

Ed Studies Junior Research Plan

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Major(s)/Concentration: Educational Studies with a concentration in Educational Policy and Implementation

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1) What is your proposed research question, and how is it significant to educational studies, broadly defined?

How has the growth of the charter schools affected the decline in public schools (including magnets, technical, and Montessori schools) in the city of Chicago over the past ten years?

The introduction of charter schools into major cities have caused tension to rise between educators and parents because of the competition involved in enrollment between the charters and other public schools. Recently, there has been over 54 public schools (non of which are charters) that were closed down in the city of Chicago which became a very controversial issue for Chicago Public Schools (CPS) teachers and parents. Trying to understand the patterns, if there is one, between the growth of charter schools and the decline of public schools will be controversial to some, but it can help others gain understanding of the changing of schools within the city.

2) What courses, experiences, and/or readings inspired you to choose this question?

I am personally interested in this topic as a Chicago native and charter school alumni. I have taught in public schools that operate within CPS during the summer and have tutored within charter schools as well. The tension between the two different types of schools has been a long battle in Chicago, and I testified in the closing of one of the schools (my old elementary school) the year prior to its closing. It became one of the 54 CPS schools that were closed in 2013 after given another year of probation in 2012.

The first time I became exposed to the charter schools movement and the history of educational reform was in a class I took freshman year with Professor Dougherty, EDUC-

300: Education Reform, Past and Present. We discussed the way schools have evolved from public schooling over the years, and especially the Harlem Children's Zone and Geoffrey Canada.

In EDUC-308: Cities, Suburbs, and Schools, representing differences visually and the implementation of different reforms were discussed in which triggered my further interest in studying the relationships between charter schools and public schools. I worked on a schools choice project with CT Voices during that year in which helped me further understand these relationships.

Hess, G. A. "Understanding Achievement (and Other) Changes Under Chicago School Reform." *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 21.1 (1999): 67-83. *JSTOR*. Web. 2 Apr. 2015. <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/1164547>>.

Rau, William, Paul J. Baker, and Dianne Ashby. "The Chicago School Reforms: Are They Working?" *The Sociological Quarterly* 40.4 (1999): 641-61. *JSTOR*. Web. 1 Apr. 2015. <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/4121258>>.

3) What prior methods training do you have, and what primary sources and methods will you use to answer this question?

I have had training in ArcGIS through my research class, ENVS-286: Theory and Application of GIS, in mapping different locations and using the software to highlight changes and tell stories about different topics. Moreover, this past summer I worked on organizing data and analyzing the relationships in that data with non-for-profit organizations with Professor Dougherty. In writing about historical data, I learned how to structure my thoughts and learned how to write about history in my EDUC-300: Educational Reform, Past and Present class in which we wrote our own research papers as a final class project.

For my senior research project, I want to be able to use some historical and quantitative data to outline and demonstrate trends in different schools throughout the city as well as the history behind the relationship between charters and other public schools throughout the city. I plan to map the different locations, using ArcGIS, of schools from 2005

through 2015 and the different types of schools that are most prominent in different parts of the city.

4) Does your plan include research with human subjects?

My research does not include any type of interviews, observations, or surveys that I know of yet. Most of my research will be quantitative and can be accessed either through the City of Chicago data portal or through online journals and newspapers.

5) Does your research plan require access to a school or organization?

I will not need any access to any schools or organizations that I know of.