Public Schooling in Micropolitan America: Understanding the Interplay of Demographic Shift, Teacher Labor Markets and Education Costs

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CHAPTER 1

Big Changes in Small Town America? A Macro Level Analysis of Micropolitan Schooling[1]

1.0 Introduction

Until June 2003, communities across the nation were identified only as "metropolitan" or "non-metropolitan." However, in order to more precisely understand the social and economic diversity within residual non-metropolitan areas, the U.S. Census Bureau created the new classification "micropolitan" as part of its core-based statistical area system (CBSA). Prior to 2003, areas were considered as either in Metropolitan CBSA's or Rural, non-CBSA's (no core). Metropolitan CBSA's are areas centered around urban clusters of 50,000 or more residents. Presumably, any cluster less than that was more similar to sparsely populated, non-clustered, coreless areas. The micropolitan classification added to this mix, areas centered around "urban clusters" of 10,000 to 49,999 residents.[2]

Micropolitans represent a unique blend of features, like agricultural economies typically associated with rural areas and immigration trends typically associated with urban areas. Demographers, economics, and sociologists have just begun to explore the particular characteristics of micropolitans, and little is known about education in these areas.

In this chapter, we establish a preliminary foundation of knowledge about micropolitan areas to inform educational policy research. By establishing a national, state, and regional statistical profile of school districts in micropolitan areas with particular emphasis upon change in student population demographics, we examine whether there are generalizable patterns across micropolitan communities that can be identified and whether the rapidly changing, ethnically and linguistically diverse micropolitan areas featured in recent media outlets are typical of the modern-day micropolis (see for example Nasser, 2004a, 2004b; Zehr, 2005). Due to the undeveloped nature of research about these areas, we first consider the extent to which classic notions of rural and urban dynamics are sufficient for capturing the evolving context of micropolitan communities and micropolitan schools. Then, through macro-level descriptive analyses, we explore and begin to develop an understanding of educational policy issues that are distinctly micropolitan.

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[1] Portions of the introduction and conclusions of this paper drawn from Ng and Baker (2006)

[2] Under the 2000 standards, the county (or counties) in which at least 50 percent of the population resides within urban areas of 10,000 or more population, or that contain at least 5,000 people residing within a single urban area of 10,000 or more population, is identified as a "central county" (counties). Additional "outlying counties" are included in the CBSA if they meet specified requirements of commuting to or from the central counties. (www.census.gov)

Goals

In this chapter of this report, I use multiple data sources and methods to address the following four questions:

1. What is the magnitude of micropolitan schooling in the U.S?
2. What is the changing demography of student populations in micropolitan communities?
3. Which areas of the country, and agricultural states and communities specifically, are most affected by demographic shifts?
4. To what extent has teacher supply and teacher demographics, adjusted to changing student populations?

The primary purpose of this chapter is to evaluate the magnitude of micropolitan schooling generally and then to explore in greater detail micropolitan communities that have experienced the types of demographic shifts that have made headlines. Where are these micropolitan areas? Are they geographically clustered in specific regions of the United States? Is this clustering linked to agricultural industries?

Also in this chapter I provide a preview of teacher labor market concerns in these rapidly changing micropolitan communities. I conclude with implications for the state of Tennessee, home to Tennessee State University which provided financial support for this investigation.

2.0 Delineating Urban and Rural Education Research: Evaluating Existing Literature

An examination of social context is inherent to understanding education in urban, rural, and other settings. Although some researchers, teacher educators, and educational policy makers view schools generically and give little attention to the particulars of community context, many others in contemporary discourse characterize urban and rural education as distinctly different cultural domains and fields of study (Howley, 2004; Kannapel & DeYoung, 1999; Martin & Yin, 1999). A review of research literature indicates that commonly expressed notions of urban and rural schools are quite consistent and based in both the realities of local communities as well as socially constructed stereotypes.

For example, rural areas are often perceived romantically as “bucolic villages” inhabited by residents who are church-going, hard-working, and decent people (Ward, 2003). Spanning multiple generations, such communities foster within individuals deep attachments and identification to their hometowns and families (Theobald, 1997), and interpersonal relationships and connections to others are given primacy (Haas & Lambert, 1995). This sense of social cohesion in rural areas is especially strong given their small population size and relative demographic homogeneity (Nachtigal, 1982; Williams, 2003). And the environments within rural schools are believed to mirror community dynamics because students in small schools have more positive attitudes, attend class

more frequently, are less likely to drop out, exhibit fewer behavior problems, and feel more like they belong than do students at large schools (Herzog & Pittman, 1995; Hicks, 1999; Martin & Yin, 1999). For many people, including school reformers, the simplicity of rural life epitomized in these images conjures up sentimental yearnings for a virtuous, golden era now threatened by technological modernization, multiculturalism, and indiscriminant suburban and urban sprawl (Bushnell, 1999). The ensuing educational agenda, then, is to protect the distinctive values and practices of rural life from extinction by creating schools that promote and perpetuate it in future generations.

Another view of rural areas, however, contrasts sharply with the first. According to this second characterization, rural residents are ignorant, backward, and culturally bankrupt people who live in impoverished communities with little economic or social value (Albrecht, Albrecht & Albrecht, 2000; Beeson & Strange, 2003; Ward, 2003). The sparse population, geographical isolation, economic decline, and weak social infrastructure underscored by this portrayal of rural towns clearly extend into the domain of rural school concerns. For example, per pupil expenditures in rural schools are high, yet curricular offerings are limited by insufficient funds and overextended teachers who report feeling professionally, culturally, and socially isolated (Hare, 1991; Massey & Crosby, 1983; Williams, 2003). Efforts intended to remedy these issues include district consolidation, busing, alternative routes for teacher certification, and the centralization of school administration in order to pool financial resources, maximize human capital, and create more efficient, bureaucratized systems of governance (Brent, Sipple, Killeen & Wischnowski, 2004). By favoring large schools and outside expertise, however, rural schools are increasingly removed from local concerns, interests, and direct involvement with the people they serve. Many proponents of rural education argue that such reforms are ultimately based on a deficiency model of rural life and ignore the critical role schools play as the social and cultural heart of small communities (Bushnell, 1999; Kannapel & DeYoung, 1999).

The notion of deficiency has also deeply penetrated discussions about culture, community, family, and children in urban areas. An examination of terms used to describe urban residents and their neighborhoods during the last 50 years include pathological (Moynihan, 1965); undeserving poor and underclass (Gans, 1995; Lewis, 1968); deprived and at-risk (Weiner, 1993); and ghetto (Anyon, 1997). Given these stigmatizing terms, the word “urban” has been criticized too for its use as a euphemism for bad or problem communities and schools (Miron, 1996). While accounts of educational effectiveness and possibility in urban schools do exist (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Meier, 1995; Rose, 1995; Scheurich, 1998), the persistent challenges these schools face is undeniable. Inheriting the circumstances of their surrounding communities, urban schools overwhelmingly serve low-income, racial/ethnic and language minority youth (Kasarda, 1993; Valenzuela, 1999) who reside in racially isolated (Noguera, 1996; Powell, Kearney & Kay, 2001), politically disenfranchised (Anyon, 1997) communities where dependable, living-wage employment is increasingly scarce (Wilson, 1996; Zinn & Eitzen, 1999). Recruiting and retaining qualified teachers to work in these areas is difficult given their perceptions of rampant school and community violence, discomfort with racial/ethnic and linguistic differences, and pressures to accomplish a great deal under poor working conditions and inadequate resources (Cochran-Smith, 1995, 2000; Dee & Henkin, 2002; Dworkin, 1987; Gilbert, 1995; Greenberg, 1984; Groulx, 2001;

Mason, 1999; Shultz, Neyhart, Reck & Easter, 1996). Reforms enacted to address teacher shortages in urban areas include providing signing bonuses and more competitive salaries, improving diversity training and multicultural education, and preparing paraprofessionals, career changers, or new college graduates to teach through alternative certification programs (Clewell & Villegas, 2000; Dorman, 1990; Feistritzer, 1993; Grant, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1999; Shen, 1998; Sleeter, 1995). Yet, these approaches have not entirely satisfied the staffing needs of urban schools, and the quality of teachers produced through these means remains uncertain (Ballou & Podgursky, 2000; Darling-Hammond, 2000; Haberman & Post, 1998; Sears, Marshall & Otis-Wilborn, 1994).

Characterizations of urban education as harsh and turbulent appear to be the mirror image of quaint, pastoral schools in rural areas. However, rural education has also been viewed negatively, requiring large-scale "urban-style" reforms to correct its supposed deficiencies (DeYoung, 1987; Kannapel & DeYoung, 1999; Rosenfeld & Sher, 1977). Such classifications reify understandings of social context and notions of what constitute rural and urban education. They also oversimplify or ignore how certain communities have evolved demographically and economically over time. Exploring micropolitan education provides us with an opportunity to better understand how traditional thinking about rural and urban education may be insufficient to capture the changing social contexts of micropolitan communities and micropolitan schools.

Lang & Dhavale (2004) explain that the largest micropolitans substantially overlap with some metropolitan areas, and the remaining non-metropolitan areas that fall below micropolitan levels can now be seen as truly rural. The blurring of distinct metropolitan and non-metropolitan characteristics in micropolitan areas is evident by the growing use of lay terms such as "rurban" (Francis, 2005), and research literature specifically addressing micropolitan demographics has only recently begun to emerge. Brown, Colmartie and Kulcsar (2004) examined in- and out-migration, and public service differences between metropolitan, micropolitan and non-CBSAs. They noted that micropolitan areas appear more stable than non-CBSA areas during periods of out-migration. That is, as rural areas lose population, micropolitan centers appear to experience smaller declines. The authors note: "Decade-to-decade swings in micropolitan areas, while still marked, were not nearly as dramatic as those experienced by smaller more isolated places with more production-dependent economies" (p. 415). Regarding the local economies and available services of micropolitan areas, the authors found that "while micropolitan areas have relatively extensive representations of metropolitan functions, their service complements are less complete than what is characteristic of even the smallest category of metropolitan areas. Moreover, …while industrial restructuring has diffused throughout the urban hierarchy, the transformation from production to services is far less complete in non-CBSA counties than in more highly urbanized micropolitan areas" (p. 415).

Prior to the Census Bureau classification, Vias, Mulligan and Molen (2002) categorized 219 micropolitan areas by economic conditions, service and trade-type counties, manufacturing and farming sectors, and related migration, growth, and decline patterns. Their findings, like those of Brown, Colmartie, and Kulcsar (2004), suggest that some generalizations can be made about the characteristics of micropolitan areas in relation to each other and to metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas. They also note,

however, that there is a great deal of diversity within micropolitans and little is known to date about these areas overall.

3.0 The Magnitude of Micropolitan Schooling in America

I begin the analyses with an overview of trends in total micropolitan student populations from 1989 to 2004 using data from the National Center for Education Statistics Common Core of Data, Local Education Agency Universe Survey. As a comparison, Charter Schools generate substantial interest in research literature. Currently, there are approximately 4,578 charter schools serving 1,407,421 children for an average school size of 300 students. Micropolitan schools have received little attention in education policy research. The number of micropolitan schools has remained relatively constant at about 12,000 but as a share of total schools, micropolitan schools have declined slightly (from over 14% to 13%). Currently, approximately 4.5 million children attend schools in micropolitan areas, which as a share, has declined from over 11% in 1989 to under 10% by 2004. In recent years, however, some states failed to report.

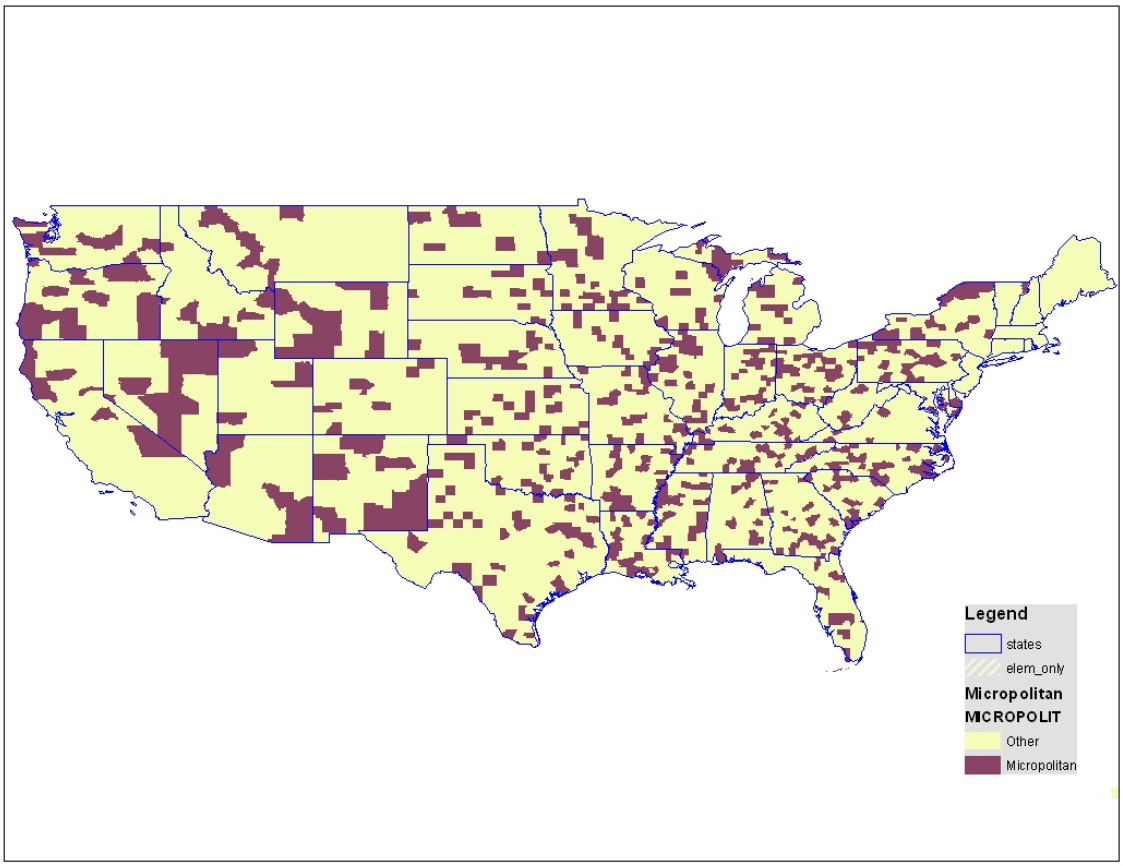
Table 1
Number of schools and enrollments in Micropolitan schools 1990 to 2004

	Schools				Enrollment				
year	Metropolitan	Micropolitan	Total	% of Schools	Metropolitan	Micropolitan	Total	% of Children	
1989	47,201	9,858	69,346	14.2%	27,667,641	3,976,571	35,782,004	11.1%	
1990	52,857	11,581	80,433	14.4%	30,941,315	4,560,445	40,601,845	11.2%	
1991	50,168	10,929	75,260	14.5%	29,695,648	4,340,853	38,655,532	11.2%	
1992	52,136	11,162	78,189	14.3%	31,208,901	4,474,264	40,540,150	11.0%	
1993	54,234	11,442	81,625	14.0%	32,773,386	4,660,025	42,703,828	10.9%	
1994	55,154	11,594	82,936	14.0%	33,430,889	4,725,498	43,512,888	10.9%	
1995	55,686	11,635	83,523	13.9%	34,029,884	4,755,359	44,196,835	10.8%	
1996	54,282	11,702	82,240	14.2%	33,482,014	4,769,824	43,700,623	10.9%	
1997	57,808	11,839	86,106	13.7%	35,336,319	4,796,846	45,618,257	10.5%	
1998	58,859	11,982	87,338	13.7%	35,815,567	4,790,006	46,056,819	10.4%	
1999	58,803	11,788	86,889	13.6%	35,518,134	4,613,958	45,476,020	10.1%	*
2000	60,098	12,028	88,645	13.6%	36,114,528	4,643,909	46,105,668	10.1%	*
2001	60,866	12,065	89,458	13.5%	36,632,566	4,632,262	46,580,395	9.9%	*
2002	61,946	12,091	90,554	13.4%	37,123,180	4,614,857	47,044,439	9.8%	*
2003	62,628	12,054	91,171	13.2%	37,549,606	4,606,389	47,441,316	9.7%	*
2004	62,581	11,832	90,695	13.0%	37,391,981	4,543,931	47,151,292	9.6%	**

*Tennessee failed to report
**Tennessee and Nevada failed to report
Data Source: NCES Common Core of Data, Public School Universe

Figure 1 displays the locations of micropolitan counties nationwide, and micropolitan areas are scattered widely. Of primary interest herein are those micropolitan counties located in regions where substantial demographic shift has occurred in recent decades. Specifically, I focus on those micropolitan counties which tend to be agricultural communities, which have seen a dramatic influx of immigrant populations in recent years.

Figure 1
Geographic Distribution of the American Micropolis



Data Source: NCES Common Core of Data, Public School Universe

Figure 2 and Figure 3 display an analysis called Local Indicators of Spatial Association (LISA) for counties nationally, identifying areas of higher and lower concentrations of Hispanic populations (student populations) in 1990 and 2005 based on the NCES Common Core of Data. LISA analysis identifies areas where high values are adjacent to or nearby other high values, where low values are adjacent or near other low values, and where high values are surrounding by lower values and vice versa. High areas adjacent to other high areas are shown in the Figures in red. Low areas next to other low areas are shown in blue. Pink areas are high outliers in otherwise low areas and light blue areas are low outliers in otherwise high areas.

The casual observer might expect high rates of Hispanic populations to be found in Texas, California and Florida, which they are. By 1990, significant Hispanic migration

had extended up from Texas across the Oklahoma panhandle and into southwest Kansas. That migration continued to expand through 2005. Areas where Hispanic student populations expanded even more significantly during that time period include central Washington, western central Colorado and southern Idaho. These areas include significant numbers of micropolitan counties, which, in many cases are distant from major metropolitan centers and which, for decades have been predominantly to entirely white towns and counties.

Figure 2
Spatial Cluster of Hispanic Populations 1990

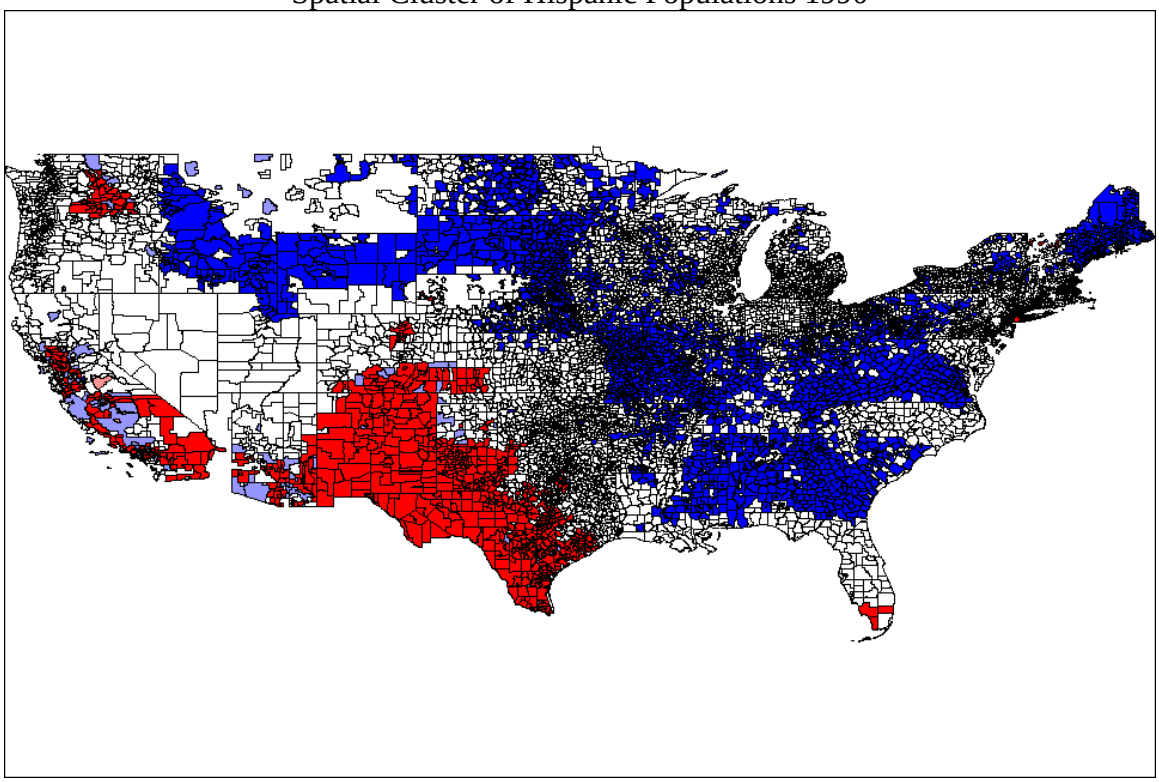
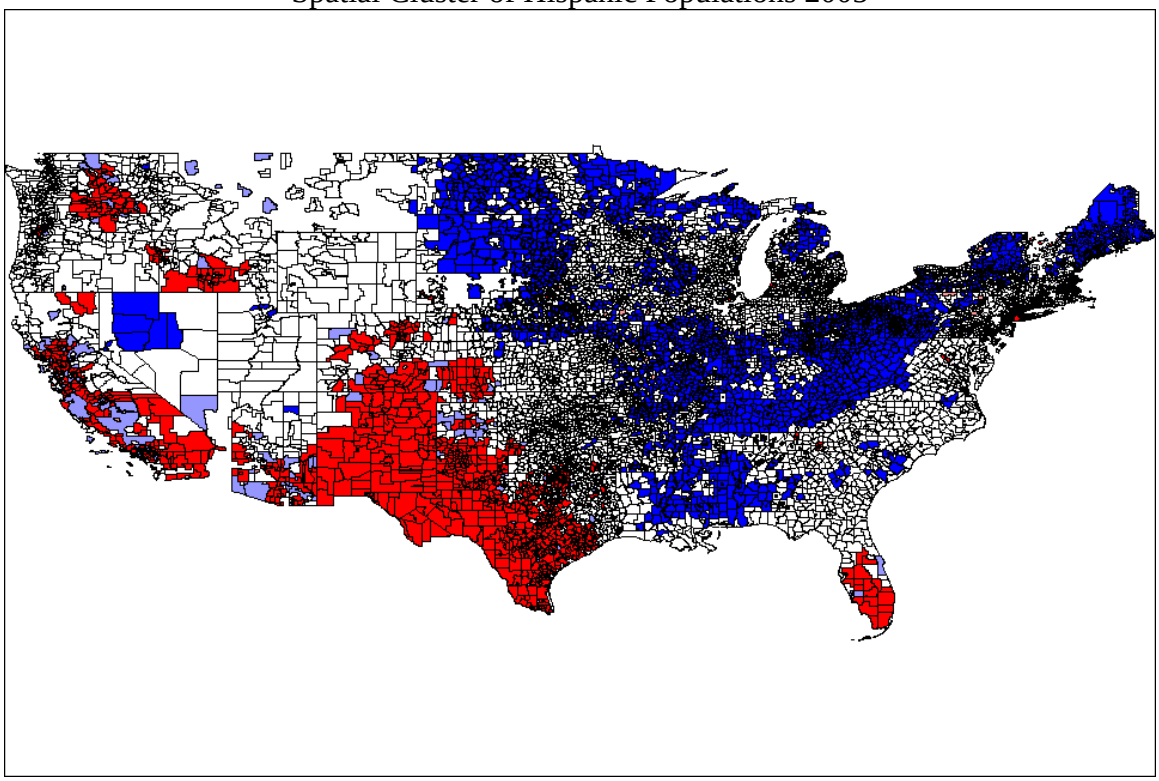


Figure 3
Spatial Cluster of Hispanic Populations 2005



4.0 The Rapidly Changing Micropolis

In this section, I attempt to identify those specific micropolitan areas where schools in particular have experienced significant demographic shift – most notably, rapid expansion of Hispanic immigrant populations. Table 2 uses NCES Common Core data aggregated at the state level to identify those states which have seen the biggest increases in the number of majority Hispanic enrollment schools in micropolitan areas. New Mexico experienced a 42% increase in the number of schools in micropolitan areas which are majority Hispanic between 1990 and 2004. 54% of Micropolitan schools are majority Hispanic. Connecticut is a quirky case in that a single area is considered micropolitan, and happens to have a significant share of predominantly Hispanic schools. Other states with significant increases in majority Hispanic schools in micropolitan areas include Colorado, Kansas, Washington, Nebraska and Oregon – a cluster of agricultural plains/mountain states and a cluster of Pacific northwestern states.

Table 2
Emergence of Majority Hispanic Micropolitan Schools by State

State	Schools 1990	Majority Hispanic 1990	% of Micropolitan Schools	Schools 2004	Majority Hispanic Schools 2004	% of Micropolitan Schools	
New Mexico	296	123	42%	331	178	54%	
Connecticut	15	0	0%	16	8	50%	*
Texas	623	183	29%	692	239	35%	
Arizona	80	16	20%	92	29	32%	
Colorado	97	1	1%	115	19	17%	
Kansas	337	3	1%	302	36	12%	
Washington	212	1	0%	240	23	10%	
Nebraska	209	1	0%	214	17	8%	
Oregon	269	3	1%	279	18	6%	
National Totals/Averages	10,580	335	3%	10,488	610	6%	

*Involves 2 Micropolitan areas, one with sizeable Hispanic population (Willimantic)
Data Source: NCES Common Core of Data, Public School Universe

Table 3 identifies specific micropolitan areas in plains and Pacific Northwest states which have experienced dramatic increases in the numbers of schools which are majority Hispanic. Micropolitan areas are ranked from highest to lowest percent of schools in 2004 that were majority Hispanic. By 2004, 73% of schools in Dodge City, Kansas micropolitan area had become predominantly Hispanic schools, up from 7.1% in 1990. Changes in Garden City and Liberal micropolitan areas were comparable. Other dramatic increases have occurred in Moses Lake and Walla Walla, Washington and in Lexington, Nebraska micropolitan areas. These are dramatic changes for areas that in the not too distant past had few or no predominantly Hispanic schools.

Table 3
Micropolitan Areas with Increases in Majority Hispanic Schools

Micropolitan Area	Majority Hispanic Schools in 2004	Schools in 2004	Majority Hispanic Schools in 1990	Schools in 1990	% Schools in 1990	% Schools in 2004	Growth
Dodge City KS	11	15	1	14	7.1%	73.3%	1026.7%
Garden City KS	12	20	1	18	5.6%	60.0%	1080.0%
Liberal KS	9	15	1	13	7.7%	60.0%	780.0%
Hood River OR	4	9	1	9	11.1%	44.4%	400.0%
Edwards CO	10	23	1	14	7.1%	43.5%	608.7%
Moses Lake WA	20	47	1	39	2.6%	42.6%	1659.6%
Fort Morgan CO	7	17	0	17	0.0%	41.2%	
Lexington NE	9	30	0	31	0.0%	30.0%	
Ontario OR-ID	7	34	2	27	7.4%	20.6%	277.9%
Pendleton-Hermiston OR	6	43	0	38	0.0%	14.0%	
Silverthorne CO	1	8	0	6	0.0%	12.5%	
Walla Walla WA	3	27	0	23	0.0%	11.1%	
Burley ID	3	28	0	27	0.0%	10.7%	
Norfolk NE	4	40	0	40	0.0%	10.0%	

Data Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data, Public School Universe Survey

Figure 4 maps the locations of counties that have experienced dramatic changes in the share of the population that is Hispanic between Census 1990 and Census 2000.

Figure 4

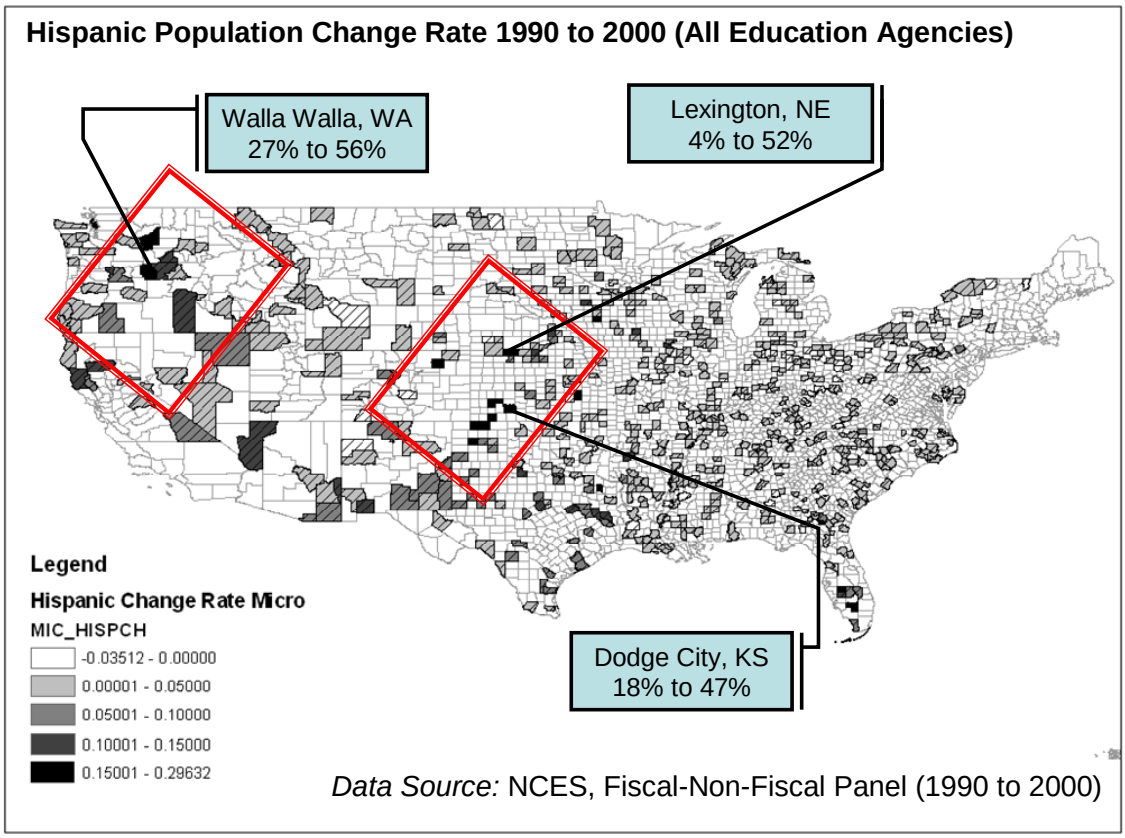


Figure 5 maps the locations of majority Hispanic schools in the plains states. In this case, I have identified schools which specifically have majority Hispanic populations in grades K-3, which serves as an indicator of the future enrollment of upper grades in the district. Note that there are many more schools with majority Hispanic K-3 enrollments than there are predominantly Hispanic schools. Predominantly Hispanic schools in the plains and mountain states exist primarily along the Platte River in Nebraska, throughout southwestern Kansas, scattered across the high plains of southern and eastern Colorado, in the Denver area and west into the mountains.

Figure 5
Majority Hispanic Schools in the Plains States

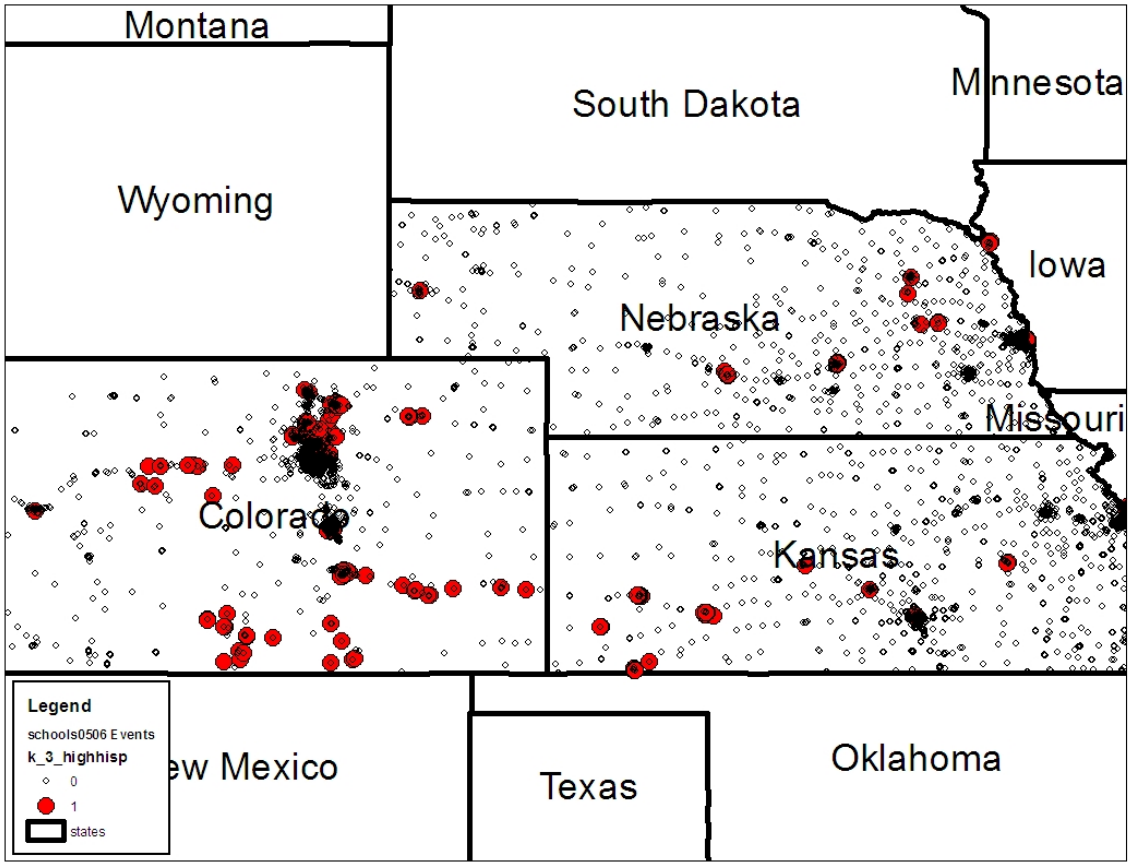


Figure 6 shows specifically, the distribution of schools that are predominantly Hispanic in grades K-3 in Nebraska, with a light grey dashed overlay of micropolitan counties. Many of these agricultural counties lie along the Platte River, from east to west in Nebraska. Notable locations include those near the middle of the Platte in Nebraska, such as Grand Island and especially Lexington.

Figure 6
Location of Majority Hispanic Grade K-3 Schools in Nebraska

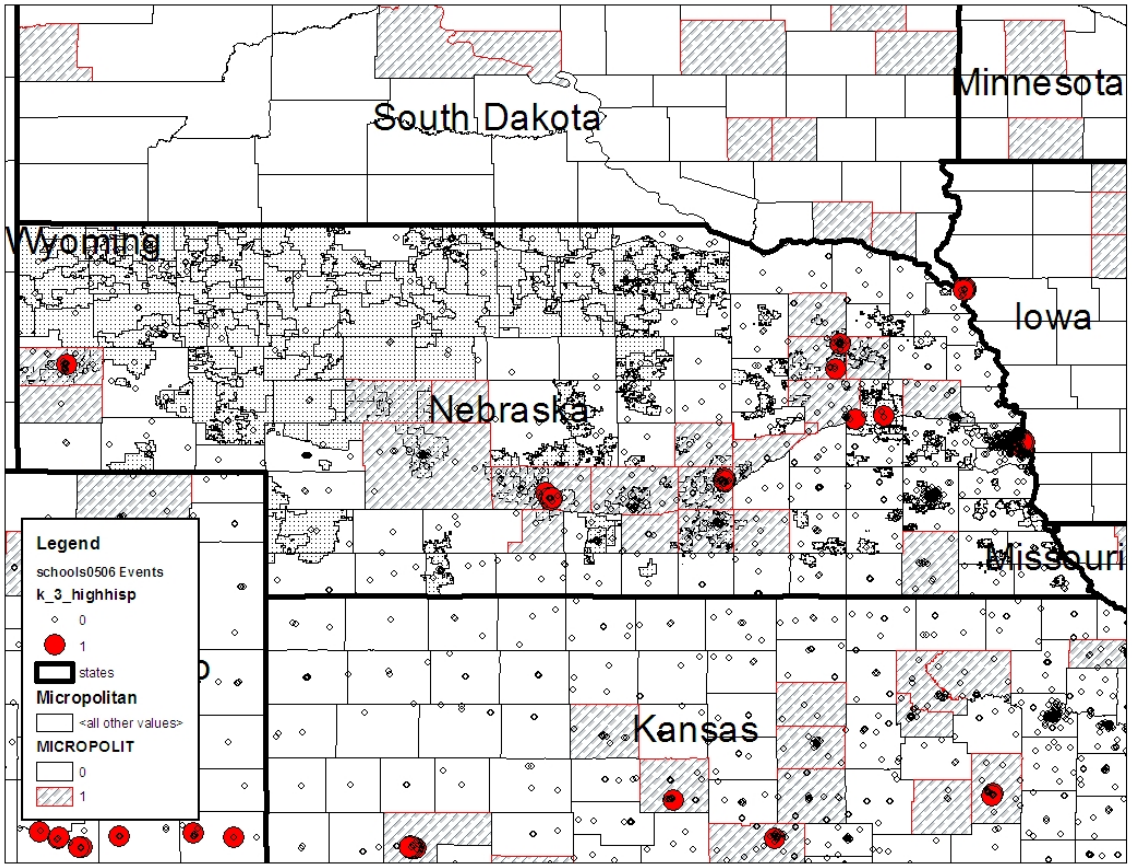


Figure 7 shows the locations of majority K-3 Hispanic schools in Washington and Oregon. Most lie through the central regions of Washington, with a handful in the urban areas near Seattle and Portland.

Figure 7
Majority Hispanic Schools in the Pacific Northwest

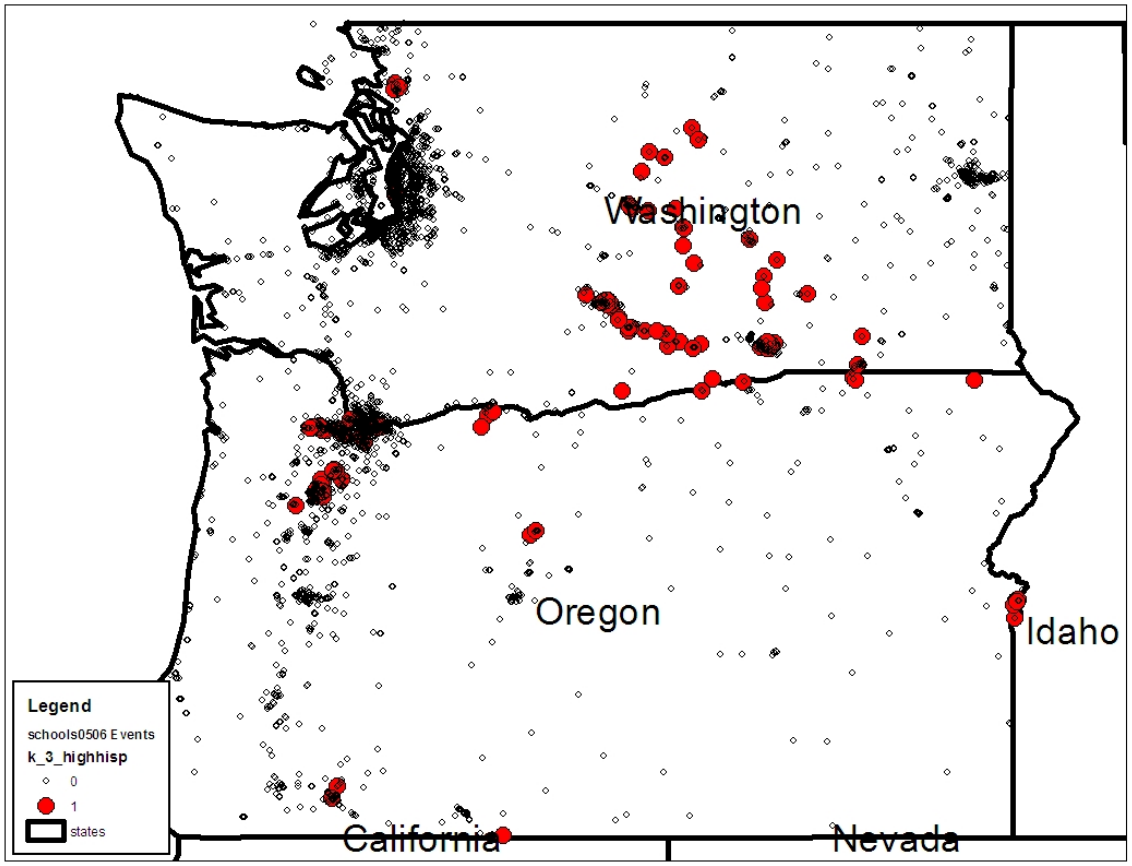


Figure 8 shows more specifically, the locations of predominantly Hispanic schools in Washington, along with a micropolitan county overlay. Several predominantly Hispanic schools exist in the Moses Lake micropolitan area of central Washington, and a handful in the Walla Walla micropolitan area of southeastern Washington. Note that several other central Washington predominantly Hispanic schools are in the Wenatchee, Yakima and Redmond areas, all of which are relatively small cities, perhaps more similar to agricultural micropolitan areas than to major urban centers.

Figure 8
Location of Majority Hispanic Grade K-3 Schools in Washington

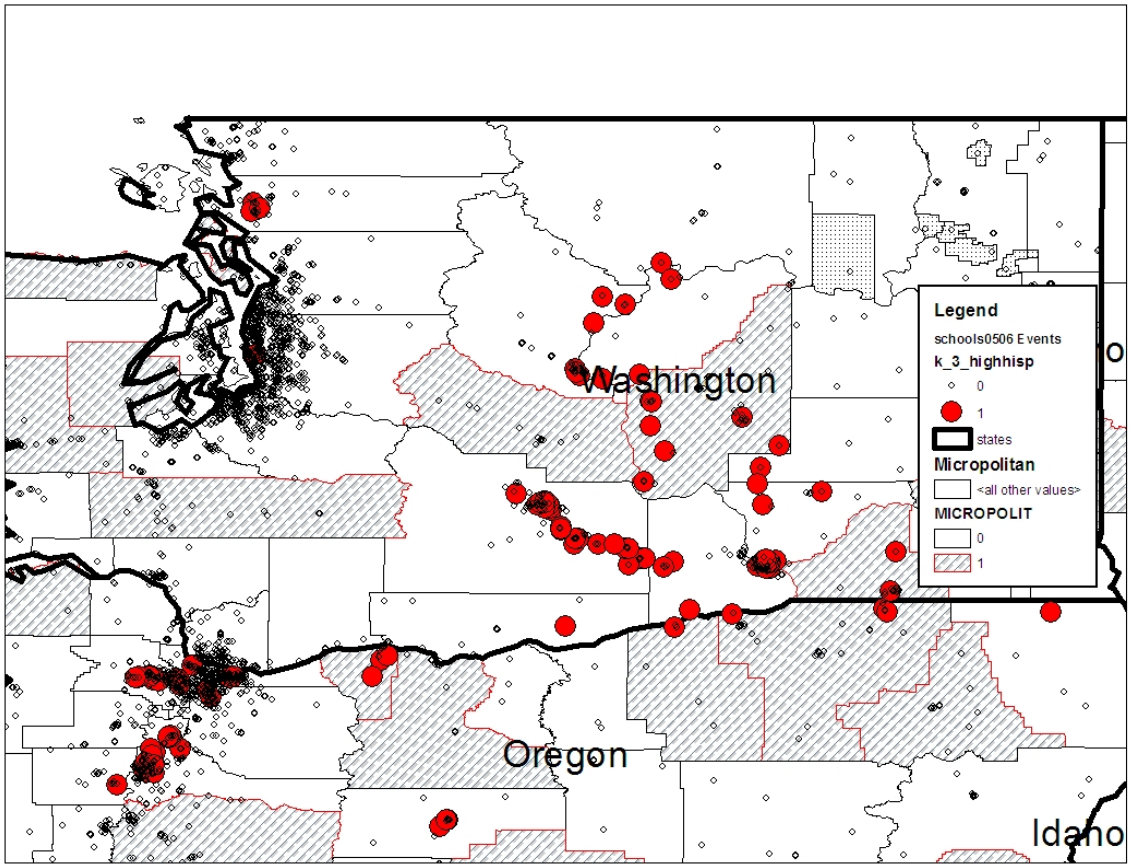


Table 4 provides insights into the pace of demographic change in these communities by comparing elementary enrollments to secondary enrollments. As immigrant families enter these school districts, they typically do so with relatively young children. As such, the ethnic composition of the lower grades in school districts changes before the ethnic composition of the upper grades in the school district. To the extent that dropout rates remain disparate by ethnicity, the pace of change in upper grades enrollments may be slowed.

Micropolitan areas in Table 4 are sorted by the extent of contrast between upper and lower grade enrollments. In Dodge City micropolitan area, lower grades of schools are, on average majority Hispanic. In Dodge City itself, rates are much higher. But grades

9-11 remain only 24% Hispanic in the micropolitan area. In nearby Liberal, Kansas, lower grades are 65% Hispanic, compared to 50% for upper grades. Lexington and Grand Island, Nebraska also show contrasts between lower and upper grades Hispanic enrollments for all schools in the micropolitan area. Again, rates within the town core districts are much higher. Differentials in the Pacific Northwest micropolitan areas appear somewhat smaller, indicating that early waves of immigrant students have already begun to fill out enrollments in upper grades.

Table 4

Contrast between elementary and secondary enrollments in rapidly changing micropolitan areas

	Schools by Grade Level				Lower Grades		Upper Grades		
Micropolitan Area	*Schools*	*1-Primary*	*2-Middle*	*3-High*	*Majority Hisp K-3*	*K-3 % Hispanic*	*Majority Hispanic 9 - 11*	*Grade 9 - 11 % Hisp*	*Upper/ Lower Contrast*
Dodge City KS	15	9	3	2	7	57.3%	1	24.1%	33.2%
Hood River OR	9	5	2	1	3	49.1%	0	21.6%	27.5%
Edwards CO	24	11	5	4	7	54.9%	1	37.0%	17.9%
Liberal KS	15	10	3	1	7	65.8%	1	50.2%	15.6%
Emporia KS	26	13	4	5	2	22.7%	0	7.7%	15.0%
Garden City KS	24	12	6	2	8	55.2%	1	40.9%	14.3%
Fort Morgan CO	18	8	4	5	5	42.7%	0	28.7%	14.0%
Grand Island NE	49	28	6	10	5	21.2%	0	9.9%	11.3%
Lexington NE	32	22	2	6	5	28.2%	1	17.0%	11.2%
Silverthorne CO	8	6	1	1	1	26.4%	0	15.2%	11.2%
Columbus NE	27	12	1	3	1	20.1%	0	10.7%	9.4%
City of The Dalles OR	12	5	1	2	0	19.0%	0	9.9%	9.2%
Great Bend KS	19	8	4	4	1	17.0%	0	8.3%	8.8%
Fremont NE	33	15	1	6	0	11.7%	0	3.6%	8.0%
Pendleton-Hermiston OR	47	20	9	10	4	26.7%	1	18.9%	7.7%
Shelton WA	29	9	3	5	0	12.2%	0	4.5%	7.7%
Prineville OR	7	5	1	1	0	15.2%	0	8.1%	7.1%
Moses Lake WA	70	25	11	15	8	46.7%	6	39.7%	7.0%
Ellensburg WA	19	7	2	4	0	12.3%	0	5.6%	6.7%
Brookings OR	11	5	1	4	0	9.9%	0	3.8%	6.0%
Aberdeen WA	49	23	4	12	0	10.0%	0	4.4%	5.5%
Hutchinson KS	42	22	7	7	1	8.5%	0	3.4%	5.1%
Astoria OR	16	7	3	4	0	11.4%	0	6.4%	5.0%

Data Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data, Public School Universe Survey

5.0 The Unchanging Teacher Workforce in Micropolitan Areas

The student populations in many of these micropolitan areas are changing rapidly, to the point where elementary students in some cases look little like high school students in the same district. But, what do the teachers look like? Has there been any shift in the demography of the teacher population expected to serve these changing student populations? Or, does the teacher population in rapidly changing micropolitan areas look much like the national average teacher population of white females educated at regional within state teachers colleges? Much has been made in the past of the mismatch between "urban" students – (code for low income black students) – and their white middle class female teachers. Studies have suggested that teachers' expectations of students vary by racial match and mismatch of teacher to student in ways that may affect student performance. In short, several authors have argued that teachers' race with respect to student race matters.

Certainly, one might argue that the likelihood that teachers speak fluently the language of the majority of children in early grades would matter. Therefore, it is potentially highly problematic if schools that are majority Hispanic, non-English speaking children in grades K-3 are staffed primarily with an aging workforce English-only speaking teachers (regardless of their race, ethnicity or gender). We address this issue in far greater detail in the third chapter of this report. Here, we provide a descriptive snapshot of teachers in Washington and Nebraska micropolitan areas, by contrast with metropolitan areas in those same states.

Table 5 summarizes the ethnicity of teachers in high Hispanic concentration micropolitan schools in Lexington and Grand Island, compared to the ethnicity of teachers in the state's one major metropolitan area – Omaha. The number of teachers in the Lexington and Grand Island districts from 2000 to 2006 grew modestly from 1700 to about 1900. In Omaha the number grew from about 9500 to 10,500. The number of teachers in Lexington and Grand Island micropolitan areas working in schools with more Hispanic than white students grew from 238 to 424 – most in the core town districts. The number of Omaha metro area teachers in predominantly Hispanic schools grew even more, but Omaha public schools includes a more complicated racial/ethnic dynamic, where in some schools Hispanic populations outnumber white populations, but may not outnumber black populations.

In schools with greater Hispanic than white populations in Omaha, about 90% of teachers are white. In Lexington and Grand Island, that number climbs to 97%. Among new teachers, in their first three years, in Omaha, teachers are 91% to 93% white and in Lexington and Grand Island, new teachers are 93% to 97% white (nearly 98% in 2005). There is little sign that teacher ethnic composition is changing or will in the near future to better match student populations.

Table 6 addresses the demography of teachers in high Hispanic concentration schools in Washington micropolitan areas and in Washington metropolitan areas, specifically Walla Walla and Moses Lake micropolitan area, and Seattle/Tacoma metropolitan area. Like the Nebraska analysis, I address all teachers and new teachers in an attempt to determine whether a more diverse population of new teachers is entering the labor market. Among all teachers, the percent of teachers in Hispanic schools in Walla Walla and Moses Lake micropolitan areas that are white is 93% to 94%. In

Seattle/Tacoma predominantly Hispanic schools, the teacher population is substantially less white, though not necessarily more Hispanic.

There appears to be some, though not much change when looking at new teachers in Hispanic micropolitan schools. The percent of those teachers who are white ranges from 88 to 93% from year to year, but does not appear to be trending toward greater diversity in the past 6 years. New teachers in Seattle/Tacoma also remain about as white as teachers of all experience levels.

Table 5
Racial Composition of Micropolitan and Metropolitan Teacher Workforce in Majority Hispanic Schools in Nebraska

						All Teachers		New Teachers	
year	*Teachers*	*Grand Island and Lexington Teachers*	*Omaha Metro Teachers*	*GI & Lex Teachers in High Hispanic Schools*	*Omaha Metro Teachers in High Hispanic Schools*	*% White GI & Lex Teachers in Hispanic Schools*	*% White Omaha Metro Teachers in Hispanic Schools*	*% White GI & Lex Teachers in Hispanic Schools*	*% White Omaha Metro Teachers in Hispanic Schools*
2000	27,420	1,715	9,470	238	440	97.4%	88.9%	93.0%	93.8%
2001	28,173	1,803	9,599	244	477	96.7%	88.6%	92.6%	91.2%
2002	28,476	1,819	9,626	245	495	96.3%	88.9%	93.8%	92.9%
2003	28,819	1,850	9,678	334	756	94.6%	90.4%	93.6%	91.9%
2004	28,951	1,867	9,702	337	781	95.5%	89.5%	92.8%	92.3%
2005	29,497	1,891	9,931	392	1,037	96.6%	90.5%	97.9%	92.8%
2006	30,664	1,925	10,435	424	1,267	96.2%	90.7%	93.2%	91.8%

Data Source: Nebraska Department of Education – Fall Staffing Survey

Table 6
Racial Composition of Micropolitan and Metropolitan Teacher Workforce in Majority Hispanic Schools in Washington

						All Teachers		New Teachers	
year	*Teachers*	*Moses Lake & Walla Walla Teachers*	*SeaTac Metro Teachers*	*ML & WW Teachers in High Hisp Schools*	*SeaTac Teachers in High Hisp Schools*	*% White ML/WW Teachers in Hisp Schools*	*% White SeaTac Teachers in Hisp Schools*	*% White ML/WW Teachers in Hisp Schools*	*% White SeaTac Teachers in Hisp Schools*
2001	51,186	1,392	24,224	303	678	93.07%	75.81%	88.2%	74.89%
2002	52,505	1,416	24,819	352	856	94.32%	76.17%	93.6%	77.89%
2003	53,155	1,437	25,107	410	925	94.63%	75.78%	92.3%	75.68%
2004	52,796	1,433	24,831	404	948	94.55%	74.37%	93.2%	73.74%
2005	53,572	1,493	25,207	434	1,176	93.78%	76.28%	91.9%	77.37%
2006	53,417	1,511	24,772	458	1,291	92.79%	76.22%	89.9%	74.93%

Data Source: State of Washington, Personnel Master Files

6.0 Economy of the Micropolis

In this subsection, I address briefly the economy of micropolitan areas in Nebraska and Washington. Reports from U.S. Census certainly validate that the areas discussed in this report tend to be highly productive agricultural regions. However, much of the education literature on the relationship between agri-business and student population demographic shift is either anecdotal or largely conjecture (see Monk, 2007). Grey (200?) for example, discusses the effect of the meatpacking industry in Iowa on demographic change and mobility in Iowa rural schools. While an intriguing and relevant case, Iowa does not appear to be as active a location for such change as the micropolitan areas identified herein. Notably, our analyses herein bear out many of those anecdotes and much of the conjecture, but we believe it to be important to present at least some relevant descriptive evidence.

Table 7 summarizes the employment by industry for Micropolitan counties in Nebraska (Dawson for Lexington and Hall for Grand Island). In both counties, the service sector remains the largest employer, with trade-transport-utilities also substantial. Manufacturing and Goods-Producing sectors are also large. And, manufacturing and goods producing salaries in these particular counties tend to be below average for the state. That said, as will be discussed in Chapter 2 of this volume, these are generally lower wage areas of the state.

Table 7

Employment by Industry in Micropolitan Counties in Nebraska

Nebraska

	Annual Average Employment			**Annual Average Employment**			**Annual Average Weekly Wage**		
Industry	State	Dawson County	Hall County	State Share	Dawson Share	Hall County	State	Dawson County	Hall County
Construction	98,154	418	1,859	3%	2%	3%	$759	$1,081	$724
Education and Health Services	225,634	651	3,356	7%	4%	6%	$711	$443	$666
Financial Activities	127,735	322	1,699	4%	2%	3%	$888	$636	$690
Goods-Producing	**324,930**	**4,589**	**8,655**	**11%**	**25%**	**15%**	**$742**	**$658**	**$702**
Information	38,836	97	330	1%	1%	1%	$1,088	$713	$719
Leisure and Hospitality	164,648	760	2,714	5%	4%	5%	$229	$169	$228
Manufacturing	**198,074**	**3,838**	**6,539**	**7%**	**21%**	**12%**	**$758**	**$625**	**$703**
Natural Resources and Mining	23,582	333	257	1%	2%	0%	$534	$515	$502
Other Services	48,707	231	916	2%	1%	2%	$464	$357	$346
Professional and Business Services	208,551	624	2,402	7%	3%	4%	$851	$439	$607
Service-Providing	1,198,735	4,662	19,704	39%	25%	35%	$651	$436	$522
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	382,952	1,975	8,287	13%	11%	15%	$590	$498	$512
Total Non-Government	3,040,538	18,500	56,718	100%	100%	100%			

* BLS 2007, County Level

ftp://ftp.bls.gov/pub/special.requests/cew/2007/county_high_level/

Table 8 provides the same data for Walla Walla County and Grant County in Washington. Again, the service sector is the largest employer, but goods-producing industries are second largest and particularly large in Walla Walla County. As in Nebraska, these Washington counties also have lower than average wages for Goods-Producing and Manufacturing jobs, but mainly because they are in lower than average wage regions of Washington.

Table 8

Employment by Industry in Micropolitan Counties in Washington

Washington

	Annual Average Employment			**Annual Average Employment**			**Annual Average Weekly Wage**		
Industry	State	Walla Walla County	Grant County	State	Walla Walla County	Grant County	State	Walla Walla County	Grant County
Construction	388,441	1,137	1,155	4%	3%	2%	$900	$633	$631
Education and Health Services	655,852	4,312	2,630	7%	11%	5%	$746	$709	$537
Financial Activities	303,040	906	779	3%	2%	1%	$1,132	$757	$656
Goods-Producing	**1,142,951**	**7,145**	**14,073**	**12%**	**18%**	**25%**	**$959**	**$658**	**$548**
Information	203,929	489	195	2%	1%	0%	$1,851	$710	$536
Leisure and Hospitality	551,374	1,856	2,298	6%	5%	4%	$345	$252	$248
Manufacturing	**578,336**	**3,115**	**4,481**	**6%**	**8%**	**8%**	**$1,146**	**$912**	**$822**
Natural Resources and Mining	175,510	2,894	8,437	2%	7%	15%	$473	$395	$392
Other Services	229,217	1,007	1,134	2%	2%	2%	$469	$271	$278
Professional and Business Services	670,024	838	1,620	7%	2%	3%	$1,093	$556	$402
Service-Providing	3,690,482	13,190	13,727	38%	32%	25%	$827	$555	$463
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	1,073,860	3,782	5,071	11%	9%	9%	$753	$537	$552
Total Non-Government	9,663,016	40,671	55,600	100%	100%	100%			

* BLS 2007, County Level
ftp://ftp.bls.gov/pub/special.requests/cew/2007/county_high_level/

These tables merely provide a snapshot of the economies of the counties that lie at the center of the presentation in this chapter. They do not speak directly to any causal link between certain types of industries, wages in those industries or specific immigrant populations. Appendix A provides a map of the geographic distribution of agricultural productivity, identifying these regions and others discussed herein as significant agricultural producers. Far more investigation into the underlying relationship between specific agribusiness and patterns of mobility among immigrant populations is warranted.

7.0 Implications for Tennessee

Aside from Tobacco and Cotton production, Tennessee is nolonger the type of agricultural state that others like Nebraska, Kansas (wheat, feed grains, livestock and meat) and Washington (produce) are. In addition, Tennessee is far more population dense on average than plains states in particular. But, Tennessee like many states has experienced at least some significant increases in rural Hispanic populations in specific locations. Figure 9 displays the Hispanic student concentrations of schools across Tennessee, with larger red circles indicating schools with higher Hispanic concentrations. Grey diagonal dashed counties are micropolitan counties. Tennessee is home to numerous micropolitan counties. A handful of micropolitan counties in Tennessee show elevated Hispanic student concentrations in schools. But, most predominantly Hispanic schools are clustered in the Nashville and Memphis areas.

Figure 9
Location of Majority Hispanic Schools in Tennessee

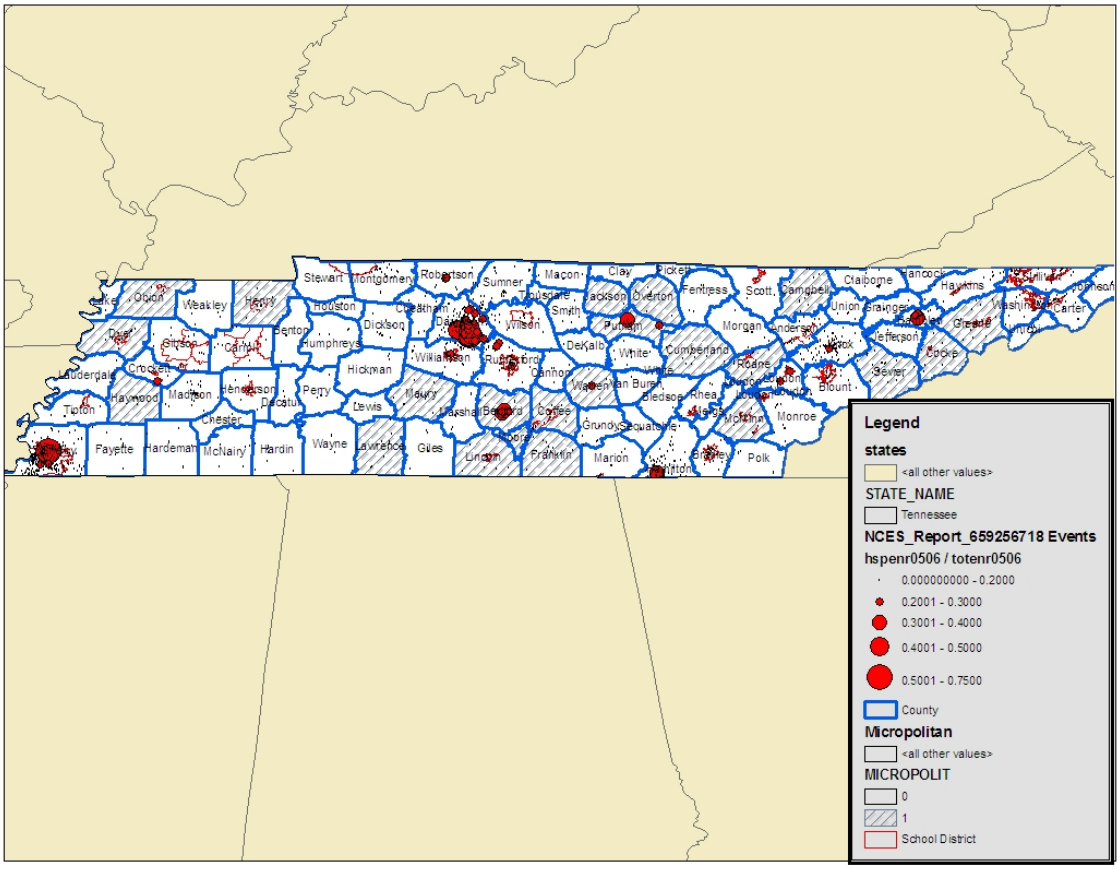


Figure 10 shows the geographic distribution of schools with elevated Hispanic student concentrations in the Nashville metro area, according to data from the 2005-06 National Center for Education Statistics Common Core of Data. Most are located along the I-24 corridor running from Berry Hill to the southeast. At the time of preparation of this report, data on individual teachers was unavailable for evaluating potential connections between student demographics and teacher qualifications in Tennessee.

Figure 10
Hispanic Schools it the Nashville Metro
2005-06

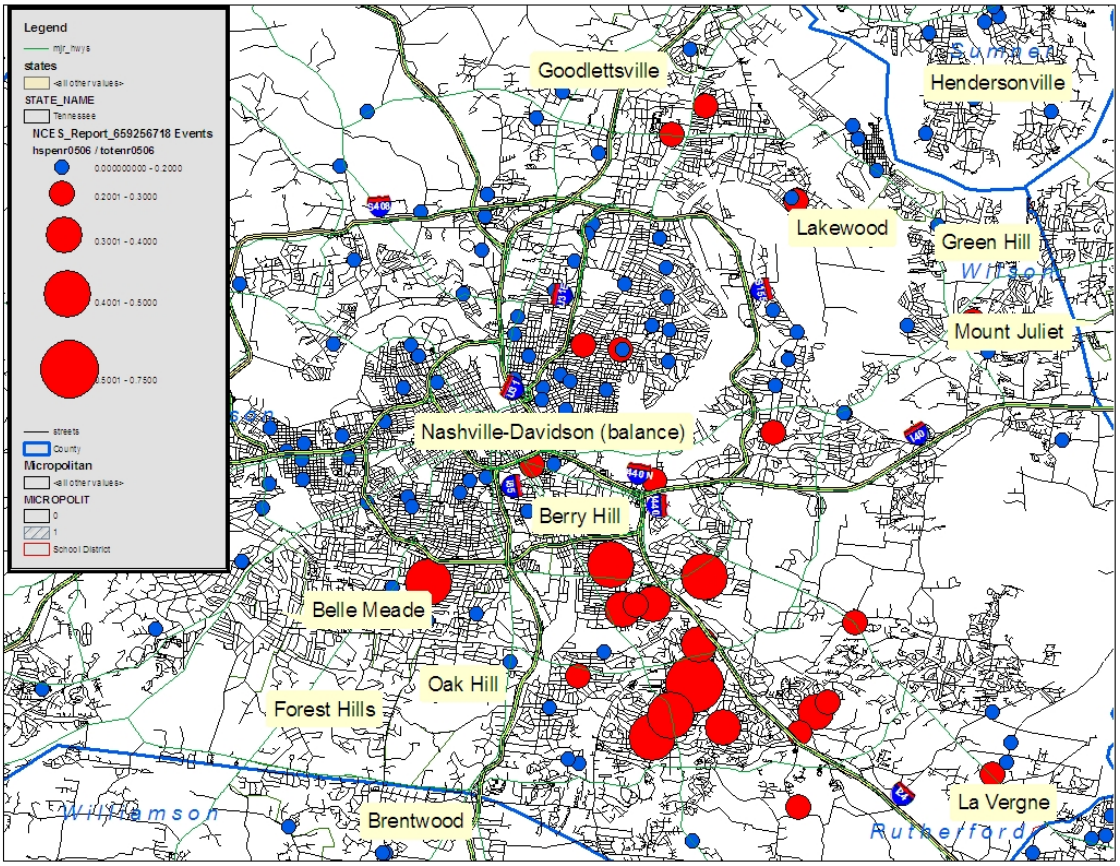
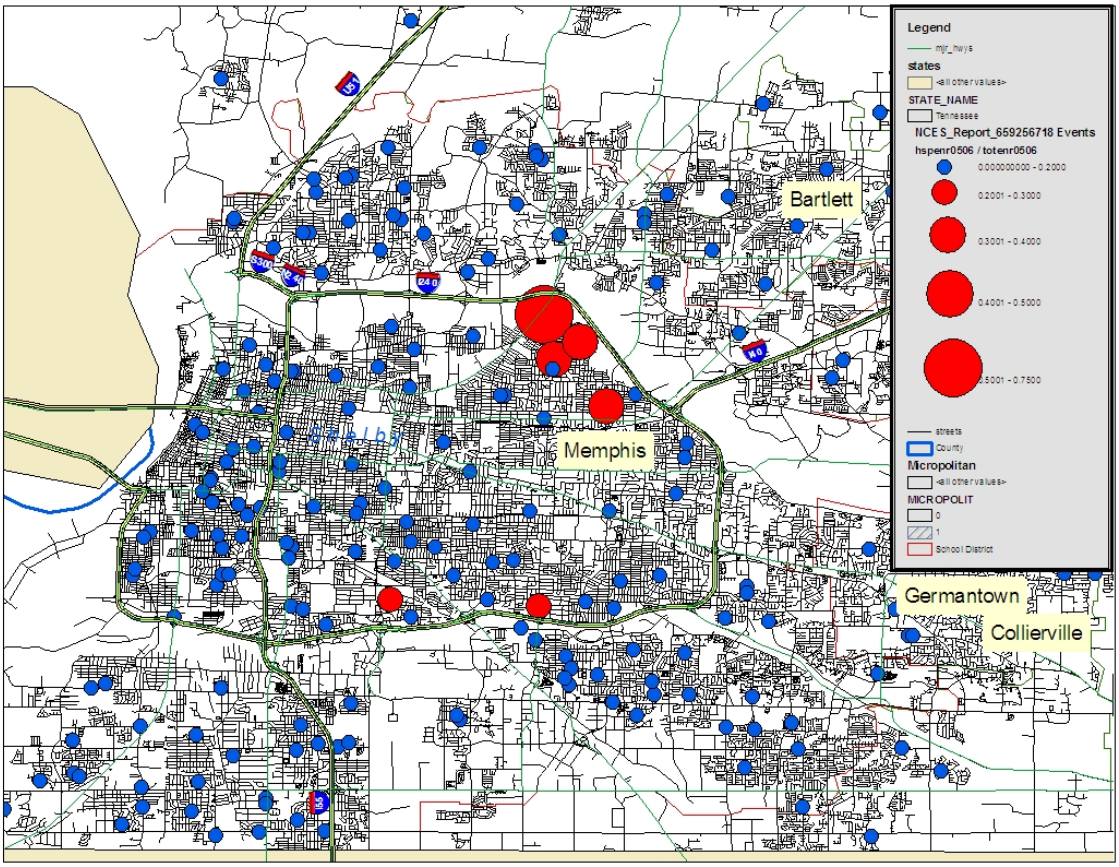


Figure 11 displays the distribution of schools with elevated Hispanic student concentrations in the Memphis area. There are but a handful of such schools in this predominantly black area. Most are located in the northeastern part of the city.

Figure 11
Hispanic schools in the Memphis Metro
2005-06



7.1 Emerging Micropolitans in Tennessee

Figure 12 displays one of the Tennessee Counties – Bedford County – which is a micropolitan county, which in its core town of Shelbyville, has many schools with elevated Hispanic student populations. Given the relevant data on teachers, Bedford County and Shelbyville might provide an interesting context for exploring micropolitan teacher labor markets in Tennessee. Shelbyville is home to Tyson foods.

Figure 12
School level Hispanic Population Concentration in Bedford County
2005-06

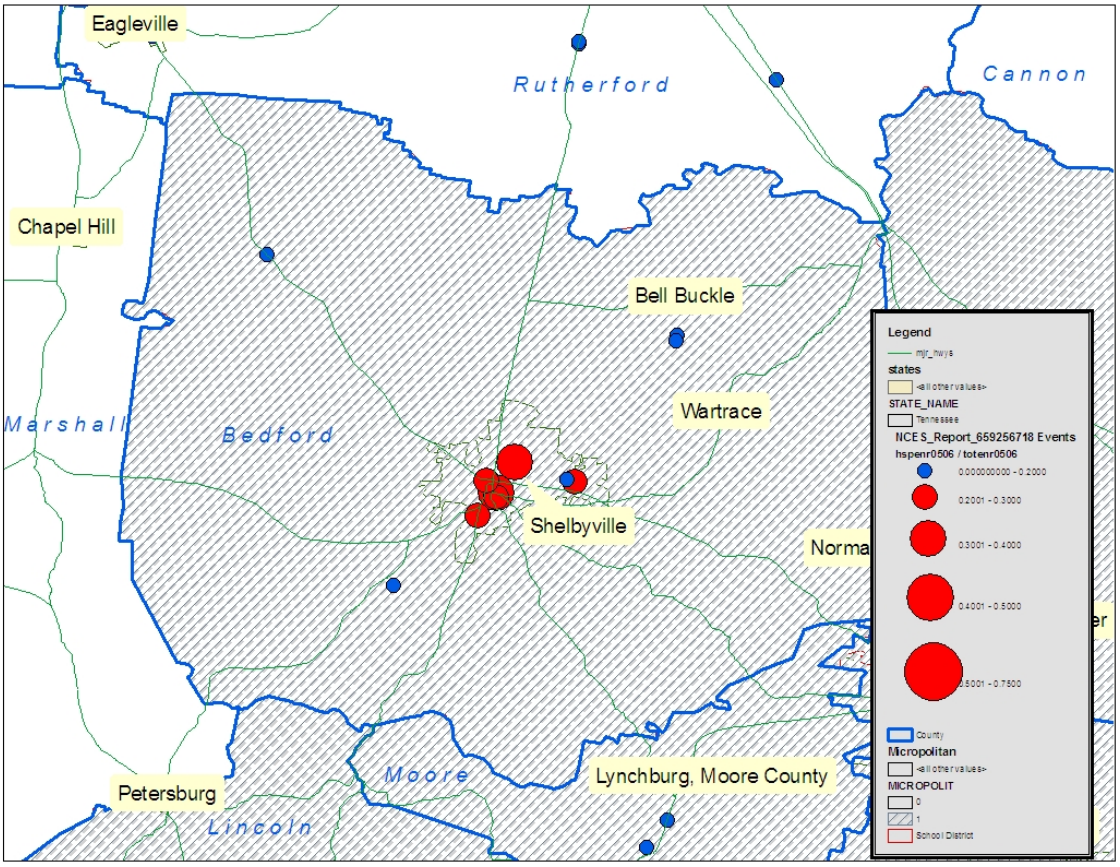


Figure 13 displays the Warren county micropolitan area around McMinnville, TN. By 2005-06, McMinnville was home to one school with elevated Hispanic student population.

Figure 13
School level Hispanic Population Concentration in Warren County
2005-06

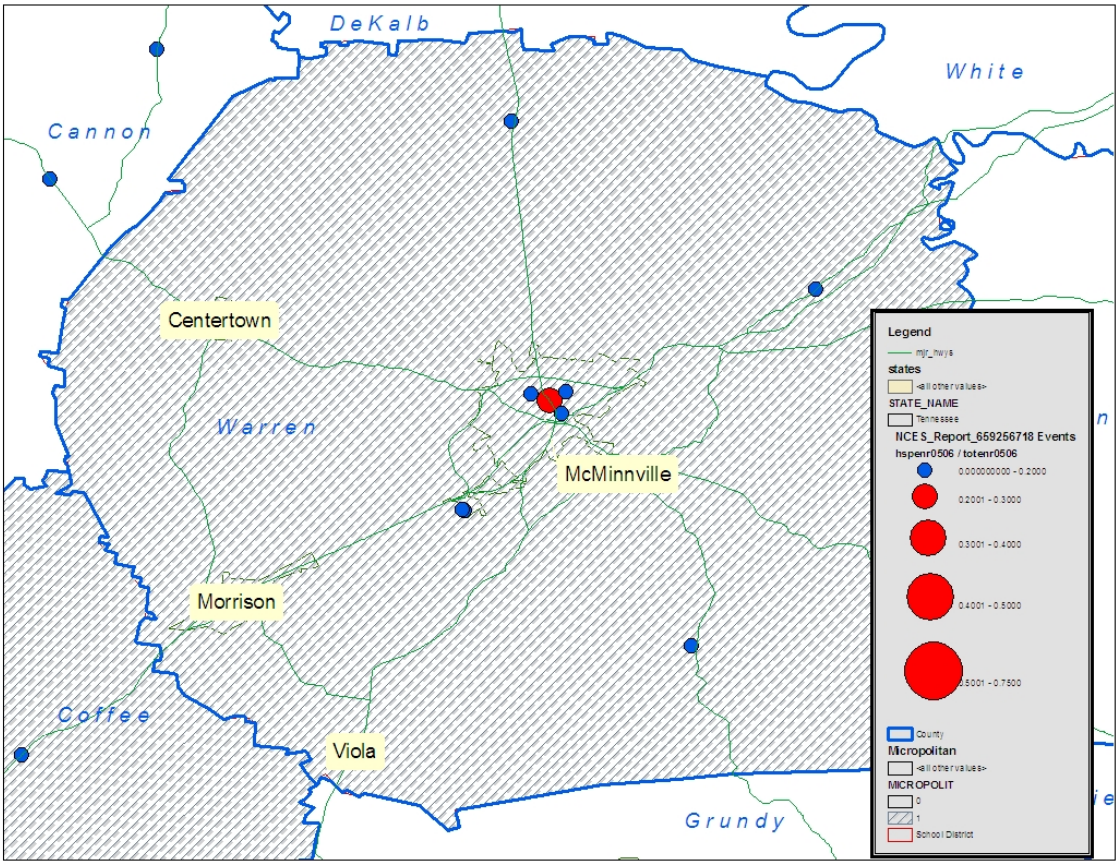
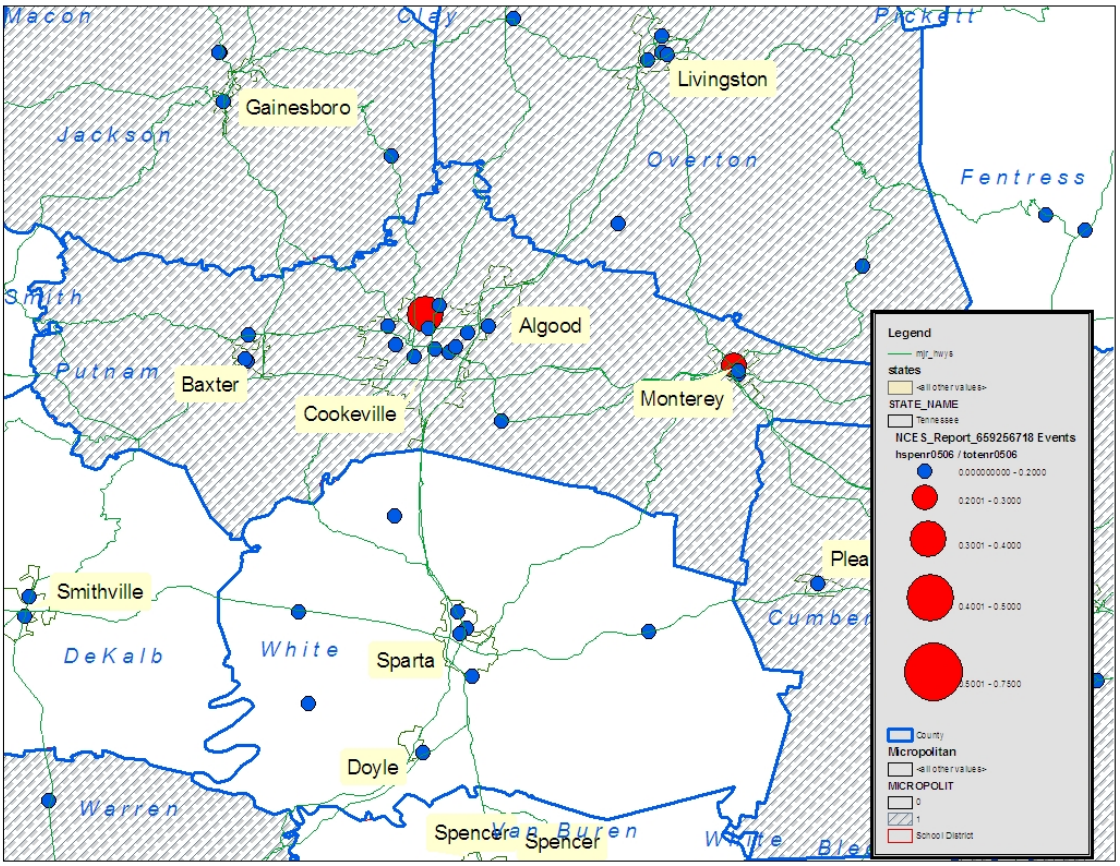


Figure 14 shows the distribution of schools and Hispanic student concentrations around Putnam, Overton and Jackson Counties. Like the McMinnville area, a handful of schools presently show elevated Hispanic student concentrations.

Figure 14
School level Hispanic Population Concentration in Putnam County
2005-06



Conclusions & Policy Implications

On average, we do find micropolitan schools to be substantively different from either metropolitan or rural schools, in terms of their student populations and decennial changes in those populations. More importantly, however, we find significant regional differences in micropolitan schooling, with some of the most significant changes occurring in states such as Kansas, Nebraska, Idaho and Washington.

A question of significant policy concern is how well states with micropolitan areas experiencing new and dramatic influx of Hispanic and LEP/ELL immigrant populations are adjusting policies to sufficiently accommodate these growing and costly educational needs. Indeed, even those states that have historically had large Hispanic and LEP/ELL populations and continue to show growth, have provided only mixed support for these growing educational needs. Under Federal Court oversight, in a case brought under the Federal Equal Educational Opportunities Act (EEOA), at the time of the writing of this paper, the Arizona legislature was being fined on a daily basis for not complying with a federal court order to provide sufficient funding to meet the needs of LEP/ELL children (Flores v. Arizona). Since that time, the case has been remanded to the district court for additional review, by the US Supreme Court with de-emphasis on the role of funding to achieve adequate programs. Future prospects for immigrant populations to use EEOA as a basis for increased resources are now bleak.

In states like Arizona, California, Texas and Florida, Hispanic immigrant population growth in particular has occurred across both metropolitan areas and micropolitan areas. By contrast, this growth in Kansas, Nebraska and Washington in particular has occurred in micropolitan centers, most with economies built on agri-business, including meat-packing industries. The plight of non-English-speaking, Hispanic immigrant populations is much less well understood in states like Kansas, Nebraska and Washington than in southern Texas or California, but is gaining some attention within the context of legal challenges to the adequacy of educational resources, where previously most attention was centered on poor urban areas.

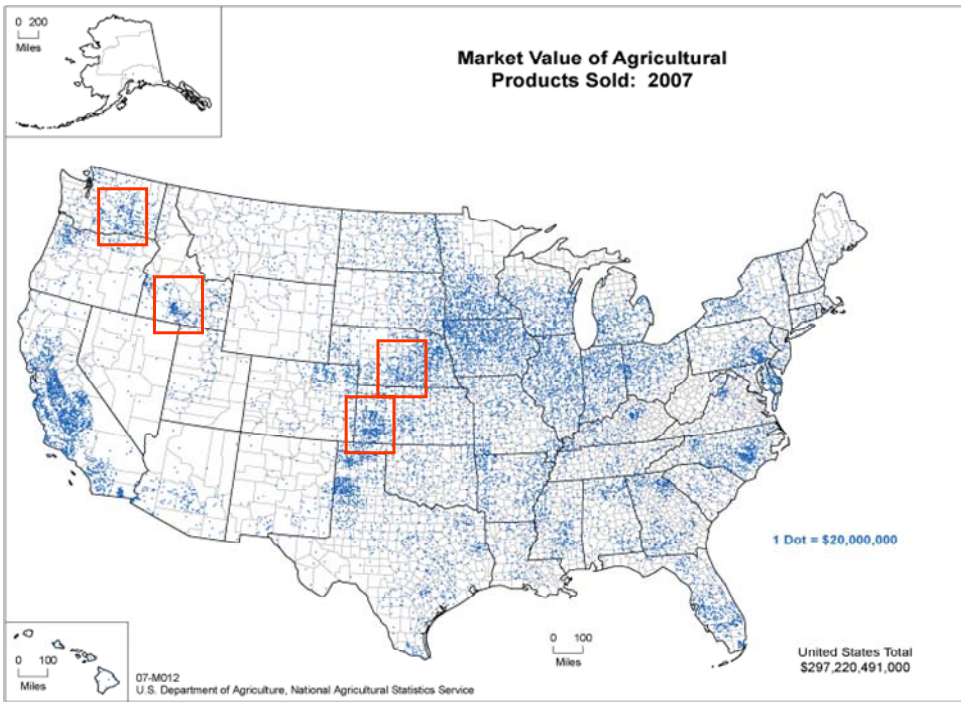
In January of 2005, the Supreme Court of the State of Kansas found in favor of plaintiff school districts that the present system of financing Kansas schools fails to meet the state constitutional requirement to "make suitable provision for finance of the educational interests of the state." (Article 6, Section 6) Plaintiff districts in the case are mid-sized towns including Dodge City, a stereo-typical rapidly changing micropolitan community (Montoy v. Kansas). Only after the court found in plaintiff's favor metropolitan districts joined with micropolitan plaintiffs in hopes of benefiting from court imposed remedies. Similarly, in 2003, school districts in Nebraska, including high-need rapidly changing micropolitan communities such as Lexington, along side the state's one major metropolitan area (Omaha), filed suit over the failure of the state system of school finance to respond to their rapidly changing needs. That case has since been settled, but these districts continue to rely on tenuous funding streams.

Beyond the responsiveness, or lack thereof, of state school finance policies to the changing needs of these communities we suspect that rapidly changing micropolitan communities lag behind metropolitan areas in other important ways in shifting their educational focus to accommodate their changing needs.

Chapter 3 of this report explores the teacher workforce in these communities, on the suspicion that many high need micropolitan schools are staffed by an aging teacher workforce that is predominantly female and predominantly white. We suspect that the gaps between teacher and student demographics are even greater than those in metropolitan areas. These gaps may exist in part due to the limited availability of higher education institutions in micropolitan communities and cultural, financial and legal barriers that limit access to institutions that are available. States such as Kansas are currently revisiting undocumented immigrant tuition policies at public higher education institutions, which may further constrain future supplies of teachers for these communities.

We hardly expect that leading urban education reformers will be chomping at the bit to be first in line to overhaul public schooling in Walla Walla, Washington, Dodge City, Kansas or Lexington, Nebraska. The lack of interest among big players in redesigning micropolitan education should be seen as an opportunity for a more calculated, context sensitive approach. While on the one hand, it may be valuable to evaluate the transferability of reforms that shown varied success in urban environments, we argue that it may be equally valuable to use the micropolitan circumstance to rethink our reform strategies, and identify more context appropriate interventions.

APPENDIX A


Market Value of Agricultural Products Sold: 2007
0 200
Miles
1 Dot = $20,000,000
0 100
Miles
United States Total
$297,220,491,000
0 100
Miles
07-M012
U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistics Service

APPENDIX B

Top10SX.xls

U.S. agricultural exports, by leading States: Estimated value by commodity group, FY 2007

Commodity group	United States	Leading 10 States, by value									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
		Million dollars									
		CA	IA	TX	IL	NE	KS	MN	WA	ND	IN
Total	81,947.1	11,301.7	5,246.8	5,198.6	4,719.5	4,046.8	3,834.8	3,581.8	2,649.4	2,564.6	2,414.6
		IA	IL	NE	MN	IN	KS	TX	SD	OH	MO
Feed grains and products	11,847.7	1,953.5	1,894.9	1,268.8	947.7	824.0	752.8	492.4	468.2	453.6	396.6
		IA	IL	MN	IN	OH	NE	MO	SD	ND	AR
Soybeans and products	11,027.2	1,871.6	1,494.8	1,075.5	898.3	828.0	812.1	718.1	569.7	446.4	428.4
		ND	KS	TX	MT	SD	WA	MN	CO	OK	NE
Wheat and products	8,457.7	1,030.8	1,012.8	529.1	525.5	454.3	428.4	354.5	336.9	333.8	312.9
		IA	NE	KS	TX	IL	NC	MN	KY	IN	MO
Live animals and meat	6,787.0	1,016.8	801.5	596.2	509.0	404.9	371.5	368.1	321.1	253.0	246.9
		CA	WA	FL	OR	MI	NY	TX	AZ	HI	ME
Fruit and preparations	5,026.3	2,443.9	946.2	729.8	170.6	122.0	117.8	74.8	46.6	38.4	32.4
		TX	AR	CA	GA	MS	NC	MO	LA	TN	AZ
Cotton and linters	4,305.3	1,824.0	415.7	404.1	364.0	289.0	171.7	167.5	153.3	131.5	114.2
		CA	WA	ID	ND	FL	OR	WI	MN	MI	AZ
Vegetables and preparations	4,296.7	1,698.9	503.9	362.4	240.3	179.1	145.3	139.9	128.4	106.2	92.9
		GA	AR	NC	AL	MS	TX	IN	CA	SC	VA
Poultry and products	3,776.9	419.7	380.2	364.8	309.9	253.5	194.1	153.7	125.9	106.7	102.3
		CA	GA	OR	NM	TX	AZ	OK	HI	AL	LA
Tree nuts	3,024.1	2,775.5	66.1	58.2	37.5	37.0	12.2	10.6	7.9	7.9	6.3
		KS	TX	NE	IA	ND	MN	MO	ID	CO	OK
Feeds and fodders	2,886.1	469.8	448.1	224.4	144.4	135.7	108.4	91.4	87.9	80.3	80.0
		WI	CA	NY	ID	MN	NM	PA	OH	SD	IA
Dairy products 1/	2,518.0	582.5	566.2	217.8	146.6	113.4	111.9	86.3	41.8	38.9	38.8
		KS	NE	TX	WI	CO	CA	UT	WA	MN	IA
Hides and skins	2,159.3	419.5	403.1	322.2	166.0	133.8	89.6	80.8	68.9	67.2	57.2
		AR	CA	LA	MS	MO	TX	na	na	na	na
Rice	1,403.3	640.2	381.4	144.3	88.4	83.5	65.6	na	na	na	na
		NC	KY	TN	GA	VA	CT	na	na	na	na
Tobacco, unmanufactured	1,143.9	409.6	386.3	55.5	53.8	52.6	50.0	na	na	na	na
		CA	OR	ND	FL	KS	AZ	IN	GA	WA	NV
Seeds	936.3	210.2	174.3	72.1	34.0	33.7	31.0	29.9	26.5	25.6	19.4
		KS	NE	TX	CO	IA	WI	CA	IL	MN	WA
Animal fats	749.1	145.1	145.0	111.5	42.7	38.7	34.6	32.8	25.4	24.2	21.4
		GA	TX	AL	FL	NC	SC	MS	OK	VA	na
Peanuts and products	249.2	109.1	49.2	27.2	21.4	16.8	11.6	4.0	3.9	3.8	na
		ND	SD	KS	MN	CO	NE	TX	na	na	na
Sunflowerseed and oil	196.1	101.3	43.5	15.9	13.0	9.2	4.1	3.6	na	na	na
		TX	AR	CA	GA	MS	MO	NC	LA	TN	AZ
Cottonseed and products	123.7	53.7	12.6	10.3	9.1	8.8	5.2	4.6	4.3	3.8	3.4
		CA	FL	PA	IL	WA	OR	TX	OH	MN	NC
Other 2/	11,033.5	2,022.5	730.5	529.1	503.2	469.1	409.9	392.9	339.4	276.3	265.6

na = not applicable.

1/ Methodology revised starting in 2007 to estimate shares based on state production of cheese, butter, dry whey, ice cream, and sherbet.

2/ Other = Sugar and tropical products, minor oilseeds, essential oils, beverages other than juice, nursery and greenhouse, wine, and misc. vegetable products.

Source: Compiled by ERS using data from U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau and U.S. Department of Agriculture, National

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