. As a result, it would be inappropriate to combine all five indicators into one variable. This is hypothetical, of course, since we have no idea how the indicators relate to one another; the WPRI report provides no record of measuring that.

This is a particularly significant shortcoming given inconsistent findings in prior research, discussed below. Yet, even if there were some a priori reason to believe certain indicators should be combined, it is common to test that relationship in the data. This is done through confirmatory factor analysis in structural equation modeling or at the very least by using Cronbach’s Alpha to test how strongly indicators correlate. But, again, the WPRI report appears to have done none of these.

Theory and Prior Research

Drawing valid and reliable research conclusions depends on a sound theoretical foundation and a valid representation of those theories in the variables used in the study. Unfortunately, the WPRI report falls short.

Wrongly Defining the “Right” Way to Choose

Key Finding: The WPRI report purports to define the “right” way parents should choose a school. But there is no one “correct” or “rational” way to choose a school any more than there is one “right” type of child.

Like WPRI, prior researchers have examined how and why parents choose a school. The how refers to the decision-making process parents use in choosing their child’s school, particularly information gathering processes and types of information sources. The why refers to

the features of a potential school that compel parents to choose it, such as academic record, school safety, and location.

In the WPRI report, the how and why are represented by two variables: whether parents consider at least two schools in the choice process and whether they utilize performance-based/academic criteria. In so doing, the report appears to define what constitutes the “right” and “wrong” way parents should choose their child’s school.

This sounds like something right out of rational choice theory,²⁷ where a rational actor is one who, when faced with a decision, engages in a search for the best information before deciding.²⁸ Yet, the context of parental decision-making (the how) is far more complex than the rational calculations represented by the report’s measure. According to prior research findings, “To make decisions regarding their children’s education, parents will rely on their personal values and subjective desired goals of education, as well as others within their social and professional networks to collect information.”²⁹ The latter source, social networks (i.e., word of mouth), is a particularly common source of information.³⁰

Indeed, 79% percent of public school parents report relying on their social networks of friends, neighbors, and other parents to inform their decision, followed by talks with teachers (59%) and school visits (43%). More “rational” sources of information, including published school achievement scores (9%), the school newsletter (3%), or media reports (3%), are used by only a small percentage of parents. Moreover, nearly half of public school parents indicate they sent their child to their assigned school without first seeking information.³¹

Other research indicates the why is likewise not as “rational” as the WPRI report theorizes, in that parental choices may not necessarily focus on academic outcomes.³² Rather, parents may select schools out of safety concerns or based on student demographics. Indeed, numerous studies indicate parents often choose schools for reasons other than academic outcomes.³³

For example, 50% of public school parents indicate Proximity to Their Home as the most important factor in choosing a school, followed by Academic Reputation (28%), The Teachers (24%), The Principal (22%), and Teaching Style (21%).³⁴ In Milwaukee specifically, educational quality, discipline, the general atmosphere, and location of the schools are among the more important factors for parents.³⁵

Are such decisions “irrational?” Do parents use the “wrong” reasons for choosing schools? According to the WPRI report, the apparent answer is “yes.” Yet, given the circumstances public school parents face in Milwaukee, choosing to remain in their neighborhood public schools or using non-academic sources and reasons for their choice could be entirely rational, given the academic quality in the MPS, the “sameness” of public schools, and the probability of gaining entry into a truly different public school.

Little Real Choice Among Public Schools

Key Finding: WPRI wrongly assumes that parents can freely choose among public schools and that there are meaningful choices to make. But in public school choice, staying in the assigned

school without looking at other options or not considering academic information when deciding makes when the only choice is more of the same and when institutional barriers make it unlikely that choices will be honored.

As the WPRI report indicates, MPS, “like many of its big-city counterparts in other states, continues to suffer from poor student performance.”³⁶ Using reading, math, and science state assessment scores, the report demonstrates that MPS students lag far behind the rest of the state, and that gap only grows as students proceed through school. Assuming, of course, students proceed through school. As WPRI points out, “Only 68 percent of MPS high school students avoided dropping out and successfully earned their diploma. The comparable figure for the rest of the state was 91 percent.”³⁷

Moreover, as several authors argue, differences between public schools are scant.³⁸ Indeed, in public school choice specifically, there are few differences between choice schools and comparison schools based on curricular content, teacher variables, procedures, or distinctiveness.³⁹ Thus, compared to choice programs that include private schools options (which the WPRI study does not include), public school choice offers parents little in the way of authentic choices between truly distinctive curricular or programmatic offerings or academic outputs.

Finally, Milwaukee parents may wish to enroll in charter, magnet, or other public schools in and outside of the district, but doing so is not as easy the WPRI report seems to imply. Charter schools enroll students based on a combination of space available (which is typically quite limited), district preference, and lottery systems, and magnet schools may select students based on criteria such as test scores, teacher recommendations, auditions, interviews, and grades.⁴⁰

Open enrollment, too, comes with limitations. Although all Wisconsin students may choose to attend a school outside of their home district, under Wisconsin Statute 118.51(5) school districts can reject enrollment applications for a host of reasons, ranging from space limitations to a child’s disability. Districts also have the discretion to cap the number of students they will allow to transfer into their schools, and no transportation is provided to transferring students.

In the face of few authentic choices among consistently poor performing schools and the limitations inherent in enrollment procedures, it would be entirely rational for many Milwaukee parents not to even try to enroll their child in a different public school. This, then, could create the appearance of a low use of public school choice as described in the WPRI report. Moreover, defining the “right” choice as one in which only academic factors (itself a vague and limiting construct) are considered fails to take into consideration the complexity involved in such a decision. Given the uniqueness inherent within each child and the diverse familial circumstances represented in a large city like Milwaukee, academic factors will not be the only consideration by parents and rationally may not even be the primary concern.⁴¹ Taken together, these theoretical shortcomings undermine the report’s ability to draw the strong conclusions it does about public school choice.

Unfounded Assumptions About Parental Involvement

Key Finding: The WPRI report's measures of parental involvement lack the necessary research-based consensus to make the sweeping conclusions it does.

WPRI's theoretical assumptions and shortcomings related to parental involvement do not contribute to an accurate picture of the degree of involvement, which, in turn, weakens the report's conclusions.

The theoretical limitations begin with the very definition of parental involvement. Despite the vast literature on this topic, few agree on what constitutes effective or meaningful involvement.⁴² Because of the lack of scientific rigor in the research related to this issue less is known about parental involvement than commonly assumed, which could, and likely does, lead to unrealistic expectations on the part of researchers and policymakers about the potential for school improvement as a result of involvement and even how to define it.

The WPRI report defines parental involvement in two ways—home-based and school-based. Each is constructed from multiple variables from the NHES database, but no research is cited that would indicate these variables are influential in improving academic performance of students or schools. Although some of these variables have been used in other studies,⁴³ their effects have proven rather inconsistent.⁴⁴ Therefore, drawing conclusions about their possible effect as an agent of change remains speculation.

Indeed, the report acknowledges but only cursorily so just how uneven the research is on parental involvement.⁴⁵ Certainly some empirical studies have shown evidence of a positive effect from parental involvement,⁴⁶ but others have found little, if any, such measurable effect.⁴⁷ It is not even clear if involvement is significant across all grade levels.⁴⁸

Some authors even report a *negative* relationship between parental involvement and academic achievement.⁴⁹ In fact, some of the variables used in the WPRI report have been shown to negatively influence student performance.⁵⁰ Unfortunately, the variable that has consistently shown to have a positive effect, parental expectations,⁵¹ was not included in the WPRI report, even though a measure of this variable was available in the database.⁵²

Other Causes of Low Parental Involvement

Key Finding: The WPRI report never bothers to ask why parental involvement is allegedly so low. The problem often begins with the school.

The WPRI report's conclusions are further undermined by the rather poor performance of public schools in facilitating parental involvement.⁵³ Schools have not engaged fully in involving parents meaningfully or granted parents access to opportunities for involvement in school affairs.⁵⁴ Parent-school partnerships are commonly established on the professionals' terms, thereby creating barriers for parents. This happens because school personnel typically conceptualize, plan, and implement parental involvement programs without considering parents'

interests. As a result, knowledge of parental needs and wishes are presumed, and parental compliance is taken for granted.

Not surprisingly, parental involvement initiatives become meaningless to parents. This meaninglessness is further highlighted as parents come to discover they are shut out from decision-making in the school. One of the most engaging types of parental involvement is including parents in school decisions, but “This typically has not been a role played by most teachers.”⁵⁵ Instead, school personnel feel threatened by such parental involvement and resist including parents in decision-making.⁵⁶

Unfortunately, the report’s comparably extended discussion of parental involvement requirements in the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) do nothing to ameliorate such findings. Although NCLB requires schools to institute programs designed to facilitate greater parental involvement, research on formal parental involvement programs has not been encouraging.⁵⁷ Moreover, recent research specifically on NCLB and parental involvement casts serious doubt on the idea of substantive change as a result of NCLB.⁵⁸

Therefore, the WPRI report’s inferences concerning parental involvement are founded upon uneven if not empirically unsubstantiated assumptions. Moreover, it never bothers to consider why involvement levels are so low, one answer of which includes the posture taken by schools toward involvement. In the face of such weaknesses, drawing firm conclusions about the effect of parental involvement as an intervention on MPS is reckless.

Conclusion

As evidenced by the scores of other studies on public school choice and parental involvement, the WPRI report’s weakness is not in asking unimportant questions but in drawing such sweeping (and ultimately meaningless) conclusions based on insufficient and erroneous theoretical assumptions and methods. To conclude as boldly as the report does that “these numbers indicate significant limits on the capacity of public school choice and parental involvement to improve school quality and student performance within MPS”⁵⁹ requires a well-grounded research study of complex design and analysis far beyond the rather simplistic approach taken by the WPRI report.

The fatal flaws in the WPRI report not only undermine its conclusions about public school choice, they also make it impossible to draw any broader conclusions about school choice programs involving private schools, such as the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program. The poor quality of the WPRI report, and the unfortunate way it has been used in the media and by opponents, is a case study in the need for sound research to inform public policy debates.

Endnotes

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- ¹ Dodenhoff, D. (2007). *Fixing the Milwaukee public schools: The limits of parent-driven reform*. Milwaukee, WI: Wisconsin Policy Research Institute.
- ² The Failure. (2007, October 30). The failure of school choice. *Capital Times*, p. A6.
- ³ Borsuk, A. J. (2007, October 24). Choice may not improve schools, study says. *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, p. A1.
- ⁴ Scott, L. (2007, November 5). School choice doesn't necessarily add up. *Kansas City Star*, p. B8.
- ⁵ Murphy, B. (2007, December). Whoops, we goofed: School choice doesn't work like its supporters promised. Gulp. Now what? *Milwaukee Magazine*, p. 164.
- ⁶ Keshlear, B. (2007, October 24). Utah Dems: So-called 'parental choice' may not improve schools, conservative think tank study finds. *Targeted News Service*.
- ⁷ Unfortunately, an introduction to the report by WPRI senior fellow George Lightbourn did not help matters. Repeatedly throughout the introduction Lightbourn conflates public and private choice: "Policy makers and policy analysts, including WPRI, have pinned high expectations on increased parental choice and parental involvement," "While many parents have taken full advantage of choosing either an MPS or another school for their children..." "Focusing on parental choice and parental involvement cannot be seen as a substitute for substantive reforms..."
- ⁸ For example, the WPRI report states, "Though 'school choice' is often used as short-hand for 'vouchers' —that is, programs that provide public funding for students to attend private schools — the logic of the educational marketplace applies just as well (in theory) to choice among public schools" (p. 4).
- ⁹ Armor, D. J., & Peiser, B. M. (1998). Interdistrict choice in Massachusetts. In P. E. Peterson & B. C. Hassel (Eds.), *Learning from school choice* (pp. 157-186). Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.
- ¹⁰ Goldhaber, D. D. (1999). School choice: An examination of the empirical evidence on achievement, parental decision making, and equity. *Educational Researcher*, 28(9), 16-25.
- ¹¹ Lindsey, D. (2006). *2005-2006 district report card*. Milwaukee, WI: Milwaukee Public Schools.
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- ¹³ Barnard, J., Frankgakis, C. E., Hill, J. L., & Rubin, D. B. (2003). Principal stratification approach to broken randomized experiments: A case study of school choice vouchers in New York City. *Journal of the American Statistical Association*, 98(462), 299-323; Greene, J. P. (2001). *An evaluation of the Florida A+ accountability and school choice program*. New York: Manhattan Institute Center for Civic Innovation; Greene, J. P. (2001). Vouchers in Charlotte. *Education Matters*, 1(2), 55-60; Greene, J. P., Peterson, P. E., & Du, J. (1998). School choice in Milwaukee: A randomized experiment. In P. E. Peterson & B. C. Hassel (Eds.), *Learning from School Choice* (pp. 335-356). Washington, DC: Brookings Institution; Greene, J. P., & Winters, M. A. (2003). When schools compete: The effects of vouchers on Florida public school achievement. Retrieved November 10, 2007, from http://www.manhattan-institute.org/html/ewp_02.htm; Greene, J. P., & Winters, M. A. (2004). Competition passes the test. *Education Next*, 4(3), 7; Howell, W. G., Peterson, P. E., Wolfe, P. J., & Campbell, D. E. (2006). *The education gap: Vouchers and urban schools*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institute Press; Hoxby, C. (2002). *School choice and school productivity (or could school choice be a tide that lifts all boats?)* (No. 8873). Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research; Hoxby, C. (2003). School choice and school competition: Evidence from the United States. *Swedish Economic Policy Review*, 10, 11-67; Innerst, C. (2000). Competing to win: How Florida's A+ plan has triggered public school reform. Retrieved November 22, 2007, from <http://www.ij.org/schoolchoice/florida/innerstreport.html>; Mayer, D. P., Peterson, P. E., Myers, D. E., Tuttle, C. C., & Howell, W. G. (2002). *School choice in New York City after three years: An evaluation of the school choice scholarships program final report* (No. 8404-045). Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research; Myers, D., Peterson, P. E., Mayer, D., Chou, J., & Howell, W. G. (2000). *School choice in New York City after two years: An evaluation of the school choice scholarships program* (No. 8404-036). Washington, DC: Mathematica Policy Research; Peterson, P. E., Greene, J. P., Howell, W. G., & McCready, W. (1998). Initial findings from an evaluation of school choice programs in Washington, D.C., and Dayton, Ohio. Retrieved November 22, 2007, from <http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/pepg/PDF/Papers/dcdavex.pdf>; Peterson, P. E., Howell, W. G., & Greene, J. P. (1999). An evaluation of the Cleveland voucher program after two years. Retrieved November 22, 2007, from <http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/pepg/PDF/Papers/clev2ex.pdf>; Peterson, P. E., Myers, D., & Howell, W. G. (1996). An evaluation of the New York City school choice scholarships program: The first year. Retrieved November 22, 2007, from <http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/pepg/PDF/Papers/ny1ex.pdf>; Rouse, C. (1998). Private school vouchers and student achievement: An evaluation of the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*,

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