

The Education Mayor:

Improving America's Schools

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NEW ROLES FOR MAYORS

- ⊕ **Mayors are increasingly held accountable for school system performance**
- ⊕ **“Mayor Daley and I share a very important philosophy. Neither one of us is willing to wash our hands of public education. We refuse to let our schools fall by the wayside and join the chorus of politicians saying the failure of the schools isn't their fault. No, Mayor Daley and I believe that when it comes to educating our kids, the buck stops in the mayor's office.” – Boston Mayor Menino ¹**

NOTE: 1. Quoted in: Brown, Mike. 1996. “Boston: Daley, Menino Say Mayors Key to Better Public Schools,” Press Release, The United States Conference of Mayors.

NEW STYLE OF GOVERNANCE

- ⊕ **Historically, an older style of mayoral involvement emphasized:**
 - ⊕ Patronage politics
 - ⊕ Lack of performance accountability
 - ⊕ Private regarding goods (such as jobs and contracts)

- ⊕ **Today, a new style of mayoral involvement emphasizes:**
 - ⊕ Primary focus on performance-driven accountability and quality of life citywide
 - ⊕ Alignment of electoral incentives with school performance
 - ⊕ Fiscal discipline
 - ⊕ Implementation of innovative ideas
 - ⊕ Coordination of education and municipal services

INTEGRATED GOVERNANCE

- ⊕ **Mayoral Control Enhances “Integrated Governance”**
 - ⊕ **Enables the mayor to rely on system-wide standards to hold schools and student accountable for their performance. Failing schools and students are subject to sanctions while being given additional support (Wong 2001).**
 - ⊕ **Builds capacity to reduce institutional fragmentation that often impedes strategic improvement.**
 - ⊕ **Leverages external and intergovernmental resources**

RANGE OF MAYORAL INVOLVEMENT

⊕ Low Involvement

- ⊕ **Traditional Governance Arrangement:** Mayor responsible for city government; School district governance is wholly separate
- ⊕ **Mayoral led “Blue Ribbon Panel”:** Traditional governance system is not changed, but Mayor selects a Blue Ribbon Committee to study the city’s schools and produce a non-binding report

⊕ Medium Involvement

- ⊕ **Permanent Mayoral Office for Education:** Traditional governance system is not changed, but Mayor establishes a standing office to promote city schools and advise the mayor’s office on issues related to education
- ⊕ **Mayoral Supported School Board Slate:** Mayor becomes more active in school governance by actively endorsing or campaigning on behalf of a slate of school board candidates

⊕ High Involvement

- ⊕ **Partially Mayoral Appointed School Board:** Traditional governance system is altered, and mayor is given power to appoint some of the school board members
- ⊕ **Fully mayoral appointed school board:** Traditional governance system is replaced by a fully mayoral appointed school board

NEW ROLE FOR STATE LEGISLATURES

- ⊕ **High involvement mayoral leadership strategies (i.e. mayoral appointed boards) require partnerships with state legislatures**
- ⊕ **State legislatures enable the mayor's office to assume new responsibility**
- ⊕ **State legislatures also create the system of oversight and accountability to monitor the mayor's progress**

DESIGN OF MAYORAL CONTROL

- ⊕ **State and local lawmakers can design mayoral control in order to best meet local conditions**
- ⊕ **Defining design features:**
 - ⊕ **Transfer of district authority to the mayor's office**
 - ⊕ **Moving from elected to appointed school boards**
 - ⊕ **Mayoral selection of the chief executive officer, city hall oversight of budget, and/or management operations**
- ⊕ **Types of mayoral control include:**
 - ⊕ **Mayoral appointment of the entire board (Chicago and Boston)**
 - ⊕ **Mayor/Governor shared appointive authority (Philadelphia)**
 - ⊕ **Hybrid elected / appointed boards (Washington DC and Detroit, both recently return to elected boards)**

VARIATIONS OF MAYORAL CONTROL

District	New / Old Style	Mayor appoints <u>majority</u> of board?	Mayor appoints <u>all</u> of board?	Mayor has <u>full</u> <u>appt. power</u> ?
Boston	New	Yes	Yes	No ^^
Chicago	New	Yes	Yes	Yes
New Haven	New	Yes	Yes	Yes
Baltimore	New	No: Joint appt. with governor		
Providence	New	Yes	Yes	No ^
Detroit ^a	New	Yes	No *	Yes
Cleveland	New	Yes	Yes	No ^^
Wash. DC ^b	New	No	No	No ^^^
Oakland	New	No	No	Yes
Philadelphia	New	No: Joint appt. with governor		
New York	New	Yes	No	Yes

NOTES: a) In 2004, Detroit reverted to an elected school board. b) In 2004, DC reverted to an elected school board. ^ School Board Nominating Commission selects the slate of candidate the mayor can choose from. ^^ Nominating committee pre-screens candidates and then gives a slate to the mayor. ^^^ Council confirmation was required when this policy was in place (2000-2004). * State places 1 of 7 on board for first five years.

WHAT LEGISLATORS NEED TO KNOW

- ⊕ **Does mayoral control “work”?**
- ⊕ **Do test scores improve? What types of gains should be expected?**
- ⊕ **How are district revenues and expenditures affected by the governance change?**
- ⊕ **Is public confidence in the school system bolstered?**

OUR STUDY OF MAYORS & SCHOOLS

- ⊕ **First national, empirical study of mayors and schools**
- ⊕ **Evaluate the “first wave” of mayoral control**
- ⊕ **Cover all large, urban districts that are potential targets for mayoral control (N = 104)**
- ⊕ **Evaluate elementary and high school achievement over a five year period, financial management over a ten year period, improvements in human capital, and public accountability**
- ⊕ **Utilize rigorous statistical methods and controls to isolate the effects of mayors on their school systems**

SAMPLE SELECTION

⊕ **SAMPLE SELECTION RULES:**

- ⊕ **(1) district is not a component of a supervisory union**
- ⊕ **(2) district primarily serves a central city of a Metropolitan Core Based Statistical Area (CBSA)**
- ⊕ **(3) district has at least 40 schools**
- ⊕ **(4) receive at least 75% of their students from a principal city, and**
- ⊕ **(5) send at least 75% of their city's public school students to the same school district**

⊕ **FINAL SAMPLE: 104 districts, across 40 states and the District of Columbia**

⊕ **Most comprehensive sample to date of any study on mayors and schools**

DECISION RULES IN ACTION

Rule	No. of Districts Remaining ^a
Baseline (no rules implemented)	16,416
Rule #1. Local school district that is not part of a supervisory union.	12,827
Rule #2. Principally serves the central city of a CBSA	735
Rule #3. Has at least 40 schools in the district.	137
Rule #4. School district must receive at least 75% of its students from the major city that it serves.	125
Rule #5. City must send at least 75% of its students to the same school district.	104
<i>Final Size of Purposeful Sample</i>	<i>104 districts</i>

MULTIPE DATA SOURCES

- ⊕ **Achievement:** We use school level data from the National Longitudinal School-Level State Assessment Score Database, for years 1999-2003 (limited to 101 districts)
- ⊕ **Staffing:** District level data from the Common Core of Data, 1992-2003 (all 104 districts)
- ⊕ **Finances:** District level data from the Annual Survey of Government Finances conducted by the United States Bureau of the Census, 1992-2003 (all 104 districts)
- ⊕ **State of the City:** Independently collected in 2005 (81 districts available)
- ⊕ **City Web Site Analysis:** Independently collected in 2005 (all 104 districts available)

ANALYTIC METHODS

- ⊕ **Achievement: Time Series**, OLS regression, with state and year fixed effects; robust standard errors
 - ⊕ Unit of observation: the “district-year”
 - ⊕ Aggregate up to district-level achievement, then calculate standardized scores (z-scores)
 - ⊕ Using “z-scores” to allow for comparison across district. The z-score is a measurement of “standard deviations from the mean.” A z-score of +1 means that the observation is one standard deviation above the mean. A z-score of -1 means that the observation is one standard deviation below the mean.
- ⊕ **Achievement Inequality**: Regression analysis as with achievement, plus cross-district analysis of 75/25 Ratios and 90/10 Ratios
- ⊕ **Staffing, & Finances**: Time Series, OLS regression, with state and year fixed effects, robust standard errors; similar set of control variables
- ⊕ **State of the City Addresses**: Bi-variate correlation analysis with achievement and control variables used in other models

MEASURING MAYORAL CONTROL

- ⊕ **Based on three dimensions of institutional variation in mayoral control districts, we develop a three-point index:**
 - ⊕ **“NEW STYLE”**: Is the governance structure driven by a “new style” of mayoral control?
 - ⊕ **“MAJORITY”**: Does the mayor have power to appoint the majority of the board members?
 - ⊕ **“FULL”**: Does the mayor have full power to appoint board members without having them screened beforehand, approved afterwards, or jointly appointed?
 - ⊕ **“INDEX”**: Composite “Mayoral Control Index” (sum of three factors above)
- ⊕ **We run regression analysis using each of these indicators to see which aspects of mayoral control are related to student achievement.**

ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS

⊕ **School district characteristics**

- **School district size**
- **Strength of private school market**
- **% of revenue from state**
- **PPE on instruction**

⊕ **Student background**

- **% African-American students in district**
- **% Hispanic students in district**
- **% Special Ed students in district**
- **% of children in city living below poverty line**

⊕ **School district governance**

- **Council-manager vs. strong mayor**
- **% of school board members voted single-member**

RESULTS OF STUDY

- ⊕ **We present results based on four major sectors in which mayoral control of urban school systems aims at performance improvement:**
 - ⊕ **Student Achievement**
 - ⊕ **Management & Governance, e.g. financial & organizational operations**
 - ⊕ **Human capital, e.g. a broader pool of district and school leadership**
 - ⊕ **Public confidence, e.g. public opinion and awareness about the school district**

ACHIEVEMENT GAINS

- ✦ **Mayoral leadership has made a difference in the early grades**
- ✦ **Giving the mayor power to appoint a majority of the city's school board is associated with an increase of .15 in standardized elementary reading achievement and an increase of .14 in standardized elementary math**
- ✦ **New style mayors are associated with a similar .11 increase in both reading and math**
- ✦ **At the same time, not putting any restrictions on who the mayor appoints to the school board seems to dampen achievement levels.**
- ✦ **Mayors must also work to reduce poverty and other structural inequalities which limit student gains**

NEW FINANCIAL PRIORITIES

- ⊕ **Big picture perspective: New style mayors are becoming more strategic in prioritizing their resource allocation and management.**
- ⊕ **A key characteristic is fiscal discipline to contain labor cost (such as employee benefits). New Style mayors, while continuing to ally with labor unions, seemed able to leverage cooperation (or concessions) from the school employees' unions.**
- ⊕ **Investing more directly in instructional purposes as compared with other non instructional functions (support services, transportation and operation).**
- ⊕ **This new strategic agenda—stronger focus on instructional core, investment for the long range improvement, and labor cost containment—is supported NOT by raising local taxes (which is consistent with the notion of fiscal discipline).**

DISTRICT INERTIA

- ✦ **Mayors were less successful in producing significant changes in human capital staffing patterns**
- ✦ **While changing central office personnel may be possible, other layers of district employees may be insulated from sweeping change**
- ✦ **Mayoral control systems tend to consolidate the central office bureaucracy**
- ✦ **Mayoral selected CEOs often broaden the pool of expertise in operation, finance, and management.**
- ✦ **Both achievement and management improvements take time, and we see evidence that the duration of mayoral control may contribute to its success**

LESSONS FOR STATE LEGISLATORS

- ⊕ **Mayoral control may be an appropriate policy option for turning around struggling school districts.** Mayors can build public confidence while starting to improve district achievement and financial standing.
- ⊕ **Mayors need partners in the state legislature.** State legislators can provide their political capital and expertise in forging new partnerships.
- ⊕ **Do homework on the current state of the district to see if mayoral control is a good solution.** Pure rhetoric about “poor performance” is not as effective as specific findings about the school district’s achievement, finances, and management.
- ⊕ **Develop a specific plan early in the process.** Because “mayoral control” is an umbrella term covering many different types of governance arrangements, it is important that a specific set of reform options be developed as early on in the process as possible. Without such a plan, it is difficult to have meaningful discussion.

LESSONS FOR STATE LEGISLATORS

- ✦ **Understand the legal options available.** Expect legal challenges, and prepare to meet them. At the same time, minimize likelihood of challenges by including opponents in discussions.
- ✦ **Emphasize partnerships with other stakeholders, e.g. teachers, unions, current school board members.** Opponents of mayoral control may paint it as a power-grab or one-person show. Show how mayor will work in partnership with the district, providing the political leverage required to allow the educators to do what they do best – educate the city’s children.
- ✦ **Coordinate efforts with civic leadership.** Mayoral control involves many actors, so it’s important to communicate with each other regarding goals, timelines, and challenges. Without this coordination, the possibility exists for mixed signals and missed opportunities for mutually beneficial partnerships.

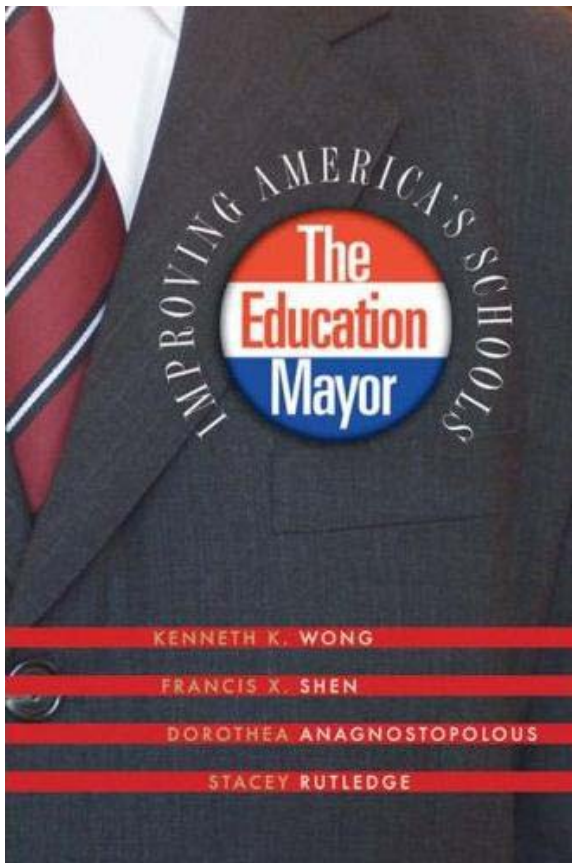
CHANGING STATE LAW

- ⊕ **A legal enabling process is required to give the mayor the power to appoint the school board.**
- ⊕ **Three basic legal options:**
 - ⊕ **State legislation that grants direct authority to the mayor to replace an elected board with an appointed board (such as Chicago)**
 - ⊕ **State legislation that grants temporary authority to the mayor, but calls for a citywide referendum on whether to grant the mayor permanent authority to appoint the school board (such as Boston and Cleveland).**
 - ⊕ **Voter approval of changes in a city charter that allow the mayor to appoint school board members (such as Oakland)**
- ⊕ **Expect court challenges, such as on school board selection methods**

FOR COMPLETE RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Pre-order the book at:

<http://www.EducationMayor.com>



The Education Mayor: **Improving America's Schools**

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"The most ambitious study ever of the impact of mayoral education control upon schools and children. Sure to be controversial because of its specific positive findings."

—Michael Kirst, Stanford University