



WOULD INTERDISTRICT OPEN ENROLLMENT DISRUPT MISSOURI SCHOOL DISTRICTS?

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KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Critics of interdistrict open enrollment (IOE) argue that allowing students to cross district boundaries will disrupt district enrollments and, in turn, disrupt district finances.
- Alternatively, proponents of IOE argue it can transform public education by sparking meaningful interdistrict competition for students. Our findings do not entirely rule this out, though they suggest it is unlikely, at least in the first five years.
- Holistically, our results suggest that IOE is not a systemic disruptor of the residentially based school assignment system. Instead, it appears to provide increased mobility for a relatively small but meaningful share of families for whom the local district is not a good fit. While IOE is unlikely to produce the sweeping changes anticipated by its strongest advocates—or feared by its strongest critics—it can still help many families have better educational experiences.