

HOW DO WE KNOW?
DETERMINING SCHOOL DISTRICT FISCAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE
POLICY IN RURAL HISPANIC BOOMTOWNS IN THE MIDWEST

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DISSERTATION

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Regional Planning
in the Graduate College of the
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2012

Urbana, Illinois

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ABSTRACT

Understanding the needs and desires of a community is one of the objectives of a democratic government. This is what we are expressing when we vote for candidates or referenda. However, the voting system does not always work to accurately reveal the preferences of a community. In addition to voting, governments often try to employ other mechanisms to understand the public's preferences. One such mechanism is communicative planning. In communicative planning, the community's preferences are revealed not through voting but through dialog with one another. By conversing with one another, we learn about ourselves and others and are changed through the process. Ultimately, the preferences are revealed through effective arguments. Using the Midwest as a laboratory to test whether communicative planning is being employed effectively as a preference revelatory tool, I demonstrate that districts do not fully implement communicative planning to understand the new Hispanic community and Hispanics are having little direct impact on fiscal and administrative decisions. However, these results are consistent with an institutional approach to communicative planning where not only are individuals influencing the governments that surround them but those governments play a significant role in shaping the activities of individuals. Many of the reasons that a communicative process was not implemented were a result of institutional factors specific to the school district. Incorporating these institutional factors into a quantitative model would better predict the impact that community members have on fiscal and administrative changes. In addition, awareness of the institutional factors that could impact the planning process and the willingness to respond to them on the part of district administrators would help them institute a more communicative process.

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1. An eye for what? Obtaining knowledge of community preferences

And so, with his face stern in front of his loss and pain, Odin All-Father turned and went toward Mimir's Well. It was under the great root of Ygdrasil—the root that grew out of Jötunheim. And there sat Mimir, the Guardian of the Well of Wisdom, with his deep eyes bent upon the deep water. And Mimir, who had drunk every day from the Well of Wisdom, knew who it was that stood before him.

“Hail, Odin, Eldest of the Gods,” he said.

Then Odin made reverence to Mimir, the wisest of the world's beings. “I would drink from your well, Mimir,” he said.

“There is a price to be paid. All who have come here to drink have shrunk from paying that price. Will you, Eldest of the Gods, pay it?”

“I will not shrink from the price that has to be paid, Mimir,” said Odin All-Father.

“Then drink,” said Mimir. He filled up a great horn with water from the well and gave it to Odin. (Colum 1920, 80-81)

The Norse god Odin sacrificed his eye and drank from a magical well for knowledge of the world and its people. What must mortal planners do to obtain knowledge of the people for whom they plan? In a democratic society, the decisions of the government should reflect the collective will of the people. In places that have homogeneous populations – populations with similar ethnic, cultural and experiential backgrounds – knowledge of a planner's own desires and preferences may be enough to plan well for a community. In places with a population that has diverse preferences, self-knowledge is not enough. In such places a planner must cultivate an understanding of these other desires and preferences. When the ethnic and cultural landscape is changing rapidly, this knowledge may be difficult to obtain. It is in this context where the mode of obtaining knowledge of the community's desires and preferences are critical to the ability of a planner to make effective, responsive decisions.

The collective will is a difficult thing to understand. The desires of an individual can be identified simply by asking or observing his or her behavior. The preferences of a group, particularly a group as large as a city, are exceedingly difficult to know. Simply adding up the preferences of all individuals can lead to results supported by no one (Arrow 1963). In addition, individuals may have preferences that are different for themselves than they are for the entire group. Fortunately, no one in our time has proposed sacrificing body parts to obtain this knowledge but there are numerous other mechanisms proposed to obtain this knowledge. Within the planning literature, one of the most prevalent mechanisms is often termed communicative planning. Sager (2002, 2007) proposes that it can potentially contribute to solving the problem of determining the preferences of a community through the involvement of many diverse

people. Communicative planning as a mechanism relies on those in government participating in a dialog with the community. In an ideal situation, the members of the government and all others in the process would have equal power in determining the agenda of what needs to be discussed and discussing it. Through dialog, the participants arrive at both the underlying issues, questions or problems and the solutions.

In this dissertation I evaluate whether this mechanism is helping governments make more responsive decisions. I do this by examining school districts in the Midwest that have experienced a dramatic increase in the Hispanic population. I evaluate whether these districts have changed their fiscal and administrative policies. I also estimate the degree to which an ideal communicative process was employed. I test two hypotheses in this dissertation. The first asserts that the presence of a new ethnic or cultural community is related to changes in a school district's fiscal and administrative policies and the second, that a communicative process is employed by the districts to understand the new community's preferences. The results of this research are not only applicable to school districts experiencing a rapid rise in the Hispanic population but to other local governments that are experiencing ethnic and cultural shifts within their jurisdictions.

1.1 Communicative planning as a way to understand community preferences

Communicative planning is rarely framed as a revelatory mechanism for understanding community preferences. Instead, it is usually discussed in the context of participation theory broadly as an ideal process for government and resident to interact. It has been written about so much that some have called it the model for all planning-related activities (Healey 2006; Huxley and Yiftachel 2000; Innes 1995). Following Sager (2002, 2007), I see it in a narrower context. As a revelatory mechanism, it has the potential to succeed where other models based on voting have failed. This is because it allows – even encourages – all parties involved in the process to change their opinions over time and even create new ways of understanding the issues and alternative solutions. The theory is not described in exactly the same terms among scholars. It has been called “communicative” (Sager 2002), “collaborative” (Healy 2006), and “deliberative” (Forester 1999). Its roots lie in Habermas's theory of communicative action (Habermas 1987) where government decisions are made and carried out through communication, deliberation, and argument, involving the entire community in the discussion.

The problem of preference revelation for communities has been debated for over a century. The problem is relevant for democratic governments that want to act according to the needs and desires of the entire community. Early mechanisms were simply variations on voting schemes (Wagner 1958[1883];

von Stein 1958[1885]). More sophisticated ways of voting were developed to address problems with people voting against their own preferences (Tiebout 1956; Vickrey 1961). However, Arrow (1963) points out that all systems based on individual preferences are doomed to fail under certain circumstances. When everyone votes for their ordered preferences, the result can be the option least favored by the entire community. This leads Sen (1999) to propose that the community's preferences can be determined through empathetic comparisons rather than self-centered voting. Such a strategy is very close to the dialogic nature of communicative planning.

Not all who write about communicative planning agree on exactly what is involved in a communicative process but there are some broad themes. Actions that are inclusive of all community members, contribute to changing the frame of reference of the people involved in the process, and help people connect to one another are characteristics of communicative planning (Healey 2006). Actions that perpetuate the power structure and disempower contradicting voices are contrary to communicative planning (Flyvbjerg 1998; Sager 1994). All theorists agree that a central characteristic of a communicative process is the presence of a diversity of people in the process, however diversity is defined for that community. A corollary to this is that diverse populations were not only present but contributed their knowledge in a meaningful way. Several theorists (Healey 2006; Forester 1999) emphasize the fluid nature of a communicative planning process and suggest that there must be room within the process for new groups to form, new associations to be created and identities to shift. As these associational changes take place, the underlying knowledge about the issues also evolves as people change their understanding of the issues and their own relation to them.

It is difficult to test this. A community's true preferences are basically unknowable and so a comparison between the revealed preferences and the true preferences is not possible. However, in a place where there is considerable rapid change within a community, a government must use some type of formal mechanism to understand the community's shifting preferences. Because of the difficulties in ascertaining community preferences through voting, Sager (2007) proposes that communicative planning could be a mechanism through which governments can accurately ascertain the preferences of the people living in that jurisdiction. Furthermore, it may be that if there are many communities undergoing the same type of population change and all of the governments are discovering the preferences of their communities, then they are changing their fiscal policies in similar ways. The rural Midwest provides an excellent case to study such processes.

1.2 Growth of the Hispanic population in the Midwest

Over the past two decades people in towns and rural counties across the Midwest have witnessed a dramatic change in the demographics of their areas. Many small towns across the Upper Midwest have been home to declining and aging populations. Others have been sites of expanding populations that are becoming increasingly less homogenous. Shortly after the Census Bureau began releasing tables of data from the 2000 Decennial Census, articles appeared in newspapers with headlines like “Area’s Hispanic population growing” (Sisco 2001), “Hispanics the majority in Iowa town” (Associated Press 2001), and “Spanish influence changing Midwest” (Armas 2002). These news articles took note of a trend that started in the 1990s and was glaringly apparent by 2000. Hispanics were no longer concentrated solely in the traditional gateway states of Texas, California and Arizona. More and more Hispanics lived in the Heartland of the United States. Hispanics were not just moving to big cities, accustomed to diversity. Increasingly, small towns were home to burgeoning Hispanic communities. Kandel and Cromartie (2004) go so far as to say that the growing Hispanic population “saved” many small Midwestern towns from declining into obscurity as the offspring the towns’ old timers moved to Midwestern cities and the coasts.

In the 1980s, Hispanics were concentrated near the U.S.-Mexico border with some pockets of concentration in Southern Florida and large cities such as Chicago and New York (figure 1.1). While the concentration has remained high in the border states, other parts of the US experienced increased immigration of Hispanics (figures 1.2 and 1.3). In 1990, the Census Bureau projected a population of 30.6 million Hispanics in the United States in 2000 (US Census Bureau 1993). The actual population in 2000 was 35.3 million (Suro and Tafoya 2004). By 2004, the population had already surpassed the 1990 projection for 2010 of 39.3 million (Suro 2005) and the actual population in 2010 was 50.5 million (Ennis, Ríos-Vargas and Albert 2011). The places with the fastest growing Hispanic populations tended to be in places that have had heretofore fairly homogenous populations – rural counties in the Midwest, places in Appalachia and the Deep South.

Focusing on nonmetropolitan counties, those counties which are not a part of Census-defined metropolitan areas, Kandel and Cromartie (2004) identify three types of counties: high-growth Hispanic, established Hispanic, and other nonmetropolitan counties that did not have either a large contemporary or historical presence of Hispanic people. High-growth Hispanic counties are those that started with very few Hispanic residents in 1990 and had over 1000 Hispanic residents in 2000. Established Hispanic counties started with a population that was at least 10 percent Hispanic in 1990 and maintained or exceeded that proportion in 2000. Established counties are located primarily in the South and West and are fairly contiguous. High-growth counties are primarily dotted across the Midwest, Appalachia and the South. Kandel and Cromartie (2004) attribute the growth to the draw of low-skill, non-seasonal jobs.

Figure 1.1. Concentration of the Hispanic population in 1980 (1980 Census)

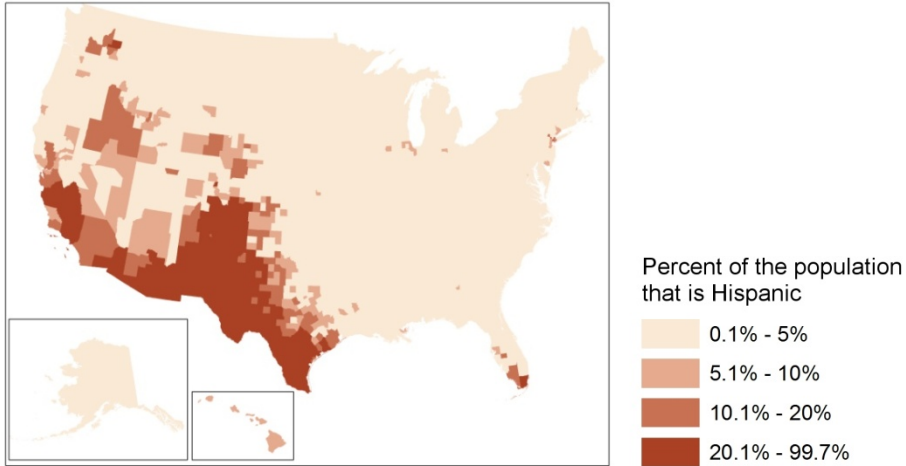


Figure 1.2. Concentration of the Hispanic population in 1990 (1990 Census)

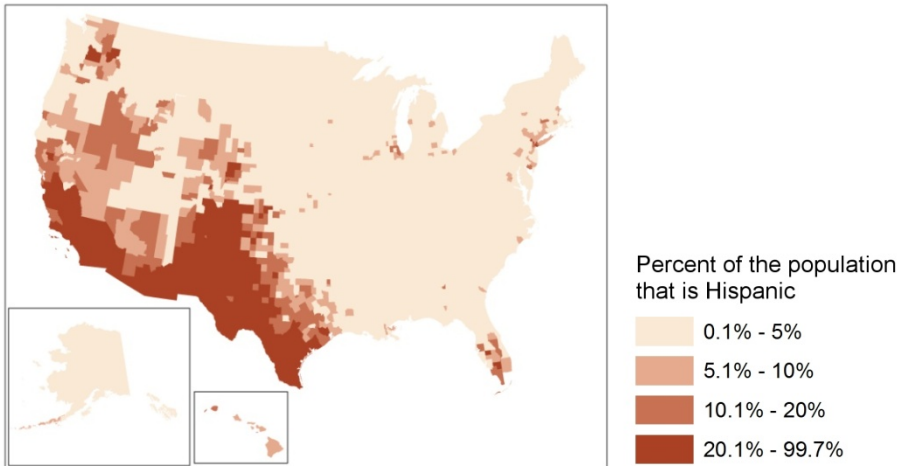
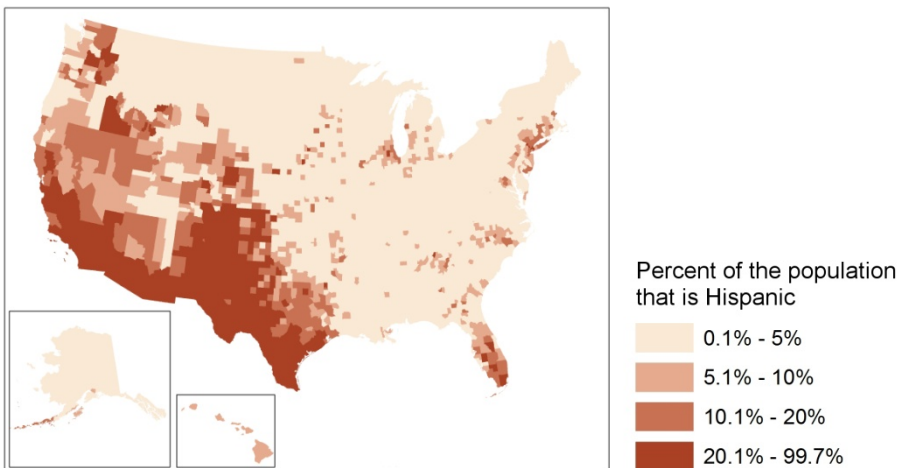


Figure 1.3. Concentration of the Hispanic population in 2000 (2000 Census)



Numerous case studies have documented the attraction of particular types of jobs to new Hispanic migrants (Grey and Woodrick 2002; Grey 1995; Griffith 1995; Gozdziaik and Bump 2004; Hernández-León and Zúñiga 2000; Johnson-Webb 2002; Kandel and Cromartie 2004; Liaw and Frey 2007; McDaniel and Casanova 2003; Parrado and Kandel 2008, Diaz McConnell and Miraftab 2009). Beef, pork and poultry processing plants employ many of the new arrivals to these states (Stull, Broadway and Griffith 1995). Across the South forestry also employs many Hispanics (McDaniel and Casanova 2003). Johnson-Webb (2002) demonstrates that, at least in North Carolina, this can be attributed to employer recruitment of Hispanic workers through local and distant newspaper and radio ads, H2A and H2B temporary visa programs, Mexican consulates and informal labor recruiters. Grey and Woodrick (2002) draw an even stronger link between places in the US and Mexico. They document the link between a rural Iowa meat-packing plant and small town in Mexico. Grey and Woodrick (2002) as well as others (Grey 1995; Hernández-León and Zúñiga 2000; Johnson-Webb 2003) show the strong influence that social networks can have on employment and migration patterns. Within any given rural, high-growth place, therefore, there is often a fairly homogenous “Hispanic” culture.

The changing ethnic and cultural landscape in the rural Midwest is an excellent situation in which to test my hypotheses. The towns in which this change has taken – and is taking – place are relatively isolated. Unlike in the Southwest and West, these school districts did not first see change beginning in the neighboring school districts. The change happened without any spatial signal and the districts had little opportunity to prepare for it. In addition, other scholars (Grey and Woodrick 2002; Grey 1995; Gozdziaik and Bump 2004; Hernández-León and Zúñiga 2000; Johnson-Webb 2002; McDaniel and Casanova 2003; Parrado and Kandel 2008) have established compelling evidence that within these towns, the Hispanic community is fairly homogeneous, with many sharing ties of birthplace, family and migration route. This means that there is an opportunity to involve them as a group instead of as individuals. Finally, 15 or 20 years is a short time for the ethnic and cultural identity of a place to change but it is enough time for decisions to change. There is an opportunity for change in leadership, the structures of funding and other fiscal and administrative matters that can take years to accomplish.

1.3 Policy-making in elementary and secondary education

To some, it may seem odd for questions of planning to be tested in school districts. But school districts are not so different from other forms of local government policy. Coombs (1977) recognizes that “...educational decisions have always been political...” (74). He goes on to list seven categories of participants that are quite similar to the categories of participants in other local government decisions:

elected politicians, education officials, teachers and their organizations, parents and their organizations, students, employers, and experts. To generalize, both contexts have people who are elected every few years and must be accountable for decisions made during their tenure. In the local government context this might be the mayor and city council. In the context of a school district this would be the school board. Both have technicians and unelected managers. In the local government this includes people in the planning department and other city offices while in schools this would include the teachers and administrators of the school and the district. Finally, both contexts have other outside influences which may be stronger or nonexistent, depending on the place. These might include the business community and Chamber of Commerce, a religious community, and other interest-specific organizations. School districts also have similar powers as other forms of local government. They have the power to levy taxes and to legislate. It is true that their legislative powers are not as extensive as those of a city or county, but they can establish rules that parents and students must abide by. Sometimes the local police are involved in enforcing those rules, other times the district employs its own enforcement staff.

Despite the similarities between education policy and other local public policy areas, education policy does have some funding and governance structures that are unique. In the United States, providing for elementary and secondary education has always been primarily a local issue. In fact, it is the primary service that local taxes fund (GAO 1992). Schools today have a wider funding structure than most other local government functions, drawing on funds from the local, state and federal levels. The degree to which a school relies on state and federal sources depends on some factors outside of their control such as the state they are located in and the number of disadvantaged students that they serve. However, the local contribution to education is established the same way other local tax levies are determined. Local funds are generally acquired primarily through property taxes but can also include some combination of sales and income taxes or fees.

In the early days of the republic, schools were solely the responsibility of towns, villages and communities and tended to be financed through fees (Johns and Morphet 1960). As early as the late eighteenth century, states, beginning with Connecticut, set aside funds for public education and in the nineteenth century communities began to levy local taxes to support elementary and secondary schools (Johns and Morphet 1960). Though the federal government has influenced educational policy somewhat throughout the history of the country, it became increasingly involved in local education in the middle of the twentieth century. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was the first major federal legislation that affected how schools could be governed (Sunderman and Kim 2004). The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 gave the federal government a much larger role in funding local education in the United States. It initially focused on supplementing the revenue of schools that educated many poor students. It

has been continually reauthorized and expanded since then. Today it is known as the No Child Left Behind Act (Sunderman and Kim 2004). Its primary funding focus is the education of disadvantaged students (poor students, those who are delinquent or have been neglected, and migratory children). This area of funding is called “Title I” after the title of the act that authorizes it. The other major area of funding is called “Title III” and addresses English language instruction for students with limited English proficiency. In addition, it funds initiatives for teacher training, innovation in school instruction and many other programs. Even though the federal government is now involved in education, it still recognizes that education is a local issue by allowing states to write the rules within the federal guidelines and by distributing funds through the state instead of directly to school districts.

State involvement in school funding has increased in the past fifty years from about 40 percent of all school districts’ budgets in 1964 (Wong 1999) to about 47 percent in 2005 (NCES 2009). However that there are considerable interstate differences in the contribution they make to education and the way they make it. In 2005, state contributions varied from a low of 27 percent of local school budgets in Nevada to a high of 85 percent of budgets in Vermont (NCES 2009).¹ Political traditions within a state shape the way it distributes aid (Wong 1999). Local schools have little influence over these political traditions but must deal with the situation that exists within the state where they are located. Some states have a hands-off approach to education while other states are very involved in funding and regulating education.

Despite this funding structure school districts and the residents who live in them still have considerable autonomy. School boards and the district residents can determine the structure and administration of their district. Some places have separate school boards for elementary and secondary levels of education, others have one body to oversee both. School districts are able to determine the acceptable student-teacher ratio, the number, type and repair of the facilities, and to a large extent they can determine the curriculum and extracurricular activities available to students. In addition, roughly 42 percent of schools’ funds nation-wide come from local sources (NCES 2009) however, this may vary from state to state and from district to district. There are some funds that are available (or not) based on factors outside the districts’ control such as the level of poverty among students but to a large extent, school districts are funded through local property taxes (King and Ramirez 1994). Besides local taxes, school districts derive revenue from outside grants, state and federal programs and private fundraising.

¹ This excludes Hawaii and the District of Columbia which have only one school district (Wong 1999). The median contribution was 46 percent of school budgets and half of all states contributed between 41 and 56 percent. Illinois was the third smallest contributor with only 32 percent of local school budgets coming from state sources (NCES 2009).

Within the changing cultural landscape of the rural Midwest, focusing on school districts as the form of government in which to test my hypotheses makes sense. School Districts are highly locally focused institutions with enough autonomy to make decisions for the good of their specific community without having to bow to fiscal mandates created by other, higher levels of government. While federal legislation has put some constraints on what school districts do through No Child Left Behind, the act recognizes that education has traditionally been a local endeavor and relegates most of the details of the legislation to the state and local level. In addition, the very nature of school districts means that they are interacting with a good proportion of their constituents on a daily basis. They are more likely to recognize the demographic and cultural change going on within their jurisdiction and because of this, would be more likely to respond more quickly than other forms of local government.

1.4 Conclusion

By analyzing school districts in the Midwest over the past 20 years, I evaluate the degree to which communicative planning is being used as a mechanism to gain knowledge of the preferences of residents. A situation such as the rapid ethnic change in the rural Midwest, demands a mechanism to understand the evolving preferences within the community. In the myth at the beginning of this chapter, Odin knew that the knowledge he gained in exchange for his eye was the true knowledge. We are not so lucky as to know the true preferences of a community but if many places are experiencing the same type of population change and they are successfully learning the evolving preferences, then I expect that they will change their fiscal policies in similar ways. I can then look at the school districts to see if the mechanism they are using is communicative planning.

Over the past 20 years, the rural Midwest has been experiencing just this type of change. Towns across this part of the country have seen their once very similar populations change dramatically with the in-migration of new Hispanic residents. The ethnic similarity of the Midwest prior to this change and the ethnic similarity of the new residents allows me to test this hypothesis. I focus on school districts because it is a form of government particularly likely to respond quickly to changes in the population.

I predict that the school districts' fiscal choices are changing in similar ways and that the districts are using communicative planning strategies to understand the preferences of the community. There are three other alternatives, though. School districts' choices could be changing in similar ways yet I could find that they are not employing communicative planning processes. In this case, there must be other mechanisms that are allowing the government to know the preferences of the community. It could also be that though school districts are using communicative processes, the districts' choices are not changing in

similar ways. I would conclude from this that the mechanism is not working as expected to reveal the preferences of the community. Finally, it is also possible that the school districts' choices are not changing in similar ways and the school districts are not employing a communicative process. I would conclude from this that either the districts are not interested in responding to the preferences of the community or that the mechanisms that they are using are not revealing preferences as they ought to be.

2. Communicative planning as a preference revelatory mechanism

The signers of the Declaration of Independence proclaimed that “Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed (Declaration of Ind.)” To govern, therefore, is to understand the preferences and needs of a community and to establish programs, structures and laws that meet those needs. In this dissertation, I am addressing the problem of discovering those preferences. However, as the quote suggests, the community and government do not exist in isolation of each other. Individuals influence the activities and institutions in a variety of ways and institutions play a role in the lives of individuals. The theory I am about to describe is largely based on Patsy Healey’s framework for collaborative planning (2006). This framework, which she calls an “institutionalist approach,” is based primarily on Anthony Giddens’ theory of structuration of society (1984) although I also draw on institutional economics (Amin 1999). It recognizes that both people and institutions are embedded in a culture that is particular to that time and place. A person is both a product of the lifestyles, norms, and values typical of that place and a creator, sustainer or challenger of them. In this sense, institutions are both formal, such as governments, and informal, such as social norms and interpersonal networks. Institutional economics tends to focus on the informal institutions as the impetus behind economic systems (Amin 1999). However, individuals are not driven solely by the context in which they find themselves but are a part of it, perpetuating or fighting against these institutions. They are acting in a world that is socially constructed. Therefore, while individuals are not driven by their context, neither can they be seen only as meeting individual preferences. Each individual is not only influenced by the socially constructed institutions but also complicit in sustaining them.

In this context, individuals cannot help but influence institutions and it would seem that there is little need for a mechanism that would reveal the preferences of the community to the institutions. However, whether we are talking about a formal institution or an informal one, it is not the mere presence of individuals that influence that institution but their actions. In addition, even in a democracy, there are differing levels of power held by each individual in any given situation. These actions and power struggles are precisely the means by which individuals impact institutions. For a formal institution, such as a local government, it may be desirable to institute a formal preference revelation mechanism to minimize the less desirable ways of influencing the institution, such as through monetary power, and maximize the more desirable ways, such as through dialog. There are a variety of mechanisms proposed in the literature specifically to determine the preferences of a community of individuals from various voting methods to empathetic comparisons.

Communicative planning is part of a larger emphasis in the planning literature on the importance of participation in government decision-making. Within this literature, the reasoning behind why it is

important is unclear. However, when viewed in light of the need for a government to understand the needs and preferences of the community, participation in general and communicative planning specifically, is a potentially effective means to achieve this goal. Healey (2006) goes some way in this direction by identifying communicative planning as part of the larger institutional framework. Sager (2007) brings the discussion of communicative planning fully into this debate by discussing how communicative planning can contribute to demand revealing schemes. The modifications he proposes to existing mechanisms involve using communicative planning, which through the involvement of many, diverse interests precludes some of the negative aspects such as rent-seeking and free-riding.

Just what communicative planning entails is up for debate. Sager (1994) describes the process in rational terms very similar to Habermas (1987). He focuses on how the process generates new knowledge and new conceptions of the problem. Healey (2006) focuses more on the social processes involved. Forester (1989), on the other hand talks about building consensus and the power planners and others inside the institution can wield in the process. Innes (1995) focuses on the important role of knowledge and the way knowledge changes through dialog. There are several themes that are common among these writings. First of all, they emphasize the necessity of involving a wide variety of people and groups. While their presence may not be sufficient to influence the decisions of governments, in most cases they would have no influence if they were absent. Second, the process must employ multiple types of knowledge. Even if an individual is present, if his or her knowledge is not valued and used, they will have little impact. Third, groups, alliances and identities must shift through the process. This is an indication that people are changing their conception of the issue. What may have begun as an us versus them situation can evolve into a more holistic understanding of the partners involved. Fourth, new knowledge and understanding must be formed through the process. This knowledge may become the basis for the formation of the groups but more importantly, it contributes to a reformulation of the issues allowing for more solutions than originally proposed.

In the context of local government, there are a limited number of ways the institution can express its power. It can pass laws that influence the ways people can act. It can also tax and spend the common revenue. Based on Musgrave's (1958) outline of the purposes of public finance, there are three primary ways to evaluate the taxing and spending of governments. The government can use the taxes to redistribute wealth. The graduated income tax system is an example of a policy that helps to accomplish this task. The government can also reallocate resources. Providing free public education is one instance of this. Finally, it can employ taxes to achieve economic stabilization and growth. To accomplish this aim, the government must invest the revenue from taxes better than individuals would have. An example of this is the provision of public goods such as power and sewer where it would cost the community more to

implement it in a private market than it does when it is done cooperatively. School districts face these questions no less than other forms of local government. A school district redistributes wealth when it decides whether to increase property taxes or seek revenue from state and federal sources. The very presence of public education is a redistribution of resources. Within education, decisions about the quantity of instructional staff and resources dedicated to other programs reflect decisions about how resources should be allocated. Finally, education is only one of many ways to invest tax revenue. The balance within a community between education, infrastructure and other public goods reflects the community's priorities for economic reinvestment.

Within an institutional theory of our social world, there are innumerable actors and institutions. The interplay between the two happens continually in subtle and overt ways. In this dissertation I am investigating the interaction between individuals in a community and the very formal institution of a local government. There are a variety of formal mechanisms that a local government can use to discover the preferences of the people in its jurisdiction. I focus on communicative planning as one mechanism by which this can happen. There are two primary tools a local government can use to shape the lives of individuals: taxing and spending. If individuals are having an impact on local governments through communicative methods, it should be reflected in these decisions.

2.1 An institutional perspective on social interactions

The larger theoretical model in which the interaction between local governments and residents takes place is an institutional theory of social interaction. I derived the outline of the theory and nomenclature from Healey (2006). She situates her discussion of communicative planning – or to use her words, collaborative planning – within this model. I also draw on the theory used by scholars of institutional economics. Amin (1999) posits three ideas central to institutional economics, that markets are socially constructed, that different relationships between actors and institutions result in different behavior and the economy is shaped by formal and informal institutions. Like Healey's (2006) conception of institutionalism, this description notes the socially constructed nature of institutions while at the same time acknowledging the power that those same institutions have in dictating the actions available to individuals.

The most valuable contribution made by Healey (2006) to the theory of communicative planning was to situate it within a broader institutional theory. She draws her theory primarily from Giddens (1984) who created the theory of the structuration of society. Giddens see us as inseparable from our social identity. It is constructed through our social relationships which are in turn structured by all of the social

relationships that have existed before. This highly structured process is both the means by which power relationships, lifestyles, rules, and habits are enforced and also the means to change them. “Thus managing our co-existence in shared spaces...becomes an exercise not merely in consensus-building but in local culture-building, and in creating the public realm. It is an interactive and discursive effort, through which new understandings and institutional capacities may be built.” (Healey 1997, 48). That institutions are socially constructed is not a new concept in itself. Following Giddens, Healey (1997) refocuses institutionalism on the individuals and the actions that create and sustain society.

Institutional economics has similarly focused on how institutions, both formal ones like laws and governments as well as informal ones like social conventions, shape economies. Hodgson (1998) defends this focus saying, “The fact that institutions typically portray a degree of invariance over long periods of time, and may outlast individuals, provides a reason for choosing institutions rather than individuals as a basic unit. Most institutions are temporally prior to the individuals that relate to them. We are all born into and socialized within a world of institutions” (172). This certainly makes sense if we are only studying what exists. However, to change institutions, one must understand how they come about, not just how they shape our economic and social world. Amin (1999) outlines a vision of institutionalism with a focus on shaping regional economies. The prescriptions for regional economic planning that he profiles are similar to communicative planning in that they focus on the development of dialog between formerly disparate groups that share common needs and goals or complimentary resources.

It is important to embed communicative planning within the institutionalist perspective because the aims of communicative planning are reflexive. Diverse voices and ideas must be involved in the process in order to influence the process itself. This concept of change and redefinition is an essential part of communicative planning. Healey (1997) calls it the process of meaning-making and points out that in the static language of preferences, this dynamism is lost. In addition, locating the communicative planning conversation within the body of institutionalist theory adds to our understanding of institutions and how we can change them.

2.2 Theories for determining public goods

There are innumerable ways that individuals might influence the formal institution of local government. Certainly money, social status and political power are possible means of controlling the decisions of local government. But in a democracy such as the United States where the declaration of independence proclaims that government is rooted in the consent of the governed, there is some expectation that all people have the ability to make their voices heard and contribute to the decisions

made by their government. Through their involvement, the government can make a decision that optimally benefits the community. What the optimal benefit is can be determined through the community's social utility curve.

Individuals derive a certain amount of utility from goods and services. For example, a gallon of milk has a certain amount of value and use to an individual. The relationship between the quantity of a good or service and the utility derived from it is called a utility curve. Social utility is the same concept except that instead of measuring the utility of one person, we are measuring the utility of the whole community together. Some theorists see social utility as a summation of individual utilities. To determine social utility in this context, one needs to employ a form of voting where people reveal their individual preferences and the tabulation of the results exposes the preferred good or service. There are some difficulties with this process. For example, in some contexts people have an incentive to obscure their true valuation of the public good so that they may obtain that good at a lower cost. There are schemes proposed to circumvent such deception (e.g., Tiebout 1956; Vickrey 1961). The most insidious problem, demonstrated by Arrow (1963), is that pair-wise voting on three options can yield a result that is not favored by the majority. Arrow (1963), Sen (1999) and others (Ritschl 1958[1931]) conclude that social utility is separate from individual utility and cannot be determined through a voting system based on individual utility. Instead, Arrow (1963) proposes that individuals have a utility curve for the community as well as for themselves and suggests focusing on the former. Sen (1999) argues that individuals do not create their utility curves in isolation of one another but through empathy. Determining a social utility curve using this conception is a considerably more complicated process than it is when social utility is assumed to be a sum of individuals' utility curves.

Determining the social utility curve has become essential to the provision of public goods. Early on researchers accepted the services provided by governments as determined by outside forces. Wagner (1958 [1883]) and von Stein (1958 [1885]) both attribute the existing public goods package to the historical, political and social conditions under which communities operate. Wicksell (1958 [1896]) challenged this and proposed that costs and public goods be defined jointly. This way there would be a link between the good and the utility of the good, as measured by the amount of taxes the community is willing to pay, to community members. Others have refined Wicksell's notion of determining public services based on voting (Lindahl 1958 [1919]), pricing schemes (Vickrey 1961; Clarke 1971; Groves and Ledyard 1977), or migration (Tiebout 1956). These revelatory mechanisms are built on the idea that public utility is a sum of individual utility and that individuals behave rationally. Therefore, if the majority favor a particular service, it is deemed to be in the public interest.

The most straight forward way to determine a social utility curve is to ask everyone what his or her preference is for a given public good and take the majority opinion. Wicksell (1958 [1883]), Lindahl (1958 [1919]) and those who built on their theories assume that each individual's utility curve takes into account all the individual's preferences whether rooted in a group or unique to that person. This assumption allows them to determine public goods through individually-focused mechanisms like voting. Wicksell (1958 [1896]) suggests that if people are allowed to bargain and vote on service packages that include both the expenditure and the means of taxation, then through a democratic process of debate, citizens can agree on packages that have the highest overall benefit for the community and the lowest cost or sacrifice. Lindahl (1958 [1919]) elaborates this principle further by stipulating that public utility is a sum of individual utility and that the price for the public goods are determined as joint goods are in a market.

There is a problem with this revelation mechanism, though. Samuelson (1954) highlights clearly what Wicksell mentioned much earlier, that the primary problem with demand revelation for public goods is that each actor has an incentive to understate his interest in the public good so that the cost burden falls disproportionately on the shoulders of the rest of the community. Each actor would prefer that the good be provided but that others pay for it. The provision of a public good depends not so much on what one individual pays but rather on what all others pay. Therefore in voting, in surveys or other revelatory mechanisms, the individual always has an advantage in undervaluing the public good under consideration. Samuelson does allow that voting may work under utopian conditions where there is no imbalance of power but under real world conditions, it is impossible to accurately price public goods.

Some theorists have proposed strategies to circumvent this. Tiebout's (1956) revelatory mechanism would work under a federal system of government where local governments have strong home-rule authority. In his theory people choose where to live based on the total package of taxation and expenditure. If a household values a certain type of service they will move to the area where they can obtain that service at the minimum cost. When everyone moves in this way, people are sorted geographically by their utility curves. Another possible revelatory mechanism was first proposed by Vickrey (1961) and later elaborated by Clarke (1971) and Groves and Ledyard (1977). The basic idea of these three papers is to separate the participant's stated preference from the share of the public good he or she gets. This is done by setting the cost schedule of the public good outside of the revelatory process. Then actors can reveal their preferences and the price they would pay is the marginal cost of the public good minus the marginal price everyone else is willing to pay. If an actor signals under his actual demand, he will receive less than his optimum of the public good. On the other hand, if he signals higher than his optimum he will end up paying for more of the good than he can use. The previous mechanisms for

determining the social utility curve assume that social utility is derived from individual utility. If this is not the case, voting may not be the best mechanism for social preference revelation.

Arrow (1963) demonstrates the possible disconnection between individual and social utility curves through an example first made by Condorcet in 1785 (Sen 1999) of three individuals that have the following preferences: the first person prefers A to B and B to C, the second person prefers B to C and C to A, and the third person prefers C to A and A to B. If they were to vote on their preference rankings in a series of pair-wise votes (between A and B and between B and C), we would find that a majority prefer A to B and B to C, therefore a majority prefers A to C. However that is not the case. A majority actually prefer C to A. Arrow points out that interpersonal comparisons of utility are not possible and therefore the social utility must be independent of individual utility curves. He concedes that in some circumstances where individual utility curves are sufficiently similar, it is possible to construct a social welfare curve from individual curves. However, when the individual utility curves are not sufficiently similar, Arrow offers two possible ways to construct a social welfare curve, though both he admits are flawed. The first assumes that people have two utility curves, an individual curve and a social utility curve. While social utility is not dependent on individuals' individual curves, it is dependent on their social utility curves. In the second method people are assumed to have utility curves for both the means and the ends of social choices. While the means curves may be substantially different between people, the social ends are likely to be much more similar.

Sen (1999) characterizes Arrow's work as a break-through that "invites engagement, rather than resignation" (365). Sen questions Arrow's conclusion that it is not possible to compare individual utility. He concludes that, contrary to social choice theory up to this point, there must be interpersonal comparisons of utility. "...It is difficult to see how people can understand anything much about other people's minds and feelings, without making some comparisons with their own minds and feelings" (Sen 1999, 358). He adds that the use of interpersonal comparisons allows for the inclusion of distributional equity in the analysis of public goods. This concept is not unlike Ritschl's (1958 [1931]) earlier conception of an independent social utility curve. He theorized that social utility could be determined through a community's leaders and individuals who are particularly in tune with the community spirit. This view of social utility is compatible with a Habermasian framework for social choice where the social utility for a particular good or service is determined not through a traditionally process of aggregating individual utilities but through communicative rationality. This form of rationality relies on dialog as the means by which truth is established.

Establishing a social utility curve through dialog is only a small step from Sen's understanding of social utility as an empathetic determination. The use of interpersonal comparisons in determining social utility is similar to the dialogical process that takes place in communicative rationality. In the context of local taxation and administration of education, the goal is to understand how people value the public good, education. Through understanding the nature of the curve, policy goals and strategies can be developed. The legitimacy of the result is dependent on the validity of the process. If the process of determining the social utility curve bows to powerful actors and ignores some groups with an interest in the issue, the social utility curve will be flawed. If, on the other hand, the process approaches the ideal communicative process, the social utility curve will be accurate.

2.3 Communicative planning and participation theory

Within planning theory, communicative planning has most often been discussed within the conversation about public participation in government processes. Since the middle of the 20th Century, the planning profession has been increasingly concerned with understanding the desires of community members through routes outside of voting. The purpose of involving the public in government decision-making through participatory activities has not been clearly stated as a means by which government can learn the preferences of the community and thereby institute responsive policies. Sager (2002, 2007) has suggested that communicative planning can contribute in this regard and other authors (Healey 2006, Forester 1999) have hinted that this may be a use of communicative action. However, the overall purpose of encouraging the community at large to participate in the process of decision-making in local governments remains murky. Many people who research public participation say that the involvement of community members results in "stronger plans" (Brody et al. 2003) or will improve the effectiveness of the plans (Godschalk and Mills 1966). Others note that the means is the end in itself, an essential process of an open democracy (Glass 1979, Laurian 2004, Brody et al. 2003). Putting the conversation about public participation into the conversation about the provision of public goods gives purpose to public participation and rescues the debate over revelatory mechanisms for the social utility curve from the doldrums of Arrow's (1963) argument that social utility cannot be known.

The debate about public participation began before the ideas from Habermas's (1987) theory of communicative rationality were incorporated into planning theory. In 1965, Davidoff wrote, "City planning is a means for determining policy. Appropriate policy in a democracy is determined through debate" (331). He advocates for planners to get involved in the political process of choosing a course of action, involving diverse voices, proposing multiple solutions, engaging their own value system and that

of the community. As one of the most frequently assigned readings in planning education programs (Klosterman 1992), it clearly has influenced planning thought over the past half-century. It was not a stretch for later scholars to incorporate Habermasian language into this theoretical framework.

In many ways Friedmann's (1987) writing about the complicated process of creating plans and carrying them out in *Planning and the Public Domain* set the stage for the incorporation of Habermasian themes into the pantheon of planning theory. In the first section of the first chapter of that book, Friedmann sets up a dichotomy of market rationality – where individuals act in their own self-interest, effectively a summation of individual utility curves – and social rationality – where individuals act in the interest of the community, effectively a separate utility curve based on preferences for the community at large. He claims that we are now operating in a hybrid situation where market rationality is allowed to reign but governments institute certain regulations that limit the damage that individuals acting in their own self-interest can inflict on others. In this era, he claims planners do not know what to do because they can no longer rely on the certainty of rationality and positivism. Knowledge is no longer concrete but fluid, valid only as it passes from one person into acceptance and reformulation by another.

As an answer to the preference revelation dilemma, communicative planning has the potential to work well. Several theorists even hint at it as a possibility. Sager (2007) sees the theory of public good provision is moving toward a deliberative model and suggests ways that communicative planning can contribute to both aligning the existing models with the ideals of communicative planning and reducing some of the distorting factors such as rent-seeking and free-ridership. Other scholars address the possibility of communicative planning as a revelatory mechanism less directly. It is generally seen as a part of a deliberative democracy (Forester 1989) with considerable description of how dialog is implemented in planning processes and how it could be. Healey (1997) focuses primarily on social relationships as the means by which communicative planning is implemented. Cutting across these theories are four major themes that give shape to a communicative process and set communicative planning apart from other revelatory mechanisms. The first among these themes is the participation of a diverse and representative set of the community. The second is the use of several types of knowledge from multiple sources. The third is the development of new associations, identities and groups. The fourth theme is the generation of new knowledge and understanding. These themes imply that conflict is central to communicative planning. Indeed, Sager (2007) in his modification of existing revelatory mechanisms, specifically suggests involving groups between which there will be conflict in order to reduce the likelihood of opportunistic behavior.

Over the years Sager (1994, 2002, 2007) has proposed amendments to several rational models to make them respond to the ideals of communicative planning. He has linked the debate about the process of determining public goods to communicative planning and proposed several modifications to existing voting schemes in order to bring them closer to the communicative ideal and to reduce distorting activities that can happen within the models. I propose taking communicative planning even further into the debate on public goods. I propose that communicative planning in and of itself is a revelatory mechanism. This is not a completely radical concept since it is often discussed as a part of a deliberative democracy (Forester 1999).

Forester (1989) relates a complicated world in which planners operate. Planners, he says, are functioning in a society in which, “the structure of the economy organizes autonomy and independence for some people, powerlessness and dependency for others” (3). Planners are obligated to work within political institutions to minimize this imbalance. They have the unique role of organizing information and shaping understanding and expectations. He exhorts planners that in order to be rational he or she must be political – an appeal to communicative rationality.

In her discussion of communicative planning, Healey (1997) focuses on the structure and social relations of groups involved in the process. This focus is similar to the focus of other revelatory mechanisms however, she does not portray it as a monodirectional, static process. Instead, she sees the forging of new connections between individuals and groups as one of the precursors to the generation of new knowledge. The creation of knowledge leads to change in the way individuals and groups understand the issue. She argues that this approach to planning, “...through its emphasis not merely on the interactive nature of governance processes but on the way social networks weave in and out of the formal institutions of government and develop governance mechanisms within themselves, and through the recognition that reasoning is a much wider activity than is captured in the model of technical-instrumental rationality and rational planning process” (Healey 1997, 205).

One of the themes that underpin communicative planning is the need to involve a diversity of people in the process. This theme emerges both explicitly (Sager 2007) and implicitly (Forester 1989) through the description of how planning processes are and should be carried out. This is also the minimum requirement that allow the other themes to happen in a communicative process. Just what makes a group of people diverse depends on the context in which the group is assembled. In some cases the meaningful form of diversity is by gender, race or ethnicity. In other cases, the meaningful form of diversity might be political views, occupation, or family background.

Another cross-cutting theme is the involvement of multiple forms of knowledge. This is the natural outgrowth of involving diverse people. In a situation where the government is orchestrating a participation process, it has the prerogative to decide whether scientific and technical knowledge is applicable or whether experiential knowledge of community members is valid in the process. “While there may be a reality or truth out there, it is hidden under the socially constructed understandings, theories, and assumptions shared in a society. These, in turn, embody an existing set of power relationships. Socially constructed concepts can colonize the lifeworld, blinding us to the deeper reality of our own experience” (Innes 1995, 186). A communicative process employs multiple ways of understanding the world and the issues at hand in order to achieve something close to the truth.

Communicative planning is a dynamic process. A process that approaches the ideal not only involves multiple types of people but those people change their identities and associations over the course of the process. These new associations form the basis for evolving institutions. For example, one community member may become involved in a dispute about a local park. This may lead her to attend city council meetings and neighborhood organization meetings. Her identity is shifting as simply a community member to a community organizer. Her neighbors begin to see her this way as well. When they find they are having issues with snowplowing on their street, they may complain to her first, expecting that she will be able to mobilize people and be better able to achieve their goals. This shift in identity is linked to a new group and a new way of operating in the neighborhood.

Identities and alliances are not the only dynamic elements in a communicative process. Knowledge is also changing. When multiple people with multiple types of knowledge come together and share their knowledge the result can be more than just a summary of all of the previous knowledge. Out of this exchange can come new ways of understanding the issues, new ways of framing them and new solutions. “In any conversation among experts these knowledge forms [rational technical reasoning, moral reasoning, and aesthetic expressive understanding] coexist and combine. The participants are actively involved in constructing and filtering understandings and valuings” (Healey 1992, 9). This mental negotiation is not confined to experts but is something that all people participating in the process do. The result is new understanding.

Healey (2006) nicely summarizes the hope for communicative planning. “A collaborative process...should be recognized by the involvement of multiple actors in new combinations and new arenas. They come together through recognising mutual dependencies. They are prepared to be power-equalising within their working practices, granting mutual respect and listening to other participants. They draw on and mix together experiential and ‘localised’ knowledge, with systematized scientific and

technical knowledge. They generate knowledge and power by collective learning and by mobilizing attention, and hence have the capacity to innovate” (332). It is clearly an ideal to strive for, not the natural situation. But none of the preference revelatory mechanisms are positivist models. They all recognize that preferences are unknown and a special mechanism is needed to reveal them. Communicative planning has potential to be a better mechanism than those based on individual preferences and voting because it not only strives to know the community but also to create and strengthen it.

2.4 Theories of Public finance

In order to test communicative planning as a mechanism for understanding the preferences of a community, there must be something around which preferences can form. One of the primary functions of local government is to tax and use that revenue to provide public goods. Public finance and the financing of schools in particular is not solely a technical problem that can be solved with one correct outcome. It must deal with cultural and political issues and with our notions of a good life and that, as Musgrave notes, “is its particular appeal” (2000, 3). Musgrave (1959) describes three reasons for taxation: 1) redistribution of wealth, 2) reallocation of resources, and 3) economic stabilization or growth. The oldest line of research is related to the first reason and aims to answer the question, What method of taxation will cause each person to sacrifice an equal amount no matter their income? This strand of theory focuses exclusively on taxation however others have developed theory on how to spend state revenues. The research related to the second purpose of taxation is answering the question, What services and how much of those services should be provided by the state? Wicksell (1958 [1896]) and Lindahl (1958 [1919]) both link spending to taxation and propose that the two be jointly determined. The third purpose is similar to the second in that it centers on spending but it focuses specifically on how the state contributes to the economy. If the state is drawing money out of the economy through taxes, it needs to reinvest it in a way that will stabilize or grow the economy. The question that is not addressed in fiscal theory is how to determine how much to tax or what to spend it on. Most fiscal theorists leave that question to other disciplines.

How to tax people is one of the oldest and most visited topics in public finance theory. The primary purpose of taxation according to Wagner (1958 [1883]) is to regulate the distribution of income. According to his theory, each person should be taxed so that the total sacrifice of each individual is equal. This means that wealthy individuals would be taxed more. The transfer of \$100 to the state by someone with an annual income of \$100,000 is a much smaller sacrifice than the transfer of \$100 by someone who makes \$10,000 a year. This is succinctly expressed by John Stewart Mill (quoted in Musgrave and

Peacock 1958) as “taxation according to ability to pay” (ix). Pigou (1928) articulated it more precisely, “In order to secure least aggregate sacrifice taxes should be so distributed that the marginal utility of the money paid in taxation is equal to all the players” (75-76). For someone who makes \$10,000 per year, perhaps all of their income is used for survival and a 5 percent tax (\$500) would mean going without some necessary items of food or shelter. That would be a much greater burden than a 5 percent tax on a person making \$100,000 a year. For this person, although they pay a good deal more in tax (\$5,000), the burden may not be as great since they will still have all of their essential needs met. However, if these two are taxed according to the marginal utility of their income, the person with an income of \$10,000 might be taxed at a rate of 1 percent (meaning he would pay \$100 to the state), while a person with an income of \$100,000 might be taxed at a rate of 5 percent, paying \$5,000 to the state.

Wagner (1958 [1883]) elaborates the principle still further by suggesting that it is not just that we want to tax people according to their ability to pay but we also want to tax people so that the total sacrifice for the whole community is minimized, although Wagner does not address how it should be minimized. The minimum sacrifice would, of course, be no sacrifice at all but we assume that there are certain functions that the will of the people obligates the state to carry out. Wagner says that the question of what those functions might be is outside of the theory of public finance and suggests that it belongs “...to the fundamental part of political or social economy” (14). Others, however, recognize that determining how much to tax is an essential part of public finance practice. Wicksell (1958 [1896]) points out that unless there is a way to determine what services the state is offering, there is no way to minimize the total sacrifice to achieve them. He rejects Wagner’s principle that every expenditure for which the cost is greater than the benefit should be rejected as too general. He adds that if you take the counterpart of this statement, that the state should fund everything for which the cost is less than the benefit, the state would “...almost necessarily lead to communism in the worst sense of the word...” (76). Wicksell proposes instead that that the expenditures and means of financing them be determined simultaneously so that the benefits of the services and the associated costs are tied.

The final function of public finance is economic stabilization or growth. Another way to look at this is as the government reinvesting potential capital in the economy. If the state is taking five percent of the total potential capital out of the market it needs to find a way to invest that back in the market that will at least equal the results had the money stayed in the private market. This is the major emphasis of von Stein (1958 [1885]). He has three principles of taxation that all point to this: the economic principle, the financial principle and the principle of public economy. The three principles build on each other. The economic principle states that there are three fundamentals in the economy: capital, income, and capital formation. The state can ultimately only tax income and income is the basis for capital formation.

Therefore, the state should not create such a burden on individuals that it prevents capital formation. The financial principle states that taxes should be no more than what is required to carry out state services, the process of taxation should not take up too much time and labor and from the time taxes are collected until they are spent on state services, the state should employ the funds in activities that contribute to economic growth. The final principle von Stein devotes the most space to. The principle of public economy says that the economic strength of the state is tied to the economic strength of the citizens that make it up. Therefore the state cannot focus solely on funding state services but must also “use its power to create the conditions which are the absolute prerequisite of the economic capacity which is the source of taxation” (von Stein 1958 [1885], 34).

2.5 Testing communicative planning as a tool to reveal community preferences

I attribute the limited number of tests of communicative planning to its vague purpose. If it is unclear what it should accomplish, how can tests be devised to evaluate whether it fulfills its obligations? In this research, I examine whether communities with similar cultural changes have made similar decisions and then examine them to discover whether communicative planning practices were employed. As there are no tests of communicative planning that shape the purpose in this way, this test is unique in planning literature. It is not, however, isolated. A better understanding of how governments incorporate community voices, particularly in a situation of ethnic and cultural change, and the effect of that dialog is a strong conversation within the planning literature.

Chaskin (2005) attributes the lack of a clear purpose for public participation to the conflicting logics of associational action and rational processes. On the one hand, associational action tends to reduce role differentiation and authority comes from the agreement of the group while rational processes that are common to governmental organizations employ a hierarchical power structure. In addition, the membership of associations tends to be fluid and indefinite while that of formal organizations tends to be clear and concrete. Another way to characterize these two groups is process-focused democratic action and ends-focused instrumental action. Studies of the results of the process are as diverse as the aims themselves. The diversity of the ways of conceiving of the purpose of communicative action or public participation means that it is difficult to draw any conclusions about the effectiveness or efficiency of communicative planning based on this literature.

I expand this diversity by suggesting that these processes achieve a goal different from those that have been previously proposed. Rather than suggesting that the process will result in “stronger plans”

(Brody et al. 2003) or that the process itself is the goal (Glass 1979; Laurian 2004), I propose a very concrete purpose – to reveal the preferences of the community. I have two hypotheses in this dissertation:

- H1. Among places where there has been a similar cultural change, the fiscal and administrative policies of governments change in a similar fashion.
- H2. In situations of dramatic cultural change, people reveal their preferences through a communicative process.

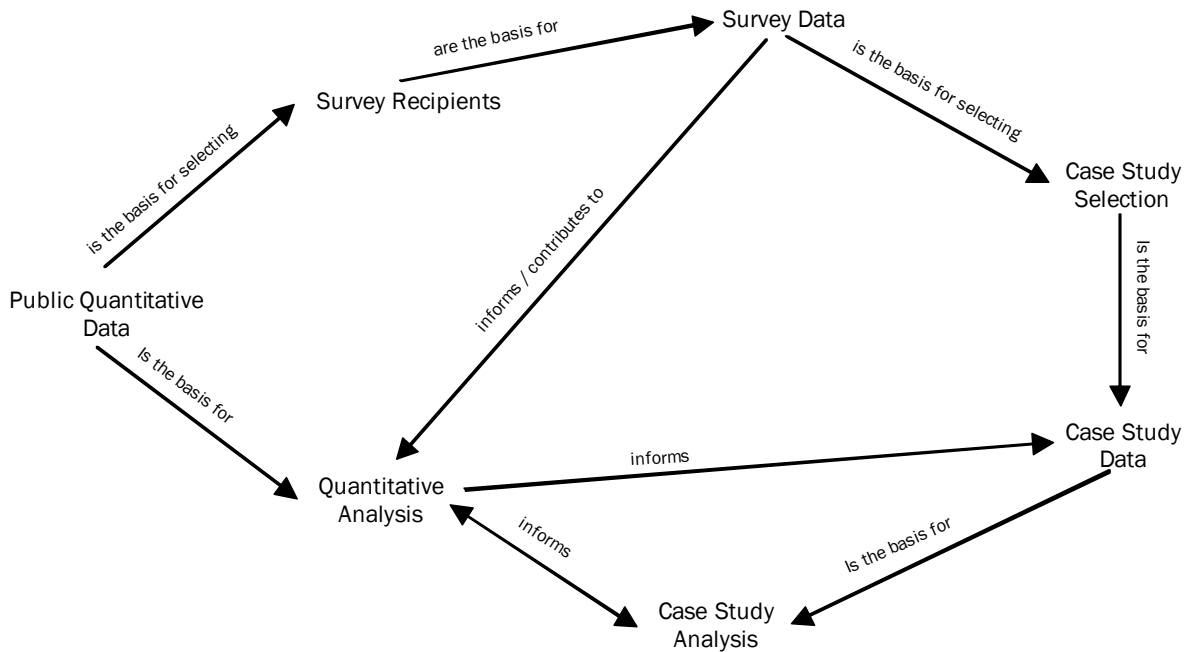
It is expected that places that are culturally similar, in the sense that they share similar ethnic, religious, familial, or experiential characteristics, will arrive at similar decisions. A culture is defined by the lifestyles, values and norms of the people who identify with it. These are the very factors that should be affecting government decisions. It is not merely by the presence of different people that these changes happen but through interaction. In a situation of dramatic cultural change, the government will have a difficult time discovering the preferences of the new community in particular without some type of revelatory mechanism. This is because many of the informal associations and identifications have yet to develop. Communicative planning is a potentially very useful mechanism because it can incorporate the voices of people in groups that have not previously been a part of the process because of lack of resources or knowledge. The critical question, however, is whether this mechanism is actually helping governments make more responsive decisions.

3. Research Design

The rural Midwest over the past 20 years has experienced a dramatic change in demographics. The Hispanic population across the U.S. has grown remarkably over this time but in the rural Midwest, the growth has been concentrated in a few towns. For the most part, these towns are attracting Hispanics through employment opportunities in food processing such as meat-packing (Grey and Woodrick 2002; Gozdziaik and Bump 2004; Parrado and Kandel 2008; Stull, Broadway and Griffith 1995), and other natural resource and manufacturing industries (Gozdziaik and Bump 2004; Hernández-León and Zúñiga 2000; Liaw and Frey 2007; McDaniel and Casanova 2003). This movement has not happened by accident but is the result of recruitment by employers and social networking through familial and geographic ties across state and national boundaries (Johnson-Webb 2002; Grey and Woodrick 2002). This situation provides an excellent context in which to test my hypothesis that communicative planning is helping local governments understand the preferences of a community. It may be impossible to know the preferences of a community with certainty (that is, after all, the problem we are trying to solve), however, if many independent places that share a similar ethnic and cultural make-up experience the same demographic change, it is likely that they will experience similar cultural tensions, similar demands from the new community, and ultimately make similar decisions based on the revealed preferences of the community.

To investigate the use of a communicative process by local governments to understand community preferences, I employ two methods to answer related questions. The unit of analysis I use is school districts. Among the forms of local government in the Midwest, school districts are most closely tied to their constituents, interacting with many of them on a daily basis. Because of these close ties, they are likely to notice and therefore respond to changes within the community much more quickly than other forms of local government. First, I want to know if the places that experienced the most dramatic demographic change had changed their fiscal and administrative policies in a manner that was significantly different from those places that had not experienced much change. To do this, I employed a quasi-experimental model where I matched the places with the most extreme demographic change with places that had very little change. Second, I wanted to know if these places that experienced a dramatic change in the Hispanic population were employing a communicative process. To do this, I studied four places in depth. For both methods I had the same sample frame – school districts in the Midwest. The sample of extreme cases I used in the quasi-experimental were those districts that had experienced the greatest increase in the Hispanic population as a percent of the total population between 1990 and 2000. I sent a survey by mail to this sample to get a general sense of the fiscal and administrative changes that had taken place and how the district involved the community in its decisions. Based on the responses to this survey, I then chose four cases to study.

Figure 3.1 Process model



The sequence of data collection and analysis began with defining the treatment group for the quasi-experimental stochastic model. The survey was then sent to these districts. Finally, the case studies were chosen from the responses to the survey. Although this was the basic sequence of the study, there was an opportunity to go back and revise earlier analyses so that each analysis was influenced by the findings of other methods (figure 3.1). The treatment group was defined in 2009, before the 2010 census data was released and is therefore based on the demographic change between 1990 and 2000.

The two methods, the quasi-experimental model and the case study model, each address different dimensions of the use of communicative planning as a tool to understand community preferences for fiscal and administrative policies. Taken together there are four possible outcomes (table 3.1). To confirm my hypothesis, the quasi-experimental model would show a significant difference in the fiscal and administrative policies between those places that experienced the ethnic and cultural change and those that did not. In addition, the case studies would demonstrate that the governments of these places are employing communicative planning to understand the preferences of the community regarding fiscal and administrative policies. Another outcome is that the quasi-experimental model is significant but the case studies show that the districts are not employing communicative planning. In this case, the conclusion I draw is that the places must be employing some other revelatory mechanism to understand community

Table 3.1 Possible outcomes

		effect of Hispanics on the fiscal and administrative policies (H1)	
		<i>Significant</i>	<i>Not significant</i>
communicative process (H2)	<i>Present</i>	Communicative planning is working effectively as a revelatory mechanism	Communicative planning is not an effective revelatory mechanism.
	<i>Absent</i>	The government is employing other revelatory mechanisms	The government is not employing any revelatory mechanisms effectively.

preferences about fiscal and administrative policies. I can also find the opposite, that the quasi-experimental model is not significant but that the districts are using communicative planning. I can conclude from these findings that communicative planning is not working as a mechanism to reveal community preferences for fiscal and administrative policies. The fourth option is that the quasi-experimental model is not significant and the case studies do not show that places employed communicative planning. The conclusion here is the negative of the hypothesis, places are not learning community preferences and they are not employing a communicative process. This conclusion is rather ambiguous because it does not suggest anything about the effectiveness of communicative planning as a revelatory mechanism and neither does it indicate how governments are responding to the changes in their populations. However, the nuances of a finding in this quadrant may shed light on why districts respond to ethnic and cultural changes the way that they do.

3.1 Sample frame

In this study, the Midwest refers to seven states: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri and Wisconsin. In 1990, among nonmetropolitan counties, the median percent of the population claiming to be white is 98.8 percent of the population of each county.² Most people reported European ancestry with the median level among counties at 76.3 percent.³ Across all nonmetropolitan counties the

² US Census Bureau. Legacy American Factfinder, 1990 Census, SF3, table P009.

³ US Census Bureau. Legacy American Factfinder, 1990 Census, SF3, table P033.

percent of the population born in a foreign country was 1.3 percent and the median level among counties was 0.7 percent.⁴ Of those that were born abroad, on average only 29.7 percent entered the US in the last 10 years and the median level was 16.7 percent.⁵ In fact, the vast majority of people in these nonmetropolitan counties were born in the Midwest. The median percent of the population born in the state that they currently reside in or another Midwestern state was 92.5 percent.⁶ It is clear that the people in these counties shared a very similar ethnic background in 1990.

Only 1.1 percent of the population (157,910) was Hispanic in these nonmetropolitan counties in 1990.⁷ By 2000, the population had more than doubled. Of those that had moved into the county in the past 5 years, 57.8 moved from outside the country and another 33.2 percent moved from a Western state. Within these rural towns, other scholars have shown that there is considerable homogeneity among the Hispanic population (Gozdziak and Bump 2004; Hernández-León and Zúñiga 2000; Liaw and Frey 2007; McDaniel and Casanova 2003) but it also appears that there is a homogeneity across these towns as well. This is important because to test whether a change in ethnicity and culture is having a uniform effect on the counties, there must be a reasonably uniform change in ethnicity and culture. It appears that there is.

The Midwest is an excellent sample frame for this study not only because of the uniformity in the initial population and within the population that migrated to the area, but also because the towns that were affected by this change, are relatively isolated. The ethnic change in towns and counties across the West is related to the changes in ethnicity in the towns and counties to the south and in the large metropolitan areas. In the West, a town can look to the demographic changes in its neighbors and anticipate the changes that will happen in their town. This is not the case in the rural Midwest. The towns here experienced the demographic change independent of the ethnic changes in surrounding towns. This is important because to if they had some warning the government could develop some informal mechanisms to understand community preferences before the change was in full swing. Since the changes are unexpected, the knowledge and understanding of the new community is limited and the government must implement some kind of formal mechanism to better understand community preferences.

The unit of analysis I use is school districts. I focus only on rural districts because they are subject to this unusual demographic pattern. Elementary and secondary education is an area of policy-making that is not often addressed in the field of planning. This is despite the fact that education comprises the largest share of local expenditure (King and Ramirez 1994) and is a primary motivation for

⁴ US Census Bureau. Legacy American Factfinder, 1990 Census, SF3, table P036.

⁵ US Census Bureau. Legacy American Factfinder, 1990 Census, SF3, table P036.

⁶ US Census Bureau. Legacy American Factfinder, 1990 Census, SF3, table P042.

⁷ US Census Bureau. Legacy American Factfinder, 1990 Census, SF3, table P011.

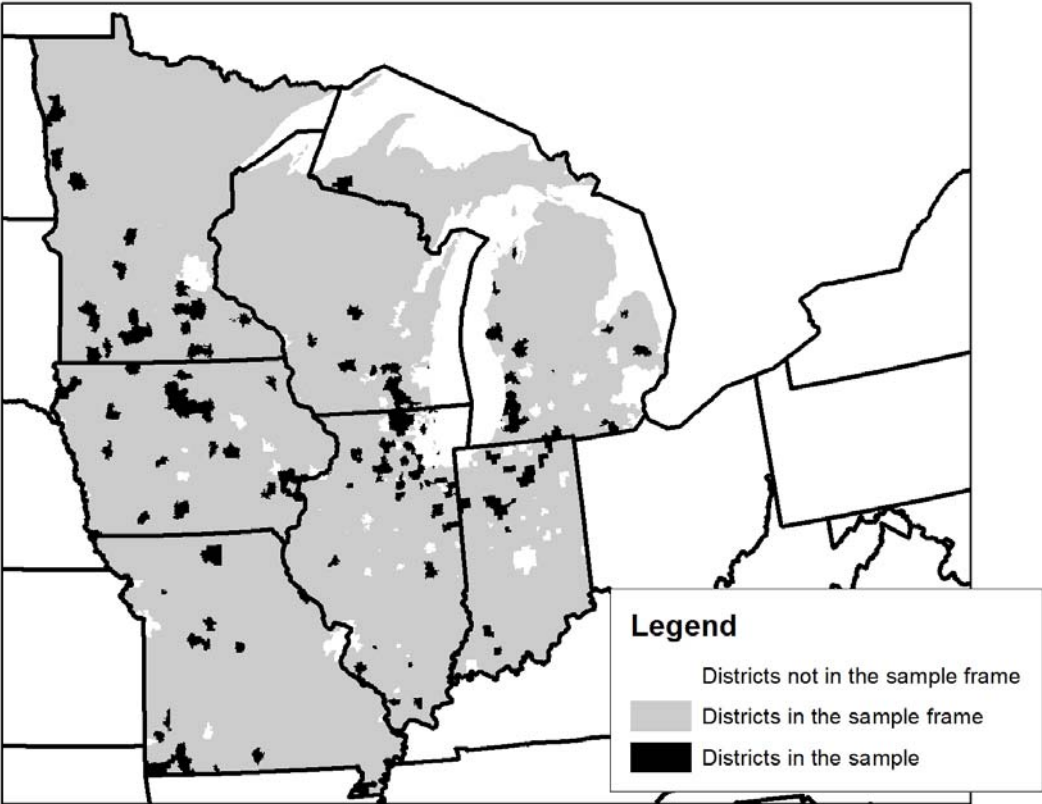
residential location (Roseman 1983). I focus on school districts in these small Midwestern towns because they are the form of government most likely to respond in a timely manner to the demographic and cultural changes. There are two reasons for this. First they have an unusually close relationship with many of their constituents. All residents of a school district are the constituents. In most places, roughly a third of those residents show up at the government office, the school, five days a week for the better part of nine months of the year. About another quarter communicate with the school at least two or three times a year in person at registration, parent-teacher conferences, and other district events. This is not including turnout at elections, school board meeting and other events. For most forms of government, the election, board meetings and community meetings are the primary means of communication with constituents. For school districts, they supplement the other modes of interaction. This close connection means that the school district is quite likely to notice cultural changes within its constituents.

I included all districts that had fewer than 500 people per square mile in 2000, the US Census Bureau's definition of a non-urbanized area. I chose to use the calculation for 2000 instead of 1990 because that eliminated many school districts that were urbanizing and would no longer be rural in 2000. After removing school districts that opened or closed between 1990 and 2000, there were 2,608 school districts in the seven Midwestern states in my sample frame. The cases in my sample are not distributed evenly across the seven states. Neither are the institutional characteristics of the seven states similar. In some states all school districts are unified, that is one district serves all grades. In other states, there are elementary and high school districts in addition to unified districts. The elementary school districts generally serve grades below eighth grade and the high school districts generally serve eighth grade and above, although sometimes the dividing grade is as low as sixth or as high as ninth. Where there are separate districts for elementary and high school grades, usually the combination of several elementary school districts makes up the geography of the high school district. For example, Smalltown High School District would have the same geographic coverage as the combination of Smalltown West Elementary School District and Smalltown East Elementary School District. In the sample frame I included all three types of school districts and the sample of 206 districts also contains all three types of school districts.

3.2 The sample

In my research I am focusing on the extreme cases of this demographic change. I am focusing on these cases because they are the places where a formal mechanism for understanding community preferences is needed because the unfamiliarity with the new community means that informal mechanisms based on social ties and common identity are difficult, if not impossible to implement.

Figure 3.2 All school districts in the sample frame with those in the sample highlighted



Within the sample frame of 2,608 school districts in the seven Midwestern states, I focus on a sample of 206 districts for the quasi-experimental analysis and the survey analysis (figure 3.2). These cases represent the outliers of the sample frame. From these 206 districts, I draw a sample of four districts to study more in depth. I based the case study sample on the results of a survey sent to all 206 of the districts in the sample. In selecting the cases, I tried to keep as many institutional factors constant across the cases and vary only the state economic character and the perceived involvement of the residents overall. I chose cases from the two extremes of state financial involvement with the assumption that these two extremes would reflect much different institutional factors under which the school district operated. Although I endeavored to choose the cases based on the perceived involvement of the residents overall, my perception proved to be misleading and this characteristic did not stratify the cases in any useful way.

The sample was defined as those districts where Hispanics as a percent of the total population increased by at least 2.5 percentage points between 1990 and 2000. The mean change was 0.83 and the standard deviation was 1.92 so 2.5 is slightly less than one standard deviation above the mean. This yielded a sample of 206 districts. It was necessary to create such a large sample to include many districts in each state. In addition, since I was planning to conduct a survey based on the sample and the cases

were to be drawn from the survey responses, I wanted to be sure to have enough in the sample so that there would be a variety of potential cases to choose from. Although the mean is 0.83, the median is 0.45 and the 206 cases in the sample are in the top 8 percent of all the school districts.

The survey was sent to all 206 districts in the sample. The primary intent of the survey was to identify school districts and events or programs within the districts to study in depth. The survey asked the respondent, in most cases the superintendent, to identify the most revolutionary changes in the district since 1990. It then asked about how those changes happened, who was involved in the process and the level of support for them. At the end of the survey, I asked if the district would be willing to participate as a case in my in-depth study of the change process. I sent 204 surveys. In one case, two districts in the sample were administered by the same superintendent and so I sent one survey asking for responses based on both districts. The other case was where both an elementary and high school district that shared the same boundaries were in my sample. In this case, I sent the survey only to the elementary school. I received 29 percent of the surveys sent. Of those about half were willing to be studied as cases of dramatic cultural change.

3.3 The survey and the selection of the four cases

The survey was conducted between November 8, 2010 and December 15, 2010. I addressed the survey to the superintendent of the school district. The names and addresses of the superintendents and school districts were recorded by the National Center for Educational Statistics in the Common Core of Data database. I indicated that they were welcome to pass the survey on to another person if they felt that he or she would be better able to answer the questions so the identity of the respondent was not known unless they wrote it on the survey.

The survey had 14 questions (Appendix B). The first four were intended to identify a particular change that took place within the district. Questions 5 through 7 were intended to understand the breadth of involvement by the community in the changes that took place. I intended to use questions 8 and 9 to identify cases that fell into particular categories of community involvement and successful implementation. Question 8 asked if any of the changes were controversial. I intended to use this question, in connection with question 6, which asked about specific groups that were involved, to gauge the extent to which the community was involved in the change process. The idea was that controversial changes will have more community involvement. Question nine asked if the changes, once they were implemented, were widely supported. I intended to use this question as a gauge of how successful the program was. Because there are differing ideas of what a successful program is, if it was supported, I

judged that the program was successful in the eyes of the community. Questions 10 through 12 were intended to check my assumptions about the person filling out the questionnaire. Finally questions 13 and 14 asked the respondent if the district would be willing to participate as a case and who a good person to contact about that would be.

I sent the survey with a letter explaining the purpose of the survey, how it contributes to my overall research plan and the importance of their response (Appendix B). I did not send any follow-up materials such as a reminder postcard or a second survey. Since the primary purpose of the survey was to identify potential cases, I judged that the utility in sending follow-up materials was minimal. Even if I boosted the overall response rate, it was likely that those later respondents would not be willing to be a case study. In addition, without follow-up materials, I had a response rate of 29 percent and a sufficient number of willing cases.

Table 3.2 Summary of survey responses

	sent	returned	case study willing
Illinois	61	26	13
Indiana	14	3	2
Iowa	29	9	5
Michigan	32	3	1
Minnesota	27	6	3
Missouri	23	5	2
Wisconsin	18	7	4

Of the 204 surveys sent to school districts in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri and Wisconsin, 59 were returned. Just under half of the responses came from school districts in Illinois. The response rate was highest in Illinois and Wisconsin (table 3.2). In choosing the cases for the case studies I was not only choosing a location but also a program to study. On the questionnaire, I asked the respondent what the most significant changes in the financing and administration of the school district over the past 20 years. My intention was to identify a program to study through this question. My assumption was that if the government was going to involve the new Hispanic population in its decision-making it would be around a decision that had a lot of import for the school district. However, I was disappointed in the answers. They tended to be very general. For example, one respondent wrote “The increasing debt of the state of IL,” and another wrote, “More Federal Grants & Programs.” A few listed specific referenda that passed or staffing changes. Most of the responses were not programs or events around which I could ask questions about the involvement of the community.

Instead, I investigated the districts that responded that they would be willing to participate as case studies to see if I could find programs that would work for this investigation. I looked for programs that were significant enough either because of the monetary size of the program budget in comparison to the school district’s overall budget or because of the potential impact it could have on the functioning of the school district. I also sought programs that would affect Hispanic students since the government would be

most likely to seek input from the community and the community would be most interested in being involved if the program was intended to affect them.

Question 8 and question 9 on the survey were intended to divide the events into four categories, those where the community was involved and they supported the changes, those where the community was involved and they did not support the changes, those where the community was not involved and they supported the changes and those where the community was not involved and they did not support the changes. For each question there were three levels of response. Question 9 asked “Once all of the changes were implemented, were they widely supported overall by parents, teachers, community members and others in the school district?” Respondents could choose “Yes,” “Somewhat,” or “No.” No respondents chose “No.” Question 8 asked “Of all the changes that were implemented, were any of them controversial?” Respondents were able to choose “Many of them,” “Some of them,” or “None of them.” About half of the respondents chose the middle option. The ambiguity of the responses to these questions made the metric for choosing cases meaningless. Instead of finding places where changes were supported and controversial or places where the changes were unsupported and not controversial, I found that in most places the changes were not really controversial and more or less supported. This could be due to the fact that the changes listed by the respondents were often vague.

Because the responses were so general and because they were not easily categorized, I looked for other criteria on which to choose the cases. One of the reasons I surveyed seven states instead of one or a smaller number is because there is considerable variation between states in the framework for school district finance and administration. One of the most obvious and easily measurable differences is in the amount of revenue that states contribute to local districts’ budgets. Across the nation, the amount states contributed to local school districts varied from 27.6 percent of the total revenue of school districts to 85.7 percent of the total revenue for school districts in the 2008-2009 school year.⁸ The state is the source for about half of school district revenue in most states. Within the seven Midwestern states I am studying, the variation is similar. Two states are at either end of the scale, Minnesota is the source of about 65.6 percent of school district revenue (the fifth highest in the nation) and Illinois is the source of about 27.6 percent of school district revenue (the lowest in the nation). The other five states are in the middle. This ranking is not a fluke but has been fairly consistent across time. In the 1989-1990 school year, for example, Illinois school districts derived about 32.9 percent of their revenue from the state and Minnesota derived 52.4 percent of its revenue. I chose to study cases in Illinois and Minnesota because they were at either end of the spectrum. I reasoned that this extreme difference in the approach to financing school

⁸ National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data, from the National Public Education Financial Survey (State Fiscal). The 2008-2009 school year is the most recent available data on school district finances.

districts was indicative of other institutional factors that could vary between states. If state context was a factor, I wanted to examine cases in the two most different state contexts.

I also attempted to choose the cases based on the level of overall involvement of the community however, it was difficult to ascertain and my judgments turned out to be wrong in the end. The surveys were not good indicators of this. I attempted to ascertain an overall level of involvement by community members based on newspaper accounts of happenings in the district and on school board materials such as board meeting minutes. This proved to be a flawed methodology. I chose four cases, two of which I judged to have high community involvement and two which I judged to have low community involvement. As I conducted the interviews in the school districts, I discovered that my pre-judgments were mistaken. Some of the districts did not have a local newspaper that routinely reported on school district activities. Some types of involvement are not covered in local papers, which tend to focus on public meetings and actions of the school board. Some of the involvement recorded in newspapers and school board minutes was superficial. In addition, because my pool of potential cases was limited in each state, I probably did not actually find extremes of involvement levels.

The two cases I have chosen in Minnesota I have called Rohan and Mayberry. The two cases in Illinois I have called Plum Creek and Avonlea. Within each case I selected one program to focus on. I tried to select similar programs that were somehow related to the performance or conduct of Hispanic students in the schools. This allowed me to hold as much constant as possible. In addition, most people only get involved in issues that are of interest to them so focusing on a program that could potentially impact Hispanic students allowed me to reasonably expect that Hispanic parents would be involved.

3.4 Description of the four cases

I chose to study a process in each of the four districts. In three of the districts, the process surrounded the awarding of money by the state to the school district to carry out some programming. In the fourth case, I set out to study a one-time Federal award of money however, it became clear that the potential impact on the Hispanic community was not large enough that it would be likely to attract their attention. Instead, at the suggestion of the superintendent, I focused on a process for rewriting the school's mission statement. The two grants I focused on in Minnesota were part of the same state program, Integration and Desegregation Revenue Program (often called Integration Aid). These were not competitive grants but pools of money that became available to districts that met certain requirements. In order to obtain the money, the district had to create a plan and budget for programs that fit the mission of the Integration Aid. In Plum Creek, the grant I focused on was a competitive grant that was awarded to

five districts the same year from a pool of money designated by the Federal government for improving students' test score in districts with a high level of poverty.

3.4.1 Plum Creek, Illinois

Plum Creek is a community of about 2,000 people⁹ in the Illinois River Valley on the banks of a large lake. Its largest employer is the school district and most people in town work in other parts of the valley. It has historically had a high level of new immigrants because a zinc smelting plant that closed in the 1970s drew people from Europe and Latin America for employment. Since it has closed, the community has shrunk. The ground and lake have been discovered to be highly contaminated due to the plant.

Although Plum Creek has had a Hispanic presence in the community for a long time, the size of the group rose dramatically from 29 percent of the population in 1990¹⁰ to 46 percent in 2000¹¹ and 55 percent in 2010.¹² Because of the high percentage of Hispanic students and the high percentage of children in poverty in the Plum Creek School District, the district was a prime candidate for the District Improvement Grants that the State awards to districts under the federal School Improvement Grant program. The purpose of the grant is to provide additional resources to Title I schools (those schools that qualify for federal aid due to high levels of poverty) that perform in the bottom 5 percent on state tests so that they might create programs that will improve students' scores.

Plum Creek applied for the grant in a competitive process in 2010 and was awarded the money for the 2010-11 school year and the following two school years. The grant is focused on a particularly low-performing school, not the entire district, but in Plum Creek there is only one school that houses kindergarten through grade 12. There were four other districts in Illinois that received grants for at least one school that year. The total grant for the three years was about \$4.5 million.

3.4.2 Avonlea, Illinois

Avonlea is a similarly small town with about 3,000 people.¹³ Unlike Plum Creek which is situated next to many other small towns, Avonlea, in Central Illinois is surrounded by farms. There are several employers in town including two light manufacturing plants. While employees at the two plants are not entirely Hispanic, they are the primary employers for the Hispanic community there.

⁹ US Census Bureau. New American Factfinder, 2010 Census, SF1, table QT-P10.

¹⁰ US Census Bureau. Legacy American Factfinder, 1990 Census, SF3, table P009.

¹¹ US Census Bureau. New American Factfinder, 2000 Census, SF1, table QT-P9.

¹² US Census Bureau. New American Factfinder, 2010 Census, SF1, table QT-P10.

¹³ US Census Bureau. New American Factfinder, 2010 Census, SF1, table QT-P10.

Avonlea has been diverse in its own way for most of its history. It has many Amish farms within the boundaries of the school district and is near one of the Amish centers in Illinois. The Hispanic community in Avonlea developed much later than in Plum Creek. The first Hispanic residents moved to the town from Mexico in the 1950s but in 1990, the Hispanic population was still only 6 percent of the total population.¹⁴ By 2000, that had increased to 20 percent¹⁵ and by 2010 it Hispanics made up 30 percent of the population.¹⁶

I intended to focus on the grant awarded to the district in 2010 through the federal Education Jobs program (PL 111-226). This money was awarded to states to distribute to school districts to help the districts maintain employment in their district in the wake of falling local tax revenue. The money was temporary and was only allowed to be used for salary and benefits of staff. The budget in Avonlea that year was balanced so the superintendent treated the money as though it were a grant. The impact of the money was not great enough to attract the attention of the community and the programs developed around the staff that was hired with the money did not have substantial significance for the Hispanic community. One of the requirements for a grant program to study in this case was that there were factors that would motivate the community, and particularly the Hispanic community to participate in the planning and execution of it. It quickly became apparent that that was not the case with the Education Jobs program revenue.

Instead, at the suggestion of the superintendent, I focused on a process the district had recently completed to rewrite their mission statement. Though this is not parallel to the other three cases in that it does not involve outside money, the superintendent felt that it was a policy change that involved the Hispanic community. Planning for the community meeting to rewrite the statement began in August of 2010. The meeting took place in October. The district solicited feedback on the mission and beliefs over the next few months and the school board discussed in the January, 2011. The final mission and a list of beliefs were officially adopted in February, 2011.

3.4.3 Rohan, Minnesota

Rohan is in Southern Minnesota. It is by far the largest of the districts I studied with about 25,000 people.¹⁷ The economy in Rohan is dominated by two meat-processing plants which have operated in the town for over 100 years. Employees in these plants have increasingly become Hispanic over the past 20 years and they are the primary employers for the Hispanic community. The growth of the Hispanic

¹⁴ US Census Bureau. Legacy American Factfinder, 1990 Census, SF3, table P009.

¹⁵ US Census Bureau. New American Factfinder, 2000 Census, SF1, table QT-P9.

¹⁶ US Census Bureau. New American Factfinder, 2010 Census, SF1, table QT-P10.

¹⁷ US Census Bureau. New American Factfinder, 2010 Census, SF1, table QT-P10.

community in Rohan began later than in either of the Illinois school districts. In 1990, less than 1 percent of the population was Hispanic.¹⁸ In 2000, the percent had grown to 6¹⁹ and by 2010, 15 percent of the population was Hispanic.²⁰

The grants I focus on in both of the towns in Minnesota were part of the same state program. The program, the Integration and Desegregation Revenue Program was set up to address the federal mandate that school desegregate. Schools and districts that have been found to intentionally segregate students must follow specific steps to desegregate. Schools and districts that are found to be segregated through no intention of the school district have the opportunity to work with other neighboring schools and districts to provide similar opportunities for students in protected groups (African/Black Americans, Asian/Pacific Americans, Chicano/Latino Americans, or American Indians/Alaskan Natives²¹) and for white students, to increase the contact between students of different backgrounds and to decrease the achievement gap between white students and those in protected groups. Although the money can be awarded based on a segregated school, for both of the cases in this study, the money was awarded because the district as a whole had more minority students than surrounding districts. The threshold that must be exceeded to qualify is 20 percent of the student body must be members of protected groups and the percent of the student population in protected groups in neighboring school districts must be 20 percentage points lower than the segregated or “racially isolated” district. In order to get the money, the school district must collaborate with the neighboring school districts to come up with a plan that addresses the goals of the program. They are given a year to do this. Each school board that passes the plan that the districts collaborated on is awarded the funds to carry out the programs.

Rohan began the planning process in the 2006-07 school year. They initially collaborated with just one neighboring school districts but other districts joined as they qualified (the size of Rohan’s group of students in protected groups kept growing while it did not grow in neighboring districts). They implemented the plan from the 2007-08 school year to the 2009-2010 school year. In 2009, they still qualified for the program so they went through another year long planning process during the 2009-10 school year and began implementing the second plan during the 2010-11 school year. The current grant will be in effect until the 2012-13 school year.

¹⁸ US Census Bureau. Legacy American Factfinder, 1990 Census, SF3, table P009.

¹⁹ US Census Bureau. New American Factfinder, 2000 Census, SF1, table QT-P9.

²⁰ US Census Bureau. New American Factfinder, 2010 Census, SF1, table QT-P10.

²¹ Minnesota Rules 2005, 3535.0110, subp. 4.

3.4.4 Mayberry, Minnesota

Mayberry is a similar size as Plum Creek, Illinois and Avonlea, Illinois with about 2,500 residents.²² It is a farming community with a pie factory in town as well as a vegetable processing plant. There is a large Hispanic migratory workforce that takes advantage of the seasonal nature of many of these jobs. However, as more stable, year-round employment is available, the workforce has become less migratory. Like Rohan, the jump in the Hispanic population occurred later than in either of the Illinois towns. In 1990, the percent of the population that was Hispanic was less than 1 percent.²³ In 2000, it was 10 percent²⁴ and in 2010, it was 21 percent.²⁵

Mayberry did not qualify for Integration Aid until 2010. In fact, they were not notified by the state on time of their eligibility. Instead, the superintendent discovered to oversight and asked the Minnesota Education Department about the status of the school district. This meant that the district didn't have the full year to plan for the revenue. Perhaps one of the reasons that the state overlooked the notification was that the department was in upheaval after a substantial change in legislative control. The change at the state legislature also impacted how the law was being interpreted by the Department of Education and moved the focus more toward reducing the achievement gap.

Over the course of the 2010-11 school year, the district met with its neighboring school districts to come up with a plan. Ultimately, only one of the neighboring districts' school boards passed the plan. This is similar to Rohan which only had one partner the first year as well. The 2011-12 school year is the first year of implementation and the grant will continue through the 2013-14 school year. Mayberry recently voted to merge with a neighboring district so it is not clear how the grant will be implemented after the consolidation takes place. The money allocated through this program is based on a per-student basis so the levels of funding for Rohan and Mayberry are similar relative to their different enrollment sizes.

3.5 Conclusion

The context of the rural Midwest over the past 20 years is an excellent situation in which to test my hypothesis that a communicative planning process is a mechanism to reveal the preferences of a community to the government. It is a good place because of the initial cultural similarity of people across the Midwest and the similarity of the cultural change that occurred in the towns. In addition, because this change occurred quickly, independently and without a spatial signal, there was little time for the

²² US Census Bureau. New American Factfinder, 2010 Census, SF1, table QT-P10.

²³ US Census Bureau. Legacy American Factfinder, 1990 Census, SF3, table P009.

²⁴ US Census Bureau. New American Factfinder, 2000 Census, SF1, table QT-P9.

²⁵ US Census Bureau. New American Factfinder, 2010 Census, SF1, table QT-P10.

governments to anticipate it and develop informal means of determining the communities' preferences. From this sample frame I draw a sample of extreme cases. I focus on school districts as my unit of analysis because school districts, while they share powers and structure similar to other forms of local government, are uniquely in touch with their constituents. The sample is 206 extreme cases where the increase in the Hispanic population as a percent of the total population was at least 5.5 times the median. I use this sample in the quasi-experimental model to test the hypothesis that governments experiencing similar cultural changes will make similar decisions based on the needs and preferences within the community. In addition, I used this sample to survey the districts about significant changes in the finances and administration of the school district over the past 20 years. Based on those responses and additional information about state finances and programs underway in the districts, I chose four cases to study. These cases are not only geographic but program-specific. I chose to study programs that would likely have a large impact on the district either because the budget for the program was quite large in relation to the school districts overall budget or because the program had the potential to alter some administrative functions of the district. In addition, I chose programs that would impact the Hispanic students and families. I used these characteristics because I wanted a program where the school district would benefit from knowing the preferences of the community and one where the community, particularly the new Hispanic community, would be interested in participating. These four cases are used to study the extent to which a communicative planning process was employed.

The two methods are not working in isolation but in concert. They each test a different dimension of the hypothesis that communicative planning reveals community preferences to a local government. There are four possible outcomes. If I find positive results for both methods, that the quasi-experimental model is significant and the case studies demonstrate the presence of communicative planning, my hypothesis is confirmed. There are three other outcomes, however. I could find a positive result for the quasi-experimental model but a negative result for the case studies. This indicates that the local governments are employing some sort of revelatory method but not communicative planning. I could also find a negative result for the quasi-experimental model but a positive result for the case studies which would indicate that a communicative process is being employed but it is not revealing the community's preferences. Finally, I could find negative results for both models. This would be a complete negation of my hypothesis but perhaps the most fruitful path for discovering the nuances of the implementation of a communicative process and the specific situations of the individual districts.

4. Fiscal and administrative differences between Hispanic boomtowns and other rural Midwest towns

I address the question of whether a cultural change within a community is related to changes in the decisions made by the local government with a quasi-experimental model of school districts in seven Midwestern states. Governments have two primary powers to implement their goals: taxation and legislation. As roughly half of all local revenue from property taxes goes to schools (GAO 1992), school districts clearly have taxing power and while they cannot mandate that all residents of their district obey their rules, they can mandate that parents and students follow them. In this experiment, I measure only changes in taxation and its corollary, spending, because data for these variables is public, easily traceable, and measurable. I address changes in rules in a more specific context through the case studies.

The hypothesis that I am testing is that a large change in the Hispanic population is related to changes in how the school district is financed and how it allocates revenue. To test this I used a quasi-experimental model. The 206 districts in the sample were the treatment group. These districts were in the top 8 percent of all districts in terms of the change in the Hispanic population as a proportion of the total population. I paired the districts in the treatment group with 206 districts that did not experience much change in the Hispanic population as a share of the total population (a change of less than half a percentage point in the Hispanic population as a percent of the total population). The paired districts were in other ways similar to the districts in the sample in 1990. I then tested to see if the two sets of districts were different on four variables that measure key fiscal choices of school districts. I chose the fiscal measures based on the three reasons for taxation listed by Musgrave (1959). I looked for changes in how the school district collects taxes, changes in how the district spends its revenue and changes in the overall public investment priorities of the community. I was not able to obtain all of the data necessary to measure this final variable. For the variables I was able to measure there was little difference between the case group and control group in 2008.

4.1 Formulating the quasi-experimental model

The quasi-experimental model I use was modeled on the method refined and popularized by Terrance Rephann and Andrew Isserman in a series of papers exploring the economic implications of the Appalachian Regional Commission (Isserman and Rephann 1995; Rephann and Isserman 1994; Isserman and Rephann 1993). In an experimental model, there are two identical test groups, one receives the treatment and one does not. In all other ways the two groups are treated the same. In research of actual people and places it is not possible to randomly administer the treatment the way one would in a

controlled laboratory environment. In a quasi-experimental design, the researcher observes that some places have received the treatment and then tries to match those places with other places that were similar but did not receive the treatment.

In this study, the treatment is the migration of Hispanics to rural Midwest towns. I define the treatment group as those districts where the increase in the Hispanic population as a percent of the total population was at least 2.5 percentage points for all rural Midwest school districts. The potential matches for the 206 school districts in my sample are all of the other districts in my sample frame where the Hispanic population as a percent of the total population changed by half a percentage point or less. If the Hispanic population in 1990 was 1 percent of the total population, in 2000 the Hispanic population was between 0.5 percent and 1.5 percent if it was considered a control county and over 3.5 percent if it was a case county. I matched the treatment and control groups based on 14 variables related to demographic, economic, and institutional characteristics of the school districts in 1990. I tested these matched sets using an ANOVA model to see if there were any differences in four measures of fiscal choices of the school district. I also tested the difference between the treatment and control groups on all four variables together using a MANOVA model.

4.1.1 Matching

There are many ways to match case and control units. Two of the most popular are propensity matching, used primarily in economics, and Mahalanobis matching, used primarily in regional science and policy fields. Propensity matching is based on a predicted probability that the treatment will occur due to a number of potential causes (Warren 2008). To construct a propensity score in this study, a researcher would generate the probability that the Hispanic population as a percent of the total population increased by at least 2.5 percentage points based on some initial characteristics of the school districts such as demographics and the presence of certain industries. Then the researcher would match cases in the treatment group with potential control cases based on the similarity of their propensity scores. The disadvantage of this method is that the matching is based on only one score so the treatment and control cases may not actually be very similar, only have a similar score. Mahalanobis matching, on the other hand, gives equal weight to each case by standardizing each of the variables used in the matching procedure and calculating the difference in the sums. Therefore, the treatment and control cases are more similar to one another based on the variables they have been matched on than under a propensity matching system. This is particularly important in this research as some of the underlying characteristics of the school districts may affect not only migration patterns but also fiscal and administrative decisions.

Because Mahalanobis matching gives equal weight to each variable, the variables selected determine the quality of the match. If several variables that measure the same phenomenon are included, then there is undue weight given to that characteristic. If measures of an important factor are left out of the matching formula, that attribute will, of course, not be captured. I matched the 206 cases to an equal number of controls based on 12 variables. I wanted to match the treatment school districts to other school districts in the Midwest that shared similar economic and demographic characteristics in 1990. In addition to these 12 variables, I recognized that the institutional setting for these districts played an important role in the fiscal and administrative decisions. I constrained the potential matches for each treatment case to only those potential controls within the same state and of the same district type (elementary, high school, or unified). This totaled 14 variables on which the treatment and control cases were matched (table 4.1).

I based the selection of the variables on several studies of the factors that have influenced the movement of Hispanics to rural towns in the Midwest and South (Liaw and Frey 2007; Gozdziaik and Bump 2004; McDaniel and Casanova 2003; Kandel and Cromartie 2004; Grey and Woorick 2002; Johnson-Webb 2002; Hernández-León and Zúñiga 2000; Grey 1995; Griffith 1995). Since it is unclear whether social or economic factors are the driver of the location decisions, I split the variables fairly evenly between the two types of factors. In addition, I included the voting results from the 1988 and 1992 presidential elections to account for many of the non-measurable social factors in the school districts. Although 1992 is after 1990, the year of the data for the dependent variable, it still precedes the Hispanic boom in the vast majority of the places considered. By including both the results from 1988 and 1992, the two years that George H.W. Bush ran for office, it reveals some of nuance in the opinions of people in the school districts because the results of the elections in the counties tended to change markedly between the two elections. The electoral votes in four of the states went to Bush in 1988 while only Indiana cast its electoral votes for Bush in 1992. The voting results and several of the economic variables are only available at the county level. However, in the seven states studied, counties are small enough that there are only a few districts within each one.

The 1990 Decennial Census is the source for the demographic variables. The demographic data are released by school district through the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) in their School District Demographics System (SDDS). Additionally, NCES conducts five surveys which it compiles and releases through the Common Core of Data (CCD). One of the surveys included in the CCD is the State Nonfiscal Public Elementary/Secondary Education Survey that I rely on for enrollment data and other school district characteristics.

Table 4.1 Variables used for matching

Variable Name	Variable Description	Minimum	Median	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation	Source
<i>Demographic</i>							
ENROLL	Number of children enrolled in the school district during the 1989-90 school year. (does not include children attending private school)	7	794	16,983	1,236.7	1,421.2	CCD
SPA	Percent of the population speaking Spanish in 1990	0	0.76	17.08	0.98	1.08	SDDS
OTH	Percent of the population speaking other languages in 1990	0	1.89	55.20	2.63	2.95	SDDS
HHwKID	Percent of households with at least one child in 1990.	16.67	38.15	65.78	38.24	5.90	SDDS
HSnMORE	Percent of people age 25 and over with at least a high school degree in 1990.	35.90	87.96	100.00	86.58	7.38	SDDS
VOTE88	Percent of voters in the county in which the school district is located who voted for Bush in the 1988 presidential election.	22.00	54.41	80.36	54.33	8.13	USEA
VOTE92	Percent of voters in the county in which the school district is located who voted for Bush in the 1992 presidential election.	18.43	36.31	72.21	36.39	6.16	USEA
<i>Economic</i>							
HHINC	Median household income in 1989	9,142	25,107	87,838	26,489.4	7,522.4	SDDS
FOODmfg	number of people employed in food manufacturing in the county in which the school district is situated in 1990.	12	2,453	477,360	6,790.5	17,982.0	CBP
AGserv	number of people employed in agricultural services in the county in which the district is situated in 1990.	1	43	5,808	123.4	307.9	CBP
UNEMP	The annual unemployment rate for the county in which the school district is located in 1990.	2.0	5.9	16.5	6.2	2.4	BEA
POV	The percent of people under 18 in poverty in 1989.	0	13.84	68.89	15.27	9.19	SDDS
<i>Institutional</i>							
TYPE	The type of district: unified, elementary, or high school	--	--	--	--	--	CCD
STATE	The state in which the school district is located	--	--	--	--	--	CCD

SDDS: National Center for Educational Statistics School District Demographics System. The SDDS is an aggregation of Census and ACS data at the school district level.

CCD: National Center for Education Statistics Common Core of Data. An aggregation of several surveys reporting on characteristics of schools and school districts.

BEA: data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis Local Area Personal Income and Employment Statistics

USEA: The US Election Atlas, a compilation of election results by county

CBP: County Business Patterns

I matched the cases and controls using the Mahalanobis matching method. This is a type of multivariate matching method that balances many variables across cases and controls. For each case-control pair, the shortest distance is calculated using the Mahalanobis distance metric. This metric scales the variables by its standard deviation so each exerts the same influence on the final match (Warren 2008). Formally, the metric is calculated:

$$d^2 (X_A, X_B) = (X_A - X_B)^T \Sigma^{-1} (X_A - X_B) \quad (4.1)$$

Where X_A is the vector of variables for the treatment group and X_B is the vector of variables for the control group, and Σ^{-1} is the variance-covariance matrix across all possible units.

4.1.2 Measures of Dependent Variables

I compare the treatment and control districts on five dependent variables representative of the types of fiscal and administrative decisions governments must make in financing public goods. These decisions are based on Musgrave's (1959) three reasons for taxation: the redistribution of wealth (changes in how the district taxes), the reallocation of resources (changes in how the district spends), and economic stabilization and growth (changes in the relative priorities of government functions). The time period over which I measure the change in the Hispanic population is from 1990 to 2000. It was after the 2000 Census tables began to be published that people took notice of the demographic shift across the Midwest. The trend has continued since then and so I test the difference between the matched pairs of districts using the

Table 4.2 Summary of dependent variables

Variable Name	Variable Description	School Year	Minimum	Median	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation	Source
LOC	Local revenue per 1000 students	1989-1990	17.78	1,743.72	46,629.63	1,962.53	1,504.30	CCD & CoG
		2007-2008	466.67	4,215.65	35,333.33	4,716.23	2,783.96	
PROP	Percent of total revenue coming from property taxes	1989-1990	0.10	18.53	48.74	19.24	9.74	CoG
		2007-2008	0.02	28.87	89.53	31.52	15.24	
EFRT	Local revenue per \$10,000 personal income	1989-1990	0.00	0.26	1.66	0.27	0.17	SDDS & CoG
		2007-2008	0.08	0.36	5.24	0.39	0.30	
INST	Percent of expenditures for wages, salaries and benefits going toward instructional staff	1989-1990	42.49	70.11	97.78	69.99	4.61	CoG
		2007-2008	40.77	69.92	100.00	69.70	4.50	
TEAC	The ratio of students to teachers	1989-1990	5.80	15.72	33.25	15.64	2.73	CCD
		2007-2008	2.94	14.68	33.77	14.85	3.44	

CCD: National Center for Education Statistics Common Core of Data. An aggregation of several surveys reporting on characteristics of schools and school districts.

CoG: Census of Governments, Public Education Finances

SDDS: School District Demographic System. A compilation of Census and ACS statistics for school districts.

latest available data on school district finances, 2008. The Annual Government Finance Survey covers fiscal variables for school districts. I accessed the Annual Government Finance Survey for 1990 and 2008 through the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR).

I discussed several mechanisms for individuals to influence government in Chapter 2. Most of these are not easily measurable, with the obvious exception of public finance and public goods variables. Musgrave (1959) describes three reasons for taxation: 1) redistribution of wealth, 2) reallocation of resources, and 3) economic stabilization or growth. In terms of measurement, these represent measures of taxation, measures of spending, and measures of reinvestment in the economy. As the norms, expectations, values and worldviews in a population change, opinions about government service priorities can change. I expect those opinions will be reflected in the choices regarding taxation levels, spending priorities and the allocation of resources among public goods.

The dependent variables include measures of the change in taxation (table 4.2): the local revenue per pupil for the school district (LOC), the local tax revenue as a percent of all revenue for the school district (PROP), and the amount of local revenue for every \$10,000 of personal income made by people residing in the school district (ERFT). I include two measures of the change in spending: the change in spending on instruction as a percent of all spending (INST) and the change in the teacher-pupil ratio (TEAC). Finally, I endeavored to measure the change in reinvestment in the economy by the change in the portion of all local revenues going toward education. However, to construct this measure, I required a map of school district boundaries in 1990 and 2008. I was unable to find such a map for 1990 that was able to be converted into a shapefile that could be read by ArcGIS.

Not only are these variables indicative of the reasons for taxation, they are also variables that are likely to be impacted by an increase in the Hispanic population. Federal funding is tied primarily to two characteristics of the school district: the number of children in poverty and the number of children needing special English language instruction. Both of these characteristics are often tied to immigrant Hispanic populations. Regardless of whether the new Hispanic population was involved in the process, the school districts with a large increase in the Hispanic population were likely to have more money available from outside sources which may or may not affect how much they choose to fund education from local sources. For the spending variables, both of these variables are often related to families and children that need additional services. On the one hand, class sizes may become larger as enrolment levels rise rapidly. On the other hand, they may shrink because of the additional instructional staff needed for English language classes, which tend to be small. The percent of spending on instruction may change as school districts find they need more staff to support social services for students and their families. Or,

again, with the increase in instructional staff for English language classes, there may be an increase in the proportionate spending on for instructional salaries.

4.1.3 Evaluation of the matches

The closeness of the matches is vital to the experiment. To test the closeness of the match it is necessary not only to test whether there is a systematic difference between the case units and control units before the treatment but also to test whether there is a systematic difference between the case units and randomly selected control units (Reed and Rogers 2003). In other words, are the matched control units more like the case units than randomly assigned control units? If they are more like the case units then there is a good indication that the matching was beneficial.

Table 4.3 Similarity of cases and controls under a random match and a purposeful match.

	random match	Mahalanobis match
LOC	^	--
PROP	*	--
EFRT	--	--
INST	--	--
TEAC	*	--
<i>manova</i>	***	--

*** significant at the 0.0001 level, ** significant at the 0.001 level, * significant at the 0.01 level, ^ significant at the 0.05 level, -- not significant

I compared the treatment group with the controls method using the Mahalanobis method and randomly matched controls. This allows me to see if there are significant differences between the cases and controls at the beginning of the period. I expect to find that the purposefully matched sets have fewer significant differences than a randomly matched set. I found that the treatment group in the purposefully matched set were slightly significantly different from the controls on some of the dependent variables (table 4.3). Bartlett's test for heteroskedacity in ANOVA models showed that LOC and EFRT were heteroskedastic in 1990. Bartlett's test can be sensitive to non-normal distributions so I also employed Levene's test, which is less sensitive (NIST 2012). It showed that all of the variables were homoskedastic in 1990. A non uniform distribution can make variables appear significant when, in actuality there is little significance. Even if that were the case for this model, the difference between the cases and controls is only barely significant. Taking the log of these variables, which is one way to deal with a non-normal distribution, does not improve the significance of the difference between the treatment and control groups. The MANOVA, which takes into account all five variables at once, was also slightly significant.

4.2 The test

I use an ANOVA model to test whether the means of the five dependent variables for the case and control groups are different in 2008 and whether the mean change in the four dependent variables

between 1990 and 2008 are difference for the cases and controls. I find that there is little significant difference between the cases and controls over this time period. This is surprising because federal revenue for school districts is tied to things that are often related to the increase in the Hispanic population such as students requiring English language services and students in living poverty.

None of the variables showed a significant difference between the treatment group and the control group. A comparison of the means for the two groups shows that they are very similar for the variables. As in 1990, Barlett's test for heteroskedacity showed that EFRT was not homoskedastic in 2008. However, also as in 1990, Levene's test showed that all of the variables are homoskedastic in 2008. In addition, the MANOVA was not significant indicating that when the five dependent variables are taken together, there is no difference between the treatment group and the control group. I conclude that, though slightly significant in the model, this variable is not really different in practice.

Table 4.4 Results of a test for the difference between treatments and controls in 2008

	case mean	control mean	significance
LOC	4782	4983	--
PROP	33.2	33.2	--
EFRT	0.373	0.408	--
INST	70.3	71	--
TEAC	15.57	15.39	--
<i>manova</i>			--

*** significant at the 0.0001 level, ** significant at the 0.001 level, * significant at the 0.01 level, ^ significant at the 0.05 level, -- not significant

My hypothesis was that when there is a dramatic cultural change, we should also observe changes in the choices of the government. I operationalized this by matching school districts with an unusually high change in the Hispanic population with districts that had very little change in the Hispanic population. I then tested to see if the difference in the means of the two groups on five fiscal variables was different after the increase in the Hispanic population occurred. I found that there was little difference between the two groups at the end of the period. There are two primary ways that this model could be improved. First, by improving the choice and measurement of the dependent variables and second by expanding the list of matching variables.

These measures of fiscal and administrative policies are fairly narrow. For example, the changes may be that school districts do not alter the level of funding for extracurricular activities in terms of the amount of money dedicated for staff, but the district may change the focus of the activities to something that the new community desires. For example, the school district may make soccer the dominant fall sport for boys instead of football. Such a change would not be reflected in these data. However, much of school funding is tied to specific populations and programs. Federal dollars are tied primarily to the number of

English language learners and the level of poverty in the district. The method of distribution of state money varies by state but is often based on demographic and programmatic considerations. I expected that these changes would be reflected in the fiscal variables I tested.

It may be that not all of the critical factors were taken into account in the matching of the districts. There were no measures of involvement by residents in 1990. A district that already has a lot of involvement by community members may be better prepared to involve the new residents as well. There are also no measures of the institutional arrangements of the schools other than the type of school district (elementary, secondary or unified) and the state the district is in. There may be some institutional arrangements that predispose districts to be welcoming to new community members or to involve community members more. It is unclear which additional measures would be good to include or if those measures are attainable for all of the districts in my sample frame.

Since I cannot improve the model in the ways I outline at this point, I conclude that there is no difference between the districts with rapid Hispanic growth and the districts with no change in the Hispanic population as a percent of the total population. Therefore, on average, the new Hispanic residents are not having an impact on the fiscal and administrative policies of the school districts in the Midwest.

4.3 Conclusion

School districts are employing some conventional preference revealing mechanisms such as voting for school board members and voting on the occasional tax levy referendum. Based on the results of this model these votes are clearly not transmitting the changing cultural preferences to the policy makers. However, I do not know if the communities are employing other preference revealing mechanisms to try to understand the community's needs and desires. If a government takes the mandate in the declaration of independence seriously and recognizes that its legitimacy derives from the consent of the governed, then it must look to mechanisms other than voting which has proven problematic as a preference revelatory mechanism. If it is also employing additional mechanisms to understand community preferences and still unable to be responsive to the changing needs and desires of the community, perhaps the mechanisms are not working or the school district is not responding to the revealed preferences.

Within structuration theory, communicative planning and other preference revealing mechanisms are a part of the institutional arrangement that influences how individuals interact with the school district and what constitutes valid input by community members. This puts a considerable amount of power into

the hands of those in the school district administration and the school board. There have been examples of individuals rejecting the established modes of communication and choosing to communicate with the school district through a mode of their choosing (Miraftab and Diaz McConnell 2008), however, stepping outside of the bounds like this is unusual. In a communicative process, some of that power should be transferred to the community empowering them to influence the decision-making process.

The fact that the difference between the treatment group and the control group was not significant indicates that whatever the preference revealing mechanisms that the school district is employing (if they are employing any) are not effectively revealing the preferences of the community or, if they are, policy-makers are not responding to those preferences in formulating policy. The next step in this analysis is to investigate whether and how the new Hispanic residents are engaging with the school district to influence policy decisions.

5. Implementation of a communicative process

In a representative democracy we typically think that people reveal their preferences for public goods through voting: voting on referenda, voting for political offices, or even “voting with our feet” as Tiebout (1956) describes. However, there are several problems with this assumption. As Arrow (1963) points out, these individual preferences taken together may be completely illogical for a community. In addition, people may have separate preferences for themselves as individuals than they do for the community they live in. One way to address these issues is to determine community preferences, not through a voting system but through dialog. A communicative process as described by Healey (1997), Innes (1990), and Forrester (1989) is a dialogic process that has the potential to meet the goal of governments to accurately understand community preferences. In places where people are demographically quite similar, it is likely that preferences are quite similar and less dialog would be needed. But in places where demographics have changed dramatically over a short period of time, this dialog would be essential to understand how community preferences have also changed. In this chapter, I evaluate my hypothesis that in a situation of dramatic cultural change, people reveal their preferences through a communicative process. I base this evaluation on the four cases I studied in Minnesota and Illinois.

For each case I assess the degree to which a communicative process was implemented. I chart how thoroughly each of the four themes discussed in the literature review are implemented in the four grant processes studied. The four themes are 1) the presence of a diversity of people; 2) the use of a variety of types of knowledge; 3) changes in identity and associations over the course of the planning process or as a result of it; and 4) the creation of new knowledge and understanding on which to base the decisions. To discover these themes I implement an interview protocol similar to the one used by Kimbrough (1964). I begin by interviewing people who are central to the process and ask them for recommendations of other people I should speak to. In the interviews I ask people about their role in the process, the role of other people and how the process changed over the course of their involvement. I find that in three of the four school districts, the processes are missing too many of the elements of a communicative process to be called successful in that regard. In the fourth case, more of the elements are present. Overall, I conclude that districts are not employing a communicative planning process.

5.1 How the data were collected

The case studies are based primarily on interviews with people who were involved in making the changes or opposing them. The list of potential interviewees was developed based on official records,

interactions with school administrators and recommendations made by other interviewees. The interviews were semi-structured with two parts (see Appendix A for a copy of the interview protocol). I began the interview with a list of questions tailored to the district and individual but focused on the description of the grant process, the role of the interviewee, their perceived involvement of others, and the role that knowledge played in the process. In my questions, I focused on the points in the process where ideas or actions altered course. This could be because of the entrance of a new group, a change in the ground rules, a new alliance, or for other reasons. This part of the interview determined the extent to which three elements of a communicative process were met: the use of a variety of types of knowledge, changes in identity and association over the course of the process and the creation of new knowledge or understanding that informed the process. The second part of the interview allowed me to evaluate the degree to which the other element was met, the presence of a variety of people. This part of the interview was usually the last 10 minutes or so of the conversation. First, I asked the interviewee to name organizations that were involved in the policy change. Second I asked the interviewee to name other people that were influential.

5.1.1 How the interviewees were determined

A study with a similar methodology was carried out by Johns and Kimbrough (1968) with 24 school districts to create a typology of community power structure and educational leadership. They related this typology of power to the “financial effort,” the ratio of revenue from local taxes to personal income, of the school districts and found those with a monolithic power structure tended to have less financial effort and those with an egalitarian leadership structure had higher financial effort. To do this their team interviewed “knowledgeable persons representative of major institutional-interest sectors of the community” (Johns and Kimbrough 1968, 102). They asked three questions: 1) what are the most important problems that have been resolved? 2) Who was most influential in those decisions? 3) What are the most influential organizations in the community? They used the results of the interviews to identify additional people to interview. People named more than three times were interviewed and a random sample of ten percent of the people named fewer than three times were also interviewed over the same questions, adding to the information gained in the earlier interviews. This allowed them to construct an index based on the number of people mentioned as influential in decisions and the frequency that they were mentioned.

This methodology has been employed in other studies by Kimbrough. A study of leadership structure and decision-making in a Florida county (Kimbrough 1964) profiled the power structure in the school districts in that county and related it to many decision-making factors such as the financial effort of the school system (as in the Johns and Kimbrough 1968 study), issues and projects addressed, and the

relationship between decision-makers. In this study, Kimbrough's team did a first round of interviews with "...persons associated with important institutional and interest sectors..." (Kimbrough 1964, 9). These people included a banker, a minister, secretaries of the two political parties, an agricultural agent, the president of a women's club, a black minister or educator, an elected official, a member of the chamber of commerce, and a union leader. A second round of interviews was conducted with people who were named most frequently in addition to the board of education and all of the county commissioners. The second interview was much more in depth covering their relationships in the community in addition to asking them about the influential people and organizations. The second interview also asked people to describe the decision-making process in one or more of the issues they brought up and how the people they named influenced the process. A third round of interviews was then conducted with people not interviewed in the second round but named as influential in civic affairs in the first round. These interviews were meant to check the second round of interviews and verify the earlier results.

I based the interview protocol on Kimbrough's questionnaire and recursive interview model. Like Kimbrough, I had three lists of interviewees. Unlike him, I did not separate these sets of interviews temporally. The first list included the superintendent, school board members and other people who were mentioned in the grant materials. The second list was people who were named three or more times by interviewees. The third list was people who were named fewer than three times in the interviews. I contacted all people on the first two lists and a sample of about five of those on the third list.

I began with a list of school board members, the superintendent and other district officials because as a white, native-born person without Spanish fluency, I judged that I would find the easiest entry into the community with this group. In addition, my questions center on how the institution has changed because of the involvement of new Hispanic residents, not the effects of the institution on the Hispanic community. To understand this, it is primarily important to speak with people who are involved in making and implementing institutional policies. It is possible that the number of Hispanic residents involved in the processes is under-represented because when I attempted to contact Hispanic residents to find out who they thought were influential in the process, they were more likely to not want to be interviewed or were difficult to get in touch with. Because people tend to name others that they know, they may have been more likely to name other Hispanic people who were involved. On the other hand, everyone I interviewed was aware that I was interested specifically in the involvement of the new Hispanic residents. I also asked about the involvement of Hispanic residents if it didn't come up in the conversation otherwise. Because interviewees knew the purpose of my study was to assess the level of involvement of the Hispanic community in the process, they were particularly motivated to show that

Hispanic residents were involved by naming them and would often talk about the outreach efforts to this particular community and the response they achieved.

Before the interview process began, I formed an initial list of people with whom I would like to speak. This list included the superintendent, all of the school board members, and people who were mentioned in the grant documents. The availability of these sources varied by district and so I was not able to consult all of the potential sources in all of the districts. As I spoke with people, I refined and extended the list. When people on my initial list were not mentioned by others, I made contacting them a lower priority. When people on my list were mentioned repeatedly, contacting them became a higher priority. For example, in Rohan, the superintendent was on my initial list but was never mentioned except when I specifically asked the second to last person I interviewed about his role. In my initial email contact with him, he had suggested a few other people who would be more knowledgeable about the grant program. Since that initial email exchange with him, nobody that I interviewed mentioned him and so I didn't pursue an interview with him. When I asked the penultimate interviewee why he had not been mentioned, she confirmed my assumption that he had not been very involved but left the planning and implementation to one of the associate superintendents and staff in the the district.

At the end of each interview I asked the interviewee for recommendations of others I should speak with. People who were named by at least three different people became a part of the second list. The third list was people who had been named once or twice by the beginning of my interview cutoff, August 2011. From this list I pulled a random sample of about five candidates. I reasoned that people who were heavily involved would be named frequently as influential people. In addition to people who had been named once or twice, the third list includes people I spoke with because of social circumstances instead of research design. This was due to two factors. There were several situations where it was socially appropriate to speak with someone even though they were not on my list. This occurred when I went to speak with an individual at his or her home and their spouse asked to be a part of the interview or when I spoke with people at their office and a coworker asked to be a part of the interview. It also occurred when, after an interview, the interviewee would suggest I speak with a person next door or down the hall and would arrange for the interview to take place right then. These impromptu interviews were always with people that had been mentioned in the prior interview and so were on my list. However, they may have only been mentioned once or twice and so should have been a part of the group that I sampled randomly. The primary purpose of the random sample was to make sure I was getting the views of a wide variety of people. Including others that were not randomly selected, though not frequently mentioned did not counter this purpose.

I contacted everyone on the first two lists at least once. Those on the first list who did not respond to my initial email and were not mentioned again, I did not contact again. Those on the second list who did not respond to my first email, I would contact a second and third time by email or, if available, by telephone. The people selected from the third list I also contacted in a similarly aggressive manner, however, it was much more likely that they would not respond or would not know the program I was talking about.

I treated the responses of each respondent as equally valid. For example, when I asked how many people were at a particular meeting, I would receive a range of estimates. Some people would calculate based on the number of tables they remembered and the seating capacity of each table. Others would just say they remembered 20 to 30. The exact number was not important so I took the whole range as an estimate of the number of people at the meeting. In another example, I asked several people whose idea it was to embark on the process. In Plum Creek, everyone pointed to the same person. In Avonlea, five different people said it was their idea. I interpreted the later to mean that many people in the district felt a lot of pride in and ownership of the process. When I noticed conflicting versions of events early in the interview process, I would ask about those events more specifically in subsequent interviews. I never asked one respondent to specifically verify another's account of an event. But, instead, let each individual's perception of events stand on their own terms.

Most people I contacted said they would be happy to speak with me. Only six of the people I contacted explicitly refused to participate. People who said they would rather not participate, I never contacted again. It was more common to not get a response through email or telephone contact. This may have been because they did not want to participate or it may have been that the email address or telephone number was not valid for the person I was contacting. Some people did respond but told me that they were not the most knowledgeable person about the program or that they really only knew about one part of the program and they suggested that they may not be a good person to interview. In this situation, I explained my interest in their perspective and asked again if they would participate. If people avoided my overtures after three contacts or if I was unable to get a response after three tries, I regarded it as a refusal to participate.

When people named others, I often asked if they had contact information for any of them. This was especially useful for people who were not employees of the school district and therefore did not have publically available email addresses or phone numbers. In addition, sometimes an interviewee volunteered to introduce me or let someone know I would call which encouraged the person to speak with me. For those that did not have email addresses or phone numbers listed on the district website, I tried to

Table 5.1 Summary of interview process

	First list		Second list		Third list		Active refusals	Passive refusals	Unable to contact	Percent spoken to
	On list	Spoken to	On list	Spoken to	On list	Spoken to				
Avonlea, Illinois	10	7	1	1	19	2	0	4	2	33%
Plum Creek, Illinois	16	6	3	3	26	5	1	15	5	31%
Mayberry, Minnesota	8	4	11	5	15	3	4	13	2	35%
Rohan, Minnesota	10	6	9	7	26	5	1	5	5	40%

find contact information through their employer or through the phone book. This was most successful for people who were prominent in the community either because of their job or because of their community activism. It was most difficult to contact former employees of the school district and people who were only marginally involved in the district or community groups.

I asked for names of people who were influential in the planning or implementation of the program when I spoke with people who were heavily involved in the program in their district. When I spoke with people who were more peripherally involved, I asked for names of other people I should contact. I made this differentiation because I found that when I asked for names of influential people, they generally said they didn't know who was influential. However, when I asked for names of people who would be good to talk to about the program, they had some ideas. Using my loose definition of influential, these people were influential from the perspective of the more peripherally involved person.

In each district I spoke with between 10 and 18 people for a total of 54 interviewees (for a table of all of the interviewees see Appendix D). Table 5.1 summarizes the process of identifying and securing interviews with people in the districts. In some districts people answered emails and were willing to speak with me. In others, securing interviews took several contacts with each person. Ultimately, in all four school districts, I spoke with between 30 and 40 percent of the people on the three lists.

5.1.2 How the interviews were conducted

After contacting potential interviewees and securing a commitment to speak with me, I allowed the interviewee to choose the location of the interview. Before the interview began, each interviewee signed a letter of consent that detailed their preferences for how the interview would be conducted (see Appendix C for a copy of the consent form). I would then give an overview of the research I was doing and what the interview would be like. I gave them a copy of the interview protocol and explained that these were some questions to get us started but that we did not need to stick to those questions in our conversation. Most interviews took about 45 minutes. At the end of the interview I would thank them for

their time and leave them with my contact information. All the interviews were conducted between March and September 2011.

I interviewed most people at their workplaces. Some invited me to their home and others suggested a public place such as a cafe. A few interviews with people in Minnesota and those who had moved out of the district were conducted over the telephone. Most consented to have the interview audio recorded. For two interviews I thought the audio recording was on but it was not. For all of the interviews I took notes in two notebooks designated for the purpose. I coded the interviews with an alpha-numeric code that was unique to the interview and interviewee.²⁶

During the interview, some people chose to stick to the pre-written questions but with most, I used the sheet as a guide to make sure I was covering the topics I planned. I usually began by asking them to describe their role in the school district and their connection to the process I was studying. The answers to these questions usually set the stage for what would be appropriate ways of framing the subsequent questions. Everyone I spoke with was generous in sharing their knowledge of the process. Only occasionally would an interviewee express discomfort with a question. When that happened, I did what I could to put them at ease again, whether it was turning off the audio recording device or changing the subject.

Interviews ranged from 15 minutes to an hour and 20 minutes based on the interviewee's schedule and how quickly we covered the topics. In my initial contact with the interviewee, I suggested the interview would take about an hour and most took about 45 minutes. When the interview went over an hour, it was because the interviewee was very passionate about the school district or the program were discussing. At the end of the interview I left my email address and phone number in case they wanted to contact me in the future or if they knew of anyone else who would like to speak with me. No one contacted me after the interview to elaborate on issues we had discussed and no one contacted me because my information was passed to them.

5.2 The model

The model of a communicative process that I use is based on the writings of Patsy Healey, John Forrester, Judith Innes and Tore Sager. Each of these theorists describe the conditions of a communicative process slightly differently but all are based, to a large degree, on Habermas's theory of communicative

²⁶ Interviews that included two people received two codes. I interviewed one person twice and those two interviews have two different codes.

rationality. Like rationality, communicative rationality assumes that there is an answer to a problem. Using rational processes such as voting can result in ambiguous results, especially when aggregating preferences. Communicative rationality, on the other hand is a dynamic process where the solution is arrived at through dialog. Through dialog, power relationships are leveled and the outcome is determined by individuals arguing with “the authority of the better argument (Habermas 1987, 145)” winning out.

Healey, Forester, Innes and Sager take those ideas and make them more concrete, elaborating the ways that communicative rationality is or can be applied in a planning process. I have distilled their recommendations down to four elements.

- There is a diversity of people involved in the process.
- There is a diversity of types of knowledge involved in the process.
- People are changed through the process.
- People come to new understandings and new knowledge is formed through the process.

I investigate these four elements separately for each district focusing specifically on Hispanic residents as the important stratification of diversity. Table 5.2 lists the possible evidence from the interviews that would indicate that each element is present in the process in each district.

There are a multitude of ways individuals can be involved and many roles each one can take on. At a minimum, a diversity of people involved would mean that there were Hispanic community members at open events or on committees. A fully integrated process would involve Hispanic community members through more than one avenue. For example, there may be a bilingual advisory committee, Hispanic parents at community meetings, and Hispanic administrators or school board members.

Perhaps the best way to understand how a diversity of knowledge can be involved in a participatory process is to look at what knowledge looks like when only one view is valued. This is comparable to the lowest rung on Arnstein’s (1969) ladder of participation – information. When only one view is valued, community meetings are meetings where the institution, in this case school districts, is conveying information to the community but any information flow in the other direction is not heard or discounted. A minimum of diversity within the knowledge that is valued would be some form of feedback from the community such as a period for suggestions at an open meeting. A process that included fully diverse forms of knowledge would include informal information from the community, formalized responses in an organized format such as a meeting, advisory committees that included people with diverse views, consistent flows of information and sporadic bouts of knowledge sharing.

Table 5.2 Possible evidence for these themes

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Evidence of the presence of the theme</i>
Presence of a diversity of people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People with different roles and backgrounds are mentioned. • People with different roles and backgrounds are mentioned frequently.
A variety of types of knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviewees mention that their concerns of views were discussed. • Interviewees mention that another person's ideas were discussed. • Interviewees talked about how people influenced the process. • Interviewee identified people who set the agenda for the project.
Changes in group associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviewees talk about how their role changed over the course of the process. • Interviewees identified groups that had formed. • Interviewees discuss how they saw themselves changed over the course of the process. • Interviewees discuss how others saw themselves changed over the course of the process. • Interviewees mention the creation of frequent meetings between groups that previously had not met regularly.
The creation of new knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviewees discussed how people's views changed from one point in time to another. • Interviewees mention their own views changed because of the interaction with others.

There is a parallel in this element with a diversity of people involved in the process but they are not the same. A diversity of people involved merely requires the presence of people from diverse backgrounds. A diversity of knowledge involved means that not only are they present but their opinions are valued and, importantly, acted upon. Diverse knowledge can also be present without diverse people. This is possible when a government taps into organized groups that have particular outlooks but whose leaders may not be ethnically different from the school district leaders. Leaders of an organization such as Migrant Head Start would have views, priorities and ways of looking at education that are different than the school district at large however, the leaders may not be Hispanic. The incorporation of their knowledge into the process would represent an increase in the diversity of knowledge but not an increase in the diversity of people.

The third element is that new groups and identities are formed. People and their relationships are multi-layered with their behavior rooted deeply in society. Wholly altering these relationships takes time. With relatively short processes such as the ones I am studying, it is possible that some changes grow out of the interaction. At a minimum, there should be the formation of a new relationship between two

people, such as two teachers beginning a collaboration. A fuller change would include the formation of new groups, both formal and informal as a result of the process, a shift in group alliances and for people to understand themselves and their role in the world differently.

The final element is that new knowledge be formed through the process. Just as the presence of a diversity of knowledge parallels a diversity of people, so does a change in knowledge parallel a change in groups and identities. At a minimum, the formation of new knowledge through the process would include the creation of new parameters for the participation process or the implementation of the grant that were not understood by the people involved when the project was undertaken. Evidence of knowledge formation through the process would also include a change in direction of the process, the creation of additional goals for the project, or a new purpose.

5.3 The test

The model is the conceptual basis to test whether a communicative process was employed in these four cases. There are, of course, many ways for a government to learn about the preferences of the community. Voting, although useful in many respects is flawed when it comes to ordering preferences of a collection of people. Communicative planning offers an alternative and by relying on dialog between people, it allows preferences to be revealed. While consensus may not be achieved (it is never achieved in voting mechanisms either), the best argument will determine the preferred course of action for the community. If a communicative process were to be employed by a government to discover the preferences of its residents, it would be most apparent in a place where shifting demographics has led to changes in the community culture and values. In addition, a government would be much more likely to employ any kind of preference revelatory mechanism if there are specific issues that need to be addressed. This is why I focus on specific grant processes within school districts with large increases in the Hispanic population. It is easiest to observe a diversity of people and knowledge involved in a process in a place where that diversity is new and obvious. If people are changing their group alliances and personal identities and generating new understandings of the issues, it will be most apparent in places where the groups are distinctive and the combination of knowledge is distinct from any of the sources.

All four of the school districts employed the first element of a communicative process, involving a diversity of people, to some degree. Some districts employed some of the other elements as well. Only one district employed all of the elements to some degree. Overall, a communicative process was not a primary means for the district to understand the community's, particularly the Hispanic community's

preferences. However, some decisions in the one district that approached a communicative process were affected by the involvement of the Hispanic community.

5.3.1 The involvement of a diversity of people

Between 25 and 37 people were named at least once in each district (everyone I spoke with was named at least once by another person, either individually or as a member of a group). Sometimes people were named in the body of the interview but most often people and groups were named at the end of the interview, during the second part when I specifically asked about people and groups that were influential in the process. Table 5.3 lists several questions I asked that led specifically to answers about a diversity of people involved.

People were free to name individuals or groups in the interviews. In recording the responses, I coded each as an individual or a group. If someone gave the name of an individual and the organization he or she was involved in, I would code it as the person only. When the same organization was mentioned by others not in connection with the individual, it was coded separately as an organization. In a few cases an organization was so closely linked to an individual that when the organization was named, I recorded it as that person. In these cases, it was rare for the organization to be mentioned separately from the individual. Finally, there were some cases where an individual was somewhat associated with an organization which also played a role in the program. In that case I would record both the person and the organization.

Table 5.3 Questions used to address the presence of a diversity of people

- Who else should I talk to?
- Which people were influential in this process?
- What groups were influential in this process?
- Who was at that meeting?
- Were there any Hispanic community members there?

In addition to coding each response as an individual or a group, I also indicated whether the individual was Hispanic or if the group was focused on Hispanic people as a part of its mission or practice. To be coded as a Hispanic person, an interviewee needed to mention that he or she was of Hispanic descent. In other words, I did not assume Hispanic status based on a person's last name or other demographic feature. I did not differentiate between the types of Hispanics. For example, if the district hired a consultant from another city who was Hispanic, that person counted as Hispanic even though he or

she was not a member of the new Hispanic community. This is particularly important in the context of Plum Creek, Illinois. Plum Creek has had a Hispanic presence for over 100 years. Many of the Hispanic residents are third generation citizens and do not speak Spanish. In addition, there is not a very strong connection between this established Hispanic community and the new Hispanic residents who are native Spanish-speakers. At the same time, I could not establish a consistent rule as to who was a member of the community and who was not based on the length of time in the town or some other criteria because some people did cultivate relationships with the new residents while others held them at arm's length. I also did not feel it was useful to determine who was "authentically" Hispanic and who was not. For my purposes it was enough to record whether they identified themselves or whether others identified them as Hispanic.

To be coded as a Hispanic organization, the organization needed to have the needs of Hispanic residents central to its mission. Therefore an organization such as a bilingual parent advisory committee would be considered a Hispanic organization but the parent teacher organization would not be even if it included or was headed by a Hispanic parent. The mission of an organization was clear in my conversations with interviewees, especially because the four school districts included many of the same types of organizations.

Finally, I coded each organization and person by the type of role played in the process. I created seven categories of roles: school board, administration, teachers and staff, community, local government, state government and other groups. This was sometimes complex as people often changed their role throughout the process or wore multiple hats. For example, one person may become involved as a school board member and continue to be involved as a community member after his or her term expired. Three of the communities are quite small and so a school board member may also be president of a community organization. In the case where the person's role changed, I coded the role as the one that they started the process in. In the case where an individual wears multiple hats, I coded their role as the one most central to the school district. For example, if a person was the president of the parent teacher organization and a board member, I coded him or her as a board member. If he or she was a teacher and a parent, I coded him or her as a teacher.

Members of the school board are elected and therefore a very easy class to define. Members of the administration included the superintendent and principals as well as meeting facilitators, teaching coaches, and others whose primary function was to administer the teachers and staff. Teachers and staff included other employees of the school district: teachers, of course, but also guidance counselors, coaches, secretaries, English language instructors, social workers and family liaisons. Community was a catchall group for residents who did not have a formal role in the district. Sometimes these people were

parents but it also included business people in the community, ministers, those that were involved in civic and charitable organizations in the area and, of course, residents. Local government included people like the mayor, city council members, and members of the police department. State government include the state board of education and its members, as well as other state-level organizations. In addition, Illinois has a system of regional superintendents that work with a geographically determined subset of school districts. I coded this organization as a state-level organization as well because the superintendents are hired and funded by the state. Nobody mentioned the involvement of any person or organization at the federal level. Other groups is the category for people and organizations that did not fit into any of the other categories. Two of the most common organizations included in this group were local community colleges and the university extension since both Minnesota and Illinois have a large and active University Extension program in the land-grant institutions. These two groups were involved in a variety of programs such as college readiness programs for high-schoolers, community education programs for parents and other community members, English classes for parents with limited English, and other family education classes.

The first way to look at the involvement of Hispanics in the process is to look at the numbers in relation to all of the people named. There were between 25 and 37 people and between 6 and 11 groups named in each of the processes (table 5.4). Each person or group can be named multiple times by different interviewees. Each time a person or group is named, I call it a connection. The interviews yielded between 55 and 97 connections. Based on this and the number of interviews I conducted, I can create a measure of centrality. In a very centralized process, each of the interviewees names the same people. In a very decentralized process each interviewee names different people. Formally, the metric is:

$$(1-(P/C)) * 100 \tag{5.1}$$

Where P is the number of people named and C is the number of connections. The metric ranges from 0 to 100 with 0 being a very decentralized network and 100 being a totally centralized network. In the four cases I studied, the metric ranges from 42 to 63 (table 5.4). The two cases in Illinois are relatively decentralized while the two in Minnesota are more centralized. I would not expect a metric result close to 0 because I intentionally tried to make sure that I spoke with people who may not have been central to the process, just to ensure that the views of those outside of the process were not radically different from those within it. When people were not central to the process often the people they named were also not central to the process either because the interviewee was not very familiar with the process or people involved or because the interviewee felt another person's view was valuable even though they were not a part of the process. In addition, though I began by asking people for the names of others who were

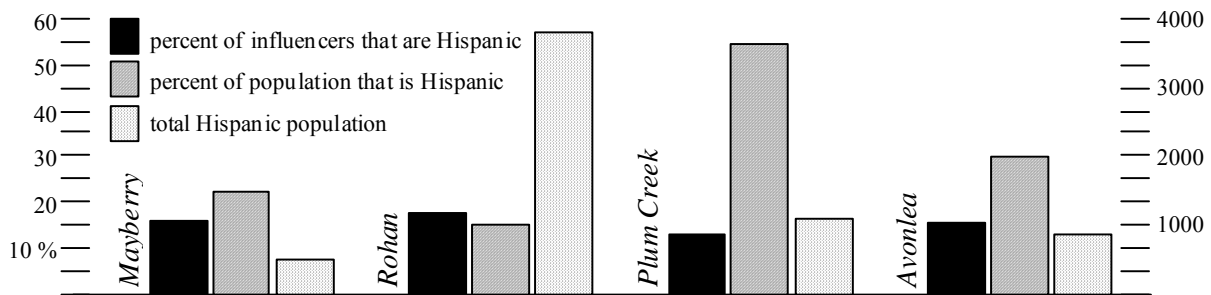
Table 5.4 People named in interviews

	Number of interviewees	Number of people	Number of groups	Total number of influencers	Times people are named	Times groups are named	Total connections	Measure of centrality
Mayberry, Minnesota	12	25	6	31	78	6	84	63
Rohan, Minnesota	18	37	3	40	91	6	97	59
Plum Creek, Illinois	14	34	11	45	71	13	84	46
Avonlea, Illinois	10	27	5	32	48	7	55	42

Table 5.5 Hispanic people named in interviews

	Number of interviews	Number of people	Number of groups	Total number of influencers	Times people are named	Times groups are named	Total connections	Measure of centrality
Mayberry, Minnesota	12	5	0	5	16	0	16	69
Rohan, Minnesota	18	7	0	7	9	0	9	22
Plum Creek, Illinois	14	5	1	6	8	1	9	33
Avonlea, Illinois	10	5	0	5	9	0	9	44

Figure 5.1 Comparison of Hispanic respondents to the population in the community



influential in the process, I changed the question wording as I interviewed people more tangentially related to ask for the names of people who would be good to talk with. This more general question led to more general responses. In order to check that I was not hearing a biased report of the process from a few insiders, it was important to identify people who were involved peripherally. This general question and the broader responses it garnered helped me to do this.

In some places people tended to name the same Hispanic people while in other places the Hispanic people named tended to be different for each interviewee. The measures of centralization within the Hispanic community ranged from 22 to 69 (table 5.5). Though in all four places the absolute number of Hispanic people involved in the process was small, in some places they were named frequently while in other places they were named less frequently. In one case (Rohan, Minnesota), almost every Hispanic person named was different. My general conclusion that when people are named frequently, they are more centrally involved in the process was somewhat flawed in the case of Hispanic community

Table 5.6 Roles of the identified participants

	Total Connections	Admi- nistration	School Board	Teachers/ Staff	Community	Local Government	State	Other Groups	
Mayberry, Minnesota	All	84	51%	8	23	12	1	1	4
	Hispanic only	16	0%	0	56	44	0	0	0
Rohan, Minnesota	All	97	45%	8	12	24	7	1	2
	Hispanic only	9	33%	0	44	22	0	0	0
Plum Creek, Illinois	All	84	33%	8	24	24	4	6	1
	Hispanic only	9	0%	0	44	56	0	0	0
Avonlea, Illinois	All	55	11%	27	5	49	7	0	0
	Hispanic only	9	0%	0	22	78	0	0	0

involvement. In Mayberry, for example, many people mentioned that a particular Hispanic man (and often a woman, too) was at several meetings. Nearly everyone gave him a different name and some described the relationship between he and the woman as a martial one while others described them as being heads of different families. It was clear from the context that they were all talking about the same people but clearly, they were not involved enough that others actually knew their names.

In relative terms, the greatest percentage of total influencers (people named at least once) were Hispanic in Rohan, Minnesota (17.5 percent) and the smallest percentage was in Plum Creek, Illinois (13.3 percent). Places with a proportionately smaller Hispanic population could be expected to involve Hispanic community members are a proportionately lower level. Within these four cases, there does not seem to be a relationship between the percent of the population that is Hispanic and the percent of the influencers that are Hispanic. In Plum Creek, the Hispanics as a proportion of people named at least once was the lowest between the four cases while it was the highest in the community. Nor is there a relationship between the total number of Hispanic people in the community and the percent of influencers that are Hispanic. While Rohan had both the highest number of Hispanics in the community and the highest number of Hispanic people named at least once as a proportion of all people named, the next highest, Mayberry with 16.1 percent of the people named at least once being Hispanic had the lowest number of total Hispanics in the community.

Hispanic people tended to be involved in the role of community member or staff (table 5.6) whereas, the influence overall tended to come at the administrative level. It is useful to look at this by connections instead of by names. One person may be involved at the administrative level but if he or she is named 20 times, it indicates considerably more influence than one community member who is named one time. Rohan, Minnesota is unusual because a third of the Hispanic connections were at the administrative level. This is because the district hired a facilitator from outside the area who was Hispanic to conduct the initial meetings. Overall, it appears that Hispanic people were involved in a minor way in

all four districts. This confirms, to some extent, one of the elements of a communicative process across all four districts. The minimum threshold of the presence of Hispanic people has been exceeded in all four districts.

5.3.2 *The presence of a diversity of knowledge*

The presence of a diversity of people is related to a diversity of knowledge but knowledge goes beyond the superficial demographic characteristics.

Even if there is the presence of Hispanic people at some points in the process, they may not contribute or their contributions may go unheard. In addition, there may be people involved in the process who do not have the demographic characteristics that mark them as diverse but they bring views to the table that are similar or represent in some way the views or opinions of Hispanic residents.

To determine the extent to which multiple types of knowledge were acknowledged and employed in the process I asked interviewees about the opinions of people involved in the process, in the wider community, and those that either chose not to be a part of the process or those who were left out for one reason or another. Table 5.7 lists some of the questions I used to address the presence of a diversity of knowledge. Though the questions were aimed at learning about sources of knowledge used in the process, the responses sometimes focused on other aspects. Sometimes the interviewee would talk primarily about the people who were left out of the process or who were under-represented. In these cases, the source of knowledge, as understood by the interviewee, was often implied. Sometimes interviewees just listed those who were present without talking about what they actually contributed to the process. During the interviews, I tried to follow up with questions about an individual or group's activities. In reading and coding the interviews, if a

Table 5.7 Questions used to address the presence of a diversity of knowledge

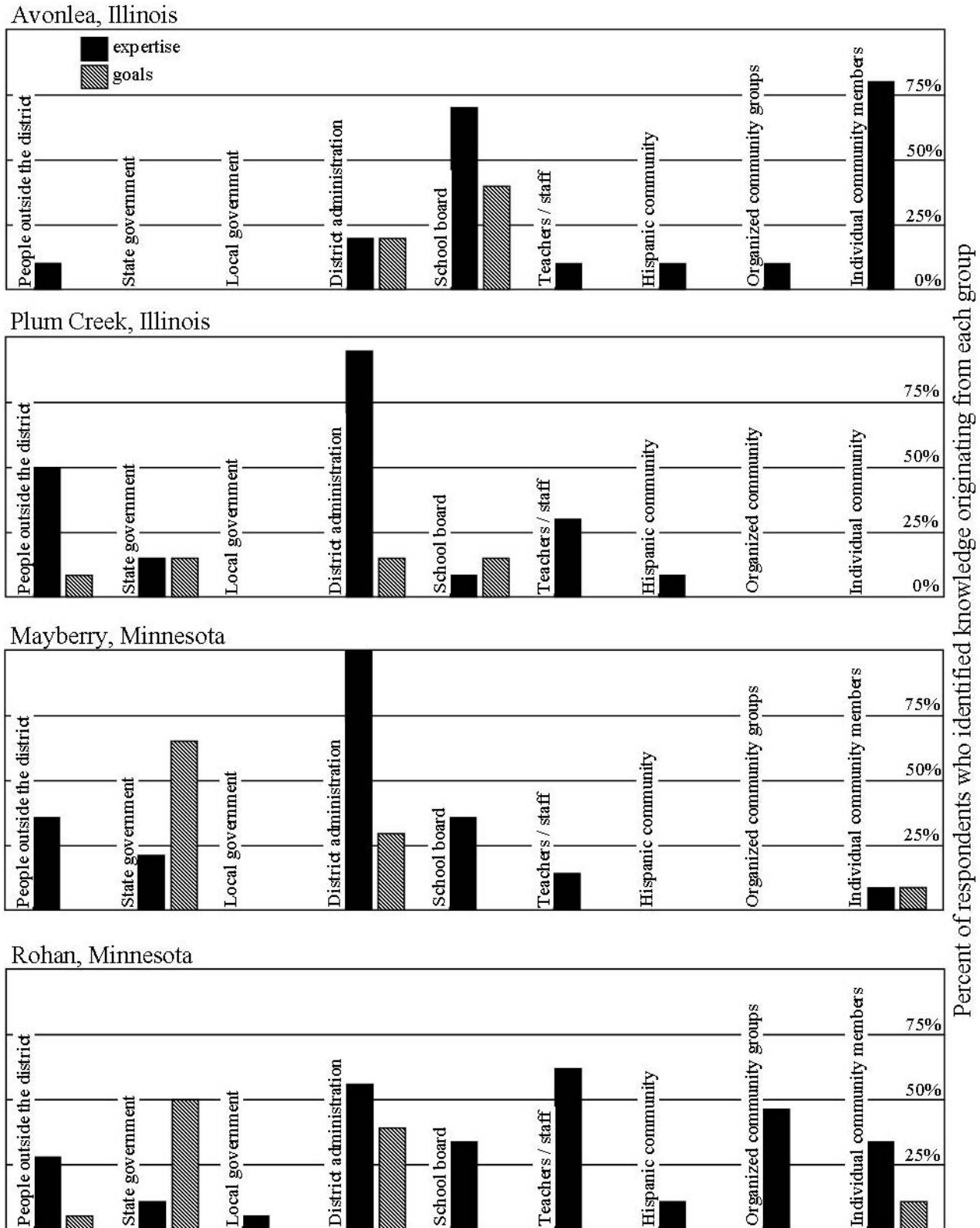
- Do people outside of the superintendent and the board discuss the district's budget?
- Why were these people present at that board meeting?
- Was the board involved in the decision process to apply for the grant?
- Have teachers been affected by the programs?
- What do students think of the programs?
- Are people in the community concerned about cultural issues or interracial contact?
- What was your role in the process?
- Are there some groups within the district that have priorities that are different or in conflict with the priorities of the grant?
- Would you characterize this as a district-driven initiative?

person's contributions were not discussed, I assumed that they were simply present and did not add to the discussion or what they did contribute was not heard by the interviewee.

I coded the responses into nine categories with a possibility for two types of knowledge to be contributed. The first type of knowledge I term "expertise." This is some knowledge that belongs to a particular person or group, such as the types of programs that will help raise the test scores of second-graders. Everyone has knowledge that is specific to them whether it be technical knowledge such as knowledge about educational programs, process knowledge such as the best way to get the school board to pass a resolution, or social knowledge such as the educational priorities of a certain community or how to engage people in a meeting. These different types of expertise are not always recognized or valued. The second type of knowledge I term "goals." This can also be called agenda setting. The ability to set an agenda may be limited legally or by deference to authority. On the other hand, the district may have the freedom to change or adapt a set of goals set by the state or other entity. Not all interviewees discussed both types of knowledge. An interviewee's knowledge was limited by his or her role in the process and very often never considered who set the goals of the program they were working in. In addition, they spoke about the program from their perspective so they may perceive that knowledge comes from one source, such as the administration, while people working in the administration perceive that the knowledge comes from the state. I did not try to adjust people's responses to what "actually" happened but took their perceptions at face value. For example, one interviewee may say that the goals of a program were set by the superintendent when the goals they are speaking of are part of the state legislation that established the program. I didn't explain the state legislation. I honored the situation as they perceived it. Some of this external knowledge helped me to interpret the findings.

I grouped the types of knowledge in categories similar to those I used to classify contacts, including, state government, local government, district administration, school board, and teachers and staff. In addition I broke the community member category into three parts, community groups, individual community members, and Hispanic community members. I did this to better understand whether the school district was incorporating knowledge held by the Hispanic community and whether the community knowledge was originating from individual community members or whether the district primarily incorporated knowledge from established, organized groups. I added a category of people outside the district, this included people who might work at the community college, as it does in the other category for the contacts. In this category I also included people who were contracted to provide knowledge and services for the district. This is a difference from how I categorized the contacts. Someone such as a facilitator who was hired by the superintendent was categorized as administrative contact but the knowledge they provided was categorized as knowledge from people outside the district. I did this because as a meeting

Figure 5.2 Sources of knowledge identified by interviewees. Goals are types of knowledge that shaped the parameters of the process and expertise are types of knowledge specific to an individual and shape the decision made in the process itself.



facilitator, they were essentially acting as an extension of the administration, organizing the meeting how the administration desired, including topics that the administration wanted included. Many people saw the facilitator's role simply as this. However, others said that the facilitator had a role in providing knowledge about the grant process, programs in other districts and even had a role in setting the goals for the grant process in that district. This knowledge was not an extension of the administrations knowledge but information from outside of the district so I categorized it as such.

For each interviewee, I coded the group and knowledge type as a yes or a no. I did not attempt to gauge the degree of influence the knowledge had. If the knowledge was influential, it would be mentioned by many of the people I interviewed. I also only recorded a yes or a no for each category whether the knowledge came from one person or several people within that category. Therefore, if an interviewee mentioned that the superintendent provided knowledge about the grant process, the principal provided knowledge about specific programs and the technology coordinator provided knowledge about grant writing, I still only recorded one "yes" for the presence of the expertise type of knowledge from the administration from that interviewee.

To see where the knowledge used in the process came from, I calculated the number of mentions of that type of knowledge as a percent of all interviewees. If everyone mentioned the presence of a certain type of knowledge, then, of course, the percent would be 100. Few people in any of the districts mentioned the contribution or use of knowledge by Hispanic residents (figure 5.2). Outside of that, the sources vary considerably. In both of the Minnesota districts, people mentioned goals set primarily by the state. This makes sense since it is a grant program created by the state to achieve ends that have been legislated. However, whereas in Mayberry, the expertise type of knowledge is extremely concentrated in the administration, in Rohan, the sources of expertise are spread more evenly across the administration, the school board, teachers and organized community groups with many people mentioning individual community members and people outside the district as sources of expertise. Like Mayberry, Plum Creek, Illinois, relied heavily on the expertise held by the administration though Plum Creek also relied on the expertise of people outside of the district to a greater degree. In Avonlea, Illinois, the goal-setting process was split between the administration and the school board while the expertise was held by the community and board primarily. This probably reflects the type of process that occurred in this school district. The process I focused on was not one that was directed by the state government as it was in the other three cases, but one that originated from decisions within the district. Because there was no external funding, there were no external requirements placed on it.

The sources of the goals or the setting of the agenda in these processes was somewhat predictable. Both of the Minnesota sites mentioned the state and administration as the two groups who were responsible for giving a purpose to the process. It makes sense because the law in Minnesota at the time was that districts that meet certain criteria related to the level of minority students relative to surrounding districts must take steps to integrate students and ensure that their minority students are receiving the same opportunities as neighboring districts. The goal was set in the law. School districts work within the broader goal to create goals of their own for the process. In contrast, in Avonlea, Illinois, the entire process from deciding to write a new mission statement to the process of implementing it was internal to the school district. There, the goals were set by the administration and school board. There were no requirements that they do it. There was no outside money secured to pursue it. Therefore, there were no other entities interested in setting the agenda for the district. On the one hand we have the state mandated process and on the other we have the totally locally driven process. Looking at these two extremes, I would expect that Plum Creek, Illinois, with a grant coming from the state with very clear guidelines as to what money can be spent on, would also reflect a strong sentiment that the state is setting the goals for the program. Interestingly, very few people discussed who was setting the agenda and the goals for the process. This may be because the reason the district was receiving the grant is because their high school is one of the lowest performing schools in Illinois on the state exams. The clear purpose for both the state, the district and the community is to raise the test scores. The superintendent explained the priority for the community:

Scores have not been good for quite a few years. But also in order to make change, you have to have money to make change. And you have to have human resources and financial resources. So, because we were in the bottom 5 percent. We know our kids and we know that we would have a good opportunity to improve our achievement with this type of grant because that would give us the human and financial resources we needed. And the state could start closing down schools that are not achieving. They certainly have the right to do that. We want our school here. We want our high school here because if we lost our high school, that would affect the elementary school and it wouldn't be overall good for the town. So, raising student achievement and keeping our high school here were huge factors.²⁷

The sources of expertise for carrying out the agendas were more varied than the sources for creating the goals. Part of this may be due to the design of the grants. Rohan is the case with the most diverse sources of expertise. One of the requirements of the grant is that the district go through a year-long planning process that involves the community. The state does not stipulate who in the community must be involved, or how the involvement of the community be incorporated into the final plan and budget passed by the school board but it does provide money to aid the school district in carrying out this

²⁷ Interview P51.

planning process. In Plum Creek, Illinois, the grant requires that the district work with one of the state-approved educational support businesses to design and carry out programs. This is probably why so many of the people I spoke with saw a great deal of the expertise held by outside groups. Likewise, in Avonlea, the involvement of the community was central to the activities and that is reflected in the sources of knowledge that people spoke about. On the other hand, however, not all of the credit for the distribution of knowledge sources can be attributed to the grant design. Mayberry, Minnesota faced the same requirements as Rohan but all of the people I spoke with there said that the expertise was held by the administration. To a lesser extent they cited the school board, people outside the district and the state as sources of knowledge. Very few people cited knowledge sources within the community, whether Hispanic or not. This indicates that while Mayberry may have fulfilled the requirement of outreach they did not gain any knowledge through the outreach or they did not incorporate the knowledge into their plan. In all of the districts knowledge held by Hispanic community members was cited very infrequently and, in Mayberry, not at all. Three of the districts barely met the minimum requirement for the involvement of knowledge from the Hispanic community.

5.3.3 Creation of new groups and new alliances

I have estimated the degree to which a diversity of people and types of knowledge were involved in the process however, within a communicative frame work, the mere presence of diversity is not enough. People must interact and through interaction, change. In the interviews I was looking for indications of the creation of new groups or new alliances or new ways for people to categorize themselves. I found it difficult to formulate questions that addressed this subject because the idea is somewhat amorphous. I was looking for people who together formed new groups and people who changed their individual or group identity in some way. This could be the creation of a formal committee or a group focused on a cause but it could also be informally having coffee with someone regularly or even just talking to someone more frequently. The most difficult changes to identify were the ones where a person begins to think of themselves in a new way. For example, a white person may get a job as a Spanish translator and begin to think of themselves

Table 5.8 Questions used to address the formation of new groups and identities

- How has your role changed over the course of the grant?
- What is the relationship between these two groups?
- Were there any people or groups that refused to participate in the process?
- How do parents usually interact with teachers, administrators and the district?
- Were any new groups formed because of the grant application or implementation process?

as not just someone with language skills but an advocate for the community of families with limited English skills.

To address the formation of a new group and identities, I asked people if any new groups had formed since the beginning of the process or as a result of the process. In general, people either said they could not think of any groups or they would tell me groups that were mandated as part of the grant proposal. The types of groups I was looking for were ones that brought together people who had previously had little contact and were sustained by the people involved in it rather than an outside force. One group that was frequently mentioned was the advisory council that continued while the grant programs were being carried out. This advisory council was required by the state however, in the case of Rohan, it joined people who previously had little interaction into a common goal. Some of the people on the council had not previously involved in the school district saw themselves as a part of the education system in the town. Others who had been involved in the school district saw themselves as part of a larger, regional effort. Not all groups mentioned these two requirements. One of the purposes of the grant program in both Minnesota districts participated in was to bring together white and Hispanic students. However, many of these groups are not sustained by the people participating but by the district administration or teacher who recruit or require students to participate. I termed these type of groups a program. Some of the groups mentioned were actually closer to programs. For example, one group that began as a result of the activities in Rohan, Minnesota was the Youth Frontiers program. This program took children entering the middle school grades on a short retreat. The purpose was to give them a common experience and help them develop socially and emotionally. In some ways, the retreat affected the identities of the children, bonding them together. However, I categorized it as a program because it was primarily organized and run by the school district. The participating children had little control over the topics covered or the activities organized. They simply signed up and the program happened. Not all activities organized by the school district were programs, however. Rohan also had a Hispanic parent organization. It was created by the district as a communication tool to help Hispanic parents who had limited English skills understand what was going on in each of the districts' schools. However, it was not a meeting that parents would just show up to. It was led by the parents themselves and the agenda was set by them. The schools provided information that the parents requested. I categorized this as a new group because of the agency that the group exercised.

In addition to groups with a formalized structure I also asked about people's changing group identification. To address this concept of informally changing groups, I asked about how their views, experience or activities had changed over the course of the process. In addition, I would ask about how other's views, experiences or activities had changed over that time. Sometimes the changes were not

related to group identity. For example, one teacher in Plum Creek said that her classes used to involve a certain amount of library time each week but that the library time had been eliminated under the grant. Changes such as this were not a part of her identification of herself as a teacher, her ethnic identity or other identities. Some people I spoke with related changes in their internal self-conception. One such change was the experience of one of the staff members' job change from staff to administration. In her new role, she began to identify herself and others identified her as one of the people in charge of organizing the programs under the grant rather than just a participant in them. Though she was not a part of the process that established the programs, she took ownership of them.

In order to categorize these instances of group changes, I paid special attention to how the group formation was discussed. If it was discussed in the terms that I described above, I included it as an instance of group formation. Often times, the same groups would be mentioned by different interviewees. If one person described the group formation in terms that fit my definition, I included it. There were no instances of severely divergent views of groups, however, there were occasionally slightly different accounts. One group in Plum Creek was described by an administrator as a cross section of school and community members while another school district employee described its membership as being made up of the people who were heavily involved in school activities. In this case, it could be that the administrator is painting the groups in a favorable light for the district or it could be that the district employee is cynical about the process and painting it in a negative light. Or, it could be two honest perceptions that differ. I reasoned that even if a group formation was seen by only one person as bringing together different types of people in a voluntary manner, and even if that vision might be overly rosey, it was sufficient to categorize it as a group formation under my definition. As I interpret the results, I did consider the conflicting views.

Across all four cases, I discovered 23 instances of group formation. They are not evenly distributed throughout the four cases. Rohan, Minnesota had the most instances of group formation and change mentioned with 15 separate group changes. Plum Creek had about half as many instances (7) mentioned in the interviews I conducted. In the interviews in Mayberry, Minnesota, there was only one instance mentioned and none in Avonlea, Illinois. Part of this may be attributable to the number of meetings within the community. Rohan's planning process began four years before I interviewed people which meant there was more time for groups to percolate up and alliances and identities to change. In Avonlea, on the other hand, the engagement with the issues outside of the board was limited to one meeting and follow-up correspondence. When normalized by the number of months over which the process took place, Rohan was still the leader with 23 instances of group formation over 53 months. Plum Creek was close behind with 7 instances over 17 months. Mayberry had 1 over 10 months and Avonlea's

process only 7 months long, had no instances. Rohan was the only district where several of these group formations included Hispanic community members and some were driven by people in the Hispanic community.

Most of the groups mentioned were ones that had been written into the grant or were a requirement of the grant. In Rohan, the most frequently mentioned group formation was the grant advisory council, commonly called the collaborative council. Among districts that receive this grant, the collaborative council is required by the state for all grant recipients. Other groups, such as the Hispanic parent advisory committee, were also required by law and others, such as the building-specific Hispanic parent organizations were written into the grant. With some of the grant money, the district set up a mini-grant program that was the genesis of a number of programs mentioned in the interviews. While not all of the programs counted as group formations under my definition, some groups formed to take advantage of this funding stream. One of those groups that was mentioned repeatedly was a service organization established by Hispanic high school students. Although they are no longer funded by the mini-grant, they continue to serve the community in a variety of ways from volunteering at the public library to participating in a celebration of the many cultural groups in Rohan.

The grant I studied in Mayberry was part of the same state program as the grant in Rohan. The planning process in Mayberry began four years after the planning process in Rohan took place. By the time Mayberry began, the legislature was in the process of shifting some of the goals of the program but the requirements remained the same. People in Mayberry also mentioned the collaborative council as a group that formed through the process. In Rohan, it was clear that the people involved in the group had taken ownership of it and actively tried to represent the diversity in the community by asking people from many different walks of life and community organizations to serve on the council. In Mayberry, the collaborative council included parents and community members, at least for a time, and at least one Hispanic person temporarily. It seemed to be more conscious of what the state and school administrators wanted them to do than in Rohan. This may be why most participants dropped out by the end of the planning process. Although by the end of the process the group did not meet my definition, I counted it since it fit at the beginning. Nobody mentioned the formation of any other groups in Mayberry.

In Plum Creek, all of the groups mentioned were ones that were written into the grant or required by the state. This district also had a bilingual parent advisory committee, a requirement in Illinois for all districts receiving Title III funding. It is related to the grant in that it became better organized through the efforts that led up to the grant application. Although this group was described to me as being driven by a couple of parents of children in the English language learner program, it is not clear how much control

they really had over the group. One administrator said that getting that group to be more organized was one of the things she did to lay the groundwork for the grant application. There were two groups that were established as a part of the grant that seem to have the potential for helping people identify with other groups but it was difficult to tell whether they were actually leading to a shift in group identities. The first was a district advisory council made up of community members, teachers, and administrators and guided by an outside organization to identify the priority areas for the district to focus on and then track those areas over time. When I spoke with people, this committee was still new but it was expressed to me that it was created because the school district needed to become more in touch with the needs, views and priorities of community members. On the other hand, it is guided by an outside organization and may only serve to legitimize the suggestions of that group. The other group is professional learning communities for faculty. The faculty in Plum Creek is small so there is little cross over between subjects and grade levels. In addition, there has been little time built into the school day for collaboration and group learning to take place. The grant established these small groups to help teachers see themselves as part of a larger learning community and help them learn from each other. Some teachers and staff have told me that these communities are building a sense of cohesion and group learning and others have told me that they have been primarily places where people vent their frustrations. There were a number of other committees that were formed in conjunction with the grant, some of them indicated that there may be some shift in groups identification but most appeared to just be another committee. One teacher told me that they had so many committees in the district she could never remember which ones she was on.

In Avonlea, nobody mentioned the formation of new groups. This may be in part due to the fact that the process was so short and consisted mainly of one meeting and some follow-up correspondence. In addition, the people who participated were mainly very civically engaged in the town and already well-known to one another. There was no special reason why this particular meeting would change the way they interacted with one another or cause them to start a new initiative when other, similar civic interaction had not. Even the Hispanic people who were at the meeting were people who were regularly involved in the school and community and well-known to most of the other participants.

The only district in which interviewees discussed informal alliances and identities was in Rohan. There, a handful of people mentioned changes related to a change in their own or others identities. People referred to instances where an individual or group of people saw themselves as part of a group they had not previously identified with. One of these instances was a professional change from staff to administration. Another interviewee mentioned a shift among some in the community from seeing the Hispanic immigrants as a burden or as visitors to seeing them as the future of the town. If this change became wide-spread it would be quite dramatic for the town which has defined itself as a factory town.

The long, acrimonious strike in the 1980s is still fresh in the minds of many and the fact that the plant is the primary employer for Hispanics in town makes it seem to some that they have come to take advantage of the town, not because they want to live there and be a part of the community. Another instance that was mentioned by more than one person was the collaboration between teachers in Rohan and neighboring school districts allowing them to broaden the sphere for their students as well as helping them to forge an educational identity outside of the district. While none of these changes in group identities is radical, this is the only district where people told me about such shifts in group identity. Some of them involve the relationship between the Hispanic community and others.

The key to the emergence of new groups and new identities seems to be time. In Rohan, where the grant had been planned for and implemented for the longest time, several formal groups had formed and a few people described changing informal group identification and alliances. Many of these changes involved contact and identification with the Hispanic community. In contrast, in Avonlea, where the process was only seven months long, no new groups formed. Time was not the only determining factor, however. In Rohan, many of the formal groups emerged through a mini-grant program that provided resources to people who had ideas for initiatives that they felt were important and contributed to the overall mission of the grant. Without the mini-grant program, there may have been many fewer groups formed. Overall, with the exception of Rohan, very few groups formed that involved Hispanics even though the timeframe of the processes ranged from seven months to 53 months.

5.3.4 The creation of new knowledge and new ways of understanding

The generation of knowledge is different from the presence of different types of knowledge. The later I can ascertain with questions like, what did that person contribute to the discussion? The former tended to be addressed in follow-up questions like, did the two parties in that disagreement come to a resolution? The joint nature is important because communicative planning is not simply convincing others of your point of view. Instead, in the ideal it is learning together through dialog where opinions and points of view are allowed to change. With the difficulty I had in finding evidence of Hispanic people just being present in the decision-making process, it is not surprising that I found almost no instances of knowledge generation.

To learn whether knowledge was created through the process, I asked participants questions

Table 5.9 Questions used to address the creation of new knowledge

- How did the process change from the beginning to the end?
- What was the decision process to apply for the grant?
- What are some of the challenges of your role in the process?

that inspired rumination on larger themes and understandings within the process. Table 5.9 lists some of the questions I used. When a program that the interviewee had particular knowledge of would come up in conversation I would ask about the impact it had on the intended group and on other groups within the school district. I also asked more general questions such as to compare the mission of the grant and the mission of the school district. In most interviews I did not find that there was any knowledge generation but a few interviewees in two districts did talk about it. Interestingly, whereas group formation appeared to be heavily influenced by the timeframe, the two instances of knowledge formation that I found happened over completely different time frames. One, in Rohan, was over the course of several years, though the pivotal point appeared to be a day-long workshop. The other, in Avonlea, was over the course of just one meeting.

In Rohan, several people discussed the evolution of the worldviews of many of the teachers and administrators from the Hispanic students as a population with special needs to a population with the same potential and abilities as the rest of the student body. This was a result of considerable cultural training for teachers but it was not a one-sided process. One administrator that was involved in organizing the training talked about a particularly successful workshop where Hispanic graduates came back and reflected on their experiences at the school and how it prepared them for the challenges that came next. It was not a confrontational meeting but more about students thinking critically about what they got out of high school and what opportunities they had missed. The teachers learned a lot from these reflections too.

We've learned a lot ourselves as we've gone along and it's been an interesting four years in that regard. And we've come across some resistance as well, but not anything too great. Still, [there is a] prevalent attitude of we're fair to all kids, we're color blind. But this last fall, we had a really, really good assembly. We had a panel of three Hispanic young adults who had graduated from Austin High School and came back to share their perspectives about that. We heard from more staff than ever before. What we heard from teachers is, I need to have higher expectations, which is exactly what we wanted to come from that. We have a teaching staff that says, oh, that's OK, he came from a poor family, or you didn't speak English as your first language, that's fine. It's not up to grade level, it's not going to get you where you need to go, It's fine. It's that benign neglect.²⁸

In Avonlea, the other district where people talked about knowledge generation, several people spoke about the generation of knowledge over the course of the meeting. It was well known to the people that attended the meeting that the purpose was to create a new mission statement for the district. Many people told me that there was considerable discussion about the content of the mission statement. When the meeting broke into groups to start drafting the mission statement, several of the older community members focused on educational basics, reading and mathematics. Others, especially the students that

²⁸ Interview R106.

were a part of the meeting, focused on having a more well-rounded education. One of the people who participated in the meeting described the impact that the youth had on the process:

I just think that it helped everybody there appreciate the other areas that other people really had passion about. I could've probably guessed going into the meeting who would be passionate about what. And it was interesting because the kids were trying to tell some of the older people, you know, we don't use those kind of words anymore, you know, reading, writing and arithmetic, we don't use those words any more. And don't put that in there.... I know that it was a good way for the youth to communicate to some of the older people how important our cultural diversity is to the kids themselves.²⁹

In Rohan, the change in knowledge was directly related to the Hispanic community while in Avonlea, it was not.

5.4 Conclusion

Rohan, Mayberry, Plum Creek, and Avonlea are all places where a communicative process, if it were employed would be visible. Because of the recent and rapid migration of Hispanics to these towns, I expect the cultural differences to be more apparent in these places than in other places that have experienced slower and less dramatic demographic changes. In addition, I chose to study processes in each of the districts where Hispanic community members would be particularly motivated to be involved because the resulting programs either targeted Hispanic students specifically or had the potential to have a great impact on them.

What I found was that the communicative process was not thoroughly employed in any of the districts (table 5.10). In two of the districts, only two of the four elements were present and each of them only at a minimal level as far as Hispanic residents were concerned. In only one district were all four

Table 5.10 The presence of each of the elements with regard to the Hispanic community in each of the four cases

	Avonlea, Illinois	Plum Creek, Illinois	Rohan, Minnesota	Mayberry, Minnesota
diversity of people	^	^	^	^
diversity of knowledge	^	^	^	--
formation of new groups/identities	--	^	*	^
formation of new knowledge	--	--	^	--

* element present to a great degree; ^ element present at a minimal level; -- element not present

elements present and most of the elements only met minimum requirements for the involvement of the Hispanic community members. Overall, my hypothesis that school districts were using a communicative process to understand the preferences of the community, particularly the Hispanic community, has proven wrong. There are, however, some factors that appear to play a part in the degree to which the process was implemented. Time was found to be a major determinant of how many groups formed through or because of the process in the four cases. It did not play a major role in the formation of new knowledge. In one place, it was described as happening over the course of years and in the other place, over the course of a few hours. In the next chapter, I will discuss some of the institutional factors that contributed to the execution of the elements.

6. Institutional influence on preference revelatory mechanisms

Individuals and institutions are not separate entities but part of the same system. Institutions, both formal (such as governments) and informal (such as social norms) shape the lives of individuals and people create, sustain or dismantle institutions. It is logical to assume, then, that as the people who make up a community change, so too should we observe changes in institutions. The results of the quasi-experimental model contradict this. There was little difference in fiscal and administrative policies between the four communities that experience dramatic cultural change and those that remained demographically unchanged. The case studies demonstrated that even for fiscal and administrative decisions that could potentially have a great impact on Hispanic students. The Hispanic community was in some cases hardly involved at all, let alone involved in a communicative process. Harkening back to table 3.1 (page 28), the lack of difference between Hispanic growth districts and unchanged districts and the lack of a communicative process leads me to conclude that the school districts are not employing any revelatory mechanisms effectively. And yet many school district administrators felt that the Hispanic students were central to the decisions that they were making.

In contrasting the four cases, there were four areas that stood out as critical to the way people were involved in the processes, the information gained from their involvement, and the reported success (or failure) of the effort. First, the state legislation and administrative rules impacted how the grants were planned for and carried out and to what degree a communicative process was implemented. Second, the goals of the district administrators for the process of involving residents and the outcomes from that involvement were also a factor in the participation of the Hispanic community and how the grant processes were carried out. Third, the resources of time and money that were available to the district shaped the scope of what the district was able to do to reach out to and involve residents. Finally, the contemporary manifestation of historical events that influence the race and class of the residents was a critical factor in how the administration and larger community engaged with the Hispanic community. Although the demographics of the new Hispanic residents were similar across the rural Midwest and the demographics of the people living in the rural towns in 1990 were similar, the towns had different histories, social patterns and civic structures. Individuals are the ones who create and sustain institutions but institutions also shape the behavior of individuals, both in the community and within an institution itself. These four areas were central to whether a communicative process was implemented as a preference revelatory mechanism or if any revelatory mechanism was employed at all.

6.1 State influence through regulations

The reason I chose case studies in two different states is because I believed states have a considerable influence over the administration of school districts. The surface-level difference of state monetary contribution to local districts' budgets that led me to select school districts in Minnesota and Illinois, as I assumed, have been an indicator of deeper differences in state involvement in local education. In Illinois, an average of 27 percent of school district revenue comes from the state³⁰ however it tends to regulate the actions of the districts more specifically than Minnesota where an average of 66 percent of school district revenue comes from the state.³¹ An example of this is the legislation and administrative rules regarding parental involvement in the education of English language learners. Both Illinois and Minnesota have statutes that mandate the school district to involve parents of children in English Language Learner (ELL) programs to be involved in meetings or be consulted regarding the language education of ELL students. In Illinois, the Illinois Compiled Statutes requires that school districts with at least 20 ELL students form a Bilingual Parent Advisory Committee (105 ILCS 5/14C-10). The Illinois Administrative Code further details that the committee meet at least 4 times per year, take minutes of those meetings, and review the school district's annual program application (23 ILAC 228.30). Minnesota's statute is less exact. The Minnesota Statutes stipulate that districts that receive revenue for ELL programs "must encourage involvement of parents" in the education of their children and ask for their views on the impact of the program on their children (MS 124D.60).

There is a constant tension in legislation between creating detailed requirements that ensure the targeted group carries out the intent of the rules and writing more general requirements that allow the targeted group to tailor their actions to be effective in that particular place or situation. In Illinois, it would be difficult to design a communicative process, that is more bottom-up in its approach when the requirements have already been spelled out. Administrators do not have to ask themselves whether the involvement is sufficient or meaningful or debate the best way to involve parents. They need only to find a couple of people who are willing to follow the rules set by the state. Minnesota's legislation opens the doors to bottom-up approaches like communicative planning. Though it also allows considerable room for school districts to tailor the involvement of parents to their specific group of parents, it also allows for superficial involvement and disregard for the mandate all together. While Illinois details a minimum standard of involvement, there is no guidance in the Minnesota statute about what would be sufficient involvement.

³⁰ National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data, from the National Public Education Financial Survey (State Fiscal). The 2008-2009 school year is the most recent available data on school district finances.

³¹ National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data, from the National Public Education Financial Survey (State Fiscal). The 2008-2009 school year is the most recent available data on school district finances.

The impact of the specificity of state requirements is apparent in a comparison of the two Minnesota cases. Both districts participated in the same grant program, the Integration and Desegregation Revenue program, though they began their participation at different points in time. When Rohan began, planning for the revenue, the requirements of the program were general.

The revenue must be used for students to have increased and sustained interracial contacts and improved educational opportunities and outcomes designed to close the academic achievement gap between white students and protected students ... through classroom experiences, staff initiatives, and other educationally related programs. (MS 124D.86)

When Mayberry began planning for the revenue, the legislature was in the process of debating changes to the legislation to focus on the outcomes of students. Although the legislation had not passed, the Minnesota Department of Education was indicating that it would not approve plans that did not focus on student outcomes.

With the program goals more open and a wider variety of implementation options, Rohan was able to implement a process closer to the communicative ideal. Since the state was not dictating which programs were acceptable and which were not, the community members on the collaborative council had greater latitude to determine what would work in Rohan to accomplish their goals. When the legislation became stricter, the Rohan grant was still underway. To fit the new focus of the revenue, Rohan altered some of its language in the grant plan. It also eliminated a program in part because of a withdrawal of support from the state for that type of program and in part because the program had not been very successful in the district. Most of the activities implemented in Rohan under this program were supported within the more restrictive requirements. The original legislation gave them more control over the process and ability to explore a variety of options.

In contrast, Mayberry's community involvement process was shut down early on when a state official visited the district to explain what programs were and were not allowed under the new priorities. This intervention was welcomed by the school district administrators who were somewhat bewildered by the shifting regulations but it may have sent the message to many community members that their input was not needed: The programming under the grant could be determined between the school district and the state.

[The state official] has provided us some great insight into what they were looking for in the process. I didn't know the person before [the new official] but, but the perception was given to us that integration was basically, whatever you submit, it'll get accepted. It's kind of whatever goes as long as you can point it toward this or point it towards this factor or mandate. Well, when [the new official] came in, she kind of set us straight which I thought was good. And that was one of those things that caused us to shift in

mid-process to go from this line of thinking to this line of thinking. And that shift did cause some of the schools, one school to pull back, step out of the effort because they said, well, this, this isn't getting to what we wanted to get to.³²

6.2 Goals prefigure outcomes

If I set out in the morning to bake six dozen cookies, by the end of the day, I will likely be much closer to filling my cookie jar than I will be to making a quilt. The goals of the processes I studied in the four school districts were not all the same. For some of the administrators in the districts studied, involving Hispanic residents on a continuing basis was a major priority. For others, just getting Hispanic community members to attend a meeting was the goal. Others made it clear that input from the community was not a primary goal of the planning or implementation process. These goals were derived from underlying ideas of who should be a part of the process and what they would contribute. In Minnesota, the Integration and Desegregation Revenue program gives districts a year to plan the programs it will implement with the money and says the planning must be carried out in consultation with the community (MAR 3535.0160 subpart 2). The state also provides a small amount of money for the district to carry out these activities. Whether because of their own convictions or because they had internalized this goal, the administrators I spoke with said they felt strongly about including the Hispanic community in the planning process. One administrator I spoke with in Mayberry said he felt like he had failed in this respect.

It became more of school officials and people tied directly to the, to the school district versus what we'd hoped for was more of parental involvement.³³

In contrast, in Plum Creek, Illinois, the administrators had no such expectation of community involvement. They solicited (and received) letters of support from many school and community groups but when it came to writing the grant, defining the needs and determining the programs, the administrators felt that between themselves, the state officials and the educational support corporations they employed as a part of the grant, they had the knowledge they needed for the grant to be successful. One administrator said that the community really counted on them to find the right programs.

I know that [the superintendent] talked with the PTO, of course the teachers. We had several meetings with the teachers. That's really important. Board of education, I believe the [local civic organization], which does a lot for the community. I believe that she got the village board president to sign, so she had spoken with them. I'm trying to think who else we called. There were quite a few. You know, we tried to get as many organizations

³² Interview S211.

³³ Interview S205.

as we could.....I think they were counting on us to do the research and then come to them and say, look, I think that we can use some of these programs. I don't remember anyone suggesting any.³⁴

A goal of community involvement will not automatically result in meaningful participation, as demonstrated in Mayberry. But a lack of a goal for participation will all but confirm the failure to achieve community involvement. A strong goal for the Plum Creek process was community support. Administrators felt that they would be more likely to win the grant if they could demonstrate wide community support. To that end, the superintendent visited many school and community groups asking for them to sign a letter of support. The grant application included 13 letters of support from various local and regional organizations, which is a lot considering the town has only about 2,000 residents.

For administrators in both Minnesota districts, the involvement of the community and Hispanic community members especially was a goal. Neither district achieved very high participation by Hispanic community members initially. While administrators in Mayberry expressed disappointment and defeat because of this lack of initial involvement, administrators in Rohan saw it as a starting point. One administrator said,

The Collaboration Council itself we did really want to have some minority community members on there and we did initially have two Hispanic males working with us for the first year. And then both of them, basically just resigned due to the time commitment. It's, that's just a work in process because we're actively pursuing leadership and trying to support leadership development in minority populations. Because people emerge as leaders on their own we think but on the other hand, we're talking about very white systems in terms of committees and boards and all of that kind of thing. It's not necessarily the way business is conducted everywhere.³⁵

Another person involved in the process in Mayberry commented on the lack of involvement by the Hispanic community.

I liken it to if you have a friend that you have not had communication with for years and years and years and then you reach out to them one time and say hey, come back, you know, come, let's get back together and then they don't respond to that and then you write it off as a, hey, I tried. Right? I relate that to also trying to get our Latino parents involved to a large extent was that, for some, this was their first request to be a part of the process.³⁶

Certainly we do not always reach our goals but if we ever hope to reach them, we have to maintain the goal and continue to work toward it.

³⁴ Interview P59.

³⁵ Interview R106.

³⁶ Interview S211

6.3 Too few resources, too little time

Even in places with the best intentions and the most enviable aspirations for truly understanding the needs and desires of a community and fully incorporating them into the policy decision-making process, the process can be impeded by a lack of resources. This was the case for Mayberry, Minnesota. The mandate for the grant process in Mayberry was, as it was in Rohan, to engage the community in a planning process for the grant money. Initially, administrators were hopeful that it would become a community-driven process as it had become in some other school districts around Minnesota. However, the administrators had too many other demands on their time to give the process the kind of attention it needed to reach deeply into the community and the community was confused by the multiple processes going on in the district and did not understand the importance of the integration grant process.

For many years before Mayberry began planning for the Integration and Desegregation Revenue program, administrators had been discussing consolidating with several neighboring school districts. About the time that the district began hosting community meetings for the Integration Aid, these consolidation explorations turned into consolidation negotiations with one particular school district. The local newspaper covered both but, naturally, consolidation had the potential for much more dramatic change in the town and dominated the headlines. Several people in the district commented on the confusion. One community member said,

I wanted to know how it was also going to all work in, if this was part of the consolidation or not. It wasn't but I didn't know. And it was the only way I could find out....[People] asked me about it afterward. Did that have to do with consolidation? I said, nope, nothing to do with it. But many were wondering if that's what it had to do with. Big words, integration and consolidation, big words, you know.³⁷

In addition to this confusion, the resources of administrators were spread very thinly between several meetings a month regarding consolidation and several meetings a month about Integration Aid. The superintendent position was split between the elementary and high school principals so the bigger picture strategizing was difficult to do. The principals were torn between carrying out their roles as principals and administering the school district as a whole. Their time was also compromised by demands they needed to meet in their roles as principals and their joint role as superintendent and they had the additional complicating layer of communicating with one another. Whatever they had hoped to achieve in the process became much harder with their limited resources of staff and time.

³⁷ Interview S207x213

This lack of resources is not an issue only confronted by Mayberry. A major motivating factor in seeking the grants in the first place was often to increase the financial resources of the school district. An administrator in Plum Creek, Illinois said,

Scores have not been good for quite a few years. But also in order to make change, you have to have money to make change. And you have to have human resource and financial resource. So, because we were in this, in the bottom 5 percent. We know our kids and we know that we would have a good opportunity to improve our achievement with this type of grant because that would give us the human and financial resources we needed.³⁸

Many rural districts struggle to finance the education of their children. The demands on the time of administrators, teachers and other staff in addition to the lack of financial resources often means that there is not the time or money to plan effectively for a thorough engagement process with the community. It is not that the districts do not want to know what the community preferences are, it is that they don't have the resources to discover it.

6.4 Race and class within the community

It is not surprising that racial perceptions played a role in the implementation of a communicative process in places with a new and growing Hispanic population. However, the ethnic history of the place influenced how race and cultural difference were perceived and dealt with by administrators and community members. This is not a formal institutional factor but rather an informal structure that shapes the lives of individuals within the community. In Rohan, Minnesota, the school district administration was actively working against this social structure to plan for and implement the programs related to the grant. The labor history influenced how Hispanic residents were thought of and treated. In Illinois, both districts have a history of diversity. In Avonlea the cultural diversity has become one of the selling points for the school districts: kids can get the benefit of diversity that they would have in a big city but without the crime and other city problems. The historic diversity in Plum Creek is the result of a zinc smelting plant that was in operation for the first three-quarters of the 20th century. The resulting pollution has depressed property values and ensured that the only people who move there are those who can't afford to live anywhere else. It was in Plum Creek where class, more than race (although the two were related) that determined the attitude toward the new Hispanic residents.

In Rohan in 1985, the meat processing plant had a long and acrimonious labor dispute and strike. It lasted almost a year and though the strike ended, hundreds of workers still refused to return to work.

³⁸ Interview P51.

The same owner still operates the plants. The current workforce has a significant Hispanic presence, though I did not discover what percent of the workforce they make up. Hispanics did not begin to arrive in town in great numbers until the mid-1990s and none of the current workers would have been strike-breakers, some community members regard them as connected to bringing down the wage and benefits of workers there. One community member talked about the link between the Integration grant and the community's feelings about Hispanic migration to the town.

And I think that [the integration grant] obviously happened because of the huge influx of Hispanics to the community to work. [And they mostly work at the local meat processing plant]. Community in a silent way is still upset about that type of thing so an integration program is probably a good move for the school system being that we're proactive. All students arrive but they can do some outside activities that simply soothes the community.³⁹

Of the four districts I studied this was the only one where people mentioned groups organized against Hispanic residents. This context of unrest did not directly impact the planning process but in undoubtedly influenced it indirectly. A former school district administrator talked about meeting with some groups quietly to head off a public dispute over the grant.

I played an active role in the first grant because it needed a lot of attention and implementation done correctly or it had the potential to be very inflammatory in the community. There was actually a formalized group against our increased Hispanic population in that community. ...We just had to navigate it so that it didn't get public attention and shift the real intent of the integration dollars to something that can happen quickly in rumor mill in a smaller community. ...I was invited to one of their meetings to at least have a face-to-face conversation about what this brought to all kids.⁴⁰

Both districts in Illinois have a history of ethnic diversity but as a result of different factors. Those factors have made for a very different experience of diversity in each place and impacted how each district approached the process. Avonlea is located near a fairly large Amish community. The proximity of the two cultures has fostered a fairly tolerant community which has been inviting for people from other cultures as well. In fact this cultural diversity in a rural setting is one of the things that Avonlea prides itself on and one of the factors that is appealing to potential new residents. One community member put it this way:

Not many kids come from a school of 200 that are going to have such a wide variety...and again, we might be 40 percent Hispanic but my daughter's class had only like 30 some people in it and at graduation you had a fully autistic boy, you had your Hispanics, you had Indian, you had a deaf person. I love that when your kids go from

³⁹ Interview R104.

⁴⁰ Interview S113.

these small schools that they're already used to different cultures and, and that type of thing.⁴¹

In addition, the town has a history of strong resident involvement in many aspects of civic life. When the school administration decided to undertake the effort to rewrite the school's mission statement, it was important to both the superintendent and the school board members to make it an open process with a lot of community input. Because of the long history of civic engagement, the administrators had a list of community leaders that represented various economic and demographic groups that would be willing to participate or recommend another person to participate.

Plum Creek also has a history of diversity. The ethnic diversity of Plum Creek is tied to the zinc smelting plant that was in operation for most of the 20th century and drew migrants from Europe as well as Latin America. Since its closing, it has become apparent that its operation has severely contaminated the land surrounding it as well as the lake on which the town is situated. The US has classified it as one of the worst Superfund sites in the nation, on par with the Hanford nuclear sites in Washington State (EPA 2012). The contamination is at the root of almost everything that happens in the town. The city's website is dominated by an effort to get the state and federal governments to clean up the site and the lake. It is the primary reason why there are so many children in poverty attending school there. People with other options tend to choose to live in a city where the soil and ground water are not severely contaminated. Those who live there are a handful of people with an unusual amount of civic pride and a love for fighting for the underdog and those who cannot afford to live in other parts of the Illinois River Valley. This concentration of poverty and minorities makes the district very appealing for grants such as the one the district was awarded. It also impacts the expected participation of community members. Several people told me that parents are just too busy to be very involved in school activities. If people are living in Plum Creek because they have few other options, they are probably working very hard to maintain shelter and food for their families. School involvement is not a priority.

Within the district there is a clear divide between the newcomers and the old-timers. This divide is more apparent than the racial divide, although it is somewhat along racial lines with the newcomers being overwhelmingly Hispanic. The other aspect of the divide is related to age and income levels, although few people, if any, in the town could be termed wealthy, the newcomers have markedly lower incomes. In addition, the newcomers tend to be younger with children in school while many of the old-timers are approaching retirement with most or all of the kids moved out of the house. The attitude among administrators (who are all from out of town) is fairly patronizing toward parents. They feel they need to educate them as well as the children.

⁴¹ Interview Q24.

In the grocery bags, the first piece they did in Spanish and English was a page that said, here's what parents can expect of teachers. When I was talking about a more informed consumer, I don't want the litigious consumer of Highland Park and Winetka but those guys hold their, their teachers' feet to the fire. I want our parents to be a little fierce like that. They can be loving and what have you. But they ought to have certain standards for what they believe their teachers should be doing....But then in the bags, they also put in there here's what teachers expect of you, as a parent.⁴²

The Plum Creek administrator certainly means well. There is a great difference between the expectations of parents in a very poor district and those in a very wealthy district like Winetka, which was referenced. However, the attitude of the administrators toward the parents was that of a service provider, not a partner, as it might be in a wealthier district. Many of the programs implemented were ways to remove the kids from their families for longer times because they were not learning enough at home and could learn more at school. Whether learning more and achieving higher test scores was a goal for the parents as well was never discussed.

The history of race and class within a town can impact how administrators and community member approach the process. In Rohan, where the labor struggle of the 1980s is still mentioned in conversation, the perception of the new Hispanic residents as people brought to the town to reduce wages colors the debate around services that they will benefit from. In Plum Creek, the major division is between the poorer newcomers and the relatively better off old-timers. The administrators and old-timers attitude toward the newcomers is that of a service provider without acknowledging that the services that are being provided may or may not be the ones that are most desired. However, as Avonlea demonstrates, the presence of cultural differences does not always need to be a source of conflict. Avonlea has managed to build upon its cultural differences with more diversity and that relatively cosmopolitan atmosphere has become a valued part of the town.

6.5 Conclusion

This dissertation has demonstrated very little impact of Hispanic individuals on the institution of school districts. Given the complex overlapping of both individual and institutional characteristics in rural school districts across the Midwest, it is not surprising that the quasi-experimental model showed no average difference between districts with rapid growth in the Hispanic population and districts that had little change. Although many Midwest towns share a similar ethnic history, the forces that have shaped and continue to influence the towns' identities and cultural norms can be vastly different. The diverse institutional factors are just as much a part of decision-making process as the new Hispanic community.

⁴² Interview P52.

The combination of all of these influences leads to a variety of outcomes depending on the specific people and institutions involved in places. This is consistent with the institutional context in which Healey (2006) situates communicative planning. In her conception, not only are individuals influencing the actions of institutions but institutions are impacting the how individuals conduct their lives.

The primary ways I found that institutions are shaping the options open to individuals are through legislation, through the goals set for the processes, through the availability of resources and through the perception of race and class within the community. These institutional factors in some cases interfered with the implementation of a communicative process. For example, the confusion and conflicting demands on administrators' time and attention in Mayberry, Minnesota as both integration and consolidation were planned for. In other cases the institutional factors were one of the elements that facilitated the communicative planning process. For example, the open requirements for the Integration and Desegregation Revenue Program while Rohan, Minnesota, was planning for the grant. Finally, there were also cases where the institutional factors were addressed and their impact mitigated through the efforts of the administrators. For example, in Rohan, Minnesota where the superintendent met with potential detractors before the grant process was well underway to defuse some of the tensions that may have resulted from historical prejudices.

The influence of these institutional factors further underscores the context in which Healey (2006) situates communicative planning. It is not just communicative planning that fits in this institutional framework but all preference revelatory mechanisms. These institutional factors can complicate the institution of a voting mechanism as well through legislation by making voting more onerous or daunting, through goals by determining the measures and the wording of those measures that are voted on, through resources by a lack of publicity about the measures voted on or even the voting process itself, and through race and class by discouraging voting among certain groups through social intimidation. It is clear that in the cases studied the school districts aimed for a preference revelatory mechanism most similar to a communicative process, not a voting process. In the four cases the institutional factors were the primary impediments to carrying out such a process. As noted by Sen (1999) and Habermas (1987), the validity of a preference revealing mechanism such as communicative planning, is based on the validity of the process itself. In a process dominated by institutional constraints, it is those institutional factors that will determine the community's social utility curve instead of discovering it through a true revelatory process.

7. Policy implications for planning practice

School districts are not alone in their quest to meet the needs and desires of the local community. It is a goal of most local governments who see themselves as deriving their power from the consent of the governed. Just how governments ascertain that consent and determine the preferences within the community has long been debated. The use of voting mechanisms is prevalent but such a mechanism may arrive at inaccurate conclusions (Arrow 1963) or reveal aggregate preferences of individuals instead of the social preferences (Rtischl 1958[1931]). To circumvent this, Sager (2002, 2007) proposes employing communicative planning as a preference revelatory mechanism. Within Healy's (2006) institutionalist framework, it is clear to see many of the pitfalls that face the implementation of such a mechanism. Institutional impediments are not unique to communicative planning but can apply to the implementation of any preference revelatory mechanism. However, the particular ways that institutions impact the revelatory process are different for communicative planning than they are for other mechanisms.

In contrasting the four case studies in light of the institutional impediments and advantages discussed in chapter 6, several implications for implementing a communicative planning process emerged. City, county, township and other local governments share many of the same dilemmas in understanding the preferences of the community for whom they work. They may not need to boost student achievement on standardized exams but they do need to plan for an implement road improvements, determine infrastructure needs, locate historic districts and protect properties of importance to the community, encourage business creation and growth, and ensure peoples' housing needs are met. Voting is not the only or even necessarily the primary mechanism that local governments employ to understand the preferences of the community around these issues. Very often, as the school districts did in these four case studies, they attempt to implement a mechanism that engages the community in dialog. The lessons derived from the four case studies yield three main policy implications.

- Outreach is important to the involvement and impact of a new community.
- The ability of the local government to implement state and federal mandates in a way that made sense for their community encourages the involvement of community members.
- Communicative planning is best seen as part of the local government's overall strategy, not a process that starts over with each new policy decision that needs to be made.

Some districts did get Hispanic community members to participate in the district's activities around these grants. In Rohan, several people I spoke with related instances where a program was created due to the specific intervention of a Hispanic community member (or several). This indicates that while not all of the districts implemented a communicative process fully, some districts did gain understanding

from a partial implementation of communicative planning techniques. It was clear in all of the cases that the most effective way for new residents to become involved in the school district was for the district to create a path for their involvement that was comfortable for them. In Rohan, the school began holding the Hispanic Parent meetings at the Catholic church after mass on some Sundays. This context was both comfortable and convenient for Hispanic parents. As the parents became more familiar with the structure and purpose of the meetings, the district moved them into the school building. Reaching outside of the school and changing the way the district operated was very effective in engaging parents, the first step in a communicative process. It is not enough to simply assume that since the members of a new community are not at a meeting, they do not care or are not impacted by the policies being discussed. Finding avenues for the new community to participate in a way that is comfortable for them will lead to preference revelation and policy changes.

Not all institutional factors are under the control of the local government. Just as individuals are operating in a complex web of institutional structures, so school districts are subject to many institutional factors from state and federal mandates to the social norms and relationships of the larger community. In some cases, as with Mayberry, Minnesota, the school district accepted these constraints as a given. There the tightening of the enforcement of the rules around the programming related to the grant meant that the school district had less autonomy to determine what programs were right for Mayberry. The lack of autonomy disenfranchised some of the participants. However, institutional factors are sustained by consent. Mayberry could have taken a more proactive stance in fighting for what they knew to be right for their community. By contrast, Rohan, Minnesota, recognized early the potential social constraints on the process and worked to minimize them. In Rohan, an administrator discussed steps she had taken to minimize the potential negative impacts of racial prejudice in the district. This awareness of the possible difficulties that the informal institution of social perceptions can have on a participation program probably helped Rohan to implement a more communicative process than other places. The institutional factors that mediate the activities of a school district are not always a disadvantage, nor do they need to be fought against to gain greater autonomy. For example, the looser regulations in the Minnesota Integration and Desegregation Revenue Program allowed the residents of Rohan to take more ownership of the grant program. When the state tightened up the regulations as Mayberry was planning for the revenue, community members didn't see the point of their involvement when the state and administrators had already decided which programs were acceptable. To understand the preferences of a community, the mechanism needs to engage the community. For communicative planning, to feel relevant to local community members, it must retain some local control for the people involved. Without local control, the process seems irrelevant and the possibility of understanding the community's preferences disappears as

the participants do. In planning for future state and federal processes, local governments can move as much of the control as possible to the local level. For example, in planning a light rail line where most of the money comes from state and federal sources and therefore has many requirements from those levels, involving community members beginning with an early stage and continuing their involvement in determining how to respond to state and federal requirements would be one way to maintain greater local autonomy. Even when there are no mandates from higher levels of government, local governments need to be aware of what institutional factors may restrain the process and be ready to respond to them.

It is important to remember that not all processes call for full participation of all community members at all stages of the process. Instead, it is more productive to think of involvement as developing over time so that the best form of involvement can be deployed at the necessary time. The timeframe of involvement was particularly apparent when I evaluated the degree to which new groups formed and peoples' identities changed. For example, in Avonlea, Illinois, the timeframe of the project was so short that there was little chance for groups to form. On the other hand, the reason that the school district administration was able to assemble a reasonably diverse group is because there are a variety of people, including Hispanic parents, involved in other aspects of the school and community. In Mayberry, Minnesota, where the timeframe studied was also short, they had difficulty getting Hispanic parents to attend meetings and contribute to the decision-making process because this was one of the first times the district had made a concerted effort to involve this community. The lack of interest on the part of Hispanic parents was bewildering to some administrators. However, if this is a system the parents are not familiar with, it is understandable that they will not know when the school district administrators need their input or what kind of input is needed. If the quasi-experimental model could be modified to include prior participation, this may contribute to a different outcome for the model. For local governments, understanding that the outreach needs to begin before the decision need to be made is important in securing useful involvement at times when it is needed. This is one of the most fundamental differences between communicative planning as a preference revealing mechanism and voting mechanisms. Communicative planning is most effective as a long-term strategy. When the district needs input into a specific decision, there is an active community to consult. Conversely, with a long term communicative strategy, there are established lines of communication for community members to communicate with the district unprompted. In contrast, a voting mechanism is always top-down and around individual issues. This is helpful because Sen (1999) relates a social utility curve as a evolving frontier. Communicative planning when implemented as a long-term strategy can be a mechanism that not only reveals preferences at a specific time but can help the government remain in touch with the needs and desires of the community as they change.

This research has broad implications for local governance. To carry out their function, local governments need some way of determining the needs and preferences of the people within their jurisdiction. A communicative planning model is a promising method of determining this because it allows the social utility curve to be determined empathetically as Sen (1999) terms it, through dialog within the community. This means that the curve is established separately from the individual utility curve. Several institutional factors impact the implementation of a communicative process differently than voting-based revelatory mechanisms. The nature of revelatory mechanisms is that they are implemented by a government. This means that many of the institutional factors specific to that government will likely impact the process. The government can overcome them or at least minimize the negative effects by reaching out to the community and changing some of their structures of engagement to better respond to and meet the needs of people who have not previously engaged with the government. The institutional structures of government are not the only factors impacting a communicative process. Awareness on the part of the local government of some of these other formal or informal structures can help them respond to or take advantage of them, retaining as much local control as possible to keep community members engaged in the process. Finally, one of the advantages of a communicative process is that an effective one is part of a longer term strategy by the government to understand the social utility curve. This means that the government ideally is learning about the preferences of the community as they evolve. This interaction is initiated by both by the government itself, as it would be in a voting mechanism, but also by individuals through the communication channels that have been mutually established. Communicative planning promises to be a useful preference revelatory tool, not just because it circumvents some problems with voting, but because of this advantage as a tool that can reveal preferences with more nuance across time.

8. Appendix A: Case study survey instrument

The case study instrument was given to the participants as a hand out. It was a single sheet of paper with printing on both sides. I personalized the questions on the first side to fit both the school district that I was visiting and the role of the person I was interviewing. The instrument on the following page is a generic formulation of the questions that were contained on the first side. The second side never varied. When I interviewed people over the phone, I emailed a copy of the instrument.

Interview protocol

The interview will be conducted at the location chosen by the interviewee. The interviews are expected to last about an hour but may vary depending on how knowledgeable the interviewee is about the policy change and how much detail he or she is willing to share. The interviews will be conducted in English unless the interviewee requests another language. If that is the case, an interpreter will be hired. Interviews will have two parts. The first part is a conversation about the policy change that took place and the role that the interviewee played. The second part is a structured questionnaire about other people and organizations involved in the process. An audio recording of the interview will be made if the interviewee consents. Notes of the interview will be kept in a specific notebook. The answers to the structured part of the interview will be recorded on the appropriate sheet. The audio recording, notes, and questionnaire answers will be coded for the school district, interviewee and date where the school district and interviewee codes are alpha-numeric strings that are not related to their actual names. The following questions will guide the first, semi-structured interview:

General description of the policy change:

- Do you know what caused the issues around the policy change to become important?
- Where there any events that provided the spark that ignited the policy change process?
- Was there a point in the process that was pivotal to the policy change or how it was implemented?
- Was this policy change controversial?
- Where and how was this policy change debated? (e.g., community meetings or in the editorial pages of the newspaper).

The role of the interviewee:

- What was your role in the process?
- How did other people feel about your role?

The involvement of others:

- How inclusive was the policy change process?
- Were any new groups formed because of this policy-change process?
- Were there any people or groups that refused to participate in the policy change process or its implementation?
- Were there any groups that were deliberately or accidentally left out of the process?

The role of knowledge:

- What were the facts that were important to this becoming an issue?
- Who introduced these facts?
- Were other facts introduced into the process later?
- What kind of reception was given to facts that had not been introduced by the most powerful party in the process?

Structured Interview questionnaire

It is thought that some organizations and persons are more influential than others on school district issues. This part of the interview will be used to understand the breadth of involvement and influence in the policy-change process. People and organizations named in this section may be contacted by the interviewer although the interviewer will not reveal who named them as influential in the process. People that are named by at least three interviewees and a random sample of about five people who were named by fewer than three interviewees will be contacted for an interview.

In your opinion, what were the most influential or important organizations involved in the policy change process we have been discussing?

In your opinion, which persons have had the most influence or leadership on the policy change process we have been discussing, regardless of whether you agree with them?

9. Appendix B: Survey instrument

The survey instrument was printed on legal size paper (8.5 x 14 inches) and folded once. It was mailed in an envelope with a letter describing the purpose of the survey and a stamped return envelope. Each questionnaire was coded at the top of the first page for the district that received it.

Name of school district	City	IL	NCES code
<h1>Changes in school district finance and administration, 1990 to 2010</h1>		<p>Please return to: Katherine Nesse University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Department of Urban and Regional Planning 111 Temple Buell Hall, MC-619 611 Taft Drive Champaign, IL 61820</p>	
<p>1. Have there been any major changes in the way the school district is financed or administered since 1990?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <i>continue with question 2</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No <i>skip to question 10</i></p>			
<p>2. When did the most significant financial and/or administrative change(s) take place? If there has been more than one period of revolutionary change, list the periods in order of significance.</p> <p>2A. Between _____ and _____</p> <p>2B. Between _____ and _____</p> <p>2C. Between _____ and _____</p>			
<p>3. During the period noted in 2A, what were the change(s) in finance that took place? Changes may include a change in the source of funds (e.g., more federal funds or more funds from property taxes), a change in how much or the method people in your district are taxed (e.g., property taxes increased or a sales tax was implemented).</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>			
<p>CONTINUED ►</p>			

4.

During the period noted in 2A, what were the change(s) in the administration of the district? Changes may include a change in how the school district is organized (e.g., schools were added or consolidated), or a change in services (e.g., more money was spent on instruction, English languages classes were added, or an increase in social services or meals).

5.

Were people other than the school board involved in making the change(s) that happened during the period noted in 2A?

- Yes *continue with question 6*
- No *skip to question 8*

6.

Who were these people? Check all that apply.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parents | <input type="checkbox"/> Members of civic organizations such as the Rotary Club |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers | <input type="checkbox"/> Members of other local organizations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Students | <input type="checkbox"/> Members of a racial or ethnic minority |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administrators | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parents' organization(s) | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers' union | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other teachers' group(s) | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student organization(s) | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> City and local government officials | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local church officials | _____ |

7.

How were they involved? Involvement may include presence at school board meetings; community meetings hosted by the school district, local government or other group; letters to the school board or the local newspaper; rallies and protests; social media such as Facebook; surveys; or input gathered through websites or other means.

8.

Of all the changes you mentioned, were any of them controversial?

- Many of them
- Some of them
- None of them

9.

Once all of the changes were implemented, were they widely supported overall by parents, teachers, community members and others in the school district?

- Yes
- Somewhat
- No

CONTINUED ►

10. Have you noticed an increase in Hispanic students as a percent of the total student body in your district since 1990?

- Yes, the percent of Hispanic students has increased
- Yes, the percent of Hispanic students has increased along with other changes in the student body
- No, I haven't noticed a change in the percent of Hispanic students but there have been other demographic changes
- No, I haven't noticed much of a change
- I don't know
- Other: _____

11. Are you a member of the school board or district administration?

- Yes
- No, my relationship to the school district is: _____
- _____

12. How knowledgeable are you about the history of the school district over the past 20 years?

- Very knowledgeable
- Fairly knowledgeable
- Not very knowledgeable
- Not at all knowledgeable

13. I am planning to follow up this survey with four case studies. Would your school district consider being one of the case studies?

- No
- Maybe, but the district would need more information first
- Yes

14. A good person to contact about your district possibly being a case study would be:

Name _____

Email _____ Phone _____

10. Appendix C: Consent form for the case studies

The consent form was the first handout I gave to people I was interviewing. When I interviewed people over the phone I emailed them a copy and asked them to either scan a copy of it once they had signed it or mail it to me through the post office.



ILLINOIS

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

Department of Urban and Regional Planning
111 Temple Buell Hall, MC-619
611 Taft Drive
Champaign, IL 61820

Dear interviewee:

You are invited to participate in a case study of this school district that is part of the dissertation research of Katherine Nesse, a doctoral candidate at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign under the supervision of Dr. Mary Edwards, a professor in the Department of Urban and Regional Planning at the same university. The purpose of this interview is to understand whether there were a diversity of people involved in the policy-change process, and how the involvement influenced the choice and execution of the policy. You must be at least 18 years old to participate in this research. In addition to this interview, I am conducting interviews with about 20 other people in your school district. I am also conducting three other case studies of districts in the Midwest. I would appreciate your help by telling me your perspective on the policy changes that have taken place and the process through which they came about. I expect it will take about an hour.

The risks of participating in this case study for you and your school district are minimal. If you feel that there may be negative consequences if your name is associated with your comments, you can choose to have your identity remain confidential. In addition, you may choose the location of the interview. If you feel that the interview would reflect negatively on your reputation or career to be interviewed at the office, you can choose to be interviewed at home or at another location. Your participation is voluntary and you may refuse to answer any question or stop this interview at any time without any consequences. If you desire, all information provided can remain confidential. Your district will not be identified by name in any published material. I will not record or quote this interview without your explicit consent. The results of these interviews will be used in my doctoral dissertation and in journal articles. Brief synopses of the case studies will be available on my website www.knesse.net in August 2011. I hope that the resulting case studies of this and other school districts will help you and your district understand your experience in relation to other districts in the Midwest.

This interview protocol has been approved by the University of Illinois Institutional Review Board. If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this study, please contact the University of Illinois Institutional Review Board at 217-333-2670 (collect calls accepted if you identify yourself as a research participant) or via email at irb@illinois.edu. For questions about this interview or my dissertation, contact me by email at knmesse2@illinois.edu or by phone at 651-366-7736 or contact my advisor, Dr. Mary Edwards at mmedward@illinois.edu or 217-333-3211.

Your participation is extremely valuable to the success of this case study, the research it is a part of, and my dissertation. A generic copy of this letter can be found on my website, www.knesse.net. Please take a moment to fill out the consent form. I will keep one copy in my files and you are invited to keep this letter and a copy of the consent form for your records. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Katherine Nesse



ILLINOIS

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN
Department of Urban and Regional Planning
111 Temple Buell Hall, MC-619
611 Taft Drive
Champaign, IL 61820

- I agree to participate in this research process
- I do not agree to participate in this research process

- The researcher may make an audio recording of my interview
- The researcher may not make an audio recording of my interview

- If an audio recording is made, I would like a transcribed copy of it
- If an audio recording is made, I would not like a transcribed copy of it

- I give permission to the researcher to quote from this interview
- I do not give permission to the researcher to quote from this interview

- I would like my identity to remain confidential
- I would not like my identity to remain confidential

If you consented to be quoted but would like for your identity to be confidential, how would you like the researcher to refer to you (for example, as “a parent” or “school board member”)?

Comments:

Name _____

Affiliation (if applicable) _____

Signature _____

11. Appendix D: Characteristics of people interviewed

The following table lists the people interviewed for the case studies along with the pseudonym of the district they were interviewed about, their self-identified role in the district and whether or not they told me that they are Hispanic.

<i>Code</i>	<i>District</i>	<i>Role</i>	<i>Hispanic</i>	<i>Code</i>	<i>District</i>	<i>Role</i>	<i>Hispanic</i>
P51	Plum Creek	Staff Member	No	Q21	Avonlea	Superintendent	No
P52	Plum Creek	Administrator	No	Q22	Avonlea	Executive director of Hispanic community center	No
P53	Plum Creek	Administrator	Yes				
P54	Plum Creek	Mayor	No	Q23	Avonlea	School board	No
P55	Plum Creek	Community member	Yes	Q24	Avonlea	School board	No
P56	Plum Creek	Community member	Yes	Q25	Avonlea	School board	No
P56x57	Plum Creek	Former school board member	No	Q26	Avonlea	School board	No
P58	Plum Creek	Community college administrator	Yes	Q27	Avonlea	Former school board member	No
P59	Plum Creek	Administrator	No	Q28	Avonlea	Meeting facilitator	No
P60	Plum Creek	Teacher	No	Q29	Avonlea	Teacher	No
P61	Plum Creek	Teacher	No	Q30	Avonlea	Pastor	No
P62	Plum Creek	Teacher	No	R101	Rohan	School district staff	No
P63	Plum Creek	Township librarian	No	R102	Rohan	Curriculum director	No
P64	Plum Creek	Teachers' union president	No	R103	Rohan	Former school board member	No
S201	Mayberry	Superintendent	No	R104	Rohan	Community member	No
S202	Mayberry	School board	No	R105	Rohan	School board	No
S203	Mayberry	Administrator	No	R106	Rohan	ELL Coordinator	No
S204	Mayberry	Administrator	No	R107	Rohan	Success coach	No
S205	Mayberry	Administrator	No	R108	Rohan	Parent	Yes
S206	Mayberry	Business manager	No	R110	Rohan	Community member	Yes
S207	Mayberry	Integration council member	No	R111	Rohan	Neighboring school employee	No
S208	Mayberry	Teacher	No	R112	Rohan	School board	No
S208x209	Mayberry	Local educator	No	R113	Rohan	Former	No
S209x210	Mayberry	Teacher	No	R114	Rohan	School board	No
S211	Mayberry	Meeting facilitator	No	R115	Rohan	Community member	No
S212	Mayberry	Neighboring district parent	No	R117	Rohan	Executive director of parenting resource center	No
S207x213	Mayberry	parent	No				
S214	Mayberry	Former school board member	No	R118	Rohan	Executive director of multicultural community center	Yes
				R119	Rohan	Success coach	No

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