



Dupont Summit 2014

..... Science, Technology, and Environmental Policy Issues

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The Policy Studies Organization

Budding Scholars Conference

Matthew Kasman – *Brookings Institution*

“Agent-based Model Simulations of Open Enrollment School Choice Policies”

Open enrollment school choice policies allow districts to ask families to make initial school selections rather than assigning students to schools by default. These policies have become an increasingly common feature of large urban school districts, but they have failed to generate the expected increases in school diversity and equity. In order to explain how the details of these policies influence their outcomes and might be altered to improve conditions in public schools, I construct agent-based models of open enrollment policies in a large, urban school district. I find that increasing participation in the school choice process has the largest positive impact on diversity in the district, increasing the priority given to proximity during assignment decreases diversity, and that replacing information given to families about school achievement levels with school value-added measures causes the largest increase in enrollment equity.

Biography

Matt Kasman received his doctorate in Educational Policy at Stanford University in 2014. He currently works as a research associate at the Brookings Institution in the Center on Social Dynamics and Policy. He has extensive experience exploring how complex systems thinking in general and agent-based models in specific can inform policy decisions. His research interests include school choice, affirmative action in higher education, teacher labor markets, educational equity, tobacco policy, and childhood obesity interventions.