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The Politics of Fair and Affordable Housing in Metropolitan Atlanta: Challenges for Educational Opportunity[1]

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The effects of residential and educational segregation are mutually reinforcing. Nikole Hannah-Jones (2015) writes, "More than 20 years of research has implicated residential segregation in virtually every aspect of racial inequality, from higher unemployment rates for African Americans, to poorer health care, to elevated infant mortality rates and, most of all, to inferior schools" (para 15). Educational policies are shaped by housing policy decisions. Measures such as the construction of affordable housing may affect where policymakers situate schools, whereas local school policies shape residential segregation through school siting decisions that affect homebuyers' decisions (Holme, 2002; Rothstein, 2017). Historically, education and housing policies have not been coordinated, though they are mutually interdependent (Rusk, 2008). Furthermore, as Haberle & Tegeler (2019) write, "Segregation concentrates the effects of discrimination and disinvestment, while sequestering financial and social capital, in both neighborhoods and schools" (p. 955). With more affordable housing measures being enacted around the country, a vital question is: How will the issues of educational policy be included and defined in the public sector? Understanding the politics of community engagement and problem definition can ultimately be useful to designing better policies across education and housing.

Review of Literature: Housing Affordability, Residential Segregation, and Educational Opportunity

Before turning to housing and education policy linkages, it is important to specify that the particular policies I focus on in this paper are a subset of the much larger universe of housing policies in the United States. These include lending and mortgage policies, tax codes for developers, public housing, and subsidies such as vouchers for low-income renters like the Section 8 assistance program (Schwartz, 2015). I am concerned with the broad category of "programs and policies designed to help low-income and other disadvantaged individuals and households access decent and affordable housing" (Schwartz, 2015, p. 1). The 1968 Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in the sale, rental, and financing of dwellings— and other real estate-related transactions— because of race, color, religion, sex, familial status, national origin,

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or disability.[3] The Act requires that the U.S. Housing and Urban Development Department (HUD) administer programs and activities relating to housing and urban development in a manner that affirmatively furthers the policies of the Act.[4] The *affirmatively furthering* mandate of the Act requires the recipients of federal funds to do more than simply not discriminate—recipients also must go deeper to address segregation and other more systemic and spatial issues driving housing inequity (Tegeler, 2019).

This case study of political developments in Atlanta contributes to the body of literature calling attention to the linkages between fair and affordable housing and educational opportunity (Holme et al. 2020; Tegeler, 2019). In general, metropolitan areas have not addressed these two issues in a coordinated fashion because each locale has its own funding streams and micropolitical tensions (Tegeler & Herskind 2018; Tegeler & Hilton, 2017). Racial and income segregation between districts in metropolitan areas has been steadily growing over the past two decades (Holme et al., 2016; Owens et al., 2016). The creation of new school districts in metropolitan areas can increase racial and ethnic inequality (Frankenberg et al., 2017). In the South, the fragmentation of school districts into separate municipalities has been a major contributor to school segregation (Frankenberg, 2009).

Butler & Sinclair (2020), in their review of how "place matters" in education (pp. 73–74), noted that many recent policy studies examining the role of geography in educational opportunity relied on quantitative methods, particularly to study the effects of choice and segregation. However, some recent qualitative work has "challeng[ed] the notion that school selection is a 'rational' process. Researchers have used place inquiry to demonstrate how geography and perceptions of place influence families' school choice decisions" (p. 73). Bell's (2009) study of parents' school choices in metropolitan Detroit documented how parents' conceptions of school quality were closely tied to their perceptions of place, including neighborhoods, particularly their racial and social class characteristics (p. 497). These perceptions of place in turn shaped their choice of schools: "for all the parents, space- and place-based geographic preferences delimited the set of schools deemed appropriate for consideration, thereby shaping the ultimate school selected" (p. 514). Researchers have also documented the negative segregative effects of test-based accountability such as realtors' reliance on test scores to market schools to parents (Wells, 2015; McKoy & Vincent, 2008), as well as how online access to school quality measures have accelerated segregation of schools by race, income, and educational background across districts (Hasan & Kumar, 2019).

Perhaps most relevant to the present case, Holme and Finnigan's (2018) regional case studies have shown that it takes sustained political effort to build coalitions that reach across sectors to find metropolitan solutions and that these efforts can be in or outside of government. They point to the importance of policy entrepreneurs who invest "resources—time, energy, reputation, and sometimes money" in order to call a particular problem to the attention of policymakers and to sustain the effort (p. 119). They found in their study of metropolitan areas that "in many places, these policy ideas hang in a tenuous political balance, and as we saw in Omaha, without the original champion or policy entrepreneur involved, the powers can shift toward other players and the reforms can fail" (p. 120). There is also recent policy literature about how transportation and education could be better coordinated across metropolitan areas (Bierbaum et al., 2019). Haberle and Tegeler (2019) emphasize the potential for states to "disrupt the mutually reinforcing patterns and policies that link these forms of segregation, and that make each so difficult to effectively remedy on its own" (p. 953). These include school district attendance boundaries and inter-district transfer on the education policy side and measures such as exclusionary zoning and targeted investments in affordable housing in high-performing school districts on the housing side. The authors write: "We posit that there is significant unexplored potential at the state government level to improve both housing and school policies and to connect the two, especially because even progressive states have rarely taken significant action to do so" (p. 954).

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[3] 42 U.S.C. §§ 3604-3606.
[4] 42 U.S.C. § 3608(d), (e)(5).

While the Obama administration's Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (2015) rules required localities to address access to high-quality schools, recent research has shown that only a handful of the approved plans did so and none included goals that addressed integrated schools (Finnigan et al., in press).

Research has documented how deliberate efforts to create mixed-income housing developments have resulted in more socioeconomically integrated schools and higher rates of achievement for low-income Black and Latinx students in Montgomery County, Maryland (Schwartz, 2012). Rosenbaum et al., (2005) found more favorable educational outcomes for the children of families participating in Chicago's *Gautreaux* program who relocated from high-poverty, racially segregated census tracts to middle-class, racially diverse or majority white suburbs than those who chose to remain in place. Scholars of spatial inequality (Tate, 2008) point to the racialized geographic structure of opportunity that extends beyond education to other aspects of health care, housing, and employment.

Although research has documented the interdependence of the two spheres and the imperative to address school and housing segregation in tandem, much less is known about how recent local initiatives to address housing affordability do or do not attempt to make linkages to education policy, whether organizationally or policy-wise. Further, the field needs a more nuanced picture of the politics of the coalitions of many kinds of actors—across governmental, non-profit, and private sectors—who may define how policies are designed and solutions proposed.

In this article, I consider these politics against the backdrop of a time period in which approaches to housing and community development, enforcement of fair housing laws, and housing affordability—all of which have connections to K-12 educational opportunity—were being debated in Atlanta. Atlanta has attracted national and international attention for its urban planning and design over the past decade, particularly the "BeltLine" development project connecting residences to local businesses and promoting walking and biking (Pendergrast, 2017). However, the influx of many young people willing to pay high rents, along with middle- and upper-income families, has exacerbated the problem of housing affordability for low-income, predominantly Black residents. Metropolitan Atlanta is one of six cities nationwide forecasted in 2017 to add an additional one million new households over the ensuing 25 years (Pendall et al., 2017). Affordable housing proposals, in turn, carry substantial implications for the composition of schools and communities within the city and region, particularly levels of economic and racial segregation, and the community-level politics that will govern them. With one of the highest eviction rates in the country and a placement near the bottom of metropolitan areas in Chetty et al.'s (2014) study of intergenerational mobility, Atlanta's education and housing policies need to become more closely coordinated if educational opportunity is to be improved in the region.

Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms, elected in 2017, promised one billion dollars for affordable housing ($500 million in new public monies) during her campaign. In September 2018, HouseATL, a coalition of business, community, philanthropic, and housing policy interests convened by the Urban Land Institute, unveiled a comprehensive plan intended to guide affordable housing policy in Atlanta. In June 2019, the Mayor's office unveiled its One Atlanta Housing Affordability Action Plan (2019). Critics claimed that there was neither sufficient funding nor goals specific enough to make a substantial difference to the city's most disadvantaged residents, and that the HouseATL's recommendations and targets were better from an equity standpoint than the Mayor's plan (Brey, 2019).

A limited inclusionary zoning measure introduced by Councilman Andre Dickens (i.e., a policy tool to incentivize the private market to subsidize affordable housing) around the BeltLine development project that connects the city's neighborhoods has not been successful in stemming displacement. However, in February 2020, the Atlanta City Council approved a measure, 13-2, mandating Source of Income protections—laws ensuring that landlords may not discriminate against voucher holders from the federal Section 8 program for low-income renters—for residents receiving city housing vouchers. This study examines these specific policy changes from 2017 to 2019 along with the formation of broad-based civic coalitions, the emergence of policy entrepreneurs, and the efforts by non-profit and philanthropic organizations to connect housing and education.

Here, I draw on documents, media accounts, observational notes from selected hearings and meetings, and interviews with 15 representatives of non-profit organizations, philanthropies, broader community-based stakeholders, and selected policymakers to answer the research questions: In what arenas have the two issue areas of housing and education been linked by policymakers, other civic entities, non-profits, or philanthropies? What are some of the barriers to and possibilities for coordination of housing and education policy instruments that would potentially increase educational opportunity in the region? How have citizens and other actors in the public arena sought to shape policy design, and how might that affect the democratic process?

While I do conceptualize housing and education policies through a metropolitan lens, the majority of initiatives I documented and individuals I interviewed were focused on the City of Atlanta, as that is where most (though not all) of the public attention was focused. The City of Atlanta is both geographically and population-wise a small subset of the larger Atlanta–Sandy Springs–Alpharetta metropolitan statistical area (MSA) designated in 2019 (Wolters Kluwer, 2019), with approximately 10% of the MSA's population. The findings revealed that the majority of efforts to define and address the link between housing and education did not emanate from governmental actors, but from the non-profit and philanthropic sectors. Racial segregation across schools throughout the region is not defined as a public problem to be solved, and that instead, place-based initiatives are emphasized through community development.

Conceptual Framework

There are two inter-related political frameworks in my conceptual framework that guided my initial inquiry into the nexus of housing and education policy in Atlanta during this period. The first is regionalism, built on the idea of civic capacity for cross-sector collaboration; and the second is the dynamics of policy design and its relationship to democratic political action. The framework is intended to illustrate the political dynamics of the Atlanta case.

Regional Framework for Cross-Sector Collaboration

Cross Sector Collaboration

In order to examine cross-sector collaboration in housing and schools, I build on scholars who apply Stone's (1989) concept of civic capacity to regional studies (Holme & Finnigan, 2018). Civic capacity includes shared responsibility in a metro area to solve complex problems and frame them more broadly so that municipalities are not caught in a zero-sum game. I share Holme and Finnigan's assumption that both mobility (i.e., options to relocate to communities of lower concentrations of poverty) as well as place-based affordable housing strategies have a beneficial role in a regional comprehensive plan. In framing their study of regional equity for urban schools, the authors observed how education has often been left out of regional planning conversations:

Although education is part of the diagnosis of the problem, conversations about regional equity have focused on municipal governance reforms, transit, and the environment; schools have not been a large part of the solutions that have been set forth within these conversations. (Holme & Finnigan, 2018, p.11)

I adopt their regional lens as a key part of my conceptual framework, which guided the decision to interview selected participants from Atlanta-based government, non-profits, and philanthropies in a qualitative case study. I sampled a cross-section of the community in order to learn from different kinds of spectators' perspectives on policy development.

Policy Design and Policy Contexts

This paper's preliminary review of policy goals advanced by different actors raises questions about how various policies were designed and/or might be in conflict with one another in Atlanta. Schneider and

Ingram (1997) illuminated how policy designs shape the social construction of a policy's targeted population, the role of power in this relationship, and how policy design feeds forward to shape politics and democracy. Here, I explore how Schneider and Ingram's concepts of policy design, policy contexts, and dynamic processes may highlight the connection and disconnection among the many actors and groups who came together during this period in Atlanta to address housing affordability as a public policy issue as well as the perceptions of organizations and members of the public on the extent to which the process was democratic. Schneider and Ingram write that "policy designs emerge from an issue context, which in turn emerges from a broader societal context through a process of framing dynamics" (p. 73). Policy actors borrow ideas across sectors, "Designs are as much a matter of borrowing as they are of invention. The multiple actors in the multitude of settings that are involved in design often 'pinch' ideas from other policies and other jurisdictions" (p. 79). According to Schneider and Ingram, the citizenry influences policy design:

Translation dynamics connects the characteristics of policy design as independent variables to societal conditions and subsequent constructions of the issue. This translation occurs through citizens, as the designs transmit to citizens information and experiences that influence their behavior, values, and participation. . . while much of policy analysis has focused on the ways in which policies either help or hinder the achievement of stated goals, the more indirect and subtle effects on democracy also deserve attention. (p. 79)

I apply this concept of dynamic policy design to understand the activities of coalitions, individual policy entrepreneurs, the non-profit sector, and formal governmental actors in Atlanta during this pre-Covid period. I also use this concept to uncover some of the political barriers and sources of capacity for policy coordination of housing and education.

Methods

I present preliminary findings from a case study of policy development and problem definition. The selection of a case should serve the purpose of the researcher's inquiry. Applying Stephen van Evera's (1997) typology for criteria, I selected Atlanta both because it is one "that resemble[s] current situations of policy concern" (pp. 83–84) and is also a "data-rich case" (p. 79). During the period of study, Atlanta was on the cusp of addressing affordable housing as a public policy issue that makes it typical of other metropolitan areas, although its demographics and patterns of simultaneous suburban sprawl and urban displacement of long-time residents is distinctive. The case was relatively data-rich because of my access as a resident to attend local events and connections from the Spencer Mid-Career Fellowship year for subsequently securing interviews.

To investigate the various actors and commissions involved in defining affordable housing as a public issue between 2017 and 2019, I analyze publicly available documents, public meeting observations (including Atlanta-based policy conferences and webinars; see Appendix B), and media accounts. I also draw on fieldnotes taken during conversations with policy, philanthropic, and community-based actors during the Spencer Mid-Career grant in 2018–2019.

A list of interviews conducted in Fall 2019–Winter 2020 are contained in Appendix A. The interview sample (N=15) was chosen by purposeful selection (Light et al., 1990), as I made judgments of which persons could provide information most relevant to my research questions. I sought a cross-section of selected policymakers, non-profit and philanthropic representatives, and leaders of regional groups such as the Atlanta Regional Commission, all of whom have been involved in some way in the recent policy conversations about affordable housing in Atlanta. These interviews were semi-structured. I asked respondents about their organization's work, how they were situated in the policy space, how they defined the needs for affordable housing, and how education and housing were or were not coordinated in policy planning. I also asked what particular state or local policies would make the most difference in coordination, what entities or organizations had the capacity to undertake it, and what each respondent perceived as the barriers to coordination (see Appendix C for interview protocol). All interviews were professionally transcribed and coded. I initially coded for themes of proposed policy, coalitions, barriers/opportunities, coordination/lack of coordination, and advantaged/disadvantaged groups. My analysis of the various

groups' documents and stated goals was guided conceptually by examining the construction of target populations. For example, I examined ways actors assigned responsibility for addressing problems or identified prospective venues for doing so (Schneider & Ingram, 1997). A limitation of the data is that I interviewed few education policymakers, though I reviewed documents from the Atlanta Public Schools (APS) Task Force on Affordable Housing and interviewed one former school board member. Two other limitations are that a) I did not succeed in interviewing anyone from the Mayor's staff, as the pandemic shut down field work after February 2020 and b) I was not able to attend any meetings of the APS Task Force on Affordable Housing as it concluded before my fieldwork began.

The Case of Atlanta

As we have seen, educational opportunity is linked to both patterns of racial residential segregation and affordable housing. In this section, I provide an overview of relevant contextual factors driving the link between housing affordability and residential segregation in metropolitan Atlanta since the 1960s: white flight to suburbs, followed by a second wave of Black migration to the suburbs in the 1990s; the planned demolition of public housing and creation of mixed-income housing by the Atlanta Housing Authority in the 1990s; the 2010 recession and high rates of Black homeowner foreclosures; and the BeltLine's effect on displacement and the current affordability crisis.

Context of Demographic Change and School Segregation

My aim here is not to provide a comprehensive analysis of all of the factors affecting school segregation in metropolitan Atlanta, as there are deeply entrenched patterns of residential segregation that date back to their codification in 1913 (Trounstine, 2018). Rather, the goal is to provide an overview of some of the geographic trends that may be affecting students' access to high-quality educational opportunities.

Atlanta Public Schools experienced declining white enrollments after 1960 in large part due to a compromise settlement to its desegregation lawsuit that never mandated metro-wide busing. Instead, the compromise gave control of the school system to Black leaders. Brown-Nagin (2011) writes that Atlanta's Black middle class was amenable to a political, rather than legal, resolution:

Since the dawn of the modern civil rights era, a small group of Atlanta's [B]lack middle class had found politics and negotiation particularly fruitful approaches to solving problems associated with race and racism, and sometimes favored it over civil rights litigation, as they endeavored to cope with racial discrimination. (p. 406)

Between 1960 and 1970, Atlanta lost 20% of its white population (Holme & Finnigan, 2018). The result of the failure to find a metropolitan-wide solution for school integration has been viewed by many as the source of continuing disinvestment from the Atlanta Public Schools, as well as the pattern of geographic residential segregation by race and poverty between North and South. As Joseph Monardo writes in his recent analysis of segregation in Georgia:

In the Atlanta metropolitan area—inclusive of Atlanta Public Schools and several county-based school districts—schools to the north (in suburbs like Kennesaw, Marietta, and Alpharetta) enroll predominantly white students, while schools to the south (across neighborhoods like East Point, College Park, and Forest Park) enroll mostly Black students. The large, oddly shaped district of Fulton County is one of the state's largest. Although Fulton constitutes a single school district, most of the land is divided into 15 separate cities on top of the micro-segregation of cities within Fulton, the entire county is effectively divided between North Fulton and South Fulton. (2019, paras 18–19)

Since the late 1990s, middle-class Black families have moved in large numbers into the surrounding suburbs in search of affordable land and high-quality schools (DeBray & Grooms, 2012). Scholars have documented the growth of metro-wide school segregation; by the 2007–2008 school year, 81% of Black students across six metro counties attended predominantly minority high schools (Tarasawa, 2009). Karen Pooley (2015) contributes to this picture of growing segregation metro-wide:

By 2013, African American students attending public schools within the Atlanta MSA were more likely to attend majority-minority schools (64 percent did so) than they had been in 2000 (58 percent). This is accompanied by disparities between majority-white and majority-minority schools in terms of both school quality and student achievement, which hampers Black children's (particularly low-income Black children's) access to upward mobility. (para 6)

By 2010, Atlanta's suburbs housed 87% of the metro's Black population (Pooley, 2015). Atlanta was also one of six metropolitan areas whose suburban school districts were classified as undergoing "rapid racial change" (Frankenberg & Orfield, 2012, p. 31), though there was not one distinctive pattern of demographic change across the metro counties, as both white and Latinx enrollment grew in the suburbs. (The 2020 Census should shed much-needed light on these trends of suburban school segregation.) Yet another factor contributing to school-level racial segregation are the over-representation of white students in Georgia's private schools (Monardo, 2019). The growing numbers of Latinx students in the metro area also attend segregated schools, though a lower proportion than Black students (Tarasawa, 2009). Additionally, the acceleration of the cityhood movement, which means that seceding cities take better-funded amenities including schools with them (Mock, 2018), contributes to metro-wide school segregation patterns.

The APS is a relatively small school system compared to the surrounding county school systems, including Fulton, Gwinnett, DeKalb, and Cobb. As of 2019, the city of Atlanta's population was 52% Black, but the city schools' enrollment from Pre-Kindergarten to 12th grade was approximately 72% Black and 16.4% white (Georgia Department of Education, 2019). With many more young families seeking to live in the city since the early 2000s, there are some neighborhoods where the effects on school-level racial composition have been substantial, such as Inman Park, Grant Park, and the Old Fourth Ward (see the Jackson and Grady Clusters, Appendix E). Although many APS charter schools are majority Black, there are efforts to have deliberate integration by race and socioeconomic status, such as initiatives at Charles Drew Charter in East Lake, and Councilman Matt Westmoreland stated that APS charters are no more segregated than the system as a whole (interview, 1/30/20). Purpose Built Communities has a strategy to create mixed-income communities (approximately 50% market rate and 50% low-income housing held affordable in perpetuity). They view schools as a central part of community development; Drew Charter, for instance, holds 60% of its seats through twelfth grade for students receiving free and reduced lunch.

Despite these pockets of socioeconomic integration, the Fulton County school system as a whole has one of the lowest exposure rates of white students to Black and Latinx students nationally, which reardon et al., (2019) highlighted in a recent paper. In Fulton County, Black students attend schools in which the average proportion of minority students is 50 percentage points higher than those attended by their white peers. The racial gap is compounded by socioeconomic gaps, worsening academic outcomes for Black and Latinx students relative to whites (reardon et al., 2019). This leads to the conclusion that breaking down more of both the residential and school segregation barriers between North and South in Fulton County would be an important lever for increasing educational opportunity. Furthermore, a recent report by the Urban Institute using 2010 Census data to analyze education borders in the Atlanta metropolitan area identified the school district boundary lines that contributed most to racial and ethnic school segregation (Monarrez et al., 2021). The authors found that the majority of the most highly segregating district lines were located either within the Atlanta Public Schools or DeKalb County Public Schools, often with major east-west roads serving as the boundaries (Monarrez et al., 2021). Appendices F and G, reprinted with the authors' permission, show respectively the maps of the most segregating boundaries, and average school achievement by attendance boundaries in the metro area, the latter based on reardon et al.'s data. Monarrez et al. (2021) write: "Even in the presence of severe urban-suburban segregation, a closer analysis of the map shows that there are plenty of adjacent boundaries that are of starkly different compositions" (p. 10). This report highlights not just the geographical disparities, but the underlying political inequalities, of school and racial segregation.

The 1990s: A Push toward Mixed-Income Communities

Beginning in the 1990s, virtually all low-income public housing developments in Atlanta were gradually dismantled as part of the Housing Opportunities for People Everywhere program (HOPE VI). HOPE VI was initiated in 1992 under the George H.W. Bush administration, drawing on earlier experiments in Boston and Chicago with the goal of "reshaping public housing with an emphasis on promoting mixed income developments" (Chaskin & Joseph, 2015, p. 9). Atlanta's selection to host the 1996 Olympic games led city officials to demolish Techwood Homes, an older and non-white housing project that was the nation's first, and in its place create mixed-income communities (Vale, 2013). This was also the period when the Atlanta Housing Authority oversaw the destruction of several public housing projects, including one in the East Lake neighborhood, which was rebuilt as East Lake Commons. Roughly half the housing units are publicly subsidized, and the other half are market rate (Dorman, 2008). Despite criticism into the present day because of the displacement of many low-income housing project residents (Garlock, 2014), the East Lake community development model gained a national reputation for urban renewal as well as improved educational, economic, and employment outcomes and lower crime rates (Boston, 2005).[5] Purpose Built Communities was founded with philanthropic investment focused on the Atlanta goal of revitalization via the creation of stable, mixed-income communities. As my interviews show, its influence on both policy and community development strategies in Atlanta has been a durable one.

Recession, Recovery, and Displacement

Atlanta was ranked first in the United States in foreclosures during the recession (O'Callaghan, 2019). The economic downturn led to property speculation in areas of the city that have priced out working-class residents (Lartey, 2018); the percentage loss of low-cost units ($500–750 gross rent per month) between 2010 and 2014 in Atlanta was 15.7% (Immergluck et al., 2016). The recession led to a corresponding increase in single family rentals (SFRs) throughout the metro area. Immergluck (2018a) found that in Atlanta,

> increases in SFRs from 2010 to 2015 were particularly large in older, inner-county diverse suburbs. Regression results show that, controlling for other neighborhood characteristics, neighborhoods with larger Asian, Latino, and black populations saw larger increases in SFRs. The effects were particularly high in neighborhoods with larger Latino and, especially, Asian populations (p. 816).

Thirty-seven percent of this increase was in neighborhoods with less than 10% poverty, which suggests that growth in SFRs may be increasing families' access to relatively strong schools and social services (i.e., in middle-class, racially diverse suburbs). However, less than 13% of this growth occurred in neighborhoods where the population was predominantly white, which is an indicator that fair housing laws are likely not being adequately enforced in wealthier suburbs (Immergluck, 2018b).

As of 2019, one-third of households in the metropolitan area were considered "cost-burdened" (Atlanta Regional Commission, 2019). From 2012 to 2014, 95% of the construction of new rental units in Atlanta were luxury (Kusisto, 2015). When housing and transportation costs are combined, Atlanta is the fourth most expensive city in the country (M. Westmoreland, interview, 1/30/20). In 2015, Atlanta metro was ranked fifth highest in urban areas in the United States for displacement of long-time residents, with 46% of eligible tracts gentrifying (Maciag, 2015). In 2019, the city was ranked first in the United States for the gap between highest and lowest-income residents (Lu & Tanzi, 2019). These linked phenomena of declining housing affordability and increasing segregation by race and income make improving educational opportunity a spatial challenge.

The BeltLine development project—a revitalized set of paths being built around the city on an old railway line—has driven up housing prices. The original agreement called for a rail system to provide crucial transportation to southside residents, but it has not yet been built. Amenities, stores, and office buildings were all part of the original vision, and those have materialized. However, only 785 of the 5,600

[5] For a critical perspective on the Eastlake Community development, see Adam Goldstein's 2017 article in Atlanta Studies, "A purposely built community: Public housing redevelopment and resident replacement at Eastlake Meadows."

originally agreed-upon target for affordable housing units along the Beltline have been built as of 2017, prompting the original designer, Ryan Gravel, to resign in protest from the BeltLine Partnership. Despite these numbers, officials for the BeltLine claimed that targets will still be met by 2030 due to new inclusionary zoning measures (Van Mead, 2018). Inclusionary zoning was enacted by the City Council and is effective along the BeltLine under the leadership of Councilman Andre Dickens who was elected to the city council in 2014. Dickens (2019) found that 95% of the rental units built between 2012 and 2017 were in the luxury category, which made them largely out of reach for police, firefighters, and teachers. He found that mandatory inclusionary zoning was one of the top recommendations of policy research. Dickens, in recounting the passage of a BeltLine measure, recalled:

Atlanta is not much different from most other cities; we saw a [real] insurgence of new construction coming on after the recession, things started up-ticking after 2012…what happened was—we had had an affordable city. But when the market came back, we had so much new construction…11,000 units were under construction and 9,000 more were being proposed. I never really saw the trickle-down that more units would resolve all this. All I saw was more units had luxury prices. More construction was not going to make it more affordable by some filtering or making more units was going to help everybody find their place. The places that were affordable weren't near amenities or job sources. (Dickens, 2019)

Dickens brought together the Atlanta Housing Authority, the BeltLine, Invest Atlanta, and the Department of Housing and Community Affairs to make a set of policy recommendations about inclusionary zoning. As a result of this process, the City Council enacted limited inclusionary zoning provisions around the BeltLine: developments for rent must either offer 15% of homes at 80% Area Median Income or 10% of homes at 60% Area Median Income. Housing policy experts have said that Georgia would pass overriding legislation if the Atlanta City Council attempted to expand it (D. Immergluck, public remarks, 7/17/17). While the Atlanta BeltLine Partnership and Atlanta BeltLine Inc. announced, in May 2021, a Legacy Resident Retention Program that would cover increased property taxes of eligible homeowners through 2030—most of them in south and west Atlanta—it is not a long-term policy solution and many observed it was too late to have stemmed massive displacement (Brey, 2021).

The mayor's office also has the ability to coordinate leadership and draw attention to the problem of growing housing unaffordability. Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms ran and was elected on the promise of providing a billion dollars for affordable housing in the city, $500 million in new public monies. However, after her first year in office, her administration began to be criticized for not actually raising new public dollars, but instead claiming to do so by merely leveraging HUD dollars as well as not setting a more ambitious goal than building 2,000 new units through the Atlanta Housing Authority (Trubey & Deere, 2019). (Since this research was conducted, the mayor's office has announced further land owned by the city to be developed for affordable housing, defined by the city as at the rate of below 60–80% Area Median Income; Capelouto, 2021b). Measures like this and the recent bond issue by the City Council (Capelouto, 2021a) indicate that city leadership has made progress on affordable housing despite the challenges of the pandemic).

Even before the pandemic, high student mobility rates had begun to be recognized as a serious problem within the APS. According to Howard Grant of the Atlanta Housing Authority, in certain APS clusters, student mobility started as high as 42% annual turnover per school (H. Grant, interview, 10/25/19).[6] The eviction crisis in Fulton County is borne disproportionately by Black families (Mariano, 2017); for all students, there are substantial learning costs to student mobility. Mueller and Tighe (2007) note that "frequent moves made it difficult for their children to adjust to new schools, friends, and neighbors. Stressful relocations resulted in frequent absenteeism, further exacerbating poor school performance and behavior" (p. 374).

Suburban communities and school districts are experiencing an increase in racially segregated schools, of which urban displacement is one component. The concentration of poverty in regions such as South

[6] In 2015-2016, Grant estimated the turnover rate at Douglas High School at 43.50%, 48.70% at Grove Park Middle, and 53.40% at Harper-Archer Middle, all in Southwest Atlanta.

DeKalb and Clayton has influenced white families' choice of schools, causing them to move to further-out suburbs (DeBray & Grooms, 2012). There is no regional entity addressing the issue of racial segregation across Atlanta metro-area schools. The Atlanta Regional Commission has been one of the major funders of Learn4Life, a metropolitan coalition of six school systems whose goal is to benchmark outcomes such as grade-level reading, math proficiency, and graduation rates. Learn4Life is connected to a national coalition called StriveTogether that supports "collective impact" in education. However, Learn4Life's board made the strategic decision not to engage in advocacy and policy work; thus, it does not lobby for policy changes around racial segregation levels or funding inequities. Rather, the organization's guiding principle is that if educational leaders from the largest metro school systems can agree on common outcome measures, then conversations about the best practices to achieve those outcomes will also be agreed upon. According to Program Manager Rebecca Parshall:

We do publicly and frequently discuss the contextual role that these inequities play on students' experiences, opportunities, and academic outcomes. One way of putting it is that we acknowledge that these issues matter, that some of our partner organizations are working on them, and that our lane is to scale programmatic bright spots.

The opportunity study ranked Atlanta forty-ninth out of the 50 largest metros in terms of intergenerational economic mobility (Chetty et al., 2014). Certainly, a large part of Atlanta's disadvantage in addressing these problems is tied to its long-standing patterns of residential and school segregation, but also the historic lack of public transportation to the suburbs (Monroe, 2012). These long-standing patterns of school segregation across the metropolitan area could potentially be altered by a range of affordable housing policy interventions, especially those with a focus on geographic mobility. In the next section, I consider the major commissions and initiatives in fair and affordable housing policy over the past several years and the extent to which they did or did not include education and school systems.

Context: Civic Commissions and Public Initiatives, 2017-2019

This section considers two major types of initiatives that unfolded during the time period under study: first, the formation of HouseATL, a broad-based, voluntary civic coalition of housing policy, business, and non-profit stakeholders, and second, the Atlanta Public Schools' taskforce on housing affordability.

In response to pressures of housing affordability in the city and metro area, a number of civic commissions and organizations convened and began to do policy work prior to the COVID-19 economic crisis. This is crucial context for understanding the development of civic capacity to address the housing-education link in the future. As Stone et al., observed (2001), "Where multiple demands on time and resources exist, relationships among civic and political leaders may facilitate action on some matters but not others" (p. 24). Coordinating housing and education in Atlanta and elsewhere will only be a priority to the extent that there is "a frame of action that motivates individual players to take concrete steps" (p. 24).

The Atlanta Regional Housing Forum is a quarterly convening at St. Luke's church downtown designed to bring together a range of housing policy stakeholders to discuss issues of affordable housing. Between 2017 and 2019, the Forum featured the rollout of several different coalitions' plans to address the supply of affordable housing. Table 1 shows the policy recommendations, targets, and geographic scope of three different task forces' recommendations that were developed to address housing affordability citywide or regionally during this period. HouseATL is the most comprehensive of these initiatives. It is an ongoing, broad platform intended to coordinate private interests, philanthropies, and non-profits and community-based groups and was formed in response to the Mayor's pledge for one billion dollars to support affordable housing. Convened by the Urban Land Institute and comprised of numerous working groups, it released a report in September 2018 that contained four broad goals: (a) investing in an affordable Atlanta; (b) prioritizing community development without displacement; (c) working together better and smarter; and (d) empowering Atlantans: education and engagement. The stated goal of the report was to increase supply of affordable units by 20,000 by 2024. It did not mention racial equity and fair housing explicitly. The coalition also encompasses a Funders Collective and a Policy group working on state-level issues, such as establishing a statewide housing trust fund. HouseATL has applied for 501(c)(3) status, which should lend

it even more civic capacity to push for its goals beyond the term of any given mayor. Its leader, Sarah Kirsch of the Urban Land Institute, has characterized it as "a coalition of the willing," and meetings were open to all during this time.

Table 1

Comparison of Housing Affordability Commissions/Public Initiatives, City of Atlanta/Metro, 2017–2019

	Year	Convener	Affordable Housing Targets	State Policies recommended	Local Policies recommended	Regional Policies Recommended
City for All	2017	Georgia ACT	Prioritize investment to those households with less than $34,00/year, or below 50% AMI		Inclusionary zoning; establish housing trust fund	
HouseATL	2018	Urban Land Institute	$1 billion of local, flexible resources that enable 20,000+ new and preserved homes over the next 8 – 10 years affordable to those earning 0 – 120% of metro Atlanta area's median income (AMI)	A standing policy committee within the group; Georgia ACT leads this effort. Efforts are focused on advocacy for tax incentives and laws aimed at funding and preserving housing affordability, evictions protections, and establishing a statewide housing trust fund.	Funders Collective Cabinet Level Housing Position Non-Profit Capacity Comprehensive anti-displacement initiative	Nonspecific, but policy committee has goal of "growing participation with a diverse set of voices; focus on statewide and regional partners"[7]
Metro Atlanta Housing Strategy	2019	Atlanta Regional Commission	N/A	N/A	N/A	6 Strategies to address different aspects of region's challenges; breaks region into 10 submarkets based on characteristics

Of all the commissions, interviewees agreed that HouseATL was the greatest potential lever in terms of civic capacity to address housing affordability. Sara Haas of Enterprise Community Partners explained how one of the benefits is HouseATL's openness to a range of actors:

I think the other good thing is around HouseATL is it is open, right, so yes, certain folks will always be there, but it's an open platform, the planning process was very open, whoever showed up, showed up,

[7] HouseATL Policy Committee, Work Plan, February 7, 2020.

and they cast that net pretty wide, and you also had some pretty significant leaders in Atlanta that are well-respected beyond, again, the housing space, that can draw in others.

While education policy has not yet been an explicit part of House ATL's deliberations, there was one major commission convened to address the housing–schools link, to which I turn next.

The APS Task Force on Affordable Housing

In 2017, Mayor Kasim Reed requested that the APS establish a task force on affordable housing in order to assess the city schools' resources. The task force met several times that year before issuing its brief report. As Courtney English, the former chair of the Atlanta Board of Education, explained,

The city held about 50 or so deeds to APS land, and so what that triggered is a conversation around really how much land do we have, what are we doing with it, and what could we be doing with it to solve some of the issues that face our kids and our families. And so a thought around how can we stabilize communities, combined with like really a lot of political drama spurred the idea of, hey, we do have all of these assets and how can we best deploy them. And so I appointed a really phenomenal group of people to serve on a task force.

English's account underscores the socio-political nexus of problem convergence in Atlanta: Mayor Reed instigated the formation of the task force to investigate the potential availability of land, and that in turn "triggered" education policymakers to see an opportunity for a conversation to address the need for greater housing stability of families. The commission's membership included developer Marjy Stagmeier and housing official Dr. Howard Grant, both interviewed for this study, and convener of the Atlanta Housing Forum, Bill Bolling—a group that had both expertise and commitment to issues of affordable housing and education policy. The commission's final report was just three short pages, was never well publicized, and was only obtainable via a member of the media's request to the APS. Its major recommendations included a range of measures that could have significant effects on creating and maintaining permanent affordable housing, as well as bringing amenities to communities (see Appendix D for full summary of the task force's recommendations).

While there was no implementation action taken on this report, English stated that implementing the recommendations ought to be "really straightforward," for instance, the APS's leasing land to a developer, building affordable housing near a school, and offering wrap-around services.[8] However, one interviewee who preferred anonymity said,

It seems to me APS is really bad at projecting their student population, and understanding where the demand is going to exist, where there's going to be growth within the clusters, and where there is going to be a decline in enrollment…so they then are in a position where sometimes they're not making informed decisions about the disposition of their assets, or the redevelopment of their assets.

The story of the task force's work highlights how difficult it is to overcome the micro-politics of each sector, even when concrete and feasible solutions can be agreed upon by knowledgeable actors. On the other hand, it also reveals a critical mass of actors that agree on doing cross-sector work to break down policy siloes, which is one of the key findings as outlined in the next section.

Findings

The research questions I sought to answer in this study were: (a) What are some of the barriers to and possibilities for coordination of housing and education policy instruments that would potentially increase educational opportunity in the region?; (b) In what arenas have the two problems been linked by policymakers or by other civic entities, non-profits, or philanthropies?; and (c) How have citizens and other actors in the public arena sought to shape policy design, and how might that affect the democratic process?

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[8] One recent exception is that in April 2021, Invest Atlanta announced a new development with dedicated affordable units for APS teachers. Two hundred and twenty-eight of the 438 apartment units will be marketed to APS employees (McCray, 2021).

In this section, I first turn to an explication of a substantial cross-cutting theme that was evident across the interviews: the critique of housing and school policy siloes, which was also evident in the literature. Next, I organize my preliminary findings into four broad categories: actions by governmental agencies, actions by non-profit organizations, philanthropic initiatives, and initiatives of the for-profit sector. I am focused particularly on the areas where there is recognition of the connections between housing and education policy.

The interviewees' responses reflected the critique of housing and school policy siloes evident in the literature. For example, I asked City Councilman Matt Westmoreland about possible regional venues to connect housing, education, and transportation across the metropolitan area, and whether HouseATL could potentially play that role. He replied,

We have the Atlanta Regional Commission, you know, it's a great organization with a really hard job because it doesn't really have any teeth. The ARC, the Chamber, United Way, and the Community Foundation came together a couple of years ago and founded something called Learn4Life, which put the eight superintendents from Atlanta, Cobb, Gwinnett, Clayton, Fulton, DeKalb, Marietta, and Decatur around a table for the first time together. So I think those are steps, but it's hard when you have as many different counties and cities as we do to get everybody on the same page.

Marisa Ghani of the Atlanta Regional Commission stated that the agency's work does not connect to education policy, beyond supporting Learn4 Life's work, which is focused on academic outcomes and graduation rates. The reason that housing and education policymakers do not coordinate their work, she says, is that the federal funding streams are not set up to incentivize collaboration as is the case, for example, with transportation and housing.

Carol Naughton of Purpose Built Communities explained that neighborhoods should become the unit of delivery for schools and education:

So, you know, government operates in siloes, and that's...we know that, and the challenge with that is a silo may think it's doing a good job, because it's meeting its metrics, but the community may not be well-served. You know, we say that while the government is operating in siloes, people experience their community through a horizontal slice, which we call a neighborhood. And so if their neighborhood is not working for them, none of the siloes are. So, getting government to think about neighborhoods as the key unit of delivery would be a big change.

Naughton continues to state that in the 1990s, the President and CEO of the Atlanta Housing Authority, Renee Glover, had a vision to link housing and education that influenced Purpose Built Communities. Yet now, she says, city leaders do not coordinate the two:

I think when Renee was the head of the Housing Authority, she was the biggest proponent of education and thinking about how we integrate housing and education. I mean, she was talking about that the day I walked into the Housing Authority for the first time. Again, she was a lawyer as well, not an educator, but knew the power of education. And so the model that we were developing there of mixed-income housing anchored by a high quality school was part of our DNA from day-one. But what we see is that the school district here in Atlanta, under different leadership, and different boards, has its own plan, and the Housing Authority has its own plan, and then the city has its own plan about where it's going to invest, and they're not coordinated in any way.

Tene Traylor, a fund advisor at the Kendeda Fund (an independent private foundation headquartered in Atlanta), said the lack of collaboration was partly about the unaligned funding streams, but also a lack of intentional and shared communication:

I don't know if we share effectively. It starts at that very basic level of a shared understanding of work intersecting challenges. And, there's not enough bridging, in terms of shared learning and funding to support solutions such as affordable housing and high-quality schools, or stabilization of neighborhoods and quality healthcare...it's a weird conversation to have when you start talking to people who are very deep in the issues. Tunnel vision. So I think that's one. And, there's not a lot of tables where we bring and cross-issue collaborate. For example, as a funder I've never been a part of a conversation where the

superintendent is at the same table as the housing authority director solving for issues impacting the same families we're supporting. Then again, I have not seen many tables where those conversations can exist.

Lindsey Siegel of Atlanta Legal Aid spoke to the very tangible costs to the state of not addressing housing instability:

I think that as a policy matter, the state hasn't recognized that it's costing the state so much money to not address this problem because there are these health issues, there's the education issues...there's no one out there, other than the advocates, making the argument, there's no policymakers making this argument that it's actually to the state's benefit to fix this issue, and to not just listen to landlords, who are a very powerful group, and have legislators' ears.

Marjy Stagmeier, who provides educational services in apartment complexes she owns in high-poverty neighborhoods, and maintains partnerships with local school systems, similarly stated that policymakers were not making the connection about the harms of student mobility:

I think that the policymakers have way overcomplicated this issue. To me it's very simple, if you intertwine housing with education, you will have a positive educational outcome if you provide stable, decent, safe affordable housing, and enable families to be stabilized. If you look at the top five schools in the state of Georgia, there is a very low transiency rate, but if you look at the bottom five schools, there's a very high transiency rate. Housing and education are that intertwined, and this metric demonstrates the role housing plays on education.

The "siloing" effect was identified across a range of interviews. While Carol Naughton of Purpose Built and Tene Traylor of Kendeda Fund observed that policy design and planning happen in separate governmental arenas—a barrier to coordination that philanthropy may be better situated to overcome—Lindsey Siegel of Legal Aid and developer Marjy Stagmeier both noted that there is a lack of incentive for policymakers to publicly make the connection between housing instability and its effect on schools' academic performance. Interviewees clearly identified housing transiency as a problem affecting education, and one which there is an imperative to address.

Governmental Action

The Mayor's office and Atlanta City Council took incremental steps during this period to address housing affordability and individuals within the Atlanta Housing Authority and Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) also adapted some policies and initiatives to address the link between housing policies and schools. Mayor Bottoms' plan for affordable housing, released in Summer 2019, calls for 20,000 units to be created or preserved by 2026. However, until January 2021, the public monies that had been dedicated were not new, local public monies, for which her administration received much criticism. In response to the Mayor's plan released in 2019, housing expert Dr. Dan Immergluck of Georgia State's Urban Studies Institute opined, "There's too few details, no firm dollar commitments on different proposals" (Trubey & Deer, 2019, para 19). He also said, "AHA's [Atlanta Housing Authority] land should be used to create far more than 2,000 new units" (quoted in Trubey & Deere, 2019, para 19). The Director of the Atlanta Housing Authority who arrived in 2019, Eugene Jones, said he supported a more "Chicago-style" model (i.e., vouchers for relocation to lower-poverty tracts); but in a seemingly contradictory statement, he also opined that Atlanta was not ready yet for Source of Income protections (Burress, 2019).

Interviews revealed that non-profits, citizens, and philanthropies alike were closely watching the mayor's office for commitment of new public monies during this time. One respondent discussed the Mayor's reframe of pre-existing HUD as "new":

I think there is recognition that those are not new resources, and that there's a need for new resources…HouseATL will also be benchmarking and tracking and will be very clear on existing versus new. But there's also the potential to leverage existing resources to do more with new money. So there's something to be said for that, but there has to be new money, and it needs to come relatively soon.

Since the end of formal data collection, the City Council ratified the Mayor's Executive Order to issue bonds for $50 million toward affordable housing and set the stage to increase the amount of those funds to $100 million (Capelouto, 2021a). In addition, in October 2020, the City of Atlanta passed an ordinance "to

protect Atlanta's legacy residents and prohibit the predatory tactics used to harass homeowners into selling their property and becoming the victims of equity theft" (Atlanta City Council, 2020).

Dr. Howard Grant, the Vice President for Governmental, External Affairs and Human Development at the Atlanta Housing Authority is utilizing the agency's Moving to Work authority to pilot a special voucher program to serve homeless families in the APS, established in 2018 via a Memorandum of Understanding. The APS identifies families that are homeless and refers them to the Atlanta Housing Authority for vouchers. Under the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding, the work requirement is waived during the first year; in the second year, the Head of Household must work 20 hours a week or contribute 30% of their income to the cost of the rent. Grant is also attempting to meet on an ongoing basis with non-traditional landlords and developers on the Northside with the goal of encouraging more to rent to voucher holders in "areas of opportunity" (H. Grant, interview, 2/18/20). He incentivized attendance at schools in the Washington cluster,[9] utilizing some of the federal Choice Neighborhoods grant funds to pay students for outstanding attendance (see Appendix E for a map of the City of Atlanta attendance clusters). Grant stands out as a public official who clearly understands how the policies need to be more closely coordinated and is acting to attempt to curb mobility rates.

The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit, administered by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA), recently made some changes to its Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP) criteria for developers' construction of new projects with affordable housing units that provide access to schools. In its competition, the state now uses two possible indicators, which applicants can use concerning new project location near schools. These are either schools' absolute scores on the state's College and Career Readiness Performance Index (CCRPI), or schools' designation as "Beating the Odds," that is those designated by the state Department of Education to outperform expectations (J. Popper, interview, 1/17/20). DCA made this change because community and educator feedback asserted that average test score data alone was not a fair way to allocate points; that locating new projects by schools that demonstrated growth was also important.

Grace Baranowski, a former policy analyst at DCA, stated that while HUD paused and ultimately revoked states' responsibility to implement the Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Rule, states like Georgia proactively increased the allocation of Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) to advance fair housing goals. While at DCA, Baranowski sought to embed Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing principles into the QAP, the state's competitive selection criteria identifying what developers should prioritize in their applications. As a result of Baranowski's and others' efforts, beginning with the 2017 QAP, developers seeking additional points within this competitive selection process could work with community stakeholders to submit plans for "Community Transformation," informed by a community survey and/or resident engagement workshop. These locally determined plans positioned the proposed LIHTC development as a platform for improving access to education, health services, and other place-based opportunities. Of the 32 developments awarded LIHTC in that 2017 cycle, 18 created a Community Transformation plan. Through the annual revision process, Baranowski organized "listening sessions" on how the QAP could best help communities bridge the housing-education gap; some developers were more enthusiastic about this alignment than others. As the process evolved, Georgia's QAPs in later years simply asked developers to demonstrate the community's capacity to create such a plan, if awarded LIHTC. In every QAP, though, DCA envisioned the school district as a key partner in this community transformation process (G. Baranowski, interview, 1/24/20).

Georgia's "Community Transformation" plans exist within a framework of incentivizing LIHTC development in neighborhoods termed either "stable communities" or "revitalizing areas." Between 2017 and 2019, DCA prioritized educational achievement for children living in LIHTC development both directly and indirectly.

Directly, DCA incentivized the provision of educational services to children living in LIHTC developments:

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[9] The schools in the Choice Neighborhoods program are M. Agnes Jones Elementary, Hollis K-8, Brown Middle Schools, and Washington High School.

Co-location: Providing points to LIHTC developments built within a certain geographic distance of any schools (and further points for locating near *high-quality* schools)

Service integration: encouraging developers to offer educational enrichment programs within their LIHTC development

Indirectly, DCA incentivized developers to either build in communities actively working to implement a community revitalization plan (where schools and students may benefit from broad community improvements) or in "already-stable" communities (which are associated with higher educational quality)[10] (G. Baranowski, interview, 1/24/20). Joe Fretwell, a former policy analyst with the Department of Community Affairs, described the tension between policy goals of creating mixed-income neighborhoods and wanting to serve residents "in place":

I think you could definitely just give more points in the QAP to more explicit co-location with high performing schools. Like it's points in there, but its impact, I think, is muted by all of the other things we give points for. I think that's a worthy priority, but there would be pushback from the developers, for sure. But there's also, I think, some pushback to that internally at DCA, in that it's trying to strike the balance of breaking up poverty and integrating neighborhoods further, but housing in areas of concentrated poverty is sub-standard, and people don't have access to safe and affordable housing in those places either.

The City of Atlanta has enacted some promising measures with respect to residential mobility from one part of the city to another. City Councilman Matt Westmoreland was appointed chair of the community development and human services committee in early 2020. He explained that one of his immediate policy goals was Source of Income protections for city housing vouchers:

I have been really passionate about housing policy since before I ran for council when I was on the school board, so a lot of overlap between issues at the city level that were impacting students in APS, and then when I was a teacher, my students at Carver [on the southside]. One of the things we said in committee this week is, we believe that concentrated poverty doesn't work, and one of the ways we can try and help move people who have vouchers into other parts of town where they might not currently be accepted is to say, hey, if you're going to get a subsidy from the city, just like you have to follow certain affordability goals, you need to take this perfectly valid source of income to try and help move people into midtown near the Eastside Trail and up into Buckhead, who might otherwise not have the opportunity to live in those places.

He also observed of the limited inclusionary zoning measures around the Beltline passed by Councilman Dickens:

And so it sounds like we've seen a little bit of a dip in rental construction inside the inclusionary zone area. We've seen a lot of condos and townhomes being built, I think as a way of people to try and build housing without having to worry about the inclusionary zoning thing because it only deals with rental units, and not with ownership. And then the other elephant in the room is it's not really constitutional, right, no one has challenged it yet, but if someone wanted to, they'd probably have a pretty strong case.

Councilman Westmoreland's leadership in getting the Source of Income protections passed by City Council in February 2020, as well as his commitment to educational opportunity, offers the prospect of more public deliberation about the two issues of educational and housing opportunity in tandem. Westmoreland was a force behind the City Council's January 2021 approval of $100 million in bonds for

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[10] Community Revitalization

- The IRS requires States to allocate at least a portion of their LIHTC to deals that contribute to the implementation of a concerted community revitalization plan. These plans most often focus on improving the built environment of a community.
- DCA also sought to fund LIHTC built in coordination with an existing community development initiative that specifically engaged education leaders in creating plans that focus on building up the residents of a community, as well as the surrounding place.

Stable Communities: this section focuses on socioeconomic indicators, such as income and poverty levels.

affordable housing and said it was "arguably the most important initiative I've helped push during my time at City Hall. I'm proud of the future work it will fund, and I'm excited to start the year off with this" (quoted in Capelouto, 2021a).

Non-Profit Sector

The non-profit housing and community development sector in Atlanta have been active participants in both coalitions and in policy development, albeit indirectly. One clear finding across interviews was how much Purpose Built Communities was connected to other non-profits' efforts to curb evictions, assist families, and support linkages between affordable housing and education. For instance, the Atlanta Volunteer Lawyers Foundation (AVLF) initiated a Stand with Our Neighbors program in the Carver cluster of the Atlanta Public Schools. The goal of that program, which was featured on CBS This Morning, has been to marshal volunteers to advocate for families facing displacement, but base them at an elementary school with a high turnover rate. AVLF's Deputy Director, Michael Lucas, described the initial process of identifying the linkage between evictions and low academic performance at Thomasville Heights Elementary School:

We sat down with Purpose Built Schools, we started to talk about the school that they were about to start running in Thomasville Heights, and we started talking about our work, and kind of slowly I think we were figuring out why we were there together. And Greg [Giornelli, of Purpose Built] was concerned about the school having a 40% annual enrollment turnover, and historically...I think that was the five-year average…So we pulled in some academics from Georgia State and from different places and started to pull data to look at how many evictions happened in that elementary school zone, and at that time, the 2015–2016 school year, we were able to map those and see that just in that little elementary school zone there were 110 evictions.

Ayanna Jones-Lightsy, an AVLF staff attorney and co-director of its Safe and Stable Families Project, said that it was helpful in her work that Purpose Built:

recognized right off that education doesn't stand on its own, that children come to school with issues, those issues don't go away, and that if you can build the neighborhood, and build the community, the kids will stay, and they will get the benefit of that education.

Building trust with the parents was the larger challenge, as Jones-Lightsy describes:

The challenges didn't necessarily come from the school structure itself the administration was very open to us being there. Some of the challenges came from— when you deal with these particular kinds of communities where people kind of want to come in and say, I'm gonna fix all your issues, and then they leave after a year, there's no trust. So, we had to build a lot of trust with the parents, that we were here, and we were here to help, and that we were going to be present.

As that trust was built more parents became aware of their rights as tenants, the fruits of the program became evident: a 36% decrease in the student turnover rate in the first year in 2016–2017 (Lucas, 2018). In 2017, AVLF expanded into eight additional schools in Atlanta.

The Atlanta Land Trust has only recently acquired the resources to begin constructing affordable housing. The land trust began in 2009 under the leadership of many community leaders, primarily the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the Atlanta Beltline Partnership with the intention to create affordable housing and stem displacement, which the Beltline recognized was a concern. The work of the land trust never really got traction, partly because of the recession. Amanda Rhein was recruited and hired as the Executive Director in 2019. She said that it was an exciting time to begin doing the work because of both HouseATL and the Mayor's focus on housing, and that there was a sense of urgency that had never been there before. Education and outreach are major components of the organization's work, hosting monthly community information sessions and taking people through the home buying process. Rhein explains:

Because that's a really big hurdle, there's no awareness of the Atlanta Land Trust, or understanding of how a Community Land Trust works, because it hasn't been done in Atlanta. So, it's doing all of that work so that people then, like we are a known entity, that they trust us…when they think about affordable housing, home ownership in particular, they think about the Atlanta Land Trust. So that's really what we've

focused on. Now we are going through a strategic planning process that is supposed to give us guidance on how we can scale up the organization, so that now that we've done all that important stuff, how is it that we're going to actually have an impact.

Rhein adds that Atlanta Land Trust's goal is to be an anti-displacement organization, which in turn is important for families in schools; it collaborates with the Atlanta Public Schools to make sure that their staff and families are aware of home buying opportunities. Most of the acquisitions have been in Southwest Atlanta, with a few partners in Southeast as well. Rhein says any land in North and East would be through donations.

Yet another leader in the non-profit space, Enterprise Community Partners, is an active participant in helping families acquire affordable housing stock. The organization is also playing a significant leadership role in HouseATL's Funders Collective. Sara Haas of Enterprise explained the work of the Funders Collective and its potential to connect housing and education:

The Funders Collective is bringing together philanthropy in a way that hasn't been seen before in affordable housing. All of our public agencies' housing staff, some corporate foundations, banks, so usually their community development folks, CDFI's, which are Community Development Financial Institutions, and then there's a new Affordable Housing Impact Fund that just launched in Atlanta, which is a social equity debt fund, they're raising private investments. And so, we'll be launching a capital campaign later this year with [the Collective] to raise money. And I would say that that group, especially given philanthropy's part of it, they're very interested in how housing intersects with other sectors. So, these foundations and others, typically housing isn't their priority area, but they are recognizing that housing is kind of a foundational component to access to education, to your ability to be successful in school.

Haas noted that the Atlanta Public Schools had been invited to participate in the Funders Collective, but to date had not participated. She observed:

The more visible partnerships between education and housing seem to be public/private ones like Purpose Built Schools, who through their work in different APS clusters are also addressing housing stability. APS has been invited to participate in HouseATL and the Funders' Collective, recognizing the correlation of housing instability and poor educational outcomes. We hope they will become more involved in the future.

Haas says that the Funders Collective uses the Opportunity 360 Planning Tool to assess (not score) projects that come before them. Opportunity 360 is set at the census tract level and can be used to evaluate an address against a whole set of indicators including educational attainment, economic mobility, healthcare, health and wellness, mobility, and housing stability. Another non-profit whose work affects both housing and schools is Atlanta Legal Aid, which works on enforcement of fair market area rents and offers representation in eviction court. Discrimination in Atlanta housing markets remains a serious impediment to economic and educational opportunity (Vashi, 2019).

Philanthropy

In the absence of strong governmental linkages to connect education and housing, there are several significant philanthropic efforts supporting the linkages between housing and education, including the Zeist Foundation, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Cousins Foundation, the Kendeda Fund (the latter two support Purpose Built Communities), and the Arthur Blank Foundation via the Westside Futures Fund. These efforts—many of which extend back to the 1990s—encompass a range of strategies from attempting to create mixed-income neighborhoods and schools to attempting to rapidly acquire properties and keep them shielded from the market. Other foundations have supported the Atlanta Volunteer Lawyers Foundation's work to stem student mobility at high concentrated poverty schools.

Carol Naughton, now President and Interim CEO of Purpose Built Communities, explained how the model grew out of work she had done in the 1990s through Atlanta Housing to create mixed-income communities:

I was part of the group that met at least every week, sometimes more often than that, for years, to figure out collectively with the residents, other neighborhood stakeholders, the East Lake Foundation, and the

Housing Authority—what did we want to do, when there was $33 million of money available to improve housing? When? You had an organization like the East Lake Foundation that was willing to go out and raise philanthropy to bring other partners and investments to the community so we could do something other than just housing? We knew how we delivered housing was important, but housing alone wasn't going to change people's life trajectories. This was a social justice movement: how do we connect housing to the other important amenities, none more important than education? How do we link up housing with the opportunity to go to a great school? Housing with an opportunity to go to a great early learning center so you're prepared to walk in the door of that great school.

She added that the dual focus had been there since the beginning:

You know, if you go back and look at our redevelopment cooperative agreement, that I think was signed in like November of '95, or early '96, the education and the housing piece were the two key pillars of that work back in the day. So, we knew that the school needed to be so great that it would help kids who were years behind catch up, as well as be good enough to attract new people to the neighborhood because the neighborhood didn't have enough people to be economically viable. So, we needed to use the school...we thought, that's the most important lever. And it's the cauldron where social capital gets developed, where relationships are built, so it's more than just a great education for kids, but it is a community cauldron where great stuff bubbles up.

The Atlanta Public Schools, recognizing Purpose Built's success in East Lake with Drew, has contracted with them to expand in Grove Park as well as in the Thomasville Heights/Carver cluster to eventually serve 4,000 kids over 15 years (see Appendix E map). Naughton describes this as a challenge that Purpose Built is embracing both in Atlanta and in other communities nationally.

The Annie E. Casey Foundation is national in scope but runs a field office focused on community development in six south Atlanta neighborhoods. Natallie Keiser, who oversees many of the office's investments in affordable housing through its Neighborhood Transformation initiative, said that part of what makes coordination between the two sectors so difficult is that "the complexity of housing is a barrier." The Annie E. Casey Foundation acquired 53 vacant and abandoned homes in the Pittsburgh neighborhood after the recession, and then worked with partners to heavily subsidize their redevelopment as affordable housing in the post-recession period of depressed property values. The Foundation also supports affordable housing policy work, including that of Georgia ACT (2017), Enterprise Community Partners, and the Housing Justice League, as well as eviction prevention work by the Atlanta Volunteer Lawyers Foundation. Like other respondents, Keiser views HouseATL as a promising venue for coordination among public sector entities such as Atlanta Housing, Invest Atlanta, and the Metro Atlanta Land Bank, with nonprofit and private entities. She stated that HouseATL has created an unprecedented opportunity for strategically advancing the supply of affordable housing for the City of Atlanta.

Tene Traylor, the fund advisor at the Kendeda Fund, explained how many of their grants supported bold leaders and dynamic grantees, such as the Partnership for Southern Equity, Center for Civic Innovation, the Atlanta Land Trust, and the Atlanta Wealth Building Initiative. Traylor shared that in her role, she was increasingly asking economic opportunity grantees about how they connected with education, and likewise, education grantees with housing:

I'm asking the nonprofits, well, why don't you have education people? I've been having this conversation over the past two weeks, and that's the phase that we're in now. There are our economic opportunity grantees. And then, on the education side: RedefinEd, the charter schools that you're supporting, all these folks are...Black Teacher Collaborative, KIPP, TFA, I'm [asking], so, how are you addressing the housing conversation?

The Zeist Foundation's co-founder Dr. George Brumley, Jr., Chair of the Department of Pediatrics at Emory University, began a health clinic at Whitefoord Elementary School in 1994 to provide services to enrolled students and children in the Edgewood neighborhood. Beginning in 2005, Mayson Avenue Cooperative— the Zeist Foundation intermediary—purchased a project-based Section 8 housing development called Edgewood Housing Apartments. Over the following decade, the Foundation invested more than five million dollars to transform this affordable housing development in several phases: (a)

responsible relocation and demolition, (b) neighborhood master planning, (c) private-public partnerships, and (d) Low-Income Housing Tax Credits application. By 2012, the Retreat at Edgewood Townhomes were constructed with 140 units (a mixture of one-, two-, and three-bedroom units) at the 15% and 20% Area Median Income (AMI) levels (G. Long and A. Mbiwan, personal communication, 8/28/19). This commitment to affordable housing in perpetuity has had long-lasting implications for the nearby schools, as property values in the neighborhood have increased astronomically over the past five years. When APS closed Whitefoord Elementary School in 2017, the Zeist Foundation successfully fought to keep the clinic services that had been offered there open and APS leaders repurposed the school building as the Whitefoord Early Learning Academy for pre-school age children.

The Arthur Blank Foundation has been a major contributor to the Westside Futures Fund, which is a collaborative of investors committed to supporting community development in several Westside neighborhoods. Part of Westside's mission has been to acquire homes and keep them affordable in perpetuity.

Private Sector

Housing developers began to address the connections between housing and education in often creative ways. Marjy Stagmeier is an Atlanta businesswoman and developer who has developed a model to integrate affordable housing and education, called Star-C. She began offering wraparound services and literacy instruction to school-age children at her properties after observing conditions she described as "blighted," with high mobility rates and violence. She realized that by offering after-school programs, she was contributing directly to raising achievement in schools with high levels of mobility. Stagmeier explains both the vision and how the model is operationalized:

We represent ourselves as an education model with an affordable housing solution, so at the core of our housing model is the partnership with the schools and with the education system. . .We will not purchase an apartment community unless it's next to a low performing school, and we define that as in the bottom third in the state of whatever state it's located in. So that's number one. If the school is successful, we're probably not going to buy the apartment community. As part of the due diligence, we reach out to the school principal or the superintendent of the school system, and explain our model, and do community meetings with them to just see if there is political will, because again, that's the core of our model. . .We'll partner with the school, do a needs assessment, and we start signing up the children, and start the Star-C community programs.

Stagmeier hired Courtney English, the former chair of the Atlanta School Board, to serve as her Director of Community Development. He is engaged in fundraising and public relations in order to promote the model in the community; part of their outreach is monthly civic breakfasts, held at different sites around Atlanta, where they share information with developers, some of whom have used the model for their LIHTC applications. Resources permitting, they seek to expand the model into other states and communities. At the time of this research, she was the most visible example of a private developer attempting to address the linkage, but there may be others who have since begun to do so, especially since she was vigorously promoting the model pre-pandemic.

Taken as a whole, the major themes that emerge from these interviews are that numerous policy and organizational actors during this period in Atlanta readily recognized the interconnections between housing stability and education. Even though HouseATL did not succeed in bringing the Atlanta Public Schools into its policy and planning group, some interviewees expressed that ideally, that should occur. HouseATL was mostly viewed by interviewees as being open to all, although some, like Naughton of Purpose Built, noted its limitation that it did not treat communities as the unit of change. There were determined and creative individuals (such as Stagmeier, Grant, Haas, Lucas, Jones-Lightsy, Naughton, and Baranowski) within the philanthropic, non-profit, and private sectors who were defining the problem and attempting to show what could be done to address it.

Discussion

The conceptual framework I employed in my analysis focused on civic capacity to support regional equity, and policy design as a dynamic process in which various sectors can borrow ideas from each other in a given issue area, and which citizens can perceive their interests to be represented, or not.

To apply Schneider and Ingram's term, there was cross-sector "borrowing" occurring in Atlanta during this period, as the policy idea of collaboration was framed in the non-profit and philanthropic sectors. The case reveals that the majority of efforts to define and address the link between housing and education, for the most part, did not emanate from governmental actors. This is consistent with findings from many other municipalities, which have identified such a lack of coordination (Finnigan et al., in press). The Atlanta Regional Commission does not lead any efforts to look at educational inequality, mainly because federal funding sources do not connect the two areas. However, this study did reveal strong leadership in problem definition from the non-profit, philanthropic, and to a lesser extent, private sectors, which are focused on increasing stability and stemming displacement. The AVLF, Enterprise Community Partners, Purpose Built, Zeist, Kendeda, the Atlanta Land Trust, and the Annie E. Casey are all attempting to address both phenomena in the City of Atlanta. Star-C Investments raised community awareness of the link between developers and the challenges of high-poverty schools. The Atlanta Volunteer Lawyers Foundation's highly visible efforts at several elementary schools have shown that stabilization can occur when lawyers help advocate for families facing displacement.

Most non-profits were still addressing the linkage in a place-based manner, rather than in a policy-driven way. Two exceptions were Howard Grant of the Atlanta Housing Authority, who as we saw, attempted to make Section 8 lease-up more accessible in the city's northern neighborhoods, and Councilman Westmoreland, whose success in passing a citywide ordinance ought to support that effort. Both actors fit the description of policy entrepreneurs from Holme & Finnigan's (2018) civic capacity-based regionalism framework, in that they strategized creative ways to enact their goals.

Interviewees' discussion of racial inequality in education consistently focused on the dividing line of I-20 in the city, between North and South, and the attendant economic inequality. The Annie E. Casey's *Changing the Odds* (2019) report discusses the geographic divide in its section on economic opportunity. Fund advisor Tene Traylor stated that Kendeda's "education transformation" initiative referenced the divide. The Atlanta Public Schools' commission recognized the link between education and affordable housing, but not only were its recommendations not widely publicized or implemented, they did not include more structural solutions, such as altering student assignment policies. By not participating in HouseATL's funders collective, the APS is missing a potential opportunity to both shape future policies and implement some of the recommendations from its 2017 task force on housing affordability.

Formal policies that could improve housing stability and racial residential integration also appeared during this time. Source of Income protections were passed 13–2 by the Atlanta City Council in February 2020 (Peters & Deere, 2020), a measure with the potential to curb racial discrimination by landlords on the Northside if enforced. Georgia has a state tax credit that matches the federal funds for the LIHTC almost dollar for dollar, which means that it has close to double the amount it can spend on affordable housing development through the program than most states of similar population size. However, as Holme et al. found (2020), the LIHTC should be designed so as to not exacerbate racially segregated suburban schools. Affordable transportation is also key, though urban-suburban transportation is not well developed.

With respect to Schneider and Ingram's (1997) framework of social construction of target populations, "racially segregated schools" was not generally constructed as a problem in Atlanta. Policy actors more commonly discuss "equity," and the geographical divide between North and South, and point to community-based solutions. Even policymakers like Councilman Westmoreland, whose interview showed he understands the complexity of the issue of racially segregated schools, point to the current constraints in addressing the problem of school-level racial segregation in formal policy terms. Learn4Life, which is a collective impact organization created by the Atlanta Regional Commission (2019), epitomizes this social construction. It gathers data and provides a venue for superintendents from six metro-area school systems

to set common benchmarks focused on achievement and school completion. Its mission does not include structural policies such as student assignment to alleviate segregation across the region. There may be more discussion of racial segregation in housing and neighborhoods in 2021: at the February 3rd online meeting of the Atlanta Regional Housing Forum, Dr. Prentiss Dantzler presented on "Local Housing Strategies to Promote Racial Equity" (Dantzler, 2021). It is clear that for progress to be made on the issues of residential and school segregation that regional collaboration will be necessary.

Schneider & Ingram (1997) also observed that depending on the choice of policies, design elements, and how they fit together, governmental policies can feel fair or unfair. Through the meetings I attended and documents I gathered, I identified two major groups that were identified in positive terms: these were "families in schools" and "displaced longtime residents" of the city of Atlanta. That is, these groups were cast as worthy beneficiaries of better policies. Longtime residents did not always perceive themselves this way, as a recent local news report's quote from a resident of a Southside neighborhood shows. The resident spoke about another neighbor who sold her house to developers after multiple notices of code violations: "It's this feeling like they are being pushed out. They are no longer the desired citizen in Atlanta" (Stokes et al., 2020).

Student mobility is a very serious problem within the APS and is increasingly being defined as such in public spaces. In absence of legislation to curb evictions, the Atlanta Housing Authority is attempting to bridge the gap through a Memorandum of Understanding with APS to house homeless families and provide transportation to the family's original school with federal McKinney-Vento funds. The Atlanta Housing Authority is also attempting to incentivize attendance in high-poverty schools. And HouseATL is deliberately addressing displacement as one of its key pillars, which is another clear delineation of student mobility as a public issue to be addressed.

HouseATL has brought many actors, interests, and agencies to the table, and its policy and coordination work should continue beyond any one mayor's administration because of recently granted 501(c)(3) status. Its policy working group was stable and met regularly until the pandemic, with partners drawn from various communities and constituencies directly affected by rising housing costs. At its February 2020 Policy Committee meeting, which the researcher attended, a committee work plan was circulated that included the goal of "education and coalition building," and specifically, to "grow the participation of a diverse set of voices; focus on statewide and regional partners" (HouseATL Policy Committee Work Plan, 2020). At least one interviewee mentioned the committee on Community Stabilization within HouseATL as a good fit for cross-discussion between housing and education. However, this research also revealed that APS has not accepted the invitation to join HouseATL's Funders Collective, leaving it disconnected from one major lever for collaboration. This is a major constraint on the development of regional frameworks to connect housing and education, as APS's coming to the table would signal that other metro-wide systems might also participate.

Policy Recommendations

To enhance educational opportunity, the Atlanta metropolitan area and others nationally need to focus on both preventing displacement and providing more affordable housing, while balancing the many place-based initiatives with more housing mobility options and counseling. There would have to be active metro-wide discussion of joint goals that examine data on race and educational outcomes. Sociologist Prentiss Dantzler (2021) reminded housing advocates in his talk "Local Housing Strategies to Increasing Racial Equity," that "policies need to target individuals, neighborhoods, and the housing system in tandem." At the same time, there needs to be a regional examination of how school district boundaries are exacerbating racial and ethnic segregation of schools. The following fourteen recommendations encapsulate both housing and education policies, and are in addition to keeping a focus on the goals that the Mayor's office and the Atlanta Housing Authority have set for expanding the supply of affordable housing over the next five years.[11]

[11] A caveat is that these were drafted prior to the housing crisis of the pandemic.

First, the segregative school district boundary lines identified by Monarez et al. (2021) are a regional political problem that will require a regional set of agreements, or even statewide legislation, to change. While these boundary changes would not be politically easy to achieve, it is undeniable from this most recent analysis that these are profound drivers of inequality across the region. Second, returning to the key role of state policy, the Georgia legislature should fund school transfers between North and Southside counties—that is, expand beyond intra-district choice that is currently offered, and fund transportation (e.g., Monardo, 2019; Owens, 2019). Inter-county magnet schools situated to bring together racially diverse student bodies across district boundary lines are another policy tool worth expanding. While not strong enough to overcome larger regional inequities across school systems, intra-county transfers can also provide opportunity for students (Holme & Finnigan, 2018). Third, the Atlanta Housing Authority should develop a more comprehensive voluntary housing mobility program like those in other metropolitan areas.[12] Dantzler (2021) included this in a recent talk to the Atlanta Regional Housing Forum under the heading "Subsidy Reform and Increased Measures to Reduce Segregation." Fourth, the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority's public transportation expansion plan should be coordinated with fair and affordable housing location plans, as the Department of Community Affairs' Jack Popper stated. Fifth, as Atlanta Legal Aid's Lindsey Siegel advocated, counties should strengthen federal Fair Market Rent enforcement across the metro area. Sixth, there should be improved coordination of area philanthropies to support initiatives that will help families with kids, expanding efforts like those of AVLF's Stand With Our Neighbors. Also, municipalities can pass ordinances prohibiting evictions of families with kids, as well as teachers, during the academic year. A court recently upheld such an ordinance in San Francisco (Egelko, 2018). Seventh, Atlanta should enforce its recently passed city ordinance for Source of Income protections against discrimination for voucher holders; ideally it would be enacted at the state level.[13] Eighth, and relatedly, measures such as mandatory inclusionary zoning could be adopted, as proposed in Atlanta by Dantzler (2021). Ninth, as outlined in the APS Task Force's report, more of APS's existing land should be utilized to expand the supply of affordable housing, especially for households below 50% Area Median Income. Tenth, the holdings of the Atlanta Land Trust should be substantially increased as a way to shield more families from the market and stem displacement (e.g., Choi et al., 2018). Eleventh, Georgia should fund a statewide housing trust to serve its homeless and neediest residents, which several interviewees noted during discussions of the lack of expertise within the state legislature to address housing policy. Twelfth, the state should strengthen the Department of Community Affairs' programs, including LIHTC, to build on the work of incentivizing coordination between developers and school systems to ensure that affordable housing is built in neighborhoods with strong educational opportunity. This may mean revisiting the "Beating the Odds" performance measures for schools in the QAP, as the neighborhoods in which they are located may or may not be racially segregated.

The final two recommendations correspond to civic capacity. Education should be incorporated into the Atlanta Regional Commission's housing initiative, which could lead to more expansive definitions of education beyond just achievement outcomes. This could be the best venue for discussions of splintering off of individual school systems and/or making school district boundaries a more explicit part of the conversation. Finally, there should be a metro-wide joint committee of both policymakers and practitioners established to address both housing and school segregation in a coordinated fashion. HouseATL provides a starting point for such a group, particularly the Community Stabilization subcommittee; but the APS Task Force on affordable housing also recommended such an entity for the city. Dantzler (2021) called for a *Community Benefits Agreement* as part of his proposal for "subsidy reform and increased measures to reduce segregation" in Atlanta, along with community land trusts and increased enterprise capital. Additionally, as stated by Mueller and Tighe (2007), conducting both quantitative and qualitative studies

[12] It should be noted, however, that the lack of urban-suburban public transportation is something of a barrier to suburban relocation compared to other cities because access to most city jobs is limited without a car.

[13] This was passed by the City Council in February 2020, introduced by Antonio Brown and Amir Farrokhi. Two council members representing Buckhead, in the North, opposed the measure (see Peters & Deere, 2020).

about the linkages between household stability and student performance could help explain the social costs to the public and bolster the case for affordable housing.

There is another set of levers that could make a difference: federal law and policy. A Title VI racial impact assessment of educational opportunity in Atlanta would provide important recommendations about the racial impact of school boundary decisions (Tegeler & Hilton, 2017). That is, any jurisdiction within a metro area receiving federal education dollars would have to assess ahead of time the effects of district boundary changes or secession on school segregation for the federal government. Similar to Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing, Title VI could be used to make racial equity assessments of planned changes. Indeed, the Atlanta case highlights the importance of restoring the oversight and enforcement of Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing at the federal level, as well as reinstating the 2016 Memorandum of Understanding among Transportation, HUD, and Education, to incentivize joint policy initiatives and funds. As Finnigan et al. (in press) write:

President Biden's current nominee for Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, Representative Marcia Fudge, might be uniquely positioned if approved by the full Senate to bring this kind of holistic framework to HUD given she was a sponsor of the Strength in Diversity Act, aimed at fostering school integration and is expected to be a strong advocate for the enforcement of fair housing policies (p. 18).

Biden administration officials may also shift the politics of collaboration among education, transportation, and housing by restoring the Obama Administration's Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing initiative, which requires that localities develop plans to comprehensively address factors contributing to racial and socioeconomic segregation in communities, including across schools.[14] The federal Magnet Schools Assistance Plan may also provide more resources to metropolitan Atlanta school systems. However, these magnet schools should be administered with an eye to regional school-level diversity, geographically situated to maximize racial desegregated effect (e.g., inter-county magnets).

Conclusion

The period between 2017–2020 witnessed a range of commissions and task forces laying out recommendations to address the problem of housing affordability. During the period of data collection, Atlanta policymakers had not yet led a major push for new funds for affordable housing stabilization beyond existing HUD dollars and the results of an $100 million bond approved for affordable housing in the City of Atlanta in January 2021 are unknown as of this writing. With a few exceptions, the link between schools and housing is not one that has been effectively made in policy conversations. What this case shows most clearly is that there are many efforts that non-profits, community-based organizations, and civic groups are making that could potentially "bubble up" to the level of policy coordination. There are several non-profits such as AVLF, philanthropies, and both public- and private-sector entrepreneurs that began attempts to stabilize families with kids. Several entities are making efforts to scale these up through HouseATL. However, the challenge is how to get to scale in the area of governmental policy. While not mentioned in my data or findings, the pandemic necessitates that Atlanta's civic, philanthropic, and governmental sectors address housing as a means of stabilizing families health-wise, economically, and educationally. As a group of Atlanta housing scholars wrote in 2020 in a set of policy recommendations aimed at the housing dislocations of the pandemic: "Housing instability is traumatic to children, disrupts education, and can have long term effects on educational performance and ability to enter the workplace" (Raymond et al., 2020). Looking to the future, it will be crucial for philanthropy and policymakers alike to create venues for housing-education policy dialogues (Tegeler & Hilton, 2017). One of the goals of this research was to show how many individuals and organizations made efforts to connect the two areas in practice during this

[14] For a recent work on the development of Affirmatively Fair Housing during the Obama administration, its effects, and implications for renewal under the Biden administration, see:
Kelly, N., Steil, J., Vale, L., & Woluchem, M. (Eds.). (2021). *Furthering fair housing: Prospects for racial justice in America's neighborhoods*. Temple University Press.

period that might be built on and expanded as Atlanta attempts to recover from the intertwined economic, housing, health, and educational crises of the pandemic.

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Appendix A

Interviews and Meetings Conducted

2019–2020 Interviews

- Joseph Fretwell, Former Policy Analyst, Office of Housing Finance, Department of Community Affairs
- Lindsey Siegel – Atlanta Legal Aid
- Marjy Stagmeier and Courtney English –Tri-Star Enterprises
- Michael Lucas and Ayanna Jones-Lightsy, Atlanta Volunteer Lawyers Foundation
- Atlanta City Councilman Matt Westmoreland –
- Howard Grant, Atlanta Housing Authority
- Carol Naughton, Purpose Built
- Natallie Kaiser, Annie E. Casey Foundation
- Tene Traylor, Kendeda Fund
- Grace Baranowski, Purpose Built Communities (Formerly Department of Community Affairs)
- Jack Popper, Department of Community Affairs
- Susan Adams, Atlanta Neighborhood Development Partnership
- Sara Haas, Enterprise Community Partners
- Amanda Rhein, Atlanta Land Trust
- Marisa Ghani, Atlanta Regional Commission

2018–2019 Meetings (not formal interviews)

- Atiba Mbiwan and Garry Long, Zeist Foundation
- Nathaniel Smith and Bill Bolling, formerly of APS Task Force on Affordable Housing

Appendix B

Public Meetings Attended 2018–2019

- HouseATL Policy Working Group, February 7, 2020
- Atlanta Regional Housing Forum, September 5, 2018, March 7 & December 12, 2019
- Atlanta Philanthropy Roundtable, December 2018
- Webinar with Councilman Andre Dickens on policy, December 18, 2019
- Georgia ACT conference, October 10, 2018

Appendix C

Interview Protocol

1. What has been your organization's (philanthropy's, agency's) role and mission? Does it address housing policy, K12 education policy, or both?
2. With what other organizations do you partner? Has your organization been involved with broader efforts, such as the APS Task Force on Affordable Housing or the HOUSEATL initiative? If so, how and when?
3. In what arenas in the metropolitan area have there been efforts to coordinate k12 education policy with affordable housing policy?
   Prompts: addressed by mayor, civic groups, non-profit agencies, etc.; federal policies like Low Income Housing Tax credits, etc.
4. What do you see as the major barriers to coordination across these policy areas?
5. Which groups does your organization believe need to be involved in defining effective coordination?
6. What policies do you believe might be most effective in coordination?
   a. Prompts:
      i. Measurement. Is there a better way to measure particular indicators of progress for affordable housing and education in the Atlanta metro area?
      ii. Stakeholders. Are the right people and groups currently involved in the design and implementation of policies? (i.e. affected groups, community development groups, etc.)
      iii. Coordination. Are current policies supporting or detracting from efforts to address barriers to coordination across sectors?
      iv. Supports and resources. What kind of resources could help address the barriers to coordination?
      v. Leadership: what kind of political leadership might sustain effective coordination?
7. Is there anything else you think I should know about the context of housing and education policy initiatives in the work of your organization?

Appendix D

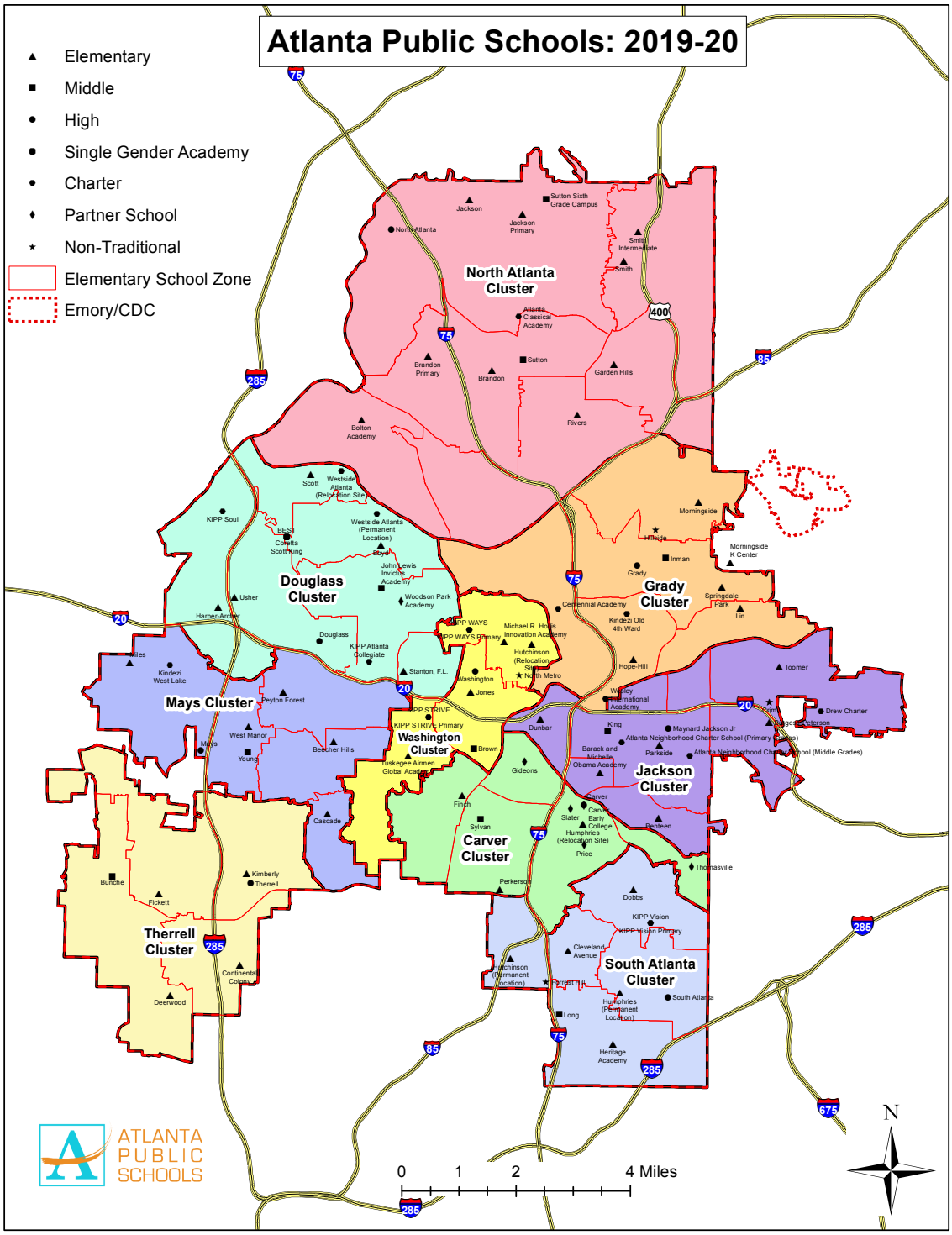
Recommendations of the APS Task Force on Affordable Housing

(Source: APS Affordable Housing Task Force, 2017)

- Create an Affordable Housing Advisory Committee to engage city, county, community, business, and school interests in an ongoing conversation regarding the intersection of school performance, community development, and resident needs.
- APS should create a Chief Equity Officer position to oversee the process
- APS should partner with real estate and property development partners to devise site specific options that balance short- and long-term goals. This could include Atlanta Housing Authority which could provide permanent management for affordability and TriStar investment which has developed an "Educational model with a housing solution" in Clarkston. Both groups have been able to quantify positive effects on student success.
- In order to remove APS from the business of real estate and property development, public partners with a dedicated focus on permanent affordability, such as AHA, should receive the first right of refusal for any APS surplus properties for sale in order to develop affordable housing and mixed-use housing units around schools with high mobility rates and low performance, in exchange for financial resources to fund specific components of the APS Turnaround Strategy.
- Any property repurposed for housing should be Mixed-use Development that brings amenities to distressed communities (mixed-use/to city used development).
- Set aside a portion of each housing development for workforce housing (APS employees, police officers, fire fighters and city service employees) – Individuals between 30% - 50% AMI.

Appendix E

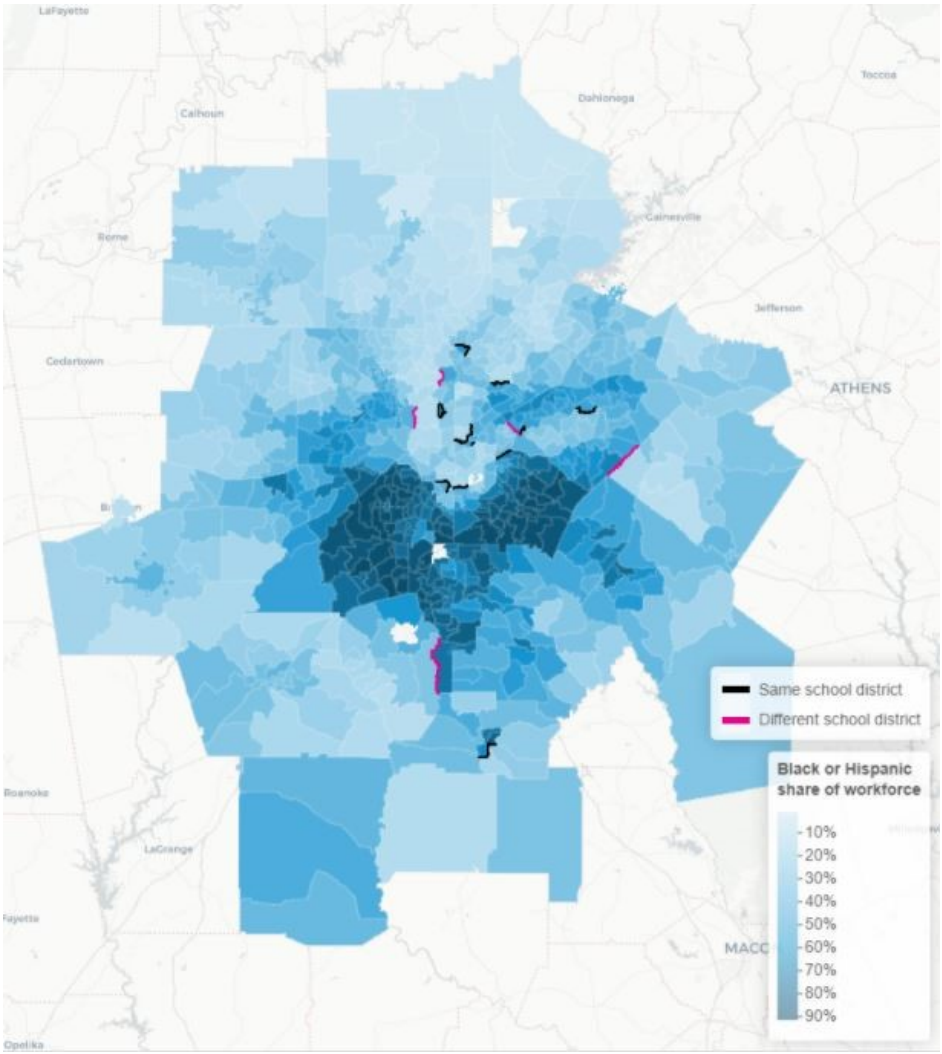
Map of Clusters in Atlanta Public Schools



Appendix F

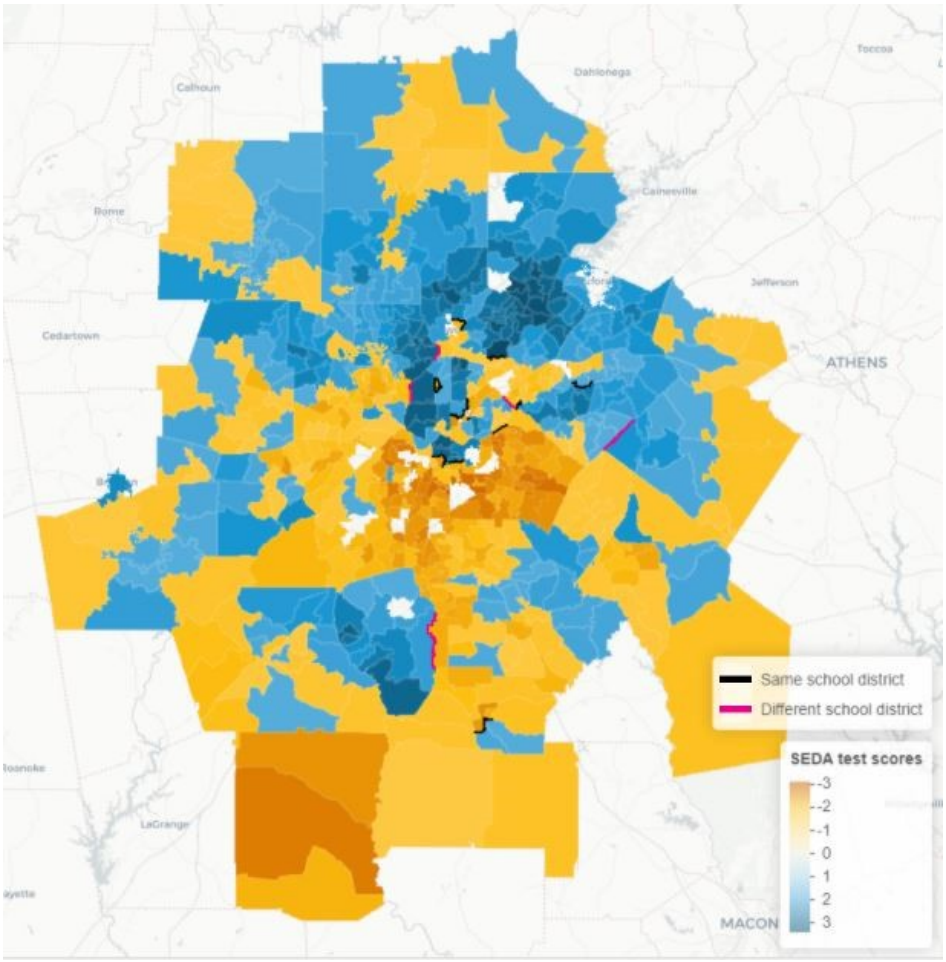
Most Segregative Borders in Atlanta Metropolitan Area 2017

(source: Monarez et al., 2021, p. 23)



Appendix G

Average School Achievement and School Attendance Boundaries in Atlanta (source: Monarez et al., 2021, p. 27)



Source:sean reardon, Demetra Kalogrides, Andrew Ho, Ben Shear, Erin Fahle, Heewon Jang, and Belen Chavez, "Stanford Education Data Archive (Version 4.1)," accessed June 17, 2021, http://purl.stanford.edu/db586ns4974.

Notes:SEDA = Stanford Education Data Archive. Achievement data are not available for some schools.