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### The Relationship Between Parental Participation in School Choice Selection Process and Attendance, Behavior, and Mobility in Secondary Students

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# The Relationship Between Parental Participation in School Choice Selection Process and Attendance, Behavior, and Mobility in Secondary Students

## Abstract

School choice selection process provides parents the option to enroll their child(ren) in a school that is aligned with the policy that is reflective of the specific district of residence. While there is research on school choice selection processes, this research study has focused on three primary student factors: student attendance, student behavior, and mobility of secondary students. This quantitative study examined the relationship between parents completing a school choice selection application or not completing a school choice selection application and the three primary student factors. This study examined existing achieved data of Grade 7 and Grade 9 students who transitioned during the 2015-2016 school year and results of a parent survey conducted by the school district. The data was split into groups by grade level and then by students whose parents completed a school choice selection application and students whose parents did not complete a school choice selection application. After applying a random sample to both groups, the data was analyzed using a point-biserial correlation. The analysis indicated that students whose parents participate in the school choice application process was significant for attendance and behavior. There was no significance for mobility. While the effect size was small, any factor that increases attendance and decrease missed instructional days is a positive factor in education. It is recommended that the school district continues the school choice selection process; however, further research regarding parents' perspective of the process and how that could increase the number of parents participating should be done.

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The Relationship Between Parental Participation in School Choice Selection Process and  
Attendance, Behavior, and Mobility in Secondary Students

By

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Submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree  
Ed.D. in Executive Leadership

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## **Dedication**

This dissertation is dedicated to my husband Larry, who without his support, I would not have been able to complete this journey. He has never said no to me wanting to learn more since I began this journey in 1998. He has spent many hours without me while I have been reading and writing without complaint. Thank you honey. I love you and yes, I am done.

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My mom, Sandi, who was my grammar editor, food deliverer and late-night meal date. Thank you for finding those double paragraphs and missing words where my mind worked faster than my fingers could type. Thank you. Love you.

To my sisters, Lisa (Jeff) and Michelle (Miles), and my brother, Chris (Pamela), who encouraged and supported me along the way. Always available for a phone conversation, a lunch conversation, or just a quick text of checking in on my progress. Love you all.

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And lastly, to my angels in heaven who have been with me every step of the way.

### **Biographical Sketch**

Suzanne Newton is currently the central registrar at the Large Urban School District. Mrs. Newton attended St. John Fisher College from 1998 to 2002 and graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in 2002. She attended St. John Fisher College from 2003-2004 and graduated with a Master of Science degree in 2004. She came to St. John Fisher College in the summer of 2017 and began doctoral studies in the Ed.D. Program in Executive Leadership. Mrs. Newton pursued her research in the relationship between parental participation in school choice selection process and attendance, behavior, and mobility in secondary students under the direction of Dr. Jason Berman and Dr. Jeanette Silvers and received the Ed. D. degree in 2019.

## **Abstract**

School choice selection process provides parents the option to enroll their child(ren) in a school that is aligned with the policy that is reflective of the specific district of residence. While there is research on school choice selection processes, this research study has focused on three primary student factors: student attendance, student behavior, and mobility of secondary students. This quantitative study examined the relationship between parents completing a school choice selection application or not completing a school choice selection application and the three primary student factors. This study examined existing achieved data of Grade 7 and Grade 9 students who transitioned during the 2015-2016 school year and results of a parent survey conducted by the school district. The data was split into groups by grade level and then by students whose parents completed a school choice selection application and students whose parents did not complete a school choice selection application. After applying a random sample to both groups, the data was analyzed using a point-biserial correlation. The analysis indicated that students whose parents participate in the school choice application process was significant for attendance and behavior. There was no significance for mobility. While the effect size was small, any factor that increases attendance and decrease missed instructional days is a positive factor in education. It is recommended that the school district continues the school choice selection process; however, further research regarding parents' perspective of the process and how that could increase the number of parents participating should be done.

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## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

Several large public school districts in the United States now provide parents with a choice of which school to send their child(ren) to for an education. Choice means that parents may enroll their child(ren) in a school other than the one closest to their home or within their zoned area (Ely & Teske, 2015, Pattillo, 2015). School choice selection started with No Child Left Behind legislation which states that parents have the right to change their child's school if the school is not providing an adequate education (U.S. Department of Education, 2017). Selections due to inadequate education may be made at any grade, Kindergarten through Grade 12 (U.S. Department of Education, 2017). However, some large public schools are providing a school choice selection process where parents can select the school their child will attend next. For example, when the student is transitioning from elementary school to secondary school. School choice selection process at transitional periods in education may allow parents to select schools with more unique offerings than their neighborhood school (Billingham, 2015; Condliffe, Boyd, & Deluca, 2015; Lay, 2016).

Additionally, as education has evolved over the years, parents are looking for alternative settings for their child's education than the one determined by the school district (Rabovsky, 2011). Parents are looking for more equitable education in some cases, or a grade configuration, or more advanced placement courses, or more sports options which would be of interest to their child and motivate that child to do well in school (Condliffe et al., 2015; Lay, 2016; Rabovsky, 2011). Districts vary in what is

offered to parents. Some of those options include zoned schools, magnet or specialized schools, single-gender schools, and specific grade configuration schools (Condliffe et al., 2015; Ely & Teske, 2015; Rabovsky, 2011). Other options include charter schools, private schools, and homeschooling (Condliffe et al., 2015; Ely & Teske, 2015; Rabovsky, 2011). Whatever the options, parents need information to make an informed choice, including what criteria would exclude their application from being approved (Phillippo & Griffin, 2016).

To understand the school choice selection process, parents need an understanding of the process used in the district where they reside. According to Moe (2008), “school choice selection process always operates within a structure – a framework of governmental rules – which in turn shapes the kinds of outcomes that choice will ultimately generate” (p. 557). If the choice structure did not exist, then school choice selection process would not exist. School districts would tell parents which school their child(ren) would attend and that would be the parents only choice (Moe, 2008). However, according to New York State School Boards Association (Sokol, 2010), school districts determine which school students will attend and school boards determine if the district will have a board policy that states specific rules regarding the selection and placement of students into schools. School board members have three main types of school choice selection models that can be utilized.

The three main types of school choice selection processes include: a lottery system, a managed selection system, and an application process. A school district may utilize one, all, or a combination of any two models in its board policy on school choice selection process. However, whatever selection process the school board determines to

be appropriate for the district, it should be aligned with educational law (Sokol, 2010) and accessible by parents.

### **School Choice Selection Policy**

School districts have a governing board that determines how the district will conduct business with its stakeholders, one of which is the parents and the enrollment of their child(ren). According to Wilder-Linkow (2011), having a school choice selection policy that allows parents to have an active role in deciding where their child(ren) will receive their education, should result in better student outcomes. However according to New York State school law (Sokol, 2010), it is up to the individual school district to establish a school choice selection policy. For example, the Large Urban School District (LUSD), site of this study, has created a school choice selection policy that outlines the historical context of school choice selection process, student enrollment, school improvement, mobility, homeschools, transportation, as well as 16 key concepts to be followed when placing students in a school (Board Policy 5153, 2008). Such as at the secondary level families must choose five schools and rank them in order of preference from one to five. Parents must also follow the rules for transfers between schools which according to board policy allows one transfer per year, unless it is for a safety transfer.

### **Selection Types**

In a district with a school choice selection process, there are several ways in which parents may select a school for their child(ren) to attend. The options can include a lottery system, a managed or controlled selection system, and an application process. A district may utilize one, all, or a combination of these methods. A full description of each selection type is in Chapter 2. Parents should know the selection process, just as they

know the information about the schools they are selecting for their child(ren), including what may keep them out.

### **Gatekeepers**

While a school choice selection process gives parents the option of selecting a secondary school for their child to attend, many times there are obstacles preventing them from selecting or gaining admission to certain schools. One district in Chicago determines if a student will be admitted based on a portfolio score (Phillippo & Griffin, 2016). Other districts may use assessment scores as well to determine acceptance. There are some schools in New York City that base acceptance on assessment scores; however, the school must accept a specified percentage of students from above grade level, on grade level, and below grade level (Ehlers, Hafalir, Yenmez, & Yildirim, 2014). Other gatekeepers, such as the ones used by LUSD, include requiring parents to sign a school compact agreeing to the rules and consequences, students may be required to interview with the principal, or they may need to audition.

### **Problem Statement**

If parents choose a secondary school that is satisfactory to both them and their child(ren), it can provide a stable education. School choice, according to Rabovsky is defined as “allowing students to transfer out of the public school to which they normally would be assigned based on residence” (2011, p. 87). Parents need to know the type of school choice selection process established in their school district to navigate through each step (Lay, 2016). Each year, according to the school choice board policy 5153 for the LUSD, parents of students in Grades 6 and Grade 8 are given the opportunity to select and rank up to three schools for their child(ren) to attend the following year (LUSD,

2018). However, each year there are parents who do not participate in the school choice selection process. When parents do not participate, their child(ren) is placed in any school that has a seat available.

After the selection process and assignment of schools is completed, students who did not get the school of their choice were left with the neighborhood school or in the students' words, the school where the dumpster kids go (Phillippo & Griffin, 2016). Condliffe et al.'s (2015) found that families chose a school based on non-academic reasons, such as closeness to home or peers attending same school. Additionally, the results showed that many inner-city families were not exposed to the specialized programs offered and as such did not select the higher academic schools.

Currently, the LUSD struggles to improve student attendance. During the 2015-2016 school year attendance was only at 88% of the total population (NYSED, 2018). The LUSD struggles to improve student behavior. During the 2015-2016 school year, the LUSD saw a total of 7,114 discipline events leading to student suspensions totaling 37,908 lost days of instruction of which 2,713 discipline events were reportable events to New York State Department of Education (NYSED, 2018). The LUSD also struggles to improve the mobility rate of students in Grade 7 and 9. During the 2015-2016 school year approximately 490 students voluntarily transferred to another school (J. Capezzuto, personal communication, August 23, 2018). School placement may be one factor leading to these struggles. However, there exists a gap in the literature regarding parental participation in the school selection process and its relationship to secondary students' attendance, behavior, and mobility.

## **Theoretical Rationale**

Self-determination theory has been the theoretical framework for empirical research. In 2015, Grolnick, Raftery-Helmer, Flamm, Marbell, and Cardemil (2015) used the SDT framework when researching parents influence on student transition to middle school. SDT looks at the social influences and how those influences impact motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2008). To gather data, Grolnick et al. (2015) interviewed 160 students, once in Grade 6 and then again in Grade 7. However, the second year, not all students participated. The results of the study showed evidence that parental influences can impact student autonomous motivation (Grolnick et al., 2015). SDT's mini theory of organismic integration theory relies on the basic need of relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2012). The students needed to trust and feel part of their parent's community to internalize their suggestions on middle school. Just as the student in this study may need to trust their parent's choice of school for their secondary education.

Self-determination theory is different from other motivation theories in that SDT links the social environment impact on intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2002, 2012). Deci and Ryan (2000, 2002) identified three basic needs that link social environments and self-determination theory: competence, relatedness and autonomy. The first, competence deals with a person's ability to take risks with his or her capabilities. Next, relatedness deals with how a person feels connected with others, a sense of belonging. Last, autonomy is a person's ability to take responsibility for one's own actions and decisions (Deci & Ryan, 2002, 2012).

Self-determination theory is based on the belief that people are naturally active and intrinsically motivated. However, intrinsic motivation develops over time and

outside environments can affect it (Deci & Ryan, 2012, 2002). Self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2017) connects the motivation of why a person does an action to the activity. Unlike operant theory that relies on extrinsic or outside motivation such as rewards, SDT relies on intrinsic or inner motivation to complete an activity (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

Self-determination theory began as a way of explaining why a person engages in one activity or another (Deci & Ryan, 2002, 2012). Deci and Ryan (2002) distinguished that SDT is different than other behavior theories in that SDT believes actions occur because a person is intrinsically motivated not because of a reward. Self-determination theory developed after studies on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2012). In 1971, Deci and Ryan studied the effects of rewards given to college students and completion of tasks (Deci & Ryan, 2012). The results showed college students were unmotivated to complete a task to earn a reward. Deci and Ryan (2012) followed this study with more studies to confirm the results.

As the theory evolved, six mini theories became apparent within SDT. First, cognitive evaluation theory (CET) evolved to explain how outside factors were impacting intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2012). This mini theory looks at how rewards affect intrinsic motivation. Second, causality orientations theory (COT) looks at whether the person is autonomy orientated or controlled orientated (Deci & Ryan, 2012). Third, organismic integration theory (OIT) is internal and resolves around a person's need to belong. Fourth, basic psychological needs theory (BPNT) focuses on the overall well-being of the person (Deci & Ryan, 2012). The fifth mini theory, goal content theory (GCT), looks at whether a person has intrinsic goals or extrinsic goals. Finally, the sixth

mini theory, relationships motivation theory (RMT), focuses personal relationships and belonging (Deci & Ryan, 2017). Depending on the type of goal determines the impact on their well-being (Deci & Ryan, 2012).

SDT has grown and changed over the past 30 years. Self-determination theory now includes six mini theories that support how the theory, intrinsic motivation, social environments, and basic needs are all connected. Deci and Ryan (2000, 2002, 2012) found that there was a connection between extrinsic factors and intrinsic motivation. Three orientations identified as autonomous, controlled, and impersonal can determine an individual's level of motivation.

Deci and Ryan's (2012) self-determination theory provides a theoretical lens on the motivation families utilize when determining where their child(ren) should attend school. The SDT lens shows the influences that social environments have on intrinsic motivation. Additionally, through SDT's mini theories a closer look at how parents make a choice is possible from multiple lens.

One mini theory of cognitive evaluation theory provides an explanation for how extrinsic factors influence intrinsic motivation of parents when choosing a school. Some of the extrinsic factors include information on the District website, information mailed home by the District, information on social media and in the news, and information shared between friends. CET additionally, examines the extrinsic factor of feedback (Deci & Ryan, 2012). Parents requesting information may choose a school based on the type of feedback received.

Another mini theory of SDT that will explain why parents select one school over another is basic psychological needs theory (BPNT). SDT identifies three basic needs

that everyone requires. Those needs are autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2012). Parents want their child(ren) to be successful in school. Parents want their child(ren) to feel a sense of belonging in school. Self-determination theory will provide the framework to guide the research throughout the study including how the participants were motivated, or not, to participate in the school choice selection process.

### **Statement of Purpose**

The purpose of this study was to determine if students of parents who completed a school choice application had better attendance, better behavior that does not result in disciplinary action, and less mobility than students of parents who did not complete a school choice application.

### **Research Questions**

To understand the effect that participation in the school choice selection process plays in secondary students' education, the following three research questions will guide the research:

RQ1: What is the relationship between parent participation in the school choice selection process and student attendance?

RQ2: What is the relationship between parent participation in the school choice selection process and student behavior requiring disciplinary action?

RQ3: What is the relationship between parent participation in the school choice process selection and student mobility?

In addition, to understand the parent's motivation in participating in the selection process a fourth and final research question guided that research:

RQ4: What factors motivated parents to participate in the school choice selection process for their child?

### **Potential Significance of the Study**

This study is significant because it investigated how the choice a parent makes may impact the secondary education of their child. There is limited literature regarding how students succeed in secondary school based on the choices made by their parents. The participants in the study all had the opportunity to participate in the school choice selection process. However, not all parents made the choice to participate. Parents making the choice at the start of a child's secondary education is an important transition that may positively or negatively impact the child.

School choice selection process is relevant to the educational field as the options available for families have increased and school districts have a role in supporting parents to know what those options are and what they offer (Glazerman & Dotter, 2017; Jacobs, 2011). Gaining insight into whether parents do or do not make a choice and knowing that decision's impact on a student's secondary academic years may change how districts proceed in future years with their school choice selection process (Glazerman & Dotter, 2017; Jacobs, 2011).

### **Definitions of Terms**

*Attendance:* Attendance will be defined as the percentage of days a student missed during the school year in relation to the days enrolled for the following 3 school years: 2015-2016; 2016-2017; 2017-2018.

*Behavior:* student behavior will be defined as the percentage of classroom days missed due to student disciplinary action resulting in removal of the student from the

school or classroom for two days or longer per year for the following 3 school years: 2015-2016; 2016-2017; 2017-2018.

*Mobility:* student mobility will be defined by the number of times a student voluntarily transfers from one school to another, including schools outside of the District for the following 3 school years: 2015-2016; 2016-2017; 2017-2018.

*School choice:* school choice is defined as the parents have the options of completing an application or not completing an application on which school they would like their child to attend for Grades 7 and 9.

### **Chapter Summary**

While having a school choice selection policy is not required by law, research shows that many school districts have implemented a school choice selection policy. The process of a school boards implementing a school choice selection policy when the No Child Left Behind legislation took effect requiring that students may voluntarily transfer if their school was not providing an adequate education (Department of Education, 2017). A school choice selection policy determines how students will be placed in a secondary school (Moe, 2008). That school choice selection policy may look different for each school district. No matter the school choice selection policy, the goal is to give parents options for their child's secondary education (Rabovsky, 2011).

Research has shown that the intent of school choice selection policy does not always have the same meaning for all (Jacobs, 2011; Lay, 2016; Rabovsky, 2011). There are districts that may include charter schools. There are districts that may include magnet schools. No matter the options, it is up to the parents to know how the school choice selection policy works in the district in which they live (Glazerman & Dotter, 2017).

Knowing how the school choice selection policy works may support parents in making an informed choice. Yet, in one large urban school district, some parents do not participate in the school of choice process and their child(ren) are placed in a school that has an available seat (J. Capezzuto, personal communication, August 23, 2018).

There is a need to identify the relationship between parents participating in the school choice selection process or not participating in the school choice selection process and students' attendance, behavior, and mobility. For the stakeholders of the LUSD, identifying the relationship between participating or not participating may provide insight into the importance of participation, or the need to revise the school choice selection policy and the selection process. Additionally, the data analysis may support other district in creating or revising their school choice selection policies or selection process.

The theoretical lens, self-determination, supports the role that parents have when selecting a secondary school for their child(ren). STD connects the motivation of the action with the action itself. When parents decide to participate or not participate in the selection process, they are intrinsically motivated, yet have extrinsic factors that may influence their choice (Deci & Ryan, 2012). For the LUSD, some of the extrinsic factors may include website information, social media, peer information, or mailers sent home.

The next chapter, Chapter 2, analyzed the empirical literature in the areas of school choice selection policy, types of schools, school choice selection process, school types, and information sources. Chapter 3 discusses the study methodology design. Included in Chapter 3 is the context of the study, a description of the participants, the instrument to be used and how the data will be analyzed. Chapter 4 presents the results

of the data analysis. The final chapter, Chapter 5, consists of a discussion of the results from the data analysis, including the limitations and recommendations.

## **Chapter 2: Review of the Literature**

### **Introduction and Purpose**

There have been numerous empirical studies on school choice selection policies. The studies have looked at the school choice selection choice from parents' viewpoint, the students' viewpoint, and from educators' viewpoint. These studies focused on the school choice selection policy, school choice selection process and on the experiences of those involved, including the difference between districts.

Depending on the district, those choices might include within district schools such as, schools within a predetermined zone, magnet or specialized schools, single-gender schools, or a specific grade configuration. Other options include out of district schools such as, charter schools, private schools, and homeschooling. Whatever the options, parents need information to make an informed choice, including what criteria would exclude their application from being approved (Phillippo & Griffin, 2016). Would knowing this information upfront make a difference in the schools that parents applied to for their child(ren)? Thinking of the importance of information, what information is essential to parents when selecting a school for their child(ren) and where is it located.

In today's world information sharing moves quickly, yet it can be difficult to find. Knowing where to locate a specific piece of information can be difficult, determining if it is the correct information is even more difficult (Jennings, 2010). Some districts have the principal determine how to "market" the school (Oplatka, 2007). The principal decides what information to publish to the public and what information to keep private. The

information can make the difference for parents selecting a school for their child(ren). At question is how the principal will market the school to attract parents to select the school to educate their child(ren) (Yettick, 2016). The sharing or marketing of information may be considered an extrinsic motivator when applying the STD lens (Deci & Ryan, 2012)

As principals are deciding what information to use to market or promote their school, parents are searching for information regarding those same schools. While parents do have options when deciding where to send their child(ren) to school, it is not always an easy decision (McGinn & Ben-Porath, 2014). Utilizing an ethnographic qualitative method, to fully understand the experiences of the participants, McGinn and Ben-Porath (2014) interviewed participants and observed them in the selection process. Additionally, documents were collected and analyzed. Through the process of collecting data, McGinn and Ben-Porath (2014) discovered that depending on the schools, parents were either able to find information or not. In some cases, former employees of a school would not even share what he or she knew about the school (McGinn & Ben-Porath, 2014). Knowing that many factors are involved for parents to decide on a school, they need access to the information. Some of those factors may include transportation, academics, sports, and safety of the school. Yet, even if parents find the information, a determination must be made as to if the information holds the same meaning for the parents and the principal (Cheng, Trivitt, & Wolf, 2016; Denice & Gross, 2016). The following is a review of research, within the past 11 years, regarding the school choice selection process.

## **Significant Empirical Findings**

School choice selection gives more options to families than just the school closest to their home. Families can choose schools that are academically stronger than their neighborhood school. Families can choose schools that offer more choices or opportunities (Lay, 2016; Parcel, Hendrix, & Taylor, 2016; Pattillo, 2015). Yet, according to Yoon and Lubienski (2017), low-income families are more comfortable sending their children to a school in their neighborhood. Using a mixed-method research design, Yoon and Lubienski (2017) interviewed low-income families to hear their first-hand account of their school choice selection process. Additionally, to determine the distance from home to school a student traveled, Yoon and Lubienski (2017) gathered address data and school choice selection data from the district. The results showed that while parents had the choice to select other schools, a school closest to home was chosen. For many parents a school closest to home meant that their child would fit in with the other children attending the school. However even if the parent did want another school transportation was often an issue as it was not provided.

## **School Choice Selection**

School choice selection gives parents the option to enroll their child in a school other than the one assigned (Ely & Teske, 2015). Yet, according to Moe (2008), “school choice selection process always operates within a structure – a framework of governmental rules – which in turn shapes the kinds of outcomes that choice will ultimately generate” (p. 557). If this choice structure did not exist, then school choice selection would not exist. School districts would tell parents which school their child(ren) would attend and that would be the parents only choice. School choice

selection is relevant to the educational field in that many new options are available for families and it can create competition between schools (Jacobs, 2011; Glazerman & Dotter, 2017). Schools compete to encourage parents to select one school over another to educate their child(ren). Charter schools, magnet school (high academic), and artistic schools are just a few of the choices available to parents.

However, multiple options within a district provides families with opportunities to change the school their student attends. Changing schools can occur during the school year, as often happens in the District of this study, causing a disruption for both the student and the school. According to Langenkamp (2014), students who transfer schools do so for many reasons, such as a family moves, changing of grade level, difficulties at current school, etc. Whatever the reason, transferring schools is not always an easy move for students.

Langenkamp found that while transferring can be difficult it is becoming the norm for society (2014), which means that school districts should prepare transition plans for students, families, and schools. Additionally, Langenkamp (2014) discovered that students who transfer struggle to bond with peers; however, do bond with teachers. Knowing that transfer students do bond with teachers and have a positive view of classmates, Langenkamp (2014), suggests “. . . the first year after transferring is likely a crucial year to intervene to prevent disengagement” (p. 828). However, it is unknown as to why students transferred since it was not included in the data collected which could make it difficult to determine what supports are required.

On the other side, not everyone sees school choice selection as a positive. Students who are not accepted into their school of choice are left with a neighborhood

school or a school that has a seat available for them. An exploratory investigation that followed 30 high-school students from Grade 9 through Grade 12 in New York City sought to understand their experiences with the school choice selection practice (Rakosi-Rosenbloom, 2010). The sample was diverse in gender, 50/50, and the racial makeup was one third Asian American, one third Latinos, and one third African Americans (Rakosi-Rosenbloom, 2010). Participants were interviewed once a year for four years on topics related to their experiences at school. Rakosi-Rosenbloom (2010) utilized two different coding methods to analyze the data, inductive and thematic. An overarching theme amongst the participants responses was that there is a hierarchy of who gets into certain schools and who does not. Students also encountered difficulty in understanding the information presented to them regarding each of the schools available for selection (Rakosi-Rosenbloom, 2010). While the participants of the study are in high school there was no mention of their parents' involvement in the selection process. Although even when parents are involved, students do not get the school choice selection of their choosing.

For another example, in a study by Phillippo and Griffin (2016), school choice selection is seen as both a positive and negative for communities. While it does give students greater access to opportunities outside of their own school, some stakeholders say it weakens the neighborhood. The cause of weakness is the decline of the school due to students attending schools outside of the neighborhood. Additionally, concerns arose over the potential competition that would arise. The rise of competition in Chicago schools resulted from families having 130 different high school options. Each offering unique options for families which resulted in a 163-page school choice selection book.

While Chicago did offer students the option of attending a high school in their neighborhood, students could apply to any of the many alternative schools; however, the students had to follow the application process for each school to which they applied.

After the application process, students who did not get the school of their choice were left with the neighborhood school or in the students' words the school where the dumpster kids go (Phillippo & Griffin, 2016). Neighborhood schools are seen as the schools where students go when they are not accepted to the academically stronger schools. What follows is a description of some of the different options available to parents.

**Magnet school.** A magnet school model is one in which the school has a focus or theme that anchors all learning (Davis, 2014; Smrekar & Honey, 2015). Many magnet schools are a choice within a district which all parents may select, no matter their location. Although, some magnet schools are inter-district and do accept students from multiple districts (Meier, 2012). In a 2012 study by Meier, it was found that magnet schools have a school culture built around a common norms, curriculum, and expectations. These norms, curriculum, and expectations are similar throughout all grade levels within the school (Meier, 2012).

**Neighborhood school.** Neighborhood schools are schools where families closest to the school attend. Students closest to the school will walk to get there. Neighborhood schools are not all the same. One neighborhood school choice selection model is called the promise neighborhood. A promise neighborhood school is different from a community school, as explained in the community school section. The promise neighborhood school is a school reform model that utilizes a community approach to

revitalizing schools and the community (Douglass-Horsford & Sampson, 2014). Within the promise neighborhood model, six dimensions explain how the community progresses through the model. These dimensions cover fundamental characteristics, social agency, functions such as communication, strategies such as organization, conditioning influences such as trust and community-level outcomes (Douglass-Horsford & Sampson, 2014). A key component of this school reform model is that an outside agency monitors any grant monies. Meaning that while it is in the neighborhood, it is controlled by an outside agency and not the district. One drawback of the promise neighborhood model is that when the grant money ends so does the agency support (Douglass-Horsford & Sampson, 2014). Knowing this information upfront could impact the choice that a parent makes when selecting a school for their child(ren).

Another option for districts to consider is that of traditional neighborhood schools, where students attend the school closest to their home. Parcel, Hendrix, and Taylor (2016) in a mixed-methods study found that parents want to have an active role in the selection of the child(ren)'s school. The sample of participants consisted of 73% White, 20% African American, and 7% Latino. In 2009, newly elected leaders worked to listen to community members which brings in the study by Parcel, Hendrix, and Taylor (2016). In Wake County, North Carolina, Parcel, Hendrix, and Taylor (2016) interviewed various members of the community to understand their thoughts and experiences related to the recent changes in school choice selection practices. Findings from the qualitative interviews showed that while community members valued diversity, a neighborhood school was important (Parcel, Hendrix, & Taylor, 2016). Distance between home and school created a divide where parents were not able to participate in their child(ren)'s

education. When analyzing the results from the quantitative survey, Parcel, Hendrix, and & Taylor (2016) again found that parents valued being close to their child(ren)'s school and that there was the least number of moves between schools as possible.

Another example can be seen in a mixed-methods research design study by Yoon and Lubienski (2017) where they found that many families chose schools within their neighborhood. While like the study above where neighborhood school is a choice, this study has different racial and location demographics. The study occurred in Vancouver, Canada. The 18 participants consisted of three Aboriginal, two African, one Middle Eastern, and 15 Asian. The qualitative portion of the study involved interviews of families and the quantitative portion studied the rate that parents participated in the choice process. Since that part is a phenomenology study, Yoon and Lubienski (2017), sought to discover the participants first-hand account of the school choice selection process in Vancouver, Canada. Yoon and Lubienski (2017) found that low-income families are more comfortable sending their children to a school in their neighborhood. To determine when a parent chose a school outside of their neighborhood, Yoon and Lubienski (2017) used the quantitative data of how far students travel from their homes to school. The quantitative data revealed that families with the lowest income, traveled the least number of miles to school. However, when a family did choose a school outside of the neighborhood it was for its offerings, such as religion, cultural beliefs, or discipline practices.

While some view neighborhood schools as a good thing, others are not so proud of them. School choice selection takes on a different meaning for individuals depending on their experiences with it. McWilliams (2017) investigated what school choice

selection meant for students, teachers, and administrators at Johnson High in Philadelphia. Johnson High is a neighborhood school in an area of Philadelphia with multiple charter schools. Its outside reputation, according to both students and teachers, is that it contains the students and teachers that no one else wants (McWilliams, 2017). In the words of the principal, Mr. Keo, “neighborhood schools have become holding ponds for the kids that nobody wants” (p. 222), and students and teachers can feel it.

Philadelphia, at the time of this article, had a school choice selection policy of neighborhood schools or charter schools. Due to rapid increase in the number of charter schools, and a decline in the number of students in the public schools, the district started closing schools (McWilliams, 2017). To understand the feelings of the students and teachers, McWilliams spent three years interviewing, observing, and interacting with the members of Johnson High, including members of the community. McWilliams (2017) discovered that the staff and students were proud of their schools but felt that the public viewed them as bad. McWilliams quotes one teacher, Mr. Roberts, as saying “. . . it’s the perception that needs rejecting out there.” (p. 228), to illustrate how staff feel when sharing that they work at Johnson High. The perception is acknowledged as more students leave the district and transfer to charter schools, if they are accepted (McWilliams, 2017). As more students leave, the greater the risk of the school being closed.

This leads to pivotal points. The first, when neighborhood schools close, who educates the students still living in the neighborhood (McWilliams, 2017), since they were not accepted into a charter school. The second, what makes the community a community if the school is no longer there and the students are attending schools in

multiple building (McWilliams, 2017). Yet, if the school stays, how does the community support changing the stigma attached to neighborhood schools in an era of school choice selection.

**Community school.** In addition to magnet and neighborhood schools, community schools are another choice that districts are offering for parents. Community schools offer more than just traditional education. According to Houser (2016), community schools provide families with extended hours, resources such as medical support, and connections to other services available in the community (Galindo, Sanders, & Abel, 2017).

Houser (2016) investigated how participation in extracurricular activities influences academic success. The difference from other studies on extracurricular activities was that outside providers supervised these activities instead of schoolteachers or staff members and often were culture specific to engage more students (Houser, 2016). To investigate whether there was a connection between activities and academic success, Houser (2016) collected data from school rosters and GPAs from the school database. Descriptive analyses were completed and showed that more students participated in activities in a community school than in a traditional school.

Another study on community schools, investigated more of how the school connects families with the resources available within the community through the experiences of the participants (Galindo et al., 2017). In a qualitative case study using interviews, observations, and document reviews Galindo et al. (2017) had a sample population of 71% Hispanic/Latino, 13% White, 11% African American, and 5% Native American or Asian. While the racial demographics may differ, the percentage receiving

free or reduced lunch is much closer at 90%. In addition to the difference in racial makeup, the participants were paid in this study. Galindo et al. (2017) received a grant that allowed for each participant to receive a gift card and the school a monetary gift. Unlike the previous study, Galindo et al. (2017) gathered and analyzed all aspects of a community school including medical services, social services, homework support, and extracurricular activities. The study discovered that teachers supported not only students, but the parents as well when they had trouble comprehending any academic assignments. The school community included anyone connected to the school whether a student, staff member, parent, volunteer, or community member.

**School configuration.** In some districts there may be schools with different grade level configuration. One model is having kindergarten through Grade 8 in one building and high school in a second building. Another model is having kindergarten through Grade 6 in one building, seventh and eighth in another building, and high school in a third building. A third model is to have kindergarten through Grade 6 in one building and Grade 7 through Grade 12 in the high school building. The LUSD has all three models within its district.

Whatever type of school configuration, transitions can be difficult for students. Remaining in one building reduces the number of transitions to one when utilizing either the kindergarten through Grade 8 to high school model or kindergarten through Grade 6 to a Grade 7 through high school model (Weiss & Baker-Smith, 2010). Weiss and Baker-Smith (2010) looked at two groups of students in Philadelphia, one group who attended a K-8 school and one group who attended a traditional middle school model. They compared academic scores of the two groups after Grade 9. Weiss and Baker-

Smith (2010) found that students who attended the K-8 did better in Grade 9. However, Carolan and Chesky (2012) studied results of a national survey, “Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class 1998-1999” (p. 34) and found that students in Grade 7 and Grade 8 who attended a traditional middle school fared better in reading than their peers in a K-8 school.

**Gender based school.** Gender based schools can be found in school districts as well as charter schools. Gender based schools are as the name says schools where all the students are either all male or all female. This type of school is another option for parents to choose from when they are available.

Gender based schools are becoming more available. The LUSD give parents the option of an all-male gender middle/high school comprising of Grades 6 through 12. Just as the LUSD, a charter school in Michigan is an all-male school. To gain an understanding of all-male schools, Oeur (2017) spent 11 months observing and interview members of the school including students, teachers, custodians, and parents. The philosophy behind the school was to prepare the students for college by showing them how to be men while in high school (Oeur, 2017).

As with the students at LUSD, the students at the charter school in Michigan wore professional blazers and ties every day to school. Students, in a phenomenological study using interviews Brooms (2016), also attended an all-male school and dressed professionally in preparation for attending college. Brooms (2016) discovered through the stories shared by the students that they felt the teachers at the charter school taught them to be proud of who they were and to let it show. While Oeur (2017) discovered that the main objective of the school was to instill a sense of brotherhood in the students.

Both schools in the studies desired to have the students learn to work together, depend on each other, put their academics at the top of their list of priorities, and to believe in themselves (Brooms, 2016; Oeur, 2017).

**Charter school.** Charter schools began in 1991 in Minnesota. Since that time charter schools have opened in many states. A charter school is a public school that is funded by public monies; however, it is separate from the public school system of the city or state it is established (Convertino, 2017; Jacobs, 2011; McWilliams, 2017). As a requirement of approval and renewal for a charter, the student enrollment should be like that of the district that the charter will be receiving students (Drame & Frattura, 2011). The two main reasons for a charter to be denied for renewal is a lack of financial stability and proof that students are meeting or exceeding academic standards (Drame & Frattura, 2011). When parents are looking at charter schools for the child(ren), just as when they look at other options, they need to know what is offered and how the charter school will support their child(ren) and they need it to be the correct information.

When incorrect information is published or shared with others, that information could stop a parent from making a school choice selection that would be better for their child(ren). In an ethnographic study of a charter school in Arizona, Convertino (2017) gathered data through observations, and interviews. The observations were conducted over a three-year period, giving Convertino (2017) time to explore even the trivial details of the participants daily lives. Interviews were conducted with teachers, parents, and students. The racial demographics of the students were 50% White, 35% Latino, 5% Black, 5% Asian American, and 5% American Indian. Additionally, 20% of the students

received some form of specialized services to support their academics. All families were able to make a choice of where to send their child(ren) to school.

Even though Arizona has a choice policy, Convertino (2017) discovered through the interviews that some students did not realize they were attending a charter school. Information regarding both charter schools and district schools that was incorrect was shared. Through the investigation it became evident that opponents of charter schools stated that charter schools only took the best students (Convertino, 2017). While those in favor of charter schools pointed out how bad or dangerous the district schools were and should be avoided. Yet students did not realize that they were attending a charter school. Based on the findings from the study, Convertino (2017) determined further work needs to be done so that parents can make educated decisions on where to send their child(ren) to school.

**Private school.** Parents have the options of selecting a private school for their child(ren)'s education. Unlike other options available to parents, private schools will cost money to attend. The amount may vary depending on the state in which the family resides. One example, in New Orleans, Louisiana a voucher system allows parents to apply the funding that would go to the public school for their child(ren) to the private school, leaving the parents to pay the balance or nothing at all (Jabbar & Li, 2016). Jabbar and Li (2016) investigated how administrators thought private schools impacted school choice selection and how, if any, competition they set up between schools. To investigate, Jabbar and Li (2016), conducted surveys, interviews, and analyzed administrative data from the National Center for Educational Statistics Private School

Survey. An interesting finding from the study is that competition is not overly a concern but the mobility of students between schools is a concern.

**Homeschool.** Parents may decide that all the options available to them are not what they want for their child(ren). In that case, parents have the option to keep their child(ren) home and education them. The parents become the teacher. In a study by Mazama and Lundy (2015), three reasons were highlighted as why African American parents chose to homeschool their child(ren). The reason includes religion, public school environment, and dissatisfaction with what is being taught.

Throughout the study, 74 interviews were conducted with the sample pool coming from seven different cities, states. Of the participants, 92.7% were African American, 2.9% were Caribbean, and African, Mixed race, and Hispanic/Latino were each 1.4%. Once the results were analyzed, they showed that the number one reason that parents opt to homeschool their child(ren) is the quality of education (Mazama & Lundy, 2015). Parents felt they were better able to prepare their child(ren) educationally, especially when teaching the historical events of cultures.

### **Information Sources**

Parents need information to make choices as to where they child(ren) should be educated. Where they find that information may not be the same for everyone. It may not be the same for all schools. Traumatic events may alter how information is shared, which can impact how parents select a school. For example, schools in New Orleans underwent a transformation after Hurricane Katrina. Schools are under one of two governing entities, Recovery School District or Orleans Parish School District (Lay, 2016). As part of the transformation, New Orleans has no neighborhood schools.

Parents must apply to each school that they wish their student to attend. While parents are not limited in the number of applications, they still needed information on each school they applied to for their child(ren). Lay (2016) sought to figure out how parents selected the school their student would attend and how the parents navigated the school choice selection process of New Orleans.

There are many avenues to find information. Lay (2016) discovered that parents sought information regarding the schools from multiple sources. The most frequent source was site visits to the schools 94.9% of the 349 parents surveyed (Lay, 2016). However, only 40% said they used school flyers and district websites. While a local group began to provide an annual parent guide, it contained information on every school in the district for Kindergarten to Grade 12 and was exceptionally large. Lay (2016) concludes that it is not necessarily the choices that matter but the presentation of information that has the biggest impact on family school satisfaction. Parents want to know they have had all the correct information before deciding on a school, including additional enrollment requirements.

However, interestingly not all information requires pen and paper. Through an ethnographic study, McGinn and Ben-Porath (2015) interviewed and observed 78 stakeholders to get a full understanding of their experiences with school choice selection and finding information. Participants included parents, teachers, community members, students, board members, and the former mayor of the city. In reviewing the data, many stakeholders wanted to make informed decisions on their school choice selection yet found it sometimes difficult to locate the information (McGinn & Ben-Porath, 2015). Some schools advertised their offerings, some offered gifts if parents selected the school,

However, Hamilton Charter, a highly respected school, was well known in the community and did not rely on written documentation. The charter relied on its families talking with other families in the community (McGinn & Ben-Porath, 2015).

Another method of sharing information is through a website. A website is an electronic site that parents can visit to find information regarding the school; however, it is the only information that the school has allowed to be put on the site. Wilson and Carlsen (2016) investigated 55 school websites using a qualitative document analysis method. Each school of the study had to have been established in the 2012-2013 school year and have students in Kindergarten through Grade 8. The focus of the study was charter schools. In order to qualitatively understand the information on the website, the information was coded three times to get to the final groups and themes (Wilson & Carlsen, 2016). Interestingly, the results showed that schools shared unique information, possibly allowing for parents to interpret the information in a manner that works for their family. For example, schools that were coded into Group 1 focused on international learning and tended to be elitist, schools where graduates would excel in college and global society (Wilson & Carlsen, 2016). On the other hand, Group 2 schools were geared toward diverse cultures, making sure that students knew their heritage was important to those in the school (Wilson & Carlsen, 2016). While Group 3 schools were geared toward high expectations and achieving excellent results on everything they do (Wilson & Carlsen, 2016). The last group, Group 4 schools were the most diverse schools of all in the study, believing in each student as an individual and each student's social-emotional health (Wilson & Carlsen, 2016).

Knowing what each school valued, Wilson and Carlsen (2016) investigated what was presented on their school websites in three different areas. The first area, diversity, was either lacking or highlighted depending on if the school valued diversity or devalued diversity. If the school devalued diversity, the website did not mention diversity. When a school did value diversity, it was evident on their website and explicitly stated (Wilson & Carlsen, 2016). The second area, academics, unlike diversity all schools had academic information on their websites. The difference was in the amount of detail and the level of terminology used to describe the curriculum used at the school (Wilson & Carlsen, 2016). The last area of the website is the part that addressed how students will learn at the schools. Here, Wilson and Carlsen (2106) discovered some commonality between all the schools in that all promoted a sense of collaboration, intelligence, development of individual, yet lacked actual information regarding the academic side of learning. However, it is key that the information on the website was only what the principals of the schools wanted the public or parents to know about their school. Wilson and Carlsen (2016) concluded with this statement about their results in that they “echo long-standing concerns about how choice might exacerbate patterns of segregation and sorting in education and deepen inequality of educational opportunities” (p. 40), this could be especially true if the information presented on the website is geared to exclude some, while inviting others.

**School marketing.** When thinking about students that schools miss due to lack of advertising or word-of-mouth, with all the competition between school they are now having to market themselves to find those students. Without enough students a school may close. Marketing what they have to offer may bring in the students that they need to

grow. At the forefront of the marketing is the principal and what information they choose to share (DiMartino & Butler-Jessen, 2016). Everything that a principal decides to share from the name of the school to the colors of the sports uniforms can affect enrollment (DiMartino & Butler-Jessen, 2016). DiMartino and Butler-Jessen (2016) combined data from two data sets, each of which came out of studies in New York City. The first data set came from a case study in which data was collected through interviews from stakeholders in a middle school in the Bronx (DiMartino & Butler-Jessen, 2016). The second case study collected data from two different college preparatory schools. All interviews were recorded. To ensure reliability, data triangulation was done by including demographics data and other public documents (DiMartino & Butler-Jessen, 2016). The most significant finding is that schools can market and brand themselves to encourage parents and their child(ren) to attend their school. What the principal shares could determine whether a parent selects the school, whether the parents keeps their child(ren) in the school, and whether the parent will recommend the school to other parents.

**Principal marketing.** Principals are the representative of the school. It is their responsibility to promote the expectations of the school to families. It is their responsibility to ensure the safety of the schools and to promote how they do that to parents. It is their responsibility to let parents know about their curriculum, their extra activities, and other services that are available. Principals need to promote their school. They need to advertise what they are, who they service, and how they will improve the academic and social lives of the students who attend the school.

For example, in a qualitative study, Donovan and Lakes (2017) examined two schools use of the International Baccalaureate Diploma (IB) program to scrutinize the academic level of students applying for entrance into the school. Donovan and Lakes (2017) take the point of view that schools are like markets in which families are the consumers. Their study focused on International Baccalaureate Programmes and how each presented the characteristics to the family consumers. The schools were either in the state's metropolitan area (affluent) or urban area on the peripheral boundary (economically disadvantaged). While each of the two schools had two different IB tracks for students to follow, each promoted them differently. School 1 marketed, or advertised, and included that they had two different tracks. While School 2 only marketed, or advertised, that they were an IB school, not that they had two different tracks. School 1 emphasizes the high qualities demanded of their students. Especially that their students need to crave competition. While School 2 thought of the IB track as a way to set students apart from non-IB students. Principals need to think about the message they are sending with their website presence or their lack of one.

Another piece of key information for principals to consider marketing is safety of students when or if they must walk to and from school. Banerjee, Uhm, and Bahl (2014) looked at how children viewed walking to school in comparison to how the policy makers viewed walking to school. In addition, the study presented several thoughts as to why parents may or may not have their student walk to school. Throughout the study it became clear that safety was the top priority for parents and students. However, what constituted safety varied by age, gender, and availability of transportation.

There were several key components for school leaders to keep in mind. The first, many students and parents see “the trip to school and the trip from school” (p. 134) as two vastly different trips (Banerjee et al., 2014). Students may get a ride to school but must walk home. The student may have siblings to walk with to school but due to other commitments, may walk home alone. The streets may be empty in the morning but filled later in the day when they are walking home. Lastly, what adults may consider safe, a playground or park, may bring feelings of fear to a student walking alone (Banerjee et al., 2014). The sense of safety often leads a family to choose a school farther from home. A longer distance results in transportation. Transportation means students are not walking alone. School principal may share how students will be safe during the time they are away from their families, including the time getting to and from school.

### **School Selection Process**

There are different types of school selection processes which districts may use when giving parents the opportunity to select a secondary school for their child(ren). An understanding of the processes may provide parents with a knowledge to understand the consequences of completing or not completing a secondary school application for their child. What follows is a review of the different types of school selection processes.

**Lottery.** When it comes to choosing a school, parents attempted to make the best choice possible. However, sometimes the choice is taken out of their hands. Parents in Washington, D.C. have over 200 schools to choose from when selecting a school. Policy makers decided to use a lottery system to determine which students attended which school. However, neighborhood schools remained an option for families without using the lottery system (Glazerman & Dotter, 2017).

In a lottery model, parents selected and ranked 12 schools from those available (Glazerman & Dotter, 2017). This information gave the computer program the necessary data to generate a school choice selection for the student. While the lottery had general requirements for schools, some had additional requirements or priorities for selection. One school may have an audition, another gives priority to siblings, and yet a third requires a certain level of academic scores. The researchers, Glazerman and Dotter (2017), sought if there were determining factor differences among varying race/ethnicity or income among the participants.

**Managed or controlled choice.** One way that school districts control the number of students at schools across their district is with a managed or controlled choice system. Based on where a family lives, determines the schools a parent can select from to send their child(ren) to for an education (Billingham, 2015).

To have families stay in urban neighborhoods, cities have begun to look at how the educational system can entice families to move to and stay in the city. Boston public schools struggled to find the balance between what the city's vision and the families' vision for the school system. Neighborhood schools appealed to affluent families who wanted to keep their children close. However, this was not in line with the current policy in which parents had multiple schools to choose where their children should attend. In 2012, Boston schools began a move toward a constrained choice system.

To understand parents' viewpoints regarding students' placement within the Boston School District, Billingham interviewed a total of 36 parents from three neighborhoods (2015). There were two rounds of interviews. The round one conducted in 2009, consisted of 32 participants. The second, conducted in 2012, added four

additional participants to the study. All participants were female, 83.3% were married and White, 80.6% had obtained a graduate degree, and 77.8% worked full or part-time (Billingham, 2015).

The change began with a controlled choice system. Assignment zones divided the Boston School District. Within each assignment zone were walking zones. However, citywide schools were open to any student who applied. Yet, students who applied to a citywide school and had a family member attending or were in the walk zone had preference over a student who had neither of these conditions.

This controlled choice system model did not attract the affluent families that Boston hoped would move into the city. The District finally settled on a mix of a lottery and choice system. A computer program determines the best four school based on location. If all four schools are low performing, the list increases by one school. Parents then chose which school to send their children.

**Application process.** The application process consists of parents having to fill out an application, either handwritten or electronic for each school they select for their child(ren) based on the number allowed. The rise of competition in Chicago schools resulted from families having 130 different high school options (Phillippo & Griffin, 2016). Each offering unique options for families which resulted in a 163-page school choice selection book. While Chicago did offer students the option of attending a high school in their neighborhood, students could apply to any of the many alternative schools; however, the students had to complete an application for each school (Phillippo & Griffin, 2016). Resulting in families having to fill out multiple applications depending on how many options families desired.

After the application process, and one of the negatives of the process, students who did not get the school of their choice, were assigned to a neighborhood school or in the students' words the school where the dumpster kids go (Phillippo & Griffin, 2016). Neighborhood schools are the schools where students go when the academically stronger schools do not accept them. The researchers do admit that the sample was too small to make any generalizations.

While most studies look at the application process from the parents' point of view, Jennings (2010) conducted an ethnographic study of three principals in New York City to learn about their experiences with the process. To collect data, Jennings (2010) observed each principal at their respective schools for a combined "1,200 hours of observations" (p. 232). Included in those observations were professional development meetings where the principals and their staff worked on either curriculum implementation or other issues affecting their schools (Jennings, 2010).

Even though observations were the main data collection, Jennings (2010) conducted semi structured interviews with each principal and teachers from each school. However, Jennings (2010) only included information from the principals in the article. Once all data was collected, it was coded by themes, one of which was "strategies used to manage the school choice selection process" (p. 233) for similarities between the three schools (Jennings, 2010).

The school choice selection process for the three principals meant deciding how they would present their schools to parents at school fairs. Utilizing a team network available to principals, two of the three principals took advantage of the team network. The fellow principals in the network gave advise on the best way to present their school

to attract the kind of student they wanted for their school (Jennings, 2010). For one principal that meant excluding Hispanic students by refusing to have print material available in Spanish or telling parents that students must wear uniforms and if they refused that her school was not the right one for them (Jennings, 2010). Additionally, if parents had students requiring any specialized services, they were encouraged to look elsewhere. Though, if it was a family that would be the right family for the school, the principal kept the family's name to have at selection day (Jennings, 2010). This information is not shared with parents.

### **Chapter Summary**

School choice selection process can look different depending on the district and its board policy. There are different schools of choice that parents can select from, such as magnet schools, neighborhood schools, community schools, charter schools, private schools, and homeschooling. Each school of choice has unique characteristics that parents will need information on in order to make an education selection. However, parents will need to find the information. One way that they can find the information is by using a school's website. Website information can entice parents to select the school or turn them away. Parents may also get information from other parents, information sessions, or mailing from the schools. Once parents have the information on the schools, they will need to select a school. The selection process can vary depending on the school district, but key options are a lottery, managed choice, and an application process. The District of this study utilizes a managed choice process.

## **Chapter 3: Research Design Methodology**

### **Introduction**

If parents choose a secondary school that is satisfactory to both them and their child(ren), it may provide a stable education. School choice selection, according to Rabovsky (2011) is defined as “allowing students to transfer out of the public school to which they normally would be assigned based on residence” (p. 87). Parents need to know the type of school choice selection process established in their school district to navigate through each step (Lay, 2016). Each year, according to the school choice selection board policy 5153 for the Large Urban School District, henceforth referred to as the LUSD, parents of students in Grades 6 and 8 are given the opportunity to select and rank up to five schools for their child(ren) to attend the following year (LUSD, 2018). However, each year there are parents who do not participate in the school selection process. When parents do not participate, their child(ren) is placed in any school that has a seat available.

After the selection process and assignment of schools is completed, students who did not get the school of their choice were left with the neighborhood school or in the students’ words, the school where the dumpster kids go (Phillippo & Griffin, 2016). Condliffe et al. (2015) found that families chose a school based on non-academic reasons, such as closeness to home or peers attending same school. Additionally, the results showed that many inner-city families were not exposed to the specialized programs offered and as such did not select the higher academic schools.

Currently, the LUSD struggles to improve student attendance. During the 2015-2016 school year attendance was only at 88% of the total population (NYSED, 2018). The LUSD struggles to improve student behavior. During the 2015-2016 school year, the LUSD saw a total of 7,114 discipline events leading to student suspensions totaling 37,908 lost days of instruction of which 2,713 discipline events were reportable events to New York State Department of Education (NYSED, 2018).

The LUSD also struggles to improve the mobility rate of students in Grade 7 and Grade 9. During the 2015-2016 school year approximately 490 students voluntarily transferred to another school (J. Capezzuto, personal communication, August 23, 2018). School placement may be one factor leading to these struggles. So, the problem question is can participation in the school choice selection process provide a stable education in secondary education.

To understand the effect that parent participation in the school choice selection process plays in secondary students' education, the following three research questions guided the research:

RQ1: What is the relationship between parent participation in the school choice selection process and student attendance?

RQ2: What is the relationship between parent participation in the school choice selection process and student behavior requiring disciplinary action?

RQ3: What is the relationship between parent participation in the school choice process selection and student mobility?

Each of the first three questions was analyzed using point-biserial correlation. The dichotomous variable was whether the parents completed the school choice selection application or did not complete the school choice selection application (yes or no). A completed (yes) application was one in which information is filled in, including ranking of school choices, and it was returned to the LUSD by the specified date. A not completed application (no) was one that was not returned to the District. There are three continuous variables and each variable was tested individually. The continuous variable for RQ1 was student attendance. The continuous variable for RQ2 was student behavior. The continuous variable for RQ3 was student mobility.

In addition, to understand the factors that motivate parents to participate in the school choice selection process the fourth and final research question was:

RQ4: What factors motivated parents to participate in the school choice selection process for their child?

### **Research Context**

The study was conducted in an urban school district in the Northeast region of the United States. This Large Urban School District (LUSD) uses a school choice selection process where parents complete an application where they selected and ranked their top five choices of schools for their child(ren) to attend. There are two different application forms, one for students who were in Grade 6 and one for students who were in Grade 8. Each form has the schools listed for the next grade level and the citywide schools that a parent selected from for their child(ren). Available schools included a magnet schools, a male gender-based school, four different grade configurations, as well as neighborhood schools. In addition to the application, some schools have specialized requirements to

attend, such as an interview, signing a compact, or an audition. Students were required to complete an interview, sign a compact, or audition prior to the school lottery to secure their seat, if accepted.

The information on the form was entered in the District's school lottery software. The lottery software placed students in schools based on their parent's choices. Students whose parents did not complete the school choice selection application were assigned to a school with an available seat after all students who did participate were placed in their selected schools. Parents also had options available outside of the District but those are not included on the application, such as a charter school or a private school.

There are approximately 29,984 students attending the LUSD. The District maintains 50 different schools with grade configurations such as: K-6, K-8, K-12, 7-8, 7-12, 9-12. Families attending the LUSD bring a wealth of diversity as there are approximately 75 different languages spoken. The LUSD finds that the percentage of students with chronic attendance is 41% of its population and approximately 20% of the student population is losing classroom instruction time due to behavior resulting in disciplinary action.

### **Research Participants**

Participants for this study were the 2015-2016 academic school year students in Grades 7 and 9. School year 2015-2016 was chosen as there was three years of data on attendance, mobility, and behavior resulting in disciplinary actions. The 2015-2016 academic year had 1,939 sixth to seventh Graders and 1,901 eighth to ninth Graders. However, any students who withdrew from the District during the 2015-2016 academic

year was excluded from the study. A random sample was conducted to determine which data to include in the study.

Further, a second group of participants were part of the study. The parents who completed and did not complete the school choice selection application were surveyed by the District. All 3,832 parents were included in the mailing. Due to the small response size, 34, all surveys that were completed correctly, 23, were included in the study. Surveys not completed or done incorrectly were excluded from the study.

### **Instruments Used in Data Collection**

For this study, the measure of the continuous variables was available in the existing archived databases maintained by the District. The LUSD data was made available to the researcher on a codified CD from the 2015-2016 school year, the 2016-2017 school year, and the 2017-2018 school year. The data contained a list of non-identifiable student ID numbers with the requested data. Additional information included number of days student was enrolled in the district for the school year.

RQ1: data contained whether a student's parent participated in the school choice selection process or not and the percentage of days the student was in attendance for each of the three school years of the study.

RQ2: data contained whether a student's parent participated in the school choice selection process or not and the number of days a student was absent from class due to behavior resulting in disciplinary action for each of the three school years of the study.

RQ3: data contained whether a student's parent participated in the school choice selection process or not and the total number of times a student transferred schools during

the three school years of this study. These protected data were entered in SPSS and analyzed using point-biserial correlation.

Further, a second source of existing district data was accessed to allow the researcher to broaden the scope of direct and specific parental feedback as it related to the school choice selection process. This data set was in the form of an exit survey created and implemented by the LUSD and related results obtained from parents of Grade 6 and Grade 8 students from the 2015-2016 academic year. The results were analyzed via a codified CD with unique identifiers. The purpose of the survey was to inquire as to the motivation of completing the school choice selection application or the barriers to not completing the school choice selection application. The very nature and intent of this survey, noting parental latitude of providing feedback specific to internal and/or external influences (for school choice selection application completion), aligned directly with self-determination theory, the foundational framework of this study.

### **Procedures for Data Collection and Analysis**

In order to determine the relationship between parental participation in school choice selection process and attendance, behavior, and mobility in secondary students the following steps were used to complete the study.

1. Completed the necessary requirement to receive permission from LUSD to conduct the study.
2. Requested and obtained the historical data for the school years 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18 from the person in the department of accountability in charge of data requests.

3. Examined and cleaned data based on whether students were enrolled in a District school for all three years of the study.
4. Randomly selected 400 students from Grade 7 and 400 students from Grade 9.
5. Calculated the percentage of absences for all selected participants for each of the three historical school years, 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18.
6. Calculated the percentages of lost days of classroom instruction due to behavior for all selected participants for each of the three historical school years, 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18.
7. Ran point-biserial correlational statistical analysis between parent participation in the school choice selection process and Grade 7 participants attendance for each of the three historical school years, 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18.
8. Ran point-biserial correlational statistical analysis between parent participation in the school choice selection process and Grade 7 participants behavior for each of the three historical school years, 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18.
9. Ran point-biserial correlational statistical analysis between parent participation in the school choice selection process and Grade 7 participants mobility for the total of the three historical school years, 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18.
10. Ran point-biserial correlational statistical analysis between parent participation in the school choice selection process and Grade 9 participants

attendance for each of the three historical school years, 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18.

11. Ran point-biserial correlational statistical analysis between parent participation in the school choice selection process and Grade 9 participants behavior for each of the three historical school years, 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18.
12. Ran point-biserial correlational statistical analysis between parent participation in the school choice selection process and Grade 9 participants mobility for the total of the three historical school years, 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18.
13. Results from the District created and implemented parent survey were examined for completeness of questions one and two.
14. Question 1 answers were entered into a matrix.
15. Question 2 answers were listed and review for commonality.

Once the data was entered into the SPSS software a point-biserial correlation was run with the dichotomous variable and each of the continuous variables to determine if a significant relationship existed between the two variables (Lund & Lund, 2018). A point-biserial correlation was also used to show the effect the dichotomous variable had on each of the continuous variables (Laerd, 2016).

## **Summary**

The purpose of this study was to determine whether there was a significant relationship between parents completing a school choice selection application and student behavior resulting in disciplinary action, student mobility, and student attendance. The

LUSD utilized a school choice selection model that allowed parents to select a school for their child(ren) to attend at both sixth to seventh and again at eighth to ninth. The selection process occurred toward the end of the school year. The parents who participated in the school choice selection process were notified of which school their child will attend over the summer. Students whose parents participated did receive a seat in one of the schools their parents selected.

This quantitative study analyzed a dichotomous variable and the three continuous variables utilizing a point-biserial correlation as a function of SPSS software. The dichotomous variable was whether the parents complete the application for school choice selection (yes) or did they not complete the application for school choice selection (no). The continuous variables are the attendance, behavior resulting in disciplinary action, and mobility of the students. The point-biserial correlational analysis determined the significance of the relationship between the dichotomous variable and each of the three continuous variables.

## **Chapter 4: Results**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between parent participation in the school choice selection process and their child's attendance, behavior, and mobility during their secondary years over a three-year period. A quantitative method, specifically a point-biserial correlation, analyzed three years of archived data and provided the results to answer the first three research questions. These three questions looked at the relationship between parent participation in the school choice selection process and attendance, behavior, and mobility of secondary students. The remaining research question was used to identify factors that motivated parents to complete or not complete the school choice application. No specific hypotheses were generated aligned with the research questions due to a lack of empirical data regarding the relationship between parental participation in the school choice selection process and attendance, behavior, and mobility of secondary students.

### **Research Questions**

To understand the effect that parents' participation in the school choice selection process plays in secondary students' education, the following three research questions guided the research:

RQ1: What is the relationship between parent participation in the school choice selection process and student attendance?

RQ2: What is the relationship between parent participation in the school choice selection process and student behavior requiring disciplinary action?

RQ3: What is the relationship between parent participation in the school choice process selection and student mobility?

In addition, to understand the parent's motivation in participating in the selection process the fourth and final research question guided that research:

RQ4: What factors motivated parents to participate in the school choice selection process for their child?

What follows is the results of analyzing each of the first three research questions through SPSS using a point-biserial correlation. Each grade level was analyzed for all three variables separately and for each year. All Grade 7 results are shown first, followed by the Grade 9 results. Of importance to note is that while the following results all have a small effective size, that is typical for a study of this sample size. Cheung and Slavin (2016) suggested in a study that gains or changes in secondary students happens at smaller increments than with younger students and as such as smaller effect size should be expected. Following those analysis are the results for the fourth research question regarding the motivation of the parents to participate in the school choice process.

### **Data Analysis and Findings**

The first research question investigated the relationship between a parent's participation in the school choice selection process and student attendance. The Large Urban School District (LUSD) has struggled with the attendance rate of their secondary student population. This study on the relationship between parents participating in the school choice selection process and attendance of the Grade 7 and Grade 9 from the

2015-2016 cohort provided information relative to how the school choice selection process could have more parents participate.

**Attendance.** Attendance was determined as a percentage of days a student missed during the school year in relation to the number of days enrolled. For example, if a student was enrolled prior to the start of school then the total enrollment days would equal 181 days. If a student was present all days, then his percentage of days missed would be zero. If a student was enrolled on the 40<sup>th</sup> day of school and was absent 20 days, then total enrollment days of 141 was used instead of 181 days to determine the percentage of days absent.

**Seventh grade attendance analysis.** The analysis of the Grade 7 attendance data for all three years revealed that students whose parents participated in the school choice selection process by completing an application had a lower absenteeism rate than students whose parents did not participate in the school choice selection process. The negative value of the correlation results indicates that the group coded with the higher value (1 vs. 0) during the analysis had the lowest mean value. This study coded the students whose parents completed the application process with a one and students whose parents did not complete the application process with a zero.

The results of the point-biserial correlation showed a statistically significant correlation between parental participation in the school selection process and Grade 7 attendance for each of the three academic years of this study (Table 4.1):

School year 2015-2016:  $r(400) = -.17, p < .01$ .

School year 2016-2017:  $r(400) = -.18, p < .01$ .

School year 2017-2018:  $r(400) = -.19, p < .01$ .

Table 4.1

*Point-Biserial Correlational of the Relationship Between Parental Participation and Seventh Grade Absence Percentages*

Academic Year	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
Value of Correlation Results (N=400)	-0.17	-0.18	-0.19

These results show that parental involvement in the school choice participation process was significant at  $p < 0.01$ . Other factors that may be important to students attending school are discussed in Chapter 5. As such, the results were analyzed to determine the effect size or the coefficient of determination. The effect size or coefficient of determination provided a deeper understanding of the relationship (Laerd Statistics, 2016). In relation to this study, parents who participated in the school choice selection process accounts for less than 4% of the variability in attendance in any of the three years. See Table 4.2 for specific percentages.

It is important to realize that while students whose parents participated in the school choice application process accounted for less than 4% of the variability, it still made a difference. More students attended school more days when their parents participated in the school choice selection process than students whose parents did not participate in the school choice selection process.

Table 4.2

*Effect Size or Coefficient of Determination of the Relationship Between Parental Participation and Seventh Grade Absence Percentages*

Academic Year	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
Effect size or Coefficient of Determination	2.9%	3.2%	3.6%

**Ninth grade attendance analysis.** The analysis of the Grade 9 attendance data for all three years was similar to that of Grade 7 as it revealed students whose parents participated in the school choice process by completing an application had a lower absenteeism rate. The negative value of the correlation results indicated that the group coded with the higher value (1 vs. 0) during the analysis had the lowest mean value (see Table 4.3). Just as with the Grade 7 data the coding of students whose parents completed the application process remained a one and students whose parents did not complete the application process remained a zero. Therefore, based on this, the students whose parents completed the application process had lower absenteeism just as the Grade 7 did.

The results of the point-biserial correlation for showed a statistically significant correlation between parental participation in the school selection process and Grade 9 attendance for each of the three academic years of this study (Table 4.3):

School year 2015-2016:  $r(400) = -.19, p < .01$ .

School year 2016-2017:  $r(400) = -.17, p < .01$ .

School year 2017-2018:  $r(400) = -.16, p < .01$ .

Table 4.3

*Point-Biserial Correlational of the Relationship Between Parental Participation and Ninth Grade Absence Percentages*

Academic Year	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
Value of Correlation Results (N=400)	-0.19	-0.17	-0.16

Just as with Grade 7, these results show that parental involvement in the school choice participation process was significant at  $p < .01$ . Other factors that may be important to students attending school are discussed in Chapter 5. As such, the results were analyzed to determine the effect size or the coefficient of determination, just as was done with the Grade 7 data. Just as with the Grade 7, the effect size or coefficient of determination indicated that, parents participating the school choice selection process accounted for less than 3.6% of the variability in attendance in any of the three years. See Table 4.4 for specific percentages.

Table 4.4

*Effect Size or Coefficient of Determination of the Relationship Between Parental Participation and Ninth Grade Absence Percentages*

Academic Year	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
Effect size or Coefficient of Determination	3.6%	2.9%	2.6%

It is important to realize that, just as with Grade 7, while students whose parents participated in the school choice application process accounted for less than 4% of the variability, it still made a difference at the Grade 9 level. More students attended school

more days when their parents participated in the school choice selection process than students whose parents who did not participate in the school choice selection process.

**Behavior.** The second research question investigated the relationship between a parent's participation in the school choice selection process and student behavior. The LUSD struggled with lowering the number of suspensions that occur each year and its possible impact on student success. Behavior was determined to be the percentage of days of classroom instruction missed due to behavior that resulted in disciplinary action. The percentage of days a student was suspended from class was determined by the number of days student was removed from class due to behavior requiring disciplinary action divided by the number of days the student had been enrolled in the District that year.

**Seventh grade behavior analysis.** The analysis of the Grade 7 data for behavior revealed that for the first two years students whose parents participated in the school choice selection process had a lower percentage of lost days of instruction. However, in the third year, 2017-2018, the students whose parents participated in the school choice selection process had a higher percentage of lost days of instruction than students whose parents did not participate in the selection process (Table 4.5). The absence of a negative sign for the 2017-2018 academic year indicates that the group of students whose parents did participate in the school choice selection process had the higher mean average of missed days due to suspensions. The reason for this is unknown at this time.

The results of the point-biserial correlation showed no statistically significant correlation between parental participation in the school selection process and Grade 7 behavior for each of the three academic years of this study (Table 4.3):

School year 2015-2016:  $r(400) = -.08$ , NS.

School year 2016-2017:  $r(400) = -.09$ , NS.

School year 2017-2018:  $r(400) = .02$ , NS.

Table 4.5

*Point-Biserial Correlational of the Relationship Between Parent Participation and Seventh Grade Behavior Percentages*

Academic Year	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
Value of Correlation Results for Behavior (N=400)	-.08	-.09	.02

However, the 2017-2018 academic year had the smallest effect size or coefficient of determination at 0.04%. The first two years, 2015-16 and 2016-17, were small as well at .6% and .8% respectively, which indicated that parent participating in the school choice selection process may not be impacting behavior as strongly as other factors that are discussed in Chapter 5. Additionally, the results of the study for Grade 7 behavior showed no correlational significance for any of the three years; however, as with attendance, any indication that students whose parents participate in the school choice selection process made a difference in a secondary students' academic years should continue.

**Ninth grade behavior analysis.** Similar to the Grade 7 analysis there was no correlational significance for any of the three years of the study. However, all 3 years indicated that Grade 9 students whose parents participated in the school choice selection process had better behavior results than the Grade 9 students of parents who did not participate. As seen in Table 4.6 the correlational relationship was similar all 3 years.

The results of the point-biserial correlation showed no statistically significant correlation between parental participation in the school selection process and Grade 9 behavior for each of the three academic years of this study (Table 4.3):

School year 2015-2016:  $r(400) = -.08$ , NS.

School year 2016-2017:  $r(400) = -.07$ , NS.

School year 2017-2018:  $r(400) = -.07$ , NS.

Table 4.6

*Point-Biserial Correlational of the Relationship Between Parent Participation and Ninth Grade Behavior Percentages*

Academic Year	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
Value of Correlation Results for Behavior (N=400)	-.08	-.07	-.07

The effect size or coefficient of determination indicated that while parents who participated in the school choice selection process was a factor in student behavior it was not a strong factor, but still a factor. The Grade 9 effect size or coefficient of determination remained close throughout the 3 years of the study, yet it is a small percentage. No matter the small percentage, students whose parents participated in the school choice selection process had less lost days of instruction due to behavior that resulted in disciplinary action.

**Mobility.** The third research question investigated the relationship between parent’s participation in the school choice selection process and student mobility. Student mobility was determined by the number of times a student voluntarily transferred to another school during the 3 years of this study. The number of transfers, for the

LUSD, was determined by the number of enrollments the student have over the 3 year span of this study.

**Seventh grade mobility.** The Grade 7 data indicated that the students whose parents completed the school choice application had the lowest mean value or correlation, meaning that students whose parents completed the school choice selection process had the lowest number of school enrollments or rate of mobility.

Table 4.7

*Point-Biserial Correlational of the Relationship Between Parent Participation and Seventh Grade Mobility*

Academic Year	2015-2016, 2016-2017 & 2017-2018 Combined
Value of Correlation Results for Enrollment (N=400)	-.12

While the results indicated that the correlation was significant at  $r(400) = -.12$ ,  $p < 0.05$  (Table 4.7), Table 4.8 shows that the number of transfers is higher for the students whose parents did participate at 52 compared to 35 for one transfer; however, at four transfers and beyond the students of parents who did not participate had a higher transfer rate. Students who had one or two enrollments at the Grade 7 level would be reasonable since the students would have moved from an elementary school to a school that had Grade 7 and depending on the school selected for Grade 7, they would have an enrollment to another school for Grade 9. As to why students have three or more enrollments, that would require further study. Students could transfer to another school for a safety reason, a change in program, or because of a voluntary transfer. Based on the comparison of the number of enrollments that started at four and higher, the school choice selection process has worked to decrease the number of multiple enrollments,

although it should be investigated further, especially at the Grade 7 level. The Grade 7 level had students with seven, eight, and nine enrollments for students whose parents did and did not participate in the school choice selection process. Additionally, one student whose parent did participate in the school choice selection process had 14 enrollments.

Table 4.8

*Comparison of Seventh Grade Mobility of Students Whose Parents Did Participate and Students Whose Parents Did Not Participate by Number of Enrollments*

Number of Enrollments	7 <sup>th</sup> Grade										Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	14	
0 – students of parents who did not complete the school choice selection application	35	79	45	16	11	7	5	1	1	0	200
1 – students of parents who did complete the school choice selection application	52	78	46	13	3	6	1	0	0	1	200

**Ninth grade mobility.** The study looked at the mobility of Grade 9 students as well. The Grade 9 data indicated that the students whose parents completed the school choice selection application also had the lowest mean value and a correlation of  $r(400) = -.20, p < .01$  (see Table 4.9).

Table 4.9

*Point-Biserial Correlational of the Relationship Between Parent Participation and Ninth Grade Mobility*

Academic Year	2015-2016, 2016-2017 & 2017-2018 Combined
Value of Correlation Results for Enrollment (N=400)	-.20

While the results indicated that the correlation was significant at  $p < 0.01$  level, (see Table 4.9), Table 4.10 shows that the number of transfers was higher for the students

whose parents did participate at 146 compared to 87 for one transfer; however, unlike the Grade 7 the Grade 9 declined at two transfers.

Students having one enrollment at the Grade 9 level is reasonable since the students could be moving from a K-8 school to another school for Grade 9. As to why students have two or more enrollments, that would require further investigating. Once a student reached Grade 9 the only reason to change schools would be a safety transfer, a change in program, or a voluntary transfer.

Table 4.10

*Comparison of Ninth Grade Mobility of Students Whose Parents Did Participate and Students Whose Parents Did Not Participate by Number of Enrollments*

Number of enrollments	9 <sup>th</sup> Grade										Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	11	
0 – students of parents who did not complete the school choice selection application	87	64	29	7	4	1	3	3	2	0	200
1 – students of parents who did complete the school choice selection application	146	33	9	3	4	3	1	0	0	1	200

**Motivation**

The fourth research question of this study investigated the motivation of why parents did or did not complete the school choice selection process. Motivation to complete an activity or not complete an activity can be influence by outside factors (Deci & Ryan, 2012). Those outside factors may include the reputation of the school, it is the best fit for their child, child will have a sense of belonging, academics, to name a few. The results of the fourth research question are an indication of what influenced or motivated parents to complete the school choice selection process, since those are the

only surveys which were returned. No surveys were returned from parents who did not participate in the school choice selection process and as such, their motivation or lack of motivation is unknown.

**Results from parent survey.** Parents of the students in this study were sent a survey by the LUSD to inquire about their experience with the school choice selection process. There were two different surveys. One for students whose parents did participate in the school choice selection process and one for students of parents who did not participate in the school choice selection process. Each survey included two questions regarding their motivation for participating in the school choice selection process or not participating in the school choice selection process (see Appendix A). What follows is a summary of those results for the survey regarding parents who did complete the school choice selection process. Again, no results are presented from parents who did not participate, as no surveys were returned to the LUSD.

**Question 1.** The first question, an open field question, asked parents what motivated them to complete the form, the application form in the school choice selection application booklet. The 23 completed surveys indicated that parents were motivated to:

- find the perfect school,
- get the right placement,
- looking for placement at a particular high school with an IB (International Baccalaureate) program,
- my son,
- my son gets the best school,
- love/concern for my child.

One parent wrote that her participation was to ensure that school choice continues, and another wrote “I wanted to have an actual choice in where my child will attend school” (see Appendix B) modeling that parents are motivated for not only their own children but those in the community. Surprisingly, there were no duplication of answers. Each parent had a different reason that motivated her to participate in the school choice selection process. While only 23 completed surveys were returned, that was 23 parents that were invested in not only their child’s education but the LUSD.

**Question 2.** The second question asked parents what factors led or motivated them to select a school for their child. There were 10 factors for parents to select from with the 10<sup>th</sup> factor being an open field. The two most frequently cited factors that motivated parents to participate in the school choice selection process were the academics of the school and the school aligned with their child’s long-term goals. However, other parents rated those same factors as the number two motivating factors for completing the school choice selection application. Through the self-determination theory lens, parents rank the same factors with various levels of importance depending on how those extrinsic factors influence their intrinsic motivation, in this case, completing the school choice selection application (Deci & Ryan, (2012). Knowing that external factors influence intrinsic motivation, other factors were included in question 2 (see Appendix C). Such as school reputation that was ranked third by seven parents. Surprisingly, sports was ranked ninth by seven parents, as sports is a huge part of the culture within the LUCD. Factors that were ranked in the middle included fits my child’s personality, safe environment, and location of the school. The final category, other, was ranked 10 by 13 parents. While the

response rate was small, the results showed that parents are invested in the education their child(ren) are receiving and want to have a voice in that education.

### **Summary of Results**

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between parental participation in school choice selection process and attendance, behavior, and mobility in secondary students. There were four research questions:

RQ1: What is the relationship between parent participation in the school choice selection process and student attendance?

RQ2: What is the relationship between parent participation in the school choice selection process and student behavior requiring disciplinary action?

RQ3: What is the relationship between parent participation in the school choice process selection and student mobility?

In addition, to understand the parent's motivation in participating in the selection process a fourth and final research question guided that research:

RQ4: What factors motivated parents to participate in the school choice selection process for their child?

A point-biserial correlational test was used to examine the relationship between parental participation in school choice selection process and attendance, behavior, and mobility in secondary students. The sample consisted of 800 students. There were 400 Grade 7 students whose parents had either participated in the school choice selection process or had not participated in the school choice selection process. The remaining 400 students were Grade 9 students who parents had either participated in the school choice selection process or had not participated in the school choice selection process. The analysis

indicated significant results for both attendance and mobility at both Grade 7 and Grade 9. Additionally, the size effect, while a small percentage, indicated that when students whose parents participate in the school choice selection process students in both Grade 7 and Grade 9 have better attendance than students whose parents who do not participate. However, there was no significance found for behavior for either Grade 7 or Grade 9, but students whose parents participated in the school choice selection process indicated better behavior. The fourth question regarding parent motivation was analyzed by how parents ranked each response. The discussion and interpretation of these results presented are discussed in Chapter 5.

## **Chapter 5: Discussion**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between parental participation in the school choice selection process and attendance, behavior, and mobility in secondary students in the Large Urban School District (LUSD), in New York State. Chapter 5, as the concluding chapter, summarizes the findings of the study, the implications, limitations and recommendations/implications for practice for the LUSD. The remaining sections of this chapter include suggestions for further research, global impact, and the conclusion.

### **Implications of Findings**

Student attendance, student behavior, and student mobility at the secondary level of education continue to be of concern for large school districts. Depending on the school choice selection process of a district, it could influence all three of these areas. However, there is little research on the relationship between parental participation in school choice selection process and attendance, behavior, and mobility in secondary students. School choice is the process of giving parents the opportunity to select a school for their child(ren) to attend, which may or may not be located in the neighborhood where they reside. Schools districts decide the level of input parents have when deciding where secondary students will attend school. The level can be anywhere from none and students are assigned to their neighborhood school to parents having to research the different options and apply to multiple schools.

The district of this study operates under a managed or controlled choice, which started in Boston. Just as Moe (2008) wrote that school choice is a structure and that structure is based on a set of rules. In this study, it is the rules set forth by the LUSD's Board of Education policy on student placement. The policy determines the number of school choices parents will have when determining where they would like their child(ren) to attend. However, for parents who do not participate in the school choice selection process, their child(ren) will be placed in available seats after the placement of students of parents who did participate. Yet, there is little research on how participating in the school choice selection process supports the three areas of this study; therefore, this study was the initial step in that direction.

Findings from this study contributes to the area of parental involvement in the school choice selection process for secondary students. The LUSD had 1,831 Grade 7 students and 2,743 Grade 9 students in the 2015-2016 school year whose parents either participated in the school choice selection process, did not participate, or selected to send their child(ren) to an alternative location for their secondary education. For the purposes of this study, 400 students at each of the two grade levels were randomly selected based on being enrolled at a LUSD school for all three years of the study. Students who were enrolled at an alternative location for their secondary education, such as home schooling, charter school, or specialized setting were not included as their attendance, behavior, and mobility is unknown. The 400 students at each grade level were evenly split between parents who participated in the school choice selection process and parents who did not participated in the school choice selection process.

The results discovered during this study include significant results when looking at the relationship between parents participating in the school choice selection process and secondary student attendance; however, the effect size was low. The low effect size indicates that there may be other factors influencing student attendance at the secondary level beyond parents participating in the school choice selection process. Some of the other factors which could affect attendance include interactions with peers, teachers, staff, the weather, or illness of the child. Any of these factors could be either a positive or negative influence as to whether the child(ren) attends the school selected for him by either the parent or the available seat. Although, a small effective size is common in educational studies, especially, when the study involves secondary students (Cheung & Slavin, 2016). As such, the school choice selection process does work and should continue.

A second result indicates that parents participating in the school choice selection process shows that their child has a lower percentage of days of instruction missed due to disciplinary action than a student of a parent that did not participate. This was true for both Grade 7 and Grade 9 with one exception. That exception was in the third year of the study for Grade 7. For an unknown reason, during the 2017-2018 academic year, the students of parents who did participate in the initial school choice selection process had a higher percentage of missed instructional days due to disciplinary action. Even with the third year of the data indicating an increase for the students whose parents did participate in the school choice selection process, the first two years do indicate that the process does work, however it may need to be investigated for other factors.

Here again there are multiple factors that could be the reason for a child to either not exhibit behavior requiring disciplinary action or to exhibit such behavior. Those factors include interactions with peers, teachers, staff, hunger, sleep, or social media. Just like attendance any of these factors could be either a positive or negative influence as to whether the child(ren) attends the school selected by either the parent or the available seat.

The third result indicates that the mobility of the Grade 7 and Grade 9 students was significant, although at different levels, 0.05 and 0.01 respectfully. The number of enrollments, moves to another school, for Grade 7 for students whose parents participated in the school choice selection process remained consistent at one, two, or three enrollments; however, when it comes to a larger number of enrollments students whose parents did not participate increased. The Grade 9 data indicates that more students whose parents participated in the school choice selection process had one transfer than students who parents did not; however, as the number of transfers increased it was for the students whose parents did not participate.

One possible explanation for the decrease in the number of transfers is that parents were able to locate all the information required to make the appropriate selection on the choice application. The parents may have found the information in multiple locations giving them a better indication of the school (Lay, 2016). As was seen in the responses from the parent's survey, the parents of the LUSD were motivated to have their child in the right school. If they are like the parents in a study by Lay (2016), the parents were looking for information on the school's website, the district's website, visiting the school, and talking to other parents.

As with attendance and behavior there are multiple factors that could be the reason for a child or the parent to either request a transfer to a different school. Those factors include interactions with peers, teachers, staff, or social media. Just like attendance or behavior any of these factors could be either a positive or negative influence as to whether the child(ren) attends the school selected by either the parent or the available seat. Additionally, it could be these factors are the extrinsic factors that are influencing the intrinsic motivation of the parents when making their decision to participate in the school choice selection process or not (Deci & Ryan, 2012). However, whatever the reason, the results indicate that when parents are involved in the process it makes a difference in the number of enrollments, or the mobility, a student has during their secondary years of education.

The final finding of this study, while there were not enough response to generalize, the small number of parent survey responses indicates a possible communication problem. Yet, in the surveys returned, parents were motivated by wanting their child(ren) to be successful by being in a school with good academics. It was also important that their child(ren) were in a school that was aligned with their child(ren)'s long-term goals. Deci and Ryan (2012) attribute this thinking to the parents being motivated by wanting their child to have a sense of belonging at the school. The parent's sense of competence, one of the three basic needs of SDT, supports parents in knowing they can make the right decision to select a school where their child will find that they belong (Deci & Ryan, 2012). It is unknown why parents who did not complete the school choice selection application were unmotivated, since no surveys were returned from them.

Accordingly, the results of this study indicate that LUSD's school choice selection process is working when parents participate in the school choice selection process. However, not all parents participate indicating that there is a disconnect between the District and some parents regarding the process. This will be discussed further in the recommendations section.

### **Limitations of Study**

In view of these results, the study has raised some possibilities for further examination, such as there were no parent surveys from parents who did not participate in the school choice selection process. Additionally, while the sample was large and showed significance in the area of attendance for both Grade 7 and Grade 9, the effect size was a small percentage to support that parents participating in the school choice selection process as a major factor in why some students have better attendance, less behavior incidents requiring disciplinary action, and less mobility. Another limitation is that it is not known if the parent or the child completed the school choice selection application.

There were interpretation weaknesses when analyzing the data. The data did not show if the student's behavior problem is related to issues happening outside of the school setting, on the bus ride to school, or because the student does not want to be at that school. Student absenteeism could be a result of student illness, a tragic event happening in the family, or the student not wanting to go to the assigned school. When thinking about student mobility, students may voluntarily transfer schools due to the family moving to a new home, leaving the neighborhood, due to safety reasons, or program change.

## **Recommendations/Implications for Practice**

The results from this study, while limited in its scope, indicate the necessity for the LUSD to review and revise their school choice selection practice. First, the school of choice practice allows students to transfer to another school at any time for safety reasons. Langenkamp (2014) found that when students transfer to a new school it is often a disruption to their education and of others in the school. The student needs to learn the new culture, the new norms, and build new relationships with peers and teachers. Limiting the number of schools a student attends could increase the success that student finds in the secondary setting. Weiss and Baker-Smith (2010) found that students who remained in one building for Kindergarten through Grade 8 were more successful in high school than students who had multiple school enrollments. There should be one model for the District. The District should either follow a k-8/9-12 model or a k-6/7-8/9-12 model where students would only have one or two moves maximum.

Another recommendation based on the number of transfers would be to revise the way information about the schools is communicated to the community. An information booklet is sent home, but it may not be in the language spoken by the parents or mailed to the wrong address, as families often move without a forwarding address. A school expo is held each year, but parents may not have transportation to get there or able to take the time off of work. Each school at the expo should be recorded and made available on the District website for parents to view at any time after the expo. School information is available on the District website, but the parent may not have Internet. The addition of a communication link on the school website for parents to ask specific questions or set up a time to come tour the school would provide a direct link for parents to get specific

answers to questions. A 2016 study found that over 94% of 349 parents surveyed preferred to visit a school to find out what it was like (Lay, 2016). A booklet or website cannot answer questions about the culture/climate of a building. Additionally, some schools are just known by parents talking to each other out in the community. McGinn and Ben-Porath (2015) found this to be the case of a charter school, Hamilton Charter. Hamilton Charter did not advertise any information about itself. This charter was known by parents of current students talking about it out in the community. There are a few cases like this in the LUSD, yet at what cost to the other schools in the district?

Another recommendation is to look at the gatekeepers in place within the school choice selection process. Some schools require an audition. Some schools require an interview. Yet, all schools give preference to families who already have a child enrolled in the school of choice, limiting the number of available seats before the lottery even starts. These could be possible reasons some parents do not participate in the school choice selection process. They might feel their child is not going to get into one of the schools that has the better reputation in the District, so why fill out the application. This was the case in Chicago where some parents did not fill out an application for their child to go to any other school than the neighborhood school because the child was not seen as academically strong (Phillippo & Griffin, 2015). All gatekeepers should be identified, acknowledged and minimized to allow for the most flexibility possible in a lottery where all students have the same chance as any other student to get into a school of choice.

### **Summary of Recommendations for LUSD**

1. Review the transfer process as it is currently being implemented.

2. Review and revise how information about schools is shared with the community, such as a communication link on the school website for potential parents to ask questions or set up a tour.
3. Review the gatekeepers that may be hindering parents from either selecting certain schools or stopping them from participating in the school choice selection process.

These recommendations are made based on the results that show that when parents are involved in the school choice selection process for secondary students, students have better attendance, less behavior incidents resulting in lost days of classroom instruction, and less mobility. Additionally, the lack of responses from parents who did not participate in the survey regarding the process indicates a need to find out why.

### **Suggestions for Further Research**

School choice policies exist in many school districts. This study has just started the research needed to understand the relationship between parental participation in school choice selection process and attendance, behavior, and mobility in secondary students. A future study needed would be one that looks at the relationship between parent and child when making the secondary school selection. Knowing if it is the parent or the child makes the decision, or how they make the decision together, would influence how schools are represented in the booklets, at group presentation, or on a district website. Knowing this relationship could support a district to put procedures in place to ensure it is the parent completing the school choice selection application, or at the very least that a parent participated in the decision-making process.

A second recommendation would be to research the role gatekeepers are having in the school choice selection process. For example, the District of this study has now added that some schools require parents and students sign a school compact before their application can even be entered in the computer. Another school in Chicago determines if a student is allowed in based on a portfolio score and if it is not high enough you cannot go to that school (Phillippo & Griffin). That could mean a parent needs to potentially go to three schools to sign three compacts to ensure that their child(ren) will get into one of their three choices, or if the meeting is not successful, looking for another school. That leaves the child of the parents who could not do that to go to a school that does not require a compact, interview or audition. Knowing how gatekeepers impact all LUSD students may increase opportunities for students to attend schools that were once unavailable.

### **Global Impact**

The findings and implications from this study are important to the LUSD, yet they are also important to the surrounding community and beyond. There are several charter schools in the area that parents could chose to send their child(ren) to for their secondary education. The LUSD has secondary students attending six different charter schools. Some of which are not located in the city but are in the surrounding suburbs. While this has not had the same impact as it did in Philadelphia, there is always the possibility that LUSD schools may be closed due to declining student population if more students continue to enroll in charter schools (McWilliams, 2017). This was the reality for Philadelphia, it could become the reality for the LUSD, it is possible that it could become

a reality for any large urban school district where charter schools are part of the environment.

As the findings from this study discovered from the 23 responses returned from the parents, it is evident that parents want to be involved in their child(ren)'s education. LUSD and other districts need to consider how a school choice selection process is going to affect a parent's ability to interact with the school chosen for their child(ren). Additionally, any district with a school choice selection process should understand why parents are selecting the schools they do on the application. Knowing why parents choose one school over another can support a district when making the tough decisions regarding changes in leadership, staffing, or closure of buildings.

On the other hand, it can support a district in making the decision to support a low performing school because while it is a low performing school, parents are still selecting to send their child there for a secondary education. Just like a school district in Vancouver, Canada that discovered parents with low-income preferred to keep their children close to home, unless it was for cultural beliefs (Yoon & Lubienski, 2017). This meant that students went to a traditional neighborhood school.

Another option that can impact districts and the community is a community school model. Unlike a neighborhood school, a community school provides services beyond academics, such as medical, services, extended hours, and facility use by the community (Houser, 2016). The school becomes part of the community and the community becomes part of the school. All parties are invested in the success of both the school and the community.

## **Conclusion**

Several large public school districts in the United States now provide parents with a choice of which school to send their child(ren) to for an education. Choice means that parents may enroll their child(ren) in a school other than the one closest to their home or within their zoned area (Ely & Teske, 2015, Pattillo, 2015). School choice selection started with No Child Left Behind legislation which states that parents have the right to change their child's school if the school is not providing an adequate education (U.S. Department of Education, 2017). However, some large public schools are providing a school choice selection process where parents can select the school their child will attend next. The LUSD of this study is one of these districts where parents have the opportunity to participate in the school choice selection process.

If parents choose a secondary school that is satisfactory to both them and their child(ren), it can provide a stable education. Parents need to know the type of school choice selection process established in their school district to navigate through each step (Lay, 2016). Each year, LUSD parents of students in Grades 6 and 8 are given the opportunity to select and rank up to three schools for their child(ren) to attend the following year. However, each year there are parents who do not participate in the school choice selection process. When parents do not participate, their child(ren) is placed in any school that has a seat available. While there is research on school choice. There is a gap in the research on the relationship between parental participation in school selection process and attendance, behavior, and mobility in secondary students.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between parental participation in school choice selection process and attendance, behavior, and mobility of 800 students. Their parents did or did not participate in the school selection process for

the 2015-2016 school year and. The study consists of 400 Grade 7 students, 200 whose parents did participate and 200 whose parents did not participate. The remaining 400 students consists of Grade 9 students, 200 whose parents did participate and 200 whose parents did not participate.

All students selected for participation in this study based on whether their parents participated or did not participate in the school choice selection process were analyzed to determine the significance and effect size that the dichotomous variable had on each of the continuous variables. To investigate the relationship between parental participation in the school choice selection process and the three different continuous variables of attendance, behavior and mobility, each was analyzed separately. Archived data for each continuous variable was retrieved from the LUSD starting with the 2015-2016 school year and ending with the 2017-2018 school year. The data was cleaned, entered into the and SPSS statistical software program for analysis of the relationship between parental participation in school choice selection process and attendance, behavior, and mobility of secondary students.

The findings from this study contributes to the area of parental involvement in the school choice selection process for secondary students. School choice provides parents with the opportunity to select a school which will motivate their child(ren) to attend school more often, offer more sports, higher level academics, or a setting that is more aligned with the style of the student (Condcliffe et al., 2015; Lay, 2016; Rabovsky, 2011). However, even with the opportunity to participate in the school choice selection process for the child, some parents do not participate. Utilizing a self-determination theory lens, parents who do not participate may not have the competence, or the ability to take risks,

to decide where their child should attend secondary school, or it could be other environmental factors influencing their decision (Deci & Ryan, 2012). Deci and Ryan (2012) acknowledge that environmental factors can influence intrinsic motivation. The reason parents do not participate is unknown at this time due to no surveys being returned from them. A future study may be able to gather that insight.

The findings from this study investigated the relationship between parental participation in the school choice selection process and attendance, behavior, and mobility in secondary students. First, the relationship between parental participation in the school choice selection process and attendance analysis was significant and indicated that students whose parents did participate had better attendance than students whose parents did not participate in the process for both Grade 7 and Grade 9. However, when the effect size was calculated it indicated that parental participation factored in as a small percent as to why students attend school more than students whose parents do not participate. Yet, in education, especially a district struggling with their attendance rate, even a small rate of change can make a significant difference. Therefore, having parents participate in the school choice selection process is beneficial for the students and the district.

Second, the relationship between parental participation in the school choice selection process and behavior analysis was significant and indicated that students whose parents did participate had better behavior than students whose parents did not participate in the process for both Grade 7 and Grade 9. However, just as with attendance, when the effect size was calculated it indicated that parental participation factored in as a small percentage as to why students have lower missed instructional days due to behavior

resulting in disciplinary action than students whose parents do not participate. Yet, in education, especially a district struggling with their rate of behaviors resulting in disciplinary actions, even a small rate of change can make a significant difference. Therefore, having parents participate in the school choice selection process is beneficial for the students and the district.

The third finding, the relationship between parental participation in the school choice selection process and student mobility analysis was not significant however, did indicate that students whose parents did participate had fewer enrollments in different schools than students whose parents did not participate in the process for both Grade 7 and Grade 9. However, just as with attendance and behaviors, when the effect size was calculated it indicated that parental participation factored in as a small percentage as to why students have enrollments than students whose parents do not participate. Yet, in education, even a small rate of change can make a significant difference. Therefore, having parents participate in the school choice selection process is beneficial for the students and the district.

The final finding of this study was analyzing the motivation of parents to participate in the school choice selection process. While there was a small number of surveys returned, it was evident that parents were motivated by wanting their child(ren) to be successful by being in a school with good academics and would support them with their long-term goals. Deci and Ryan (2012) attribute this thinking to the parents being motivated by wanting their child to have a sense of belonging at the school. Due to no surveys being returned from parents who did not participate in the survey, it is unknown

why parents who did not complete the school choice selection process application were unmotivated.

In conclusion, investigating the relationship between parental participation in school choice selection process and attendance, behavior, and mobility in secondary students is important to the LUSD and any other district that has a school choice policy. The results of such studies can provide insight into how significant a role it plays in secondary students' education and whether it is worth the time and money to continue. Secondary education is important for students to become productive members of the community in which they reside and in districts struggling with attendance, behavior, and mobility of secondary students, knowing what might help, even a little, is better than continuing to lose ground. Based on the findings of this study, the LUSD, should continue with the school choice selection process. However, future studies should be conducted to investigate other factors that may contribute to the results and how they could work together with parental participation.

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## Appendix A

### Participated Parent Survey

- 1) *Our records indicate that you participated in the 2016 schools of choice process for the 2015-2016 school year. What motivated you to complete the form?*
- 

2)

- 3) *What factors led or motivated you to select a school for your child. Please rank the list below in order of importance with #1 being the most important and #10 being the least important.*

\_\_\_\_\_ *My child will have friends and a sense of belonging at the school*

\_\_\_\_\_ *School Reputation*

\_\_\_\_\_ *Sports Program*

\_\_\_\_\_ *Fits my child's personality*

\_\_\_\_\_ *Academics (Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate)*

\_\_\_\_\_ *Location of School*

\_\_\_\_\_ *Specialty School (School of the Arts, School Without Walls)*

\_\_\_\_\_ *Safe Environment*

\_\_\_\_\_ *School is aligned with my child's long-term goals*

\_\_\_\_\_ *Other (please write in reason)*

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- 4) **How did you hear about the school? Check all that apply**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Previous Experience with School**

\_\_\_\_\_ **School Expo**

\_\_\_\_\_ **School Selection Booklet**

\_\_\_\_\_ **School Reputation**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Speaking with Friends**

\_\_\_\_\_ **District Website**

\_\_\_\_\_ Other (please write in reason)

\_\_\_\_\_

- 5) How helpful/not helpful were the additional requirements for certain schools (such as compacts, interviews, or auditions) when making a selection?

\_\_\_ Very Helpful \_\_\_ Somewhat Helpful \_\_\_ Neutral \_\_\_ Somewhat Not Helpful \_\_\_ Not Very Helpful

- 6) How fair do you believe the school choice process (including the lottery) was for you?

\_\_\_ Very Fair \_\_\_ Somewhat Fair \_\_\_ Neutral \_\_\_ Somewhat Unfair \_\_\_ Very Unfair

- 7) How has your child's 7-12 experience been so far?

\_\_\_ Positive \_\_\_ Somewhat Positive \_\_\_ Neutral/Unsure of to date \_\_\_ Somewhat Negative \_\_\_ Negative

- 8) What did you like about the school choice selection process? Please be specific.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- 9) What do you NOT like about the school choice selection process? Please be specific.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- 10) What recommendations do you have for us to consider regarding school choice?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B

Question 1: Motivation to complete survey
to find the perfect school
to get right placement
my son
looking for placement at Wilson IB program
wanted son to have more options that best fit his learning abilities
to ensure that school choice continues
did for older children
my sons
to make sure my son gets in the best school
to get my daughter in Early College High School
I like having a say in where my child goes to school
my son wanted to change school - too many issues
love/concern for my child
my child needed to select a new school
the different choices of schools
to get my son into the same school as his sister
poor school performance
I wanted to have an actual choice in where my child will attend school
I wanted the best education suited to my son
to get a better education for my kids
didn't want my son to trade schools to often

### Appendix C

Parent Ranking to Motivation Question 2										
10	3	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	13
9	2	1	7	1	2	0	4	1	1	1
8	1	2	1	3	2	6	3	0	2	1
7	2	1	3	3	1	6	1	2	2	0
6	2	3	2	2	0	0	5	6	1	0
5	4	1	3	3	5	2	2	2	3	0
4	3	3	1	5	1	2	1	3	2	0
3	1	7	2	1	2	1	2	4	1	1
2	2	2	0	3	5	2	1	3	4	0
1	1	2	1	0	7	1	1	1	5	4
 Rank from 1-10  Choice of response	My child will have friends and a sense of belonging at school	School reputation	Sports program	Fits my child's personality	Academics	Location of School	Specialty School	Safe environment	School aligned with my child's long-term goals	other