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CHANGES TO OPERATIONAL, FINANCIAL, AND ORGANIZATIONAL
STRUCTURES OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS DURING MAYORAL TAKEOVERS

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Education
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ABSTRACT

The focus of this research was to examine the effects of mayoral control on operational and financial structures within school systems. Furthermore, this study focused on the public perception and political implications of the mayor's position on local education. The four systems chosen for this study were: Boston, Chicago, District of Columbia, and New York City. All four systems were total control districts, which allowed for each mayor to appoint a majority to the school board and appoint a superintendent or chancellor to oversee the day to day operations of the school district.

This study focused on operational and financial structures, which make up a sizable portion of the larger organizational structure. These indicators often drive how services and expenditures eventually affect the core business of these school systems.

From an operational perspective, this study was focused on expenditures, both in aggregate form and for instructional related services, pre and post takeover. From a financial perspective, this study focused on changes to revenue sources, return on investment, interest on school debt, and capital outlay. From a political perspective, this study examined the data from the various State of the City addresses over the last four years in each of the four cities, along with polling data available for New York City and the District of Columbia.

This study was concluded with a summary of findings, and implications for future research, policy, and practitioners. The research showed that New York City and Boston generally outperformed the District of Columbia and Chicago in the operational and financial metrics used in the study. Furthermore, the number of years a city had been

under mayoral control and operational and financial indicators had no significant relationship.

It was recommended that future researchers should continue to study the benefit of benchmarking metrics of organizational performance to ensure mayors are held accountable for the reforms they espouse during election cycles.

Ultimately, mayors' success in managing their school systems will be based on where they prioritize. This research offered a cross section of metrics by which mayors can benchmark their effectiveness as they change operational, financial, and organizational structures to bring about better, overall organizational performance from their school system.

To my wife, Alexis, whose love and support during this journey has been a tremendous source of strength for me. She shares in this accomplishment. And to my mother and father, Carolyn Shanoff and Barry Shanoff, who instilled a love of lifelong learning and who always encouraged me to be the best at whatever I chose to do in life.

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CHAPTER 1 THE PROBLEM AND ITS CLARIFYING COMPONENTS

Introduction

In December 2008, then President-elect Barack Obama nominated Chicago Public Schools (CPS) Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Arne Duncan, to become the next United States Secretary of Education. Duncan had no formal training in educational administration prior to his appointment as CPS chief executive officer in 2001. Also, his appointment was not made by a traditional school board. Duncan was appointed by Chicago Mayor Richard Daley who had complete authority over the Chicago Public School system. Duncan's appointment to lead President Obama's education agenda highlighted a growing trend in public education's accountability era: the rise of mayoral takeovers of school systems. Five years earlier, education philanthropist Eli Broad, in a speech to state education leaders, stated, "I don't mind telling you that I believe in mayoral control of school boards or having no school board at all. We have seen many children benefit from this type of crisis intervention . . ." (Broad, 2003).

Edelstein (2004) stated, "Urban mayors are very concerned about education in their cities, the quality of the public schools and the impact of education on the economic vitality and viability of their cities" (p. 16). Mayoral takeovers of school districts have occurred through either state legislative action or voter referendum. However, mayoral takeovers have generally been the result of poor student achievement, operational inefficiencies, financial mismanagement, or any combination of the three. At the time of

the present study, New York City, Chicago, Washington, D.C., and Boston were examples of city school systems under mayoral takeovers.

The threat of mayoral and state takeovers, whether for academic or financial purposes, is real. Today, takeovers are permitted by statute in about half the states, and they're allowed by some city charters. The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act also grants states the power to take over failing schools, although that provision has yet to be enforced. (Black, 2008, p. 34)

The consequences of mayoral takeovers have been substantial. First, traditional, single member school boards have been relegated to an advisory role. Mayors have replaced the existing superintendent with an appointed school superintendent, usually with far-reaching power, only having to answer to the mayor. Second, mayoral takeover has usually precipitated wholesale changes in organizational structure and administrative personnel. For example, Joel Klein, the school chancellor of New York City Public Schools, a mayoral control district, instituted a new core curriculum in reading and math, closed many underperforming schools, preferring to reopen those schools as smaller learning communities, and hired school principals directly from the teacher pool. Schacter (2009), reporting on Klein's actions, indicated that none of these changes could have been instituted under the previous school governance structure. Third, mayoral takeovers have affected the organizational identity of a school system to change from the traditional school district bureaucracy to more closely resemble another city government department (Wong & Shen, 2003).

Mayoral takeover of public schools has been a relatively new political movement. This study was conducted to add to the evolving research focused on the factors precipitating mayoral takeover, the structural changes made to school districts as a result

of mayoral takeover, and the organizational characteristics of successful takeover districts as compared to districts in which mayoral takeover has been less successful. Case study methodology was used to identify successful implementation strategies of changes to organization structures by focusing on four takeover districts: Boston, Chicago, New York City, and Washington, D.C., the latter being the most recent mayoral takeover city. The researcher also sought to identify potential risks to mayoral takeover, both political and organizational, using examples from districts other than those that were the major focus of this study.

Statement of the Problem

Much has been made of takeovers of public school systems by mayors of major cities such as New York City, Chicago, Boston, and Washington, D.C. Consequently, such takeovers have produced a single point of responsibility for the successes and/or failures of those public school systems. The takeovers have brought about significant changes to the organizational structure of these school districts and have resulted in either streamlining systems or creating bigger bureaucracies. Such takeovers have been accompanied by tremendous political risks. School board members have carried their own political weight and often have enjoyed recognition and influence within specific territories or areas of cities. Furthermore, not all states have had statutes that allow municipal executives to take over their school systems. These mayors and their appointed school chiefs have enjoyed long standing support of the public in their respective takeovers.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the extent to which the organizational structure of a school district has tended to change after mayoral takeover. Also, the purpose was to examine whether those school districts under mayoral takeover shared similarities as to how they were structured pre- and post-takeover. Of further interest was the investigation of how organizational structures of school districts under mayoral control differ from those of other school districts under traditional school board governance.

Research Questions

Following are the research questions, which were used to guide the study. The research questions provided the foci for the examination of public hearing documents, speeches, and organizational and financial indicators.

The research questions investigated were:

1. To what extent do mayoral takeovers affect the operational effectiveness of the school district?
2. To what extent do mayoral takeovers affect the financial health of public schools?
3. To what extent do mayoral takeovers affect the public perception of public schools?

Definition of Terms

Capital Outlay--expenditures used for facility improvements, new construction, infrastructure repairs, changes, and upgrades; technological expenditures as part of permanent school structures (NCES, 2010).

Chicago School Reform Act of 1995--the legislation passed by the Illinois General Assembly authorizing Chicago mayor Richard M. Daley full control over the city's education system. It further empowered Mayor Daley to appoint a five-member trustee board to develop, implement and oversee comprehensive school reform in CPS (Electronic Summary of the Chicago School Reform Act of 1995, 1995).

Civic capacity--“cooperation [facilitated by mayors] among political, economic, and civic actors necessary for school politics to rise to the level of comprehensive school reform” (Carl, 2009, p. 309).

Educational Management Organization (EMO)--companies or nonprofits that manage multiple schools (Whittle, 2005).

Expenditures--funds spent to operate local public schools within a district including salaries, energy costs, interest on school debt, payments to private and charter schools, books and materials, and student transportation (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2010).

Federal Revenue--“Include direct grant-in-aid to schools or agencies, funds distributed through a state or intermediate agency, and revenues in lieu of taxes to compensate a school district for nontaxable federal institutions within a district's boundary” (NCES, 2010, p. 18).

Financial Health--the extent to which financial metrics improved pre and post mayoral takeover.

Instructional Related Expenditure--“current expenditures for activities directly associated with the interaction between teachers and students, including teacher salaries and benefits, supplies, and purchased instructional services” (NCES, 2010, p. 18).

Instructional Support Staff--“includes instructional coordinators and supervisors and instructional aides” (NCES, 2010, p. 18).

Integrated Governance--a new style of city governance that incorporates school district management into the other governance functions of a local municipality (Wong, Shen, Anagnostopoulos, & Rutledge, 2007).

Interest on School Debt Expenditure--“interest expenditures on long-term debt (NCES, 2010, p. 18).

Library/media Staff--“professional staff members who are assigned specific duties and school time for professional library and media service activities. Includes library/media specialists and support staff” (NCES, 2009, p. C-2).

Local Revenues--revenues generated from “local property and nonproperty taxes, investments, and other student activities such as text book sales, transportation and tuition fees, and food service revenues” (NCES, 2010, p. 18).

Local School Councils (LSCs)--a decentralized governance model, unique to Chicago, that acts as part school advisory council, part board of trustees; has the ability to recommend hiring and firing of school principals; each school has one (Shipps, 2004).

Mayor centrism--the transfer of wholesale decision making regarding the local school district from traditionally elected school boards to the mayor, thereby consolidating responsibility and power over all municipal agencies and functions (Henig & Rich, 2004).

Mayoral Takeover--the act of using state statute, legislation, and/or voter referendum to grant the mayor the authority to take over the schools within their municipality.

Operational Effectiveness--the extent to which resource reallocation occurs towards schools and away from traditional central office and non-instructional overhead expenditures.

Partial Control Theory--a type of mayoral control in which the mayor assumes partial control over a school system, sharing decision making with elected school board (Kirst, 2002).

Partnership Relationship Theory--a type of mayoral control in which the mayor has very little statutory authority over the school system, but who is active in decision making among the elected school board (Kirst, 2002).

Per Pupil Expenditures--“current expenditures for public elementary and secondary education in a state (or territory) divided by the student membership” (NCES, 2009, p. C-3).

Politics--conceived as conflict between competing groups and interests (Viteritti, 2005).

Public Perception--the extent to which voters perceives the state of education in their city and the extent to which they assign responsibility of that perception to the mayor.

School Administrators--any staff member whose job function is primarily managing the daily functions and operations of a school (NCES, 2009).

State Revenue--“includes both direct funds from state governments and funds in lieu of taxation. Revenues in lieu of taxes are paid to compensate a school district for nontaxable state institutions or facilities within the district’s boundary” (NCES, 2010, p. 20).

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)--a standards-based reform model established by NCLB with the goal of every student achieving proficiency in each major academic area by the 2013-2014 school year (Electronic Summary of the No Child Left Behind Act, 2001).

Total Control Theory--a type of mayoral control of a school system in which the mayor assumes total control and responsibility over a school system. In most cases, the mayor actually assumes control over the school board and appoints all members of the school board (Kirst, 2002).

Total Revenue--“additions to assets that do not incur an obligation that must be met at some future date, do not represent exchanges of fixed assets, and are available for expenditure by the local education agencies of the state” (NCES, 2010, p. 20).

Urban Regime Theory--a theory in which policy change comes only if mayors and civic leaders establish a new political paradigm commensurate with the new policy being advocated (Stone, 1998).

Methodology

This study was conducted using a qualitative analysis of organizational structures of school districts before their mayoral takeovers and after the takeovers had been fully implemented. The research questions were based on a 2007 study of organizational effectiveness conducted by Wong et al. Because this was a mixed mode analysis and political forces could have impeded the collection of reliable and valid data, data collection was limited to that which could be obtained from the National Center for Education Statistics' Common Core of Data (CCD), speeches, and polling data. All collected data were available to the public. Many of the organizational structures in place pre-takeover were first addressed in conferences organized by political groups interested in the takeover of their schools before they were ultimately implemented post-takeover.

The data collected were merged in order to identify common operational and financial elements in place prior to takeover, which may, following a takeover, have changed significantly under mayoral control. A similar process was used when examining the research questions regarding the effect of mayoral takeover on public perception of organizational effectiveness, financial health of the school district and operational effectiveness of the school district.

Population and Sample

The population for the study was defined as all public school districts under mayoral control: Boston, Chicago, New York City, and Washington, D.C. The sample used in this study consisted of the four largest urban total control theory districts as of June 30, 2009. The four districts were chosen because they were total control theory school systems and each current mayor had initiated the change in school system governance. The sample districts had been under their current governance structures for as few as two and as many as 17 years. Table 1 provides some basic background information on each of the four districts.

Even though each of the four districts have been under total control during a single mayoral administration, the varying number of years each district has experienced mayoral control will help in determining whether length of time plays a crucial role in the long term success of total control theory as an education reform strategy.

Table 1
Background Information: Four Total Control Theory Districts

District	Mayor	Year Elected	School Control Initiated
Boston	Thomas Menino	1992	1991
Chicago	Richard Daley	1989	1995
District of Columbia	Adrian Fenty	2006	2006
New York City	Michael Bloomberg	2001	2001

Data Collection

Data collection was initiated through municipal and school district websites, the National Center for Education Statistics' annual reports and local periodicals. Data collected from the National Center for Education Statistics' annual reports were used by the researcher primarily to quantify data pre- and post-mayoral takeover in the districts studied and, in some cases, to compare to similar sized districts. Data were also collected through the Quinnipiac University Polling Institute, municipal websites, and local periodicals.

Limitations and Delimitations

This study was limited by the scope of school districts included. Because of the conditions imposed, there was no attempt to generalize the findings beyond the districts studied. Furthermore, "mayor-led integrated governance has not provided a policy prescription designed for all U.S. cities" (Wong et al., 2007, p. 53).

This study was also limited to the generalization of financial data. Because cost of living increases adjust revenues and expenditures at a constant rate, this study does not account for inflation, deflation, or cost of living increases. This study did not account for attrition rates of appointed school board members, changes in mayoral spending priorities, or management style of the mayor. This study was further limited by the nature of the inquiry. Specifically, the inquiry involved the review of selected documents and CCD statistics studied. In some cases, fiscal year data was not available in report form on the school districts studied until two to three years after the closure of that fiscal year.

This study was further limited by the availability of polling data specific to education policy in local political races.

This study did not include mid-sized total control districts like Harrisburg, Pennsylvania and Trenton, New Jersey, districts under partial control, partnership relationship, or low-to-medium involvement theories. Furthermore, any district within a state with statutes that did not allow for the lawful takeover of school districts was not included in the study.

This study was delimited to the study of large, urban total control school districts. The study was further delimited by the minimum length of time (two years) the district has been under total mayoral control.

Significance of the Study

The relative success of mayoral takeovers in several metropolitan areas has left the public to ponder whether this governance strategy was localized among large cities or if this was a movement that could permeate other parts of the country. School boards and school district superintendents have had to critically examine whether their districts' operational and financial structures look similar to those districts before mayoral takeover. The significance of this study was in the determination of characteristics and patterns of operational and financial structures of school districts before mayoral takeover. These determinations were intended to be helpful to (a) school district and municipal officials in making decisions regarding mayoral takeover, (b) school boards in

preventing takeover from occurring, or (c) replicating the successful models of large, urban, total control theory districts.

There has been little research conducted examining the organizational structures of school districts pre- and post-takeover. The researcher's intent in this study was to examine certain operational, financial, and political characteristics existed within school districts that may have prompted takeover. Furthermore, the researcher investigated the extent to which changes to operational and financial structures put in place during mayoral takeovers represented certain philosophical changes consistent with a particular leader or style of school takeover. For example, prior to assuming full control of the Washington, D.C. school system, Mayor Adrian Fenty commissioned New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg and his top educational advisors and leaders of the city school system to provide a framework under which a successful transition from traditional board governance to mayoral control could take place (Hernandez, 2009).

Mayoral takeovers have also brought about certain creative changes to traditional school district bureaucracy. In the present study, the researcher identified examples of creative changes that occurred during the takeovers. For example, after dealing with a school busing issue, Mayor Bloomberg appointed one of his most vocal critics to a new position as the district's family engagement officer. This position was designed to help ease tensions and to respond to critics who said parents' voices were not being heard prior to policy decisions (Sack-Min, 2007).

Organization of Study

Chapter 1 has provided an introduction to the study. It focused on the problem studied, provided a definition of terms, a brief overview of the methodology used, and the significance of the study. Chapter 2 contains a review of literature pertinent to the study. Chapter 3 presents the methodology used to conduct the study and details the procedures used in the collection and analysis of the data. Chapter 4 consists of the analysis of the data. Chapter 5 is the culminating chapter of the dissertation containing a summary of the findings, conclusions, implications for policy and practice and future research.

CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE AND RELATED RESEARCH

Introduction

Mayoral takeover has been a new relatively new movement in public education, and prior research has been narrow in scope and limited in terms of useful longitudinal data. “Despite more than four hundred published books, articles, and studies on board appointment and mayoral control, fewer than a dozen explicitly examine their impact on school reform in more than a cursory fashion” (Hess, 2008, p. 224). There has been some research conducted on the theoretical framework of mayoral takeover, the precipitating environmental factors, and initial implementation of organization structural changes. However, “not even a handful of rigorous, systematic studies have examined the effect of school governance” (Hess, 2008, p. 224). This chapter has been organized to review literature related to mayoral takeovers in public education, the impact of takeovers on school governance, the new generation of mayors, and their involvement in the business sector of their cities. The four forms of mayoral involvement in education in cities are presented, and literature is reviewed related to issues of mayoral control, the reallocation of resources, and unsuccessful attempts at mayoral control.

Mayoral Takeover in Public Education

The shift in public school governance from single member elected school boards to mayoral control began in the 1960s. Salisbury (1967) stated that “the entire governing scheme (traditional school boards) was based upon the myth of a unitary community for

which school board members could ably speak” (p. 420). Viteritti (2009) described the change as being predicated upon the increasing competition for school board vacancies, particularly in racially diverse urban communities. Cultural rivalries, teacher unions, and the civil rights movement have contributed to school board elections and decisions becoming a new political dynamic in local politics. The traditional school board governance structure evolved as a response to political corruption and mismanagement. Ironically, these are the same reasons why the devolution of the school board has occurred and major cities have returned to the mayor as a single point of accountability (Watson & Hill, 2008).

The mayoral influence in public schools changed dramatically in the 1980s and 1990s. Since the 1980s, politicians have used public education as an issue of local, national, and international importance. Numerous reports have indicated that the United States’ system of public education has been producing mediocre results in comparison to other industrialized nations (Lagorio, 2005). Meanwhile, politicians and communities have been searching for answers to the perpetual problems plaguing urban, municipal school systems.

Danielson and Hochschild (1998) predicted that mayoral control would be a short lived political movement for several reasons,

In this political world, no reform proposals, about either educational practices or processes, are so persuasive that they are likely to create broad based coalitions committed to massive change. And without such a coalition or central direction, educational policymakers are unlikely to agree--even within a district. . .thus piecemeal incrementalism appears inevitable, with the pace and direction of change strongly influenced by the particular context. . .the most powerful message emerging from these studies is that given the configuration of local political

forces, there are no clear rules about how to create, sustain, or motivate either educational reform from below or the pursuit of national goals from above (p. 294).

Other critics have claimed that mayoral control would stifle support for schools by denying citizens their vote as to who was to govern public education within their districts (Watson & Hill, 2008). Education reform has historically fit into certain models and packages. According to Watson and Hill (2008), mayoral control had the potential to look vastly different depending on the mayor's level of statutory authority and political influence. This would make replication of results from district to district very difficult to attain.

Reid (2009) reported that mayors, despite competing political forces, have become savvier in regard to education. They have acknowledged that "the welfare of their communities is linked to the success of their schools" (p. 8).

Kirst and Bulkley (2000) believed that there were several conditions that precipitated a mayoral takeover. First, bureaucratic dysfunction has been perceived as a root cause of mayoral takeovers of schools. School district bureaucracies "can create unanticipated consequences and tensions between written rules and reliance on expertise. In many cases, these conflicts can lead to near paralysis" (p. 540). Second, the public's waning confidence in the existing school governance structures has been viewed as another factor in the rise of mayoral takeovers. Prior to the Chicago School Reform Act of 1995, Chicago residents had been used to teacher strikes and financial mismanagement, which hindered schools from opening on time. When events such as teacher strikes have occurred and numerous reports have surfaced in the local media

regarding financial mismanagement, the public has had no choice but to question the legitimacy of the existing governance structure. Often times, this sequence of events has led to school board dissention and in-fighting among board members.

Third, the new demands on city governments with the decreasing availability of federal and state grants for low socio-economic children have made education an attractive option to help shore up the support and ability to provide city services to the low socio-economic areas of a given city. As Kirst and Bulkley (2000) suggested, mayors have been in need of shoring up the support of fragmented social groups under one umbrella. Watson and Hill (2008) agreed that “mayors . . . are less prone to micromanaging, better able to coordinate services for youth and children, and serve much broader constituencies than traditional school boards” (p. 9). Lastly, the accountability movement has caused education to become a central political issue. Mayors have been held accountable not only to citizens but also to business and industry for developing a reliable, highly skilled workforce. In order to put forth necessary economic development projects, business leaders have needed to be reassured that the local educational system was a successful one. The decision to assume responsibility for the city’s schools has had economic implications for cities with declining revenues as well. As middle class and upper middle class professionals and families have relocated to the suburbs, mayors have suffered from the loss of tax revenue generated by those citizens. According to Watson and Hill (2008), families might be more inclined to shed their suburban lives in favor of urban living if they knew the school system was as high performing and well managed as suburban districts.

Conversely, Danielson and Hochschild (1998) have expressed the belief that mayoral control was a low risk, high reward political calculation for mayors choosing to seek control of their city's schools. They based their position belief on the relative disassociation between mayors and their cities' schools prior to mayoral involvement. "Mayors generally have steered clear of education, rarely being punished electorally for ignoring failing city schools, and get involved to primarily advance their political interests" (pp. 293-294).

Many mayors of large cities have been granted the authority to reform, reshape and redefine their cities' schools. Through legislative authority, change in city charter, or voter referendum, mayors have seized on the operational, financial and academic failures of their school systems and pinned their political futures on the successes of their educational reform-oriented platforms, while other mayors have viewed school takeovers as a way to streamline all city services. Usdan (2006) explained, "With approximately 40 percent of children. . . growing up in abject poverty. . . all our institutions must be reconfigured to meet children's complex and interrelated educational, health, and social needs more adequately" (p. 149). Many mayors, city leaders, and school administrators have realized that public schools cannot solve the complex issues facing those students from poverty and their families. Furthermore, Usdan (2006) suggested that "political leaders are recognizing . . . that efforts to improve students' academics must be buttressed by efforts to improve children's health and the social conditions in which they live" (p. 149). This was a distinct departure from the traditional form of mayoral governance, which focused more on "redistributing jobs to supporters and cronies. . . In this

reconceptualized role, these mayors projected an image of efficient public managers who could spread that efficiency to their school systems” (Usdan, 2006, p. 153). Furthermore, Usdan (2006) explained that mayors could effectively use their powers and activate community resources better than elected school board members. Kirst and Bulkley (2000) explained, “During the 1980’s, integrating children’s services became a priority. . . the separation of schools from city government hindered the coordination of services and restricted the ability of educators and city officials to use school sites as one stop centers for providing services” (p. 542). Another circumstance that has perhaps encouraged mayoral involvement in public schools has been the high turnover in district leadership that has frequently occurred in large urban districts. Usdan (2006) purported that the “frequent turnover in superintendents . . . might enhance the case for mayoral involvement on the grounds that it will provide more stability” (p. 157).

Each mayoral takeover has been different. One takeover model in a major city has not been appropriate for another city’s takeover. Furthermore, cities have been faced with different challenges. Whereas one city may have been faced with high unemployment, another city may have had an influx of immigrants (Black, 2008). Comprehensive school reform may have been easier for some mayors to achieve than others for a variety of reasons. However, when looking at Chicago, New York City, Boston, and Washington, D.C., mayoral control of schools came early in the mayors’ terms, allowing mayors to spend political capital earned from their elections. “They can do so in spite of centrifugal forces, and limited formal powers appears attributable to their success in weaving

together both formal and informal sources of power” (Henig, Hula, Orr, & Pedescleaux, 1999, p. 16).

For all cities, however, time has been an issue. Mayoral takeovers have required years to fully impact the academic, financial, and operational aspects of the school district. Joel Klein, the Chancellor of New York City Public Schools, appointed by Mayor Michael Bloomberg, claimed, ”It’s impossible to turn failing schools around in just two or three years” (cited in Black, 2008, p. 35). Viteritti (2009), commenting on New York’s mayoral takeover, explained “that the most significant impact of mayoral control is to create a greater institutional capacity for change. That is no mean achievement in urban systems that have been instinctually resistant to innovation” (p. 29). New York City’s model for improving graduation rates has, however, been garnering special attention by mayors like Adrian Fenty who have been hungry for a dramatic turnaround in their public schools.

The risk potential in mayoral takeovers has been vast. Wong and Shen (2003) explained that mayoral takeovers risk alienating professional educators by infringing upon their previously held professional autonomy. Furthermore, appointments to high profile jobs within a takeover school district may be filled by leaders who lack the expertise to make effective decisions pertaining to instructional or curriculum related issues. Wong and Shen (2003) have cautioned both mayors and the public to avoid utilizing a single metric for success. By pinpointing one metric, such as student achievement scores, mayors may lose sight of other measures, e.g., graduation rates, improvement of school facilities, teacher retention, and financial health. Kirst (2002)

argued that two mayors, Menino and Daley, have been able to successfully focus their takeover efforts on several metrics, using student achievement as their signature issue. Daley's focus in Chicago has been on improving the lowest performing students. Menino's focus in Boston has been on installing a new curriculum and staff development. Keeping student achievement as the primary metric has allowed both to receive reauthorization from their overseers, i.e., voters for Menino and the state legislature for Daley. Viteritti (2009) cautioned that the latitude afforded to mayors in such cities could also lead to overambitious practitioners, risking the delicate balance of power and alienation of school personnel and the general public who vote.

In the first decade of the 21st century, economic difficulties across the country were jeopardizing reauthorization of some mayoral takeovers. Medina (2009) suggested that the State Assembly in New York was strongly considering withdrawing its support of Bloomberg's control over New York City Schools due to the mayor's recent statements regarding teacher layoffs. Bloomberg has been competing in a more politically difficult climate than either Menino or Daley, and reauthorization of the mayor's eight appointed seats on the 13-member board has been projected to be a major issue during the 2010 legislative season. When questioned by the New York State Assembly's Education Committee, Chancellor Klein had to defend the mayor's right to appoint a majority of members to the school board in direct conflict to the objections posed by the city's public advocate and comptroller. Klein was strongly questioned by lawmakers who demanded answers as to why it had taken so long to have formal conversations and to get

answers. Medina (2009) wrote, regarding lawmakers' concerns that, "As both parents and officials, they found it almost impossible to get answers to basic questions" (p. 18).

The mayors of Boston, Chicago, New York, and Washington, D.C. were mayors who, at the time of the present study, had assumed total control and responsibility over a school system. They had also assumed responsibility for bringing about positive organizational changes to their respective school districts in order to fend off voucher proponents and other critics of public schools. Since the mayoral takeover phenomenon was relatively new at the time of the study, it seemed unlikely that major changes to student achievement, instruction, and organization would be experienced by voters and stakeholders for several years (Kirst, 2002).

Mayoral Takeovers and School Governance

Maxwell (2009) quoted Eli Broad as arguing that mayoral control is "the only way to turn around a low performing district with a history of chaotic school board governance" (p. S10). Hess (2008) outlined four principles of effective governance:

- (a) Clear division of authority and responsibility, including the separation of governance and management activities and clear lines of accountability, (b) development of a coherent reform strategy, (c) patience and the focus to implement and support reform efforts over time, (d) effective engagement of the civic leadership and a broad range of stakeholders. (p. 10)

Watson and Hill (2008) argued that the traditional school board structure was not conducive to governance improvement and that obstacles were allowed to permeate through the processes established for school governance. The aforementioned obstacles include:

public apathy, weak links between board members and other public and private sectors, difficulty in establishing relationships among board members and the superintendent, and an inability to develop close ties with other government institutions, including city government and the state. (p. 11)

Viteritti (2009) believed that the assumption behind mayoral control, that ultimate responsibility of the local schools was in the hands of a single public figure elected by a larger portion of the electorate than most school board elections, could be the catalyst for school governance change; leveraging the power of municipal services to enhance district goals.

Before the architects of school governance plan determine the powers of the mayor, they should carefully examine the structure of the municipal Government. . . The extent of a mayor's power and the mechanisms that exist to check that power are found largely within the structure of the municipality. (p. 29)

Furthermore, Viteritti implored school governance panels to build checks and balance into their systems to keep mayors out of the process of awarding school service contracts and analyzing and disseminating performance data. He believed that such systems would lend more credibility to new district governance structures by taking the politics out of education. Henig and Rich (2004) defined mayoral control in a similar context. "Mayoral control promotes accountability and democracy . . . by placing responsibility in the hands of an easily identifiable actor who is subject to election in high visibility, high turnout campaigns" (p. 7).

Wong and Shen (2003) addressed the underlying organizational flaws within a school district as a precondition of mayoral takeover. Most total or partial control takeovers have come about as a result of public outcry for organizational restructuring. Four primary principles for takeover reform have been established: (a) Recognize that the

existing political structures are not easily alterable, (b) empower the district and state level administration to intervene in failing schools, (c) enable city hall to manage conflicting interests and reduce fragmentary rules, (d) integrate political accountability and educational performance standards at the system wide level.

Wong and Shen (2007) were unable to decipher a consistent relationship between organizational effectiveness and mayoral control. Their findings indicated that the bureaucratic layers that exist between the city hall and the schools were providing a barrier to implementing an integrated governance approach. Their analysis showed that when the indicators studied in the districts under mayoral control were considered with those of districts of similar size and demographic makeup not under mayoral control, mayors have been unable to make significant changes in district operations. Wong and Shen have identified one possible reason for the lack of meaningful reform under mayoral control. Mayoral takeover has typically resulted in changes in higher level administration within a school district. However, the lack of communication between city hall and middle to lower level management has made reform difficult to achieve. Wong and Shen's study has had serious implications for the Washington, D.C. takeover, as the chancellor of schools has not taken into account meaningful power structures within the school district, such as the influence of the unions, and has struggled to implement meaningful reform with stakeholder support.

Traver (2006) argued that mayoral control did not require institutional consensus in order to alter existing governance structures in favor of the development and eventual implementation of new administrative policies and procedures. Furthermore, Traver

(2006) argued that high level administration and governance was the only facet that the mayor could truly dictate without consensus.

A New Generation of Mayors

Mayoral takeover of public schools has been a relatively new school governance structure, which began in Boston in 1996. Mayor Menino of Boston began the mayoral takeover movement by gaining control of the city's then failing schools through voter referendum. The research questions proposed for the present study focused on the effect of mayoral takeover on the various aspects of school board organizational function. Furthermore, the political fallout from such takeovers has required some investigation, as this can be another indicator of perceived success of mayoral educational reform. Eisinger (1997) suggested that the new mayors understand that public management has six pillars: reinvention, innovation, privatization, competition, strategic planning, and productivity. The new mayors' definition of public management broke ties with traditional relationships such as teacher unions and civil rights groups, and forged new coalitions with a combination of political forces that could help them consolidate power and legitimize the need for school takeovers. In some cases, Kirst (2002) explained that this has placed the mayors at odds with the very groups that helped them get elected. However, Mayor Daley of Chicago would never have usurped control of Chicago Public Schools if the Republican controlled state legislature thought he was too loyal to traditional democratic constituencies such as unions and civil rights groups.

Mayoral takeover of public schools has been a relatively new by-product of the accountability era. Wong and Shen (2003) explained that

by the 1960s, school boards and superintendents allied with the mayor to manage intense conflicts over educational issues; many of them were further complicated by racial and income inequities in big cities. The emergence of accountability-based reform during the 1990's created a new set of political realities for a more active mayoral role. (p. 5)

Since *A Nation At Risk* (2001) was released in 1983, public education has become a political issue among municipal politicians. In the literature reviewed for this study, the effects of mayoral takeovers and the melding of public education and municipal politics, called "integrated governance" (Wong & Shen, 2007, p. 738) were reviewed.

There are several reasons why mayors have felt compelled to take over their school systems. First, "With cities competing with the suburbs for middle class parents--and the potential taxes they bring in--mayors have a big incentive to take over troubled urban school systems" (*American School Board Journal*, 2006, p. 12). Researchers have suggested that mayoral takeovers come as a result of one of three types of interventions: (a) state legislation that allows for a mayor to oust an elected school board in favor of an appointed one, (b) state legislation that allows for a city referendum to decide on whether the mayor should be allowed to appoint the school board, and (c) voter approval of changes in charter to appoint a school board. (Wong & Shen, 2007). The only caveat to a change in city charter has been that of the District of Columbia, in which the city charter may only be altered with congressional approval (Council of Great City Schools, 2007).

Wong and Shen (2007) identified several advantages to the mayoral takeover model. First, the mayors, by positional authority, have had a wider support system from

which they can elicit support and “leverage resources from nonpartisan organizations,” (p. 744) whether financial or social. Mayors have also typically been in position to utilize their political resources on the federal level to secure more grants for their schools. In Nashville and Philadelphia, mayors have worked closely with members of Congress to secure federal funding for their school programs, above and beyond what has already been authorized for them in Title I. Carl (2009), in his research on mayoral involvement in Chicago’s public school system, reported that proponents of mayoral control gave mayors credit for their ability to organize “disparate social groups in to citywide coalitions to effect lasting improvements in education” (p. 307). Kirst (2002) also reported that supporters of mayoral control believed that this model of school governance would bring about greater economic development and, in turn, a more productive labor force.

Mayoral Involvement and the Business Sector

The mayors of the cities within this study have had the benefit of securing the support of the business community. “Wherever it has come about, mayoral control has usually received enthusiastic support from the business community. Business leaders favor a strong managerial model that puts a single executive in charge. . . .” (Viteritti, 2009, p. 32). The business community in Boston had long struggled with aligning its resources with the city schools pre takeover. At the heart of these concerns was the lack of a consistent message among the school board, superintendent, and mayor. After Menino’s takeover in Boston, “the Private Industry Council and the Boston Plan for

Excellence. . . work closely with the mayor and superintendent in shaping school reform” (Portz, 2004, p. 109). This comports with Kirst’s (2000) theory that mayoral involvement could provide the stability that citizens and the business community craved.

Mayor Daley made it clear that, unlike mayors before him, he would “integrate the public schools into his plans to make Chicago a global corporate hub and a tourist destination” (Shipps, 2004, p. 85). When outlining his plan for the Chicago Public Schools, Mayor Daley “made it clear that the schools were to become part of his plans for economic development” (p. 102). Daley developed a plan for renovating the schools, hoping to attract middle class families back to the city. His renovation plan not only brought back middle class families to city schools, but also generated large construction contracts for local businesses. The socio-economic changes to Chicago’s neighborhoods also brought new businesses into neighborhoods as part of a massive neighborhood gentrification program centered around the newly renovated schools. The new economic realities of a recession, though, have called into question how the mayor would reconcile public education funding and economic development in the midst of a recession. During the late 1990s and early 2000s, Daley was able to mobilize city stakeholders and civic leaders around the idea of economic development via educational reform. Though he has been able to rebuild much of the city’s more industrial areas, large educational reform problems have persisted, particularly with a new schools chief.

Wong et al. (2007) attempted to capture the essence of the Chicago Public Schools’ mayoral takeover:

Under mayoral control, district leadership reorganized central administration in ways that reduced fragmentation and improved public confidence in the schools. These changes helped to restore the district's political capital, enabling its leaders to develop and implement an ambitious educational agenda (p. 136).

Integrated governance theory provides a mix of expectations about mayors' performance in the fiscal realm. . . Improving the school district's bottom line is likely to raise public confidence in the system and help the mayor's electoral standing. . . Beyond fiscal health, however, the *ex ante* predictions of integrated governance are more nuanced. Integrated governance recognizes that from a financial perspective, mayors may be pursuing potentially cross-cutting objectives. . . integrated governance is a flexible form of urban governance that allows local conditions to determine which strategies the mayor will adopt (p. 142).

Daley's success in attracting middle class families back to the city caught the attention of civic leaders in Seattle, who have been looking at improving school quality as a means of keeping middle class families from exiting the district in favor of private schools or schools in surrounding suburbs. Increasing the property tax revenues in Seattle would help offset pending budget deficits in Seattle's schools due to salary increases and teacher contracts (Watson & Hill, 2008).

Aarons (2009) described how the business community in Chicago has initiated venture philanthropy by sponsoring the start-up costs for a new charter school or committing valuable resources to help professional development programs like National Board Certification and principal induction programs. Such philanthropic efforts have been initiated by the takeover of city schools by Mayor Daley as well as a commitment by businesses to see schools as the vehicle for producing the next great generation of Chicago's citizens.

Perhaps the most successful partnership between business and public schools has emerged in New York City. Traver (2006) detailed the business community's initial effort to lobby New York State lawmakers to pass legislation granting control of New York City schools to the mayor. "In 2001, a group of industry executives appealed to Albany for mayoral control of the city's educational system. Their rationale was simple: a centralized system was necessary to produce graduates who can thrive in a competitive economy" (p. 503). In a March 25, 2002 editorial (Business crucial to school reform) in *Crain's New York Business*, all business groups, from local chambers of commerce to industry associations, were called upon to support the mayor's vision of centralizing the school system and make someone responsible for what happens in schools. Since his election in 2002, Mayor Bloomberg has raised more than \$240 million for public schools, not including a \$150 million grant from the Gates Foundation for smaller high schools and continued leadership development (Maxwell, 2009). A strong relationship with the business sector has allowed mayors to leverage their authority as mayors, their business acumen, and their allies to marginalize the powerful interest groups that could hinder any reform initiatives they may introduce (Watson & Hill, 2008).

Four Forms of Mayoral Involvement

Kirst (2002) explained that once mayors have developed a full understanding of their cities and school districts in order to determine their capacity for involvement in education, their next decisions should be related to selecting the best type of leadership role. Mayoral takeovers have occurred in four forms. Mayoral involvement in education

can be categorized to include four different leadership styles: (a) total control, (b) partial control, (c) partnership relationships, and (d) low-to-medium involvement.

Total control theory assumes that the mayor appoints all or a majority of members of the school board and also hires the school superintendent. In many cases, the school superintendent will be someone with no prior experience leading a school system. The school board's role is purely consultative. District staff members are absorbed into the municipal bureaucracy similar to employees in other city services (Watson & Hill, 2008). While this theory promotes a single point of accountability, as the mayor essentially makes all relevant appointments, total control does have its negative consequences. Proponents of traditional single member school boards have expressed the belief that total control results in less democracy. However, "low voter turnout empowered adult constituencies in school districts to exercise disproportionate influence over the selection of board members. Today, most voters can name the mayor. Yet few can name a single school board member" (Duncan, 2009, p. 9). The public is used to city politics and representation relative to each particular region of the city. In total control theory, parents and citizens cannot hold appointed members accountable for their concerns and complaints as they normally do under traditional school boards (Usdan, 2006). Examples of total control theory include the public school structures in Chicago, New York City, and Washington, D.C.

Wong and Shen (2003) identified total control theory cities as having a common integrated governance structure:

Integrated governance. . .has been facilitated by the following factors: (1) mayoral vision on outcome based accountability; (2) broad public dissatisfaction, with a crisis in school performance over several years preceding integrated governance; (3) state leadership that is dominated by Republicans, who are willing to empower the mayoral office to address school problems; (4) strong business support that has translated into adoption of corporate management practices to address complex bureaucratic problems in school districts; (5) weakened legitimacy of traditionally powerful service provider groups (unions) and service demand groups (racial and neighborhood-based groups). (p. 19)

In subsequent research, Wong et al. (2007) set forth the vision of integrated governance in total control districts:

Integrated governance is designed to give the mayor enough power to overcome local inertia and increase the school district's institutional capacity in the areas of management efficiency, human capital, fiscal prudence, and a broadened pool of diverse experience. (p. 141)

Watson and Hill (2008) have stated that total control theory districts, albeit having streamlined accountability, could potentially bring more stakeholders into the discussion of school improvement:

By creating formal authority over board governance, mayoral appointment (to school board seats) may spur better connections between city services and schools. Furthermore, by expending their political capital to support the school system, mayors have the power to dramatically increase civic participation in school governance. (p. 19)

Partial control theory means that mayors appoint some of the school board members. They, in turn, hire the superintendent and share in the responsibility of school budgets with the city council. Partial relationship theory calls for clear delineation between mayoral responsibilities and the school district. Under partial control, the mayor may either appoint some of the board. Under such an arrangement, the mayor may have a voting right on the board, yet allows the board to appoint a superintendent. This is the

theory under which most mayoral control school district and cities operate (Kirst & Edelstein, 2006). Examples of partial control include public school districts in Hartford, Connecticut; Providence, Rhode Island; and Indianapolis, Indiana.

In isolated cases, the mayor may actively seek the election of a slate of school board candidates that share the same philosophy as he or she. This type of involvement carries significant risk for incumbent mayors, as all, some, or none of their slate of candidates may be elected. This is not a typical involvement system as mayors rarely infuse themselves into school board elections for obvious political risks and ramifications.

The Indianapolis example has been unique. Under state law, Mayor Bart Peterson did not have direct authority to take over the city school system. However, the state law granted Peterson the authority to create and oversee charter schools within the city. Peterson created a record number of charter schools during his tenure within Indianapolis and created a quasi school system made up of charter schools. The charters directly competed for the students who already attended Indianapolis schools (Usdan, 2006).

Partnership relationships reflect mayors and school superintendents working together on common issues. In successful partnership relationship districts, city governments and school districts have developed collaborative relationships without having to change citywide authority structures. In other words, both entities work together but operate as separate organizational structures (Borut, Bryant, & Houston, 2005). Long Beach, California provides one example of partnership relationship theory. In Long Beach, the mayor and superintendent attend each other's public meetings and

provide input. Both the mayor and superintendent agree to postpone any meeting that the other will not be able to attend.

Low to medium involvement is perhaps the most prevalent of all mayoral control theories. Most states do not allow mayors the statutory authority to take over school boards. Therefore, across most of the country, there has been an understanding that school boards have the statutory authority to run their school districts without the interference or input of other public agencies or other locally elected officials. In low to medium involvement situations, mayors take a supportive role, largely that of consulting school district leadership, when new initiatives arise. In Florida, St. Petersburg's mayor recognized insofar as, through consulting the school district, he could align city services with the help and support of the school district and that the district could align school district operations and opportunities with the help and support of the mayor (Usdan, 2006).

In line with the traditional school board structure, some mayors have commissioned Blue Ribbon Panels, made up of community members, policy experts, and school district personnel, to examine some or all facets of school district operations, including academic, financial, and operational components. The findings of these panels are nonbinding and are not subject to school board action, unless the school board chooses to consider implementation of recommendations. In some districts, such as Pittsburgh and Orange County, Florida, mayors have commissioned these panels to bridge the gap between school board governance and municipal governance (Wong et al., 2007).

Further, along the continuum, some cities have established offices of education, meant to advise the mayor on issues of educational and municipal importance. The office is also meant to promote the city's schools and their programs. The city of Minneapolis is an example of a municipality with such an office devoted exclusively to supporting public education within the city (Wong et al., 2007).

Watson and Hill (2008) offered a hybrid approach to cities considering mayoral involvement in order to make it more palatable for apprehensive legislators or citizens.

(Consider) using mayoral takeover as a transition strategy only, followed by restoration of an elected board, possibly with a more focused set of duties; limiting the responsibilities of the school board to hiring and firing the superintendent and deciding whether to replace schools, while devolving other hiring and spending decisions to the schools. (p. 5)

Edelstein (2004) explained, from a school facility standpoint, mayors could utilize their political capital to either secure the funding for school facilities through private donors or through bond referendums which, when supported by a popular mayor, could pass with greater possibility than with just the political will of a school superintendent. Black (2008) described the Washington, D.C. school takeover in 2007 when Adrian Fenty was elected mayor on a platform of a complete school takeover. Upon inauguration, Fenty fired the existing school superintendent, Clifford Janey, and hired Michelle Rhee as chancellor, giving her complete control over the school system. Fenty and Rhee uncovered a "culture of cronyism" (Black, 2008, p. 35). As Black explained, Fenty and Rhee found \$1 billion misappropriated for administrative and managerial bonuses. The new leadership recovered the \$1 billion and made an initial investment in school facility renovation and construction. Subsequently, Fenty earmarked an additional

\$14 billion for school construction as Rhee fired or forced the retirement of dozens of principals (Black, 2008).

Mayoral Control and the Reallocation of Resources

Togneri and Anderson (2003) have stated that system wide school reform is a challenging process with the potential for political fragmentation, role conflict between district and school personnel, disparities in external support, inconsistent system wide instructional processes, and teacher attrition. Wong et al. (2007), however, have supported mayoral takeovers as providing the structural streamlining necessary for organizational efficiency within a school district and have cited Chicago as a primary example of organizational restructuring under mayoral control that was worth the risk. According to Olson (2007), a mayor's ability to align the resources available for mid level administrators to execute system wide reform could yield positive results by principals and teachers.

Organizational resource reallocation has been shown to have multiple facets. Allowing public education to become another city service has provided some mayors with the flexibility to tap into various city departments to assist the public schools. In Chicago, Mayor Daley empowered the city parks, recreation, and library divisions to participate in an after school program for the public schools (Maxwell, 2009). Aligning resources towards student learning brought Daley much acclaim, as no other governance structure would have allowed for cross-pollination of municipal departments.

Two common threads found in all four districts, pioneered in Chicago and evident in New York City, were the reallocation of resources towards teaching and learning and the decentralization of power. “From the vantage point of the mayor, the CEO, and other school administrators, the governance arrangements of earlier administrations had not directed enough resources at teaching and learning” (Wong et al., 2007, p. 119).

Wong and Shen (2007) determined that the work of middle to low level management within a school district was crucial to the successful implementation of mayoral control in a district. Middle to low level managers were principals, teachers, and stakeholders in and around individual school communities. Watson and Hill (2008) described the decentralization of decision making as a core component of the success of mayoral control.

New York City Schools Chancellor Joel Klein, a mayoral appointee, attempted to reconcile the bureaucratic forces behind district mandates with what was best for their schools. Bloomberg and Klein “envisioned a secondary phase of improvement efforts built on the core pillars of leadership, empowerment, and accountability” (as cited in Olson, 2007, p. 23). In short, Klein believed that decentralizing decision making and holding principals accountable for their decisions were ultimately the keys to successful organizational change. “With empowerment, we’re changing the role of the principal . . . The principal used to be in many ways the agent of the bureaucracy. Now, he is really the leader of the school” (as cited in Olson, 2007, p. 23).

Traver (2006) explored the natural progression from centralization of resources and control during the initial phases of mayoral control in New York City to the eventual

decentralization of accountability to the school principals in exchange for higher expectations for performance. Traver (2006) explained that while governance changes could be made with limited input from stakeholder groups, mayors must engage in consensus building when it comes to curriculum changes. Bloomberg made a conscious effort to bind together the academic achievement goals in New York City so that he and his executive leadership team could better position themselves behind uniformity of standards, curriculum, and assessment.

In Chicago, Daley's plan to decentralize decision making was a natural shift in policy. Daley took school board responsibilities, including the hiring and firing of principals, to Local School Councils (LSC). Each LSC represented a single school community (Watson & Hill, 2008).

Unsuccessful Attempts at Mayoral Control

Not all mayors who have aspired to control their cities' school systems have been successful. Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa of Los Angeles faced legal issues surrounding the constitutionality of his takeover attempt. As Danielson and Hochschild (1998) described, "education policymakers are unlikely to agree on revolutionary new strategies or paths of action" (p. 294). Ultimately, interpretation of the city's charter and state constitution, as described by Usdan (2006), can mitigate any mayoral takeover attempt.

Villaraigosa's effort to assume control over the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) is being viewed as an uphill battle because he may need to secure changes in both state law and the city charter--the first time a mayor seeking control over public education has faced such a situation. (p. 155)

In some cases, mayors have assumed authority over their city's schools only to turn over the operations of the district to private management companies. Philadelphia Mayor John Street's decision to accept a state decision to turn over Philadelphia schools to Edison Schools, an Education Management Organization (EMO) ultimately had detrimental consequences, as Edison did not deliver sustained educational achievement. Baltimore also underwent an EMO experiment under Mayor Kurt Schmoke in the late 1990s. The results were equally unsuccessful.

Summary

Mayoral takeover of public school districts has been a relatively new movement. Therefore, there was little data or information on the topic. However, as mayors have initiated takeovers, researchers have used real-time data and newsworthy operational changes as a basis for comparing takeover districts and districts under traditional governance structures. As more states grant mayors the statutory authority to take over their schools, as voters support the changes necessary to some city charters granting mayors expanded authority over city schools, and as public education continues to be scrutinized in major metropolitan areas, the body of research on mayoral takeovers is sure to expand. Furthermore, the reauthorization of federal legislation raising accountability for individual districts, spearheaded by Secretary Duncan, a supporter of mayoral control, is sure to raise awareness of the benefits and drawbacks of mayoral takeover of public school districts.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter contains a description of the methodology, procedures, and components of the study. Both quantitative and qualitative data are used to answer the research questions. Most of the data collected came from the National Center for Education Statistics' Common Core of Data (CCD), public speeches, organizational charts, and symposium proceedings. Chapter 3 is organized into the following sections: (a) population, (b) data collection, (c) sources of data, (d) research questions, (e) data analysis, and (f) chapter summary.

Population and Sample

The population for the study was defined as all public school districts under some form of mayoral control. The sample used in this study consisted of the four largest urban total control theory districts as of June 30, 2009. The four districts were chosen because they were Total Control Theory school systems and each current mayor had initiated the change in school system governance. At the time of the study, the sample districts had been under their current governance structures for as few as two (Washington, D.C.) and as many as 14 years (Boston).

The four sample districts in the study served Boston, Chicago, New York City, and Washington, D.C. Each of these districts transformed their school governance structure from traditional school board governance to some variation of total mayoral

control at different points in time. In each of these districts, the current mayor, either as a candidate, or as an established mayor, initiated the change. These districts were selected because of (a) their size, (b) their single point of accountability, (c) their difference in point in time of implementation, and (d) the common organizational and financial complexities of their school districts and city governments. Furthermore, Boston, Chicago, and New York City have had relative mayoral stability, as the mayors in each of these cities have been re-elected at least once. Data regarding each mayor's years of service were available on the cities' websites. The mayor in Washington, D.C., Adrian Fenty, was elected in 2006 to a four year term, and was the only first term mayor in this study. His term was set to expire in 2010.

Data Collection

The initial plan for this study was to use historical and present day documents such as organizational charts, school board meeting minutes, and speeches to identify the changes in organizational structures in each of the aforementioned total control school districts. However, the quantifiable operational and financial indicators from Wong et al. (2007) meant that school board meeting minutes were no longer necessary as data collection tools. The National Center for Education Statistics' Common Core of Data (CCD) database was the primary tool for gathering operational and financial data. All data reported through the database was current as the 2007-2008 fiscal year. These data did not involve human subjects, were reported in aggregate, and were readily available from the federal government without special permission. Thus, the approval of the

University of Central Florida's Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was not necessary.

Sources of Data

Data were collected primarily through the National Center for Education Statistics' Common Core of Data (CCD). All data relevant to the research questions were accessible via the CCD and municipal websites. The study was conducted to measure changes pre- and post-takeover relative to organizational and financial factors. Tables were generated to complete longitudinal comparisons of per pupil revenues and per pupil expenditures in each of the four districts. The CCD database provided all organizational and financial indicators necessary for this study. Public perceptions were measured through the results of opinion polling and data compiled from major mayoral speeches from 2007-2010.

Research Questions

Based on the review of literature, this study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. To what extent do mayoral takeovers affect the operational effectiveness of the school district?
2. To what extent do mayoral takeovers affect the financial health of public schools?

3. To what extent do mayoral takeovers affect the public perception of public schools?

Data Analysis

The first research question addressed the extent to which mayoral takeovers affected the organizational structures of the school district. One of the precipitating factors in mayoral takeover of schools has been the perceived operational inefficiencies that exist within a top-heavy school organization. Organizational efficiency can be measured in both financial terms and in structural changes to central office positions and personnel. If organizational restructuring results in additional resource reallocation to students and support for instruction, one would expect a higher per pupil expenditure for instruction, school-based support and school administration (Wong et al., 2007). Because each of the districts in this study had a variety of perceived organizational inefficiencies, especially pertaining to facility management, the analysis derived from this research question may not necessarily account for necessary improvements in capital outlay and may skew the results for districts with major facility needs.

This study was conducted to examine per pupil expenditure, including revenue generated by federal grants, such as Title I, the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), private grants, and other sources not generated through state and local revenue streams. Furthermore, this study used CCD data to determine the percentage of employees in various district positions pre- and post-takeover. Specifically, the researcher examined the percentages of all district employees who served in the following

capacities: teachers, aids, instructional supervisors, guidance counselors, media staff/librarians, district administration, and school administration.

The second research question regarding financial health was investigated by examining revenue per pupil, capital outlay per pupil, the various revenue streams from federal, state and local sources, debt, and expenditures per student. In their 2007 study of indicators from 1999-2003, Wong et al, measured financial health as “total revenue – total expenditures ÷ total expenditures” (p. 142). This same formula was used in the present study to answer the second research question. Financial health was also measured by comparing expenditures per student.

The third research question pertaining to public perception of mayoral control was able to be analyzed using multiple sources of data: (a) State of the City speeches from 2007-2010 were reviewed for mention of public education and mayoral involvement; (b) election and re-election results; and (c) polls by Quinnipiac University Polling Institute, and local newspapers during the respective terms of each city’s mayor involved in this study. The review of State of the City speeches was based on the Wong et al. (2007) study. The leadership index used for analyzing State of the City addresses was based on “three elements: prioritization of education, interest in playing an active role, and desire to actively engage in management of the school system (Wong et al., p. 179). Table 2 outlines guiding questions related to each of these elements.

Table 2
Basic Elements of State of the City Speeches

Basic Element	Corresponding Question
Prioritization of education	Is public education a top priority for the city?
Interest in playing an active role in local education	Is the city government actively involved in educational programs?
Desire to participate in managing school system	Does the mayor explicitly name initiatives and directives for the school system?

Public perception is difficult to generalize to other urban school districts under mayoral control because the local political landscape and issues of local importance are typically unique to that metropolitan area or geographic region. The polling data used in this study did not account for margin of error or sample size of the poll. Table 3 indicates the study domains, corresponding research questions, and sources of data which were used in the analyses.

Table 3
Study Domains, Research Questions and Data Sources

Study Domain	Research Question	Data Source
Operational Effectiveness	To what extent do mayoral takeovers affect the operational effectiveness of the school district?	Common Core of Data (CCD)
Financial Health	To what extent do mayoral takeovers affect the financial health of public schools?	Common Core of Data (CCD)
Public Perception	To what extent do mayoral takeovers affect the public perception of public schools?	Quinnipiac University Polling Center <i>Washington Post</i> State of the City Speeches

Summary

This chapter presented the population and sample, data collection procedures, sources of data, research questions, and data analysis procedures. In this study, the researcher looked for patterns in changes to organizational structures, financial health, and public perception that might be applicable and of interest to other mayors and policy makers investigating the results of total control theory in a large urban school district.

Chapter 4 contains a report of the analysis of the data. Chapter 5 concludes the study with a summary and discussion of the findings, implications for policy and practice and recommendations for future study.

CHAPTER 4 ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Introduction

The previous chapters have explained the purpose, provided a theoretical framework for the existing research, and developed the preparation of the study. Chapter 1 presented the problem to be studied and provided a brief overview of the study. Chapter 2 shared the existing literature on this topic. Chapter 3 detailed the methodology used to gather data. Chapter 4 contains an analysis of the data collected. Through the analysis of the data, it was hoped that trends and certain data of the four school districts in this study could either be replicated in other mayoral control districts or be extracted by non mayoral control districts as positive, operational or financial practices. Furthermore, it was hoped that the data collected regarding public perception of mayoral takeover would determine a dedicated set of political characteristics that could be replicated in cities considering total mayoral control.

Data that were analyzed were separated individually depending on the research question studied. Data for the first two research questions were extracted from the CCD website and placed in separate Microsoft Excel files. Data for the third research question were collected from local newspapers, city records, and the Quinnipiac University Polling Center and entered into a Microsoft excel file for further analysis.

The first two research questions were analyzed based on the data sets from the year prior to mayoral takeover and the most recent fiscal year for which data were available, 2008. Because the research questions were designed to compare the four

districts, the fact that Research Questions 1 and 2 compared different sets of years was inconsequential, as ratios were compared rather than raw data. In each set of data, formulas using components of each data set were used to measure operational and financial effectiveness. The third research question was used to examine recent speeches and polling data no earlier than 2007. Such longitudinal data is the equivalent of an entire election cycle within each of the four cities. The goal in presenting the analysis of the data was to answer the research questions by determining trends and practices unique to mayoral control districts relative to each other pre-takeover.

Research Question 1

To what extent do mayoral takeovers affect the operational effectiveness of the school district?

Total expenditures per pupil is a measure of instructional related expenditures and non instructional expenditures. Instructional related expenditures include teacher, librarian, resource support, curriculum developer, and teacher aide salaries, and any other expenditure directly related to classroom instruction including textbooks, assessment tools and technology (NCES, 2010). Non instructional expenditures include school-based and district administrator salaries, food service, transportation, funding for private schools, community service, enterprise operations, and maintenance and facility operations. While this measure is dependent upon several economic environmental factors including the consumer price index, inflation (or deflation), and local and state tax revenues, an increase in total expenditures per pupil is indicative of greater revenues. In

some cases, an increase in total expenditures is directly related to an increase in capital outlay as facility improvements represent a major cost. As it relates to total and instructional expenditures, the researcher can only report what the districts purport and would not presume the accuracy of the data.

Table 4 displays the total expenditures per pupil pre and post mayoral takeover for the four cities that were the focus of this research. The District of Columbia had a 35% increase in total expenditures per pupil pre- to post-takeover, which was only three years, a large increase in a short period of time. Coincidentally, in 2007, the District of Columbia initiated a \$1 billion capital project to improve school facilities.

Table 4
Total Expenditures per Pupil Pre and Post Mayoral Takeover

District	^a Takeover Status	Year	Total Expenditures Per Pupil
Boston	Pre (1991)	1991	7,219
	Post	2008	21,801
Chicago	Pre (1995)	1995	6,376
	Post	2008	11,051
District of Columbia (DC)	Pre (2005)	2005	12,979
	Post	2008	20,029
New York City	Pre (2001)	2001	13,566
	Post	2008	20,162

Note. Per pupil expenditures are reported in dollars.

^aPre and post takeover data does not control for inflation, consumer price index (CPI), and other variances in financial controls in the actual reported dollar amount

Boston had the largest increase pre to post takeover, both in percentage increase (300%) and real per pupil expenditure (\$14,582), over a 17-year period. Chicago increased \$4,675 per pupil over a 13-year period. The District of Columbia increased \$7,050 over a three year period. And New York City increased \$6,596 over a seven year period.

Table 4 also shows a clear difference and substantially lower per pupil expenditures in 2008 between Chicago and the three other cities in this study. Though the data presented in Table 4 can be a politically advantageous metric by which to measure a mayor's commitment to education, total instructional-related expenditures per pupil is a more accurate measure of whether true organizational structures shift from significant administrative costs due to organization structural inefficiencies towards a reallocation of resources back to schools under mayoral control.

One of the main precipitating factors of mayoral control is the perceived organizational inefficiencies brought on by top heavy school districts with high administrative overhead. If a true resource reallocation towards schools occurs, significant increases in instructional related expenditures per pupil should occur. Table 5 provides a closer look at changes in instructional expenditures per pupil pre and post takeover.

Table 5
Total Instructional Expenditures per Pupil Pre and Post Mayoral Takeover

District	^a Takeover Status	Year	Instructional Expenditures Per Pupil
Boston	Pre (1991)	1991	4,065
	Post	2008	12,410
Chicago	Pre (1995)	1995	3,697
	Post	2008	5,774
District of Columbia (DC)	Pre (2005)	2005	6,567
	Post	2008	8,640
New York City	Pre (2001)	2001	8,270
	Post	2008	13,159

Note. Instructional expenditures per student are reported in dollars.

^aPre and post takeover data does not control for inflation, consumer price index (CPI), and other variances in financial controls in the actual reported dollar amount

All four districts showed increases in instructional related expenditures per pupil. Boston increased the most of the four districts studied in total per pupil instructional related expenditures (\$8,345), over a 17-year period. Chicago showed an increase of \$2,077 over a 13-year period. The District of Columbia increased \$2,073 over a three year period. In addition, the District of Columbia's increase over three years was four dollars less than Chicago's increase over a much longer period of time. New York City increased \$4,889 over a seven year period. Table 6 displays the percentage of total expenditures per pupil reserved for instruction-related services.

Table 6
Percentage of Total Expenditures Per Pupil Reserved for Instruction-Related Services

District	^a Takeover Status	Year	Total Per Pupil Expenditure	Total and Total % Per Pupil Instructional Expenditures
Boston	Pre	1991	7,656	4,041 53%
	Post	2008	21,801	12,410 57%
Chicago	Pre	1995	6,376	3,697 58%
	Post	2008	11,051	5,774 52%
District of Columbia (DC)	Pre	2005	12,979	6,567 51%
	Post	2008	20,029	8,640 43%
New York City	Pre	2001	13,566	8,270 61%
	Post	2008	20,062	13,159 66%

Note. Expenditures are reported in dollars.

^aPre and post takeover data does not control for inflation, consumer price index (CPI), and other variances in financial controls in the actual reported dollar amount

Boston increased its percentage of total expenditures per pupil reserved for instruction-related services, pre to post takeover, by 4%. Chicago decreased its percentage of total expenditures reserved for instructional related services, pre to post takeover, by 6%. The District of Columbia decreased its percentage of total expenditures for instructional related services, pre to post takeover, by 8%. New York City increased its percentage of total expenditures for instructional related services, pre to post takeover, by 5%. Therefore, only Boston and New York City experienced increases in total expenditures reserved for instructional related services.

For comparison, the average percentage of total instructional expenditures per pupil among the 100 largest school districts in the United States, of which the four districts in this study were included, was 52% in 2008 (NCES, 2009).

The differentials between percentage of total expenditures used for instructional related services were higher in New York City than in any of the other districts in this study. New York City had the highest percentage of total expenditures dedicated to instructional related expenditures among all districts in the 100 largest school districts in fiscal year 2008. When examining the pre and post data, decreases for both the District of Columbia (51% to 43%) and Chicago (58% to 52%) were shown in the percentages of total expenditures per pupil used for instructional related services. The District of Columbia's aforementioned facility improvement project in 2007 accounted for a disproportionate amount of expenditures to improve school facilities. No such project or any other comparable project identified through this study was initiated in Chicago to explain the drop in expenditures per pupil for instructional related services for that city.

Research Question 2

To what extent do mayoral takeovers affect the financial health of public schools?

The financial health of public school districts has not only been a precipitating factor for mayoral control but also has served as a metric by which the public determines successful reform within their public schools. Tables 7-10 combine several financial benchmarks: (a) revenue sources, (b) Return on Investment (ROI), (c) interest paid on

school debt, and (d) capital outlay as a percentage of total annual expenditures. Though each benchmark may carry different weight depending on the mayoral priorities in each city, these four benchmarks have been presented to generalize the financial condition of each school district in this study. Each of the financial benchmarks were made available by the National Center of Education Statistics' Common Core of Data (CCD). Just as in Research Question 1, for expenditure and revenue data, the researcher can only report what the district purported and did not presume the accuracy of the data.

All four cities experienced an increase in total revenue pre to post takeover. Revenue totals shown in Table 7 did not account for inflation or deflation. The revenue generation shown was consistent with city size and number of students per district. Chicago had the only increase in federal revenue in 2008 compared to fiscal year 2007.

Table 7
Revenue by Source: Pre and Post Mayoral Takeover

^a District	Revenue Source		
	Federal	State	Local
Boston			
Pre (1991)	41,182	126,650	266,257
Post (2008)	91,360	393,426	828,582
Chicago			
Pre (1995)	351,759	933,461	1,630,017
Post (2008)	808,902	1,845,925	2,189,789
^b District of Columbia			
Pre (2005)	167,922	^a	941,683
Post (2008)	85,568	^a	1,138,744
New York City			
Pre (2001)	1,016,645	5,872,276	5,163,075
Post (2008)	1,785,145	9,335,189	8,765,359

Note. Revenue is reported in thousands of dollars.

^aPre and post takeover data does not control for inflation, consumer price index (CPI), and other variances in financial controls in the actual reported dollar amount.

^bThe District of Columbia does not receive state funding because it is not part of a state.

All four districts increased in each of the revenue sources pre to post takeover.

The largest increase took place in New York City, in both State and Local funding sources.

Revenues by revenue source are important because some mayors and mayoral candidates often espouse their ability to secure extra federal funding and exert political influence over sales tax increases, property tax increases, and other revenue generating initiatives (local revenue sources). Among the four largest total control theory districts, there appeared to be little to no difference in the federal funding secured by the school

districts researched and other school districts in the largest 100 school districts in the nation.

During capital budgeting, companies compare the return on investment (ROI) of different projects to select which projects to pursue in order to generate maximum return on equity for the company's stockholders. In this study, the return on investment was used as the primary determinant of financial health of a school district, a measure of comparing revenues to expenditures. It is displayed in Table 8.

Table 8
Return on Investment (ROI) Pre and Post Mayoral Takeover

^b Takeover Status	Total Revenue	Total Current Expenditures	^a ROI
Boston			
Pre (1991)	434,089	423,554	2.5%
Post (2008)	1,313,368	1,141,536	15.1%
Chicago			
Pre (1995)	2,915,237	2,469,471	18.1%
Post (2008)	4,844,616	4,235,025	14.4%
District of Columbia			
Pre (2005)	1,109,605	808,665	37.2%
Post (2008)	1,224,312	849,259	44.1%
New York City			
Pre (2001)	12,051,995	11,851,342	1.7%
Post (2008)	19,885,693	17,742,868	12.0%
100 Largest School Districts			
2007	130,166,026	132,408,186	-1.6%

Note. Revenue is reported in thousands of dollars.

^aReturn on Investment (ROI) is reported as a percentage.

^bPre and post takeover data does not control for inflation, consumer price index (CPI), and other variances in financial controls in the actual reported dollar amount

The return on investment measure did not account for differentials of recurring or non-recurring revenues or expenditures, as the NCES did not name those revenues or expenditures by recurring or non-recurring. The greatest differential of return on investment gain occurred in Boston and New York City. While all four total control districts exceeded mean ROI of the 100 largest school districts (2007 data), Chicago showed an ROI differential of -3.7, the only ROI loss among the four districts in the study, pre to post takeover. The District of Columbia had the highest overall ROI in fiscal year 2008. The only explanation for the significant difference in ROI in the District of Columbia is the lack of a State revenue stream, the only major market differential between it and the other districts in this study. Consistent with the districts that demonstrated the highest organizational effectiveness as measured in research question 1, the same two districts, Boston and New York City have the highest ROI differentials, 12.6% and 10.3%, respectively, between pre and post takeover in Table 8.

One precipitating factor of mayoral takeover is the perceived financial mismanagement of school district debt. This indicator can affect credit worthiness, bond ratings, the method government entities use to raise money, existing interest rates districts pay on debt, the ability to sell depreciating assets, favorable rebates from potential lenders and procurement-related functions of the school district, such as purchasing good and services on credit. Interest on school debt for the four districts is presented in Table 9.

Table 9
Changes in Interest on School Debt

^b Takeover Status	Interest on School Debt	Total Expenditures	^a Interest on School Debt (%)
Boston			
Pre (1991)	8,436	423,554	2.0%
Post (2008)	13,442	1,141,536	1.2%
Chicago			
Pre (1995)	333	2,469,471	<0.1%
Post (2008)	180,767	4,235,025	4.3%
District of Columbia			
Pre (2005)	0	808,665	0
Post (2008)	0	849,259	0
New York City			
Pre (2001)	344,457	11,851,342	2.9%
Post (2008)	400,000	17,742,868	2.2%

Note. Interest on school debt and total expenditures are reported in thousands of dollars.

^aInterest on school debt is reported as a percentage of total expenditures.

^bPre and post takeover data does not control for inflation, consumer price index (CPI), and other variances in financial controls in the actual reported dollar amount

Reducing interest payments on school debt is a good indicator of the district's flexibility in reducing interest rates on outstanding debts and improves the district's debt/expenditure ratio. Debt/expenditure ratio is the percentage of total expenditures made for interest payments related to school debt. Though the District of Columbia school district has been bound by law to balance its budget from year to year, the three other districts in this study were not bound by the same regulation. Boston and New York City reduced their percentages of total expenditures dedicated to interest paid on school debt by .8% and .7% respectively, Chicago increased its percentage of total expenditures

dedicated to interest paid on school debt by 4.2%. Based on the data displayed in Table 9, the District of Columbia was in the best position with no interest on debt. The reduction of debt in New York City and Boston is, however, worthy of note. Chicago's increase in interest paid on school debt is high, given that its existing increase of 4.2% is greater than Boston's and New York City's pre takeover debt combined.

In order to determine whether other financial indicators may be explained by major capital improvement projects, capital outlay as a percentage of total expenditures was also investigated in this study. In many cases, mayoral involvement in schools can be partially attributed to the public perception of conditions of school facilities. Therefore, mayors can look at capital improvements to school facilities as a public metric of improvement made to schools. The results of this aspect of the analyses are presented in Table 10.

Capital outlay can contribute valuable information regarding the financial health of a school district. A high percentage of capital outlay may have implications for instructional related services. Facility improvements and upgrades to existing school infrastructure may have important implications related to technology. Mayors' predispositions towards an increase in percentage of expenditures for capital outlay projects can convey the vision and purpose they, as leaders, have for their school systems.

Table 10
Capital Outlay Percentage Increase Pre and Post Takeover

^a Takeover Status	Capital Outlay	Capital Outlay Percentage Increase
Boston		
Pre (1991)	4,356	1.0%
Post (2008)	36,418	3.1%
Chicago		
Pre (1995)	58,097	2.4%
Post (2008)	322,333	7.6%
District of Columbia		
Pre (2005)	134,417	16.6%
Post (2008)	167,103	19.7%
New York City		
Pre (2001)	2,002,823	16.9%
Post (2008)	2,208,816	12.4%

Note. Capital outlay is reported in thousands of dollars

^aPre and post takeover data does not control for inflation, consumer price index (CPI), and other variances in financial controls in the actual reported dollar amount

Boston reported an increase in capital outlay of 2.1%. Chicago reported the largest increase in capital outlay (5.2%). The District of Columbia reported an increase of 3.1%. The District of Columbia also had the highest capital outlay percentage of all four districts in 2008 (19.7%). New York City reported the only decrease in percentage of total expenditures dedicated to capital outlay (-4.5%).

Research Question 3

To what extent do mayoral takeovers affect the public perception of public schools?

The third research question dealt with public perception of mayoral takeover and whether mayoral takeover of public schools was a risky political calculation for mayors. This question was answered using multiple sources of data: (a) State of the City speeches from 2007-2010 were reviewed for mention of public education and mayoral involvement; (b) election and re-election results; and (c) polls by Quinnipiac University Polling Institute, and local newspapers during the respective terms of each city's mayor involved in this study.

Analysis of State of the City Speeches

Tables 11-14 provide data obtained from a review of State of the City speeches for each of the four cities that were the focus of this study. Speeches were reviewed for the following five elements: (a) explicit mention of education as a top priority, (b) explicit interest in playing an active role, (c) number of references to education/schools in speech, (d) highest number of references to another city program/service, and (e) mention of education/schools within first 250 words.

An explicit mention of education in a State of the City speech as a top priority meant that the mayors, in their speeches, actually used the term, "priority," when describing their education plans for that year. An explicit interest in playing an active role

in education meant that the mayors, in the given year's speeches, described how they would personally be involved in education that year.

To obtain the number of references to education/schools, the researcher counted and reported the mayors' use of the words "schools," "students," and "education" in each year's speeches. A mention of any of these education-related terms qualified as a reference.

To determine the highest number of references to another single city program/service, the words "public safety," "housing," and "budgets" were counted and totaled. A word count was performed in order to determine whether the first mention of education occurred in the first 250 words of the text of the speech. If this occurred, it indicated that education was the first city program mentioned in a State of the City speech.

Table 11
Qualitative Analysis: Boston State of the City Speech

Indicator	2007	2008	2009	2010
Explicit mention of education as a top priority	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Explicit interest in playing an active role	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Number of references to education/schools in speech	10	13	10	10
Highest number of references to another city program/service	10	14	13	11
Mention of education/schools within first 250 words	No	No	No	No

Note. Boston's State of the City speech in 2010 was not given. The mayor's inaugural speech after re-election was given in its place.

Table 12
Qualitative Analysis: Chicago State of the City Speech

Indicator	2007	2008	2009	2010
Explicit mention of education as a top priority	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Explicit interest in playing an active role	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Number of references to education/schools in speech	21	29	15	27
Highest number of references to another city program/service	13	12	14	17
Mention of education/schools within first 250 words	No	Yes	No	Yes

Note. The 2007 Inaugural Address supplanted the State of the City Address that year.

Table 13 Qualitative Analysis:
District of Columbia State of the City Speech

Indicator	2007	2008	2009	2010
Explicit mention of education as a top priority	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Explicit interest in playing an active role	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Number of references to education/schools in speech	16	8	11	7
Highest number of references to another city program/service	19	11	8	5
Mention of education/schools within first 250 words	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

Table 14
Qualitative Analysis: New York City State of the City Speech

Indicator	2007	2008	2009	2010
Explicit mention of education as a top priority	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Explicit interest in playing an active role	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Number of references to education/schools in speech	15	6	7	13
Highest number of references to another city program/service	10	11	15	7
Mention of education/schools within first 250 words	No	No	No	No

Each of the four districts, over the four year period of speeches, all explicitly mentioned education as a top priority of the incumbent's administration. Each mayor

explicitly stated his desire to play an active role in the leadership and management of his city's school system. Though Mayor Daley of Chicago had more mentions of education/schools than any other city service or policy initiative, Mayor Menino did not mention education, in any of his four speeches over the same period of time, more than other city services or policy initiatives. In both the District of Columbia and New York City, each mayor had two years of mentioning education more than other city services or policy initiatives and two years of mentioning another priority more frequently. In three of the four years of data, Mayor Fenty mentioned education within the first 250 words of the speech on three occasions. Mayor Daley mentioned education, as early, twice. Neither Mayor Bloomberg nor Mayor Menino mentioned education within the first 250 words of any of their four State of the City speeches between 2007-2010.

Election and Re-election Results

This study has been conducted in part, to isolate the mayors' leadership over public education as either a reason for reelection or possibly a vote for an opposing candidate. No research exists that either proves or disproves that the public in any of the four districts in this study has voted for mayor based on public education or any other single issue.

Polling Data and Public Perception

Prior to Michael Bloomberg's reelection in 2009, the Quinnipiac University Polling Institute released results of a poll indicating that, by a 56%-32% margin, poll

respondents responded favorably when asked about their opinion of mayoral control of public schools in New York City under Mayor Bloomberg. In the same poll, voters were asked, by party affiliation, whether mayoral control of New York City schools was a success. Democratic and Republican respondents approved (51%) and disapproved (37%) in equal numbers of Bloomberg's handling of public schools. Along racial lines, white respondents, black respondents, and Hispanic respondents all expressed opinions that the mayoral takeover of schools had been a success. The trending data outlined in the 2009 poll report, revealed a public opinion approval increase of 21 percentage points, from 35% approval in May 2003 to 56% approval in July 2008.

Polling data did not show that public perception was swayed significantly immediately following a state of the city address. In the Quinnipiac Poll, Mayor Bloomberg had a higher approval rating in handling the public schools in July 2008 than he did in January 2009, immediately following the State of the City speech. No major policy shifts were announced within a month of each of these polling dates.

Another question from the same poll asked respondents to rank certain issues, in order of importance that influenced their vote for mayor. The economy held a 32 point advantage over education. However, education was ranked second highest as the single most important issue in the respondents' vote for mayor that year. Education was 16 points higher than crime, 12 points higher than taxes, and 11 points higher than mass transit.

The Quinnipiac University Polling Institute's poll also concluded that voters approved of New York City Schools Chancellor Joel Klein by a margin of 37%-35%,

with 28% indicating they were undecided. This approval polling data were slightly down from previous polls in early 2009 and late 2008.

In the weeks leading up to the 2010 mayoral election in the District of Columbia, Mayor Adrian Fenty, down in the polls at the time, dispatched Michelle Rhee, Fenty's appointed chancellor, to campaign for his re-election. In an overly Democratic city, registered Democrats were almost equally divided with 41% indicating that Chancellor Rhee was a reason to vote for Fenty, and 40% stating she was a reason to vote against Fenty. Ultimately, the clear preference of white voters in the city, who clearly supported Rhee's leadership of the school system was in stark contrast to the lack of support among the city's black voters who comprised the overwhelming majority of voters in the city (Stewart & Craig, 2010).

Summary

Chapter 4 focused on the analyses of data. First, indicators of operational effectiveness were analyzed and compared between the four districts studied. Operational effectiveness was measured by: (a) total expenditures by pupil, (b) instructional expenditures by pupil, (c) and the percentage of total expenditures per pupil made up of instructional related expenditures per pupil. Second, indicators of financial effectiveness were analyzed and compared between the four districts. Financial effectiveness was measured by: (a) total revenue, (b) return on investment (ROI), (c) interest on school debt as a percentage of total expenditures, (d) and capital outlay as a percentage of total expenditures. Third, the priority placed on public education was measured by comparing

data from each of the State of the City speeches given during the most recent four year period (2007-10), the equivalent of an election cycle. Furthermore, in cities where the data were available, polling data prior to mayoral elections was shared.

Chapter 5, the final chapter, will articulate findings from this chapter in greater detail. Each of the three research questions will be summarized and discussed, and conclusions will be shared. Chapter 5 will also present recommendations for future study and implications for municipalities considering this type of school governance structure.

CHAPTER 5 SUMMARY, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine the impact of mayoral takeover on the operational and financial structures of school districts. This study focused on a variety of operational and financial factors including expenditures in aggregate terms, per pupil expenditures, revenue in aggregate, revenue types, return on investment (ROI), interest on school debt, and capital outlay. In addition, this study focused on the relationship between politics and education, examining polling and mayoral speech data as ancillary but important factors in determining the perceived and actual success of mayoral takeover of public schools.

Chapter Five will focus on summarizing the study's findings. The results of each research question will be discussed. Furthermore, recommendations for future research will be shared. Chapter Five will conclude with implications and recommendations for municipalities and city leaders considering mayoral takeover, in the initial stages of mayoral takeover, or recently elected administrations considering their own education policies when they replace mayors who have already pioneered mayoral takeover of schools in their own cities.

Statement of the Problem

This study sought to identify the changes in operational and financial structures pre and post mayoral takeover. Furthermore, this study sought to determine whether

mayoral control serves as a successful school governance structure. This research will provide a framework by which mayors can benchmark operational and financial structures throughout their control of the school system.

Methodology

This was a mixed method study, using both qualitative and quantitative data, in order to develop a cross section of measurable operational and financial benchmarks for schools under mayoral control. Furthermore, data from polls and from State of the City speeches were used to determine how the infusing education into city politics either worked to help re-elect mayors and re-authorize mayoral control as a school governance structure.

This study focused on the four largest total control districts: Boston, Chicago, Washington, D.C. (also referred to as the District of Columbia), and New York City. The mayors in each of the four cities control the school system, participate in education policy, and ran for re-election at least once on their respective records, including their control of education. Each of the four cities studied are included in the National Center for Education Statistics' (NCES) annual report on the 100 largest school systems in the United States (US).

The data for the first two research questions were found in the NCES Common Core of Data (CCD), part of the US Department of Education. Because no human subjects were used in the data and all data used in this study were previously published either by government agencies, municipal websites, polling centers, journals and

periodicals, IRB approval was not necessary. Data were shared for the year previous to mayoral control and the most recent year for which data were available, fiscal year 2008.

For State of the City speech data not available via the city website, a Freedom of Information Act request was made. This request can be viewed in Appendix A.

Data Analysis

This study was guided by the following three research questions.

1. To what extent do mayoral takeovers affect the operational effectiveness of the school district?
2. To what extent do mayoral takeovers affect the financial health of public schools?
3. To what extent do mayoral takeovers affect the public perception of public schools?

Research Question 1

To what extent do mayoral takeovers affect the operational effectiveness of the school district?

The analysis of data for RQ1 was based on the quantification of operational data.

In this study, operational data were identified through disaggregating expenditure data, both in aggregate form and as exclusively instructional-related data. In this study, operational effectiveness was defined as reducing organizational overhead and reallocating resources within the school system towards instruction and instruction

related services. This study did not account for inflation between pre and post takeover expenditures. Table 4 covered the total per pupil expenditure in the year prior to takeover year and the per pupil expenditure in 2008. Table 5 listed the per pupil instructional-related expenditure in the year prior to takeover and in 2008.

Table 5 also reveals information relevant to changes to operational effectiveness. Boston experienced the highest growth of per pupil instructional expenditures pre takeover to post takeover (300%). New York City experienced the second highest growth (37%). Chicago experienced the third highest growth (36%). The District of Columbia experienced the lowest growth of the four districts in per pupil instructional expenditures (25%). While Chicago and New York City increased comparable percentages pre takeover to post takeover, New York City experienced their increases in six fewer years than Chicago.

Table 6 combined the data from Table 4 and Table 5 to show whether there was an increase in the percentage of per pupil expenditures in instructional-related areas. The data in Table 6 clearly shows the very resource reallocation break towards instructional related expenditures that this study defines as effective organizational structural realignment took place most effectively in New York City. Also, New York City's overall standing among the 100 largest districts in terms of percentage of total expenditures earmarked for instructional related services is a primary indicator of successful mayoral involvement in organizational realignment. Boston also showed an increase over time. Boston's standing among the 100 largest public school districts also

places in the top quartile of percentage of total expenditures earmarked for instructional related services.

Instructional-related expenditures as a function of total expenditures is a primary indicator of reduced overhead and administrative costs. One of the precipitating factors of mayoral takeover discussed in Chapters 1 and 2 is the perceived operational inefficiencies of a top heavy school district, the glut that keeps revenue from being expended on instructional personnel and resources. According to the measure used in this study, mayoral takeover has helped reallocate resources toward instruction and thus reduce administrative overhead, in New York City and Boston. Chicago experienced a decrease in total expenditures per pupil for instructional-related services in their pretakeover year of 1995 (58%) to 2008 (52%), a decrease of 6%. The District of Columbia experienced an 8 percent decrease in total expenditures per pupil for instructional-related services between their pretakeover year of 2005 and 2008 (51% to 43%). The aforementioned resource reallocation toward facility renovation in 2007 and 2008 in the District of Columbia may have explained their decrease in per pupil expenditure for instructional related services between pretakeover and 2008.

Research Question 2

To what extent do mayoral takeovers affect the financial health of public schools?

Financial health can be quantified by revenue, ROI, debt and capital outlay. When examining total revenue, all four districts have experienced increases in total revenue, mostly from increases in local funding sources, namely property taxes. All four districts

reside in municipalities that have experienced little to no effect from existing property depreciation that is encompassing most areas of the country. While other cities with large school districts rely heavily on federal and state revenues to replace shortfalls blamed on increased home foreclosures and declining property values, the four cities in this study have largely been unaffected by declining local revenues. Property tax generation remain a primary indicator of financial solvency as local revenues represent the largest revenue source for all school districts. The importance of local revenues is underscored by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, commonly referred to as the stimulus bill. This bill aimed to infuse money in states with declining revenues for institutions normally funded by state and local revenues, like schools.

Table 8 represents ROI measures on each of the four districts. New York City and Boston have the highest gain in ROI pre takeover to post takeover. Washington, D.C. has the highest overall ROI (37.4% to 44.1%), which is due in large part to having one fewer revenue source than the other districts. Chicago has the lowest ROI change pre takeover to post takeover of the four districts (-3.7%). However, all four districts have a higher ROI in fiscal year 2008 than the mean of the 100 largest districts in 2007 (-1.6%).

Table 9 represents interest paid annually on school debt as a percentage of total expenditures. Boston and New York City both decreased the percentage of expenditures accounting for interest payments on school debt. Chicago increased its interest paid on school debt pre takeover to post takeover and the District of Columbia balances its budget each year and does not carry any debt from year to year.

Table 10 represents resources dedicated to capital outlay. Chicago showed the greatest increase pre takeover to post takeover in percentage of total expenditures for capital outlay.

Based on the four measures used to define financial health, Boston and New York City represent the greatest increase in financial health pre takeover and post takeover due to ROI increases over time and reductions in interest on school debt. The District of Columbia is the most recent of all four districts to experience takeover and has begun to move in a similar direction as Boston and New York City. Chicago has been under total mayoral control longer than all districts except Boston, and has seen a decrease in ROI and an increase in interest paid on school debt, both negative signs for financial health.

Summary and Discussion of Findings

This study was designed to determine which total control theory school districts among the 100 largest school districts in the U.S. have effectively managed the operational and financial components during takeover. The three research questions focused on operational, financial, and political aspects of school district leadership from the mayor's office. Operationally, the reduction in administrative overhead, as measured by reallocating expenditures for instructional related services, was measured to determine if mayoral involvement in school district leadership streamlined resources out of the central office and back to the schools.

Financially, the study focused on several factors including revenue sources, total revenue, ROI, interest paid on school debt, and capital outlay as a percentage of total

annual expenditures, to determine, if among the four measures, each of the four mayors have effectively managed the capital in their respective school districts.

Politically, the study focused on both polling data where available and State of the City speeches over the last four years, to determine the priority placed on education relative to other city priorities.

Operationally, New York City and Boston had the highest reallocation of expenditures for instructional related services. Chicago had the lowest of all four districts. Therefore, Boston and New York City were found to be the most operationally effectiveness defined by the measure used in this study. As mentioned earlier, operational effectiveness can be defined by percentage of total expenditures used for instructional related services. Mayors in New York City and Boston could articulate that they have effectively reallocated resources away from the central office and back to schoolhouses.

Financially, the study targeted four key benchmarks in each of the four districts. All four districts had an increase in total revenue pre to post takeover, with Chicago showing the only increase in federal funding of the four districts studied, between fiscal year 2007 to fiscal year 2008. New York City and Boston showed the highest increase in ROI, and had the largest decrease in interest paid on school debt as a percentage of total expenditures. The District of Columbia had the highest overall ROI in 2008. Chicago had the largest increase in interest paid on school debt of the four district studied. When investigating capital outlay, Chicago had the highest percentage increase, while Boston had the lowest overall capital outlay as a percentage of total annual expenditures in 2008.

Each total control theory school district will be at the mercy of a mayor's priorities. In some cases, as was the case in the District of Columbia, capital outlay is a major priority given the condition of school buildings at the onset of mayoral takeover. However, the overall indicator of financial success is ROI, as it accounts for all monies coming into the district and leaving the district.

Politically, the State of the City speech data showed the most amount of parity. The mayors in each of the four cities work in different political climates and ultimately speak to most pressing issues in the cities. Their speeches differed in length, style and timing in the calendar year. However, each mayor consistently stated the public education was a priority of their administrations. Mentions of public education or education related terms were as popular as mentions of other city services such as public safety, budgets, public health, and other community based services. Ultimately, State of the Speech data had no effect on public perception of mayoral takeover, as polling data did not show a difference in approval among voters when asked about the mayors handling of public education in months when the mayor delivered a state of the city address.

The polling data made available in New York City and the District of Columbia was particularly telling. New York City citizens overwhelmingly approved of the mayor's control of that city's public schools, whereas the District of Columbia voters were decidedly divided, along racial lines, about the success of public school reform in that city. The polling data revealed that mayoral control is a divisive issue and the appointment of a school superintendent or chancellor is an appointment that can make or break re-election. Danielson and Hochschild's (1998) claim that municipal political

climates are not naturally set up for coalition building around educational reform, was no more evident than in the District of Columbia. However, New York City, perhaps the most diverse of all North American cities, in terms of politics and cultural backgrounds, disproved their assertion that mayoral takeover is unsustainable. Therefore, it could be argued that it depends on the city's background, the mayor's perceived ability to govern, and the timeline by which reforms are put in place. Kirst (2002) predicted the demise of total control mayors like Fenty, who alienated constituencies that supported his election such as the teacher unions and other labor friendly groups.

Implications for Policy and Practice

Mayoral control is sure to expand as a popular school governance reform structure. As new candidates run for municipal office and State Statutes are revised by legislators insistent upon changing the establishment system for governing schools, formal metrics will become more common to baseline school district processes pre and post mayoral takeover. In response to the review of literature and the analysis of data, the following conclusions were drawn (in no particular order of importance):

1. Instances of total mayor control will likely increase over the next 10 years, contrary to the research of Danielson and Hochschild (1998).
2. Mayors will become more susceptible to re-election based upon public perception of school reform and the rise of nontraditional candidates with education as a centerpiece of their platform.

3. Researchers will continue to compare the success of mayoral takeover as a governance reform strategy to those districts of comparable size under a traditional governance structure.
4. Mayors will appoint school chancellors and superintendents from nontraditional backgrounds.
5. Mayors must pay attention to expenditures and reform those processes and organizational structures that keep revenue from schoolhouses.
6. Mayors must use financial metrics to evaluate their organizational reform. These metrics resonate with the public and local leaders, who act as the city's shareholders.
7. Mayors must continue to leverage their business acumen, relationships and leadership to bring greater investment into public schools (Viteritti, 2009).
8. Mayors must engage union leadership in meaningful reform. Cities are usually saturated with union membership. Engaging unions in meaningful reform discussion plays well with the public and with teachers.
9. Taking over control of the local public education agency is no longer a low risk governance strategy. Mayoral engagement in public school leadership is paramount to a successful reform movement.
10. Mayors need to set the metrics for the public just prior to takeover. Other city services have metrics, such as public safety, and the metrics should not be exclusively academic, operational, financial, or political (Wong & Shen, 2003).

11. The success of mayoral takeover of school districts is linked to the success of other city services and agencies that work toward the social welfare of the city's youth (Usdan, 2006).

Recommendations for Future Research

The following recommendations for future research are based upon the review of literature and the analysis of data:

1. Study the relationship between total control theory and improvements in organizational structures within school districts.
2. Compare the total control theory districts with those under other types of mayoral control models.
3. Develop other metrics of operational effectiveness for school districts under various forms of mayoral control.
4. Develop other metrics of school district financial health for school districts under various forms of mayoral control.
5. Explore the relationship between mayoral control of education and voter preferences.
6. Investigate the risks to mayoral re-election involved with the various forms of mayoral control of education.
7. Compare education to other factors that cause voters to make their decisions for who to vote for.

8. Compare the successes and failures of the various forms of mayoral control to those districts of comparable size and demographic data that continue under traditional governance structures.
9. Compare operational and financial metrics to academic metrics. Assess if there are relationships between operational and financial metrics and academic metrics.
10. Investigate the relationship of mayoral control of schools to citizen migration either to or from municipalities and suburbs.
11. Investigate the precipitating factors for the various forms of mayoral control. Assess if certain non educational, political forces are involved in the eventual takeover of schools.
12. Investigate the effectiveness of chancellors and superintendents from nontraditional backgrounds.

Recommendations for Practice

This study revealed that operational and financial effectiveness in school districts can, in fact, be measured. Furthermore, this study further showed that polling data can reveal a strong divide in the electorate regarding feelings related to mayoral control. Clearly, many citizens may never be comfortable with the idea of a nontraditional school system in which the mayor has ultimate control like any other city department or service. However, in order to hedge against initial backlash of necessary reform, mayors must explicitly lay out their case for takeover. Too few mayors utilize data and measures that can help bolster their case for mayor control in favor of rhetorical sensationalizing of

current school district conditions. Ultimately, mayors must benchmark school district governance the same way they benchmark public safety departments and other city services. Setting a timeline by which the public can expect these benchmarks to take place is a good step in establishing transparency of school governance along with accountability that comes with the total control model, as Watson and Hill (2008) and Kirst and Bulkley (2000) argued.

Operationally, mayors must, upon takeover, take a close look at all non-instructional related services. Ultimately, resource reallocation to the schoolhouses will enhance academics, and play well politically to the citizens. An organizational restructuring should be an option on the table in order for this to occur. The appointment of a school superintendent or chancellor with a track record of successful organizational realignment is the key to ensuring operational effectiveness. Mayors who take over schools have a unique opportunity to replicate effective operational procedures from other large city departments in their school system. Specifically, consider the consolidation of supply chain management policy, which could not only eliminate layers of bureaucracy, but also help cities leverage supplier contracts, providing all city departments cost savings on supplies and eliminating wait time for such supplies. This could potentially bring a major cost savings for all city departments.

Mayors must not, however, fall into the trap of trying to replicate another district's operations plan, as circumstances are significantly different and vary from state to state and city to city.

Financially, the mayor must take a hard look at how revenue generation occurs, how budgeting takes place, and historical ROI data, a viable benchmark to document progress for a potentially skeptical public. Hiring a chief financial officer (CFO) for the school district is crucial. Many mayors will make the mistake of deputizing city administrators to handle oversight of the school systems budget in addition to other city services. There is much at stake in the takeover of the school system. Without viable, competent financial leadership within the school system, sound experience in school finance, mayors and citizens can expect more of the same, with the schoolhouses and students ultimately feeling the effects of financial mismanagement.

From an organizational perspective, mayors must look at their new authority over the schools as an opportunity to reshape the organizational landscape of the school district. Urban school districts often are large bureaucracies. Mayors must reframe their school system from a culture of departmental isolationism to departmental interdependence.

When a mayor has completed a historical financial analysis of the school district, laying out the financial benchmarks for the school districts by which the public can hold him/her accountable for, is a proper next step to ensure not only transparency in school district governance, but also instill accountability in those the mayor has appointed to those positions of influence, the superintendent or chancellor and the CFO.

Politically, Mayor Adrian Fenty's recent defeat in his re-election bid should cause all total control mayors and those considering a takeover to take pause and re-evaluate whether the political risks are worth it. Mayor Fenty lost because he did not read the

polling data which clearly showed that the African American citizens were skeptical of his leadership over the schools, which ultimately is what cost him his job and made him the first total control theory mayor to lose re-election.

Ultimately, mayors need to treat public education with the same care as they do other public issues, like public safety, housing and public health. They must be prepared that voters will vote on a single issue, as voters did in September 2010 in the District of Columbia. Furthermore, trying to reform public education in a short time may potentially scare voters, who viewed the chancellor unfavorably for all of the reforms she attempted to institute on behalf of the mayor. The mayor made public education reform the signature issue of his re-election campaign and lost. Certainly, mayors and their staff members will need to study how Fenty and his administration failed in conveying the message that his control of public education in the District of Columbia was on a successful track.

Above all else, there must be an acknowledgement that the blueprint for successful mayoral control is different in each city. Just as Fenty unsuccessfully attempted to replicate the successful takeover of New York City schools, mayors must look at the needs of their school districts and plan accordingly as to what can be accomplished in one year, two years, five years, and ten years. Every mayor considering some form of mayoral control should have a vision for their superintendent or chancellor, including what types of changes to organizational structures must take place to bring about the type of school district they want for their city, and a plan for holding those

appointed to positions of leadership in the school system accountable for benchmarked quarterly and annual goals.

Mayors cannot underestimate the level of their engagement in public school policy and decision making. The public must see them actively involved in the operations, financials, and academics of their schools.

Summary

The analysis of data presented in Chapter 4 has been discussed in Chapter 5. In this chapter, the findings and discussion were related to each research question, conclusions were provided, and recommendations for future research were offered. The chapter concluded with implications and recommendations for future practice.

APPENDIX A
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT REQUEST

**CITY OF CHICAGO
Freedom of Information Request**


Requestor's Name:	Mark Shanoff	Address:	511 St Dunstan Way				
Telephone Number:	407-913-8533	City	Winter Park	State	FL	Zip	32792
Fax Number:	407-877-5009	Email	shanoffm43@yahoo.com				
Organization (if any):	University of Central Florida						

Records sought (be specific): Please furnish me with one copy of the Mayor's 2007 and 2008

State of the City Addresses. Thank you.

This request is being made for a commercial purpose. Section 2(c-10) of FOIA defines "commercial purpose" as the use of any part of a public record or records, or information derived from public records, in any form for sale, resale, or solicitation or advertisement for sales or services. For purposes of this definition, requests made by news media and non-profit, scientific, or academic organizations shall not be considered to be made for a "commercial purpose" when the principal purpose of the request is (i) to access and disseminate information concerning news and current or passing events, (ii) for articles of opinion or features of interest to the public, or (iii) for the purpose of academic, scientific, or public research or education.

This request is not being made for a commercial purpose.

Signature  [For optional use only]

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