

KANSAS CITY EVICTION PROJECT

STUDENT MOBILITY, EVICTIONS, AND ACHIEVEMENT Initial Findings from KCPS for 2008-2017

Each year, roughly 9,000 evictions are filed in Jackson County. Many more evictions occur informally, outside of the court system, and with no data to represent them. Eviction is more than a forced move, impacting physical and mental health, access to schools and transportation, people's ability to keep their jobs, and much more. Eviction is both a cause and a condition of poverty.

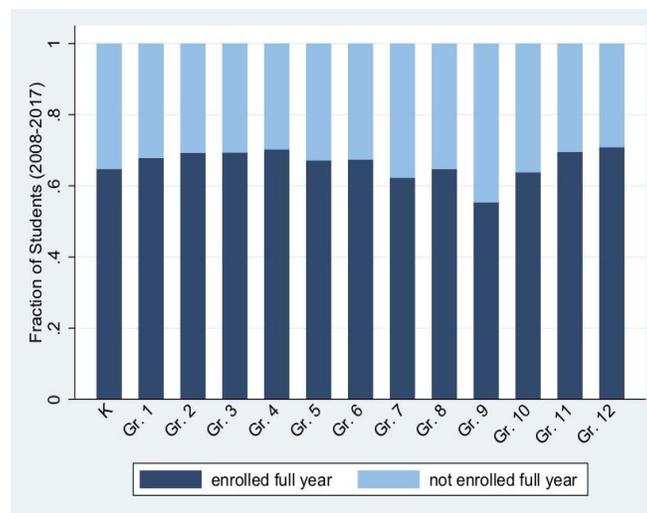
Insecure housing is particularly disruptive for kids, especially when they have to change schools many times over. Research has shown that student mobility, or the movement of students between schools within or between school years, is associated with lower achievement.¹ We believe that it is likely that physical mobility, in part caused by formal and informal evictions, contributes to student mobility, and therefore has important implications for student outcomes.

The purpose of our work is to study the relationships between housing mobility, student mobility between schools, and student achievement in the Kansas City Public School District (KCPS). Our initial dataset includes over 71,000 unique students enrolled between 2008-2017 school years, and 96,000 evictions filed between 2007-2016. Our work to date helps to quantify these phenomena and suggest an initial correlation between mobility and achievement. We have much more work to do to show a causal link.

STUDENT MOBILITY

Students in the KCPS system are highly mobile. Over the past decade, at each grade level between 20-30 percent of enrolling students are new to the KCPS system. At end of each year, 15-20 percent of the students who started that year transfer or drop out. Of the 2,880 Kindergartners enrolled in 2008, only 360 (12.5 percent) remained in KCPS throughout our sample (ten consecutive years). Additionally, only approximately 60 percent of KCPS students are enrolled in the same school for at least 90 percent of the academic year.

FIGURE 1: Full Year Enrollment by Grade SY 2008-2017



Note that this includes approximately 15 percent of students who were coded as enrolled for less than 30 days. If we accept those students as ones who never were really enrolled, the full year attending percentage would be approximately 80 percent.

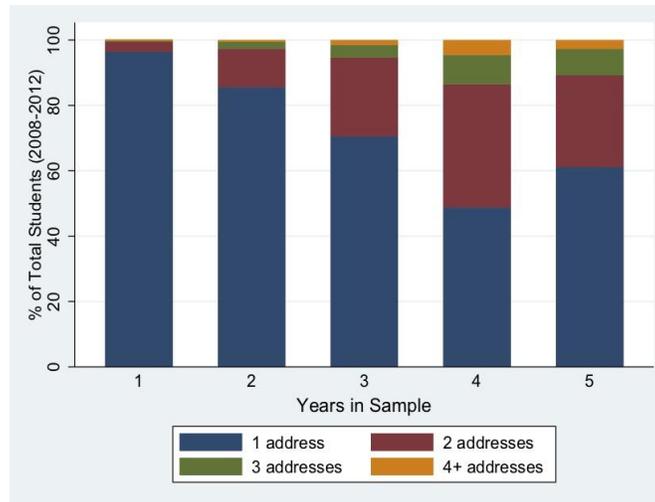
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STUDENT HOUSING MOVES

Using address data from KCPS from 2008-2012, we find that 40 percent of those students who were enrolled for four or five of those years have at least two unique addresses, likely reflecting a move. Additionally, approximately 10 percent of the students move at least twice in a four or five year span:

FIGURE 2: Number of Moves, Based on Years in Sample



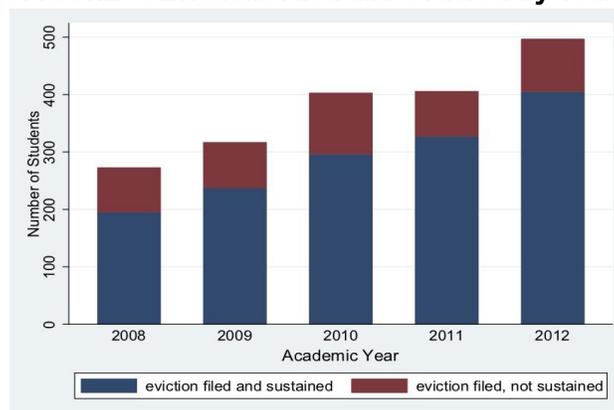
Note that this may understate the true mobility of students who enroll at KCPS because we don't observe moves for those who transfer or drop out.

EVICTIONS OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN KCPS

To study how evictions contribute to mobility, we take the student address data from 2008-2012 and attempt to identify students whose family faced an eviction proceeding. We only count evictions where we can confirm that the (a) student was enrolled in KCPS in the year of the eviction; (b) the evicted tenant's last name matches the student's or their parent's or guardian's; and (c) the address in the KCPS data and the eviction record match.

Figure 3 shows that between 2008-2012, 300-500 students in KCPS faced an eviction at their stated address:

FIGURE 3: Evictions Filed and Ordered by Year



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That equates to approximately 4 percent of the enrolled students in KCPS each year and is only the formal evictions we can match on the three criteria. Thus we believe our eviction total is conservative. 84 percent of the students facing eviction are Black as opposed to only 60 percent of the students who were never evicted in the sample. Additionally, 80 percent of the evicted students were on free or reduced lunch compared with approximately 65 percent of the non-evicted students.

MOBILITY, EVICTIONS AND ACHIEVEMENT

Finally, we take an initial look at the relationship between mobility, evictions and achievement at the school level using MAPS test results for 3rd and 8th grade. The figures below use average MAPs score (between 1 - “below basic” and 4 - “advanced”) for each school between 2008-2017 as the y-axis. The figures show a strong positive correlation between the percentage of students who are enrolled for a full year in a school and MAPs scores, and a negative correlation between the fraction of students facing an eviction and MAPs scores.

FIGURE 4: Correlation Between Grade 3 Test Scores and Full-Year Enrollment

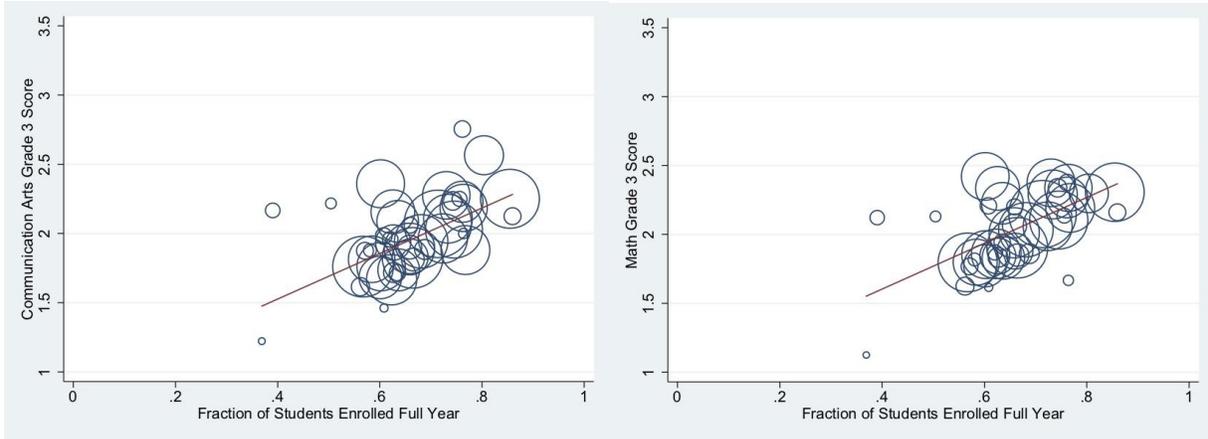
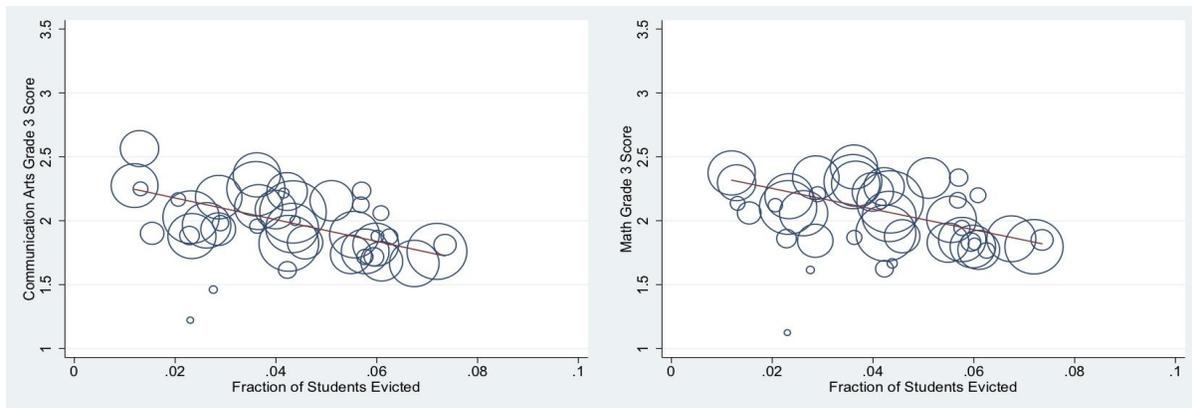


FIGURE 5: Correlation Between Grade 3 Test Scores and Evictions



While the correlations are in the directions we would expect, we caution against a causal interpretation for now. In other words, we cannot yet say for sure whether low levels of full-year enrollment *cause* low standardized test scores. For example, it is plausible that low levels of full-year enrollment and high student mobility is correlated with other variables: low average income, worse instruction, lower per-pupil expenditure, etc. In reality, it is likely that several factors are at play. Our goal is to isolate the impact of mobility and evictions by either (a) controlling for correlated factors, or even better, (b) exploiting quasi-random variation in student mobility and/or evictions.

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FURTHER STUDY

We aim to extend our analysis by:

- Matching evictions data for more years (2013+)
- Attempting to quantify informal evictions/forced moves
- Using models or natural experiments to attempt to isolate the causal impacts of eviction and student mobility not just at the school level, but also at the student level.
- Adding data from districts surrounding KCPS.

DATA REQUEST

To further our analysis, we would request that other school districts in and around Jackson County provide similar data to what we have graciously received from KCPS. We are currently unable to track what happens to the significant number of students who leave KCPS and enter other schools in the area. Additionally, a significant fraction of the evictions in Jackson County (approximately 25 percent) happen outside the boundaries of the KCPS school system and thus we are unable to evaluate whether they are affecting students. Specifically, we would ask for:

- Annual enrollment data with demographic information
- Student address data with dates for changes in address
- Data on student achievement (MAPS scores, NWEA, graduation rates, etc)
- Data on within year student mobility (i.e., attendance, switching schools, etc)

We have set up a comprehensive data security system with KCPS such that data with individual identifying characteristics is on a cloud server that is only accessible by the researchers who have signed data sharing agreements with KCPS. No identifying data is on any personal computers or can be accessed without triple factor authentication.

We thank KCPS, specifically Mike Reynolds, Shannon Jaax, and Jerome Williams, for sharing their data and time for research.

Kansas City Eviction Project is a collaborative effort involving researchers, community organizers, neighborhood leaders, lawyers, and policymakers to dramatically reduce the eviction rate in Kansas City and, in doing so, advance a comprehensive housing justice agenda that can serve as a model for the country.

¹ See <https://www.edweek.org/ew/issues/student-mobility/index.html> for an overview of some research.

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