

NEO CANDO

In Practice

DOCUMENTING, ANALYZING,
AND SUPPORTING SCHOOL
IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS

Catalyst Cleveland is a bimonthly, nonprofit newsmagazine created to document, analyze and support school-improvement efforts in the Cleveland public schools. Working at the frontline in education policy, the magazine has been reporting on education reform in the Cleveland Municipal School District for the past eight years. It's 13,000 subscribers include members of the philanthropy community, school teachers and administrators, community leaders in organizations that serve area youth, as well as local and state policy makers.

The magazine has the goal of providing this wide audience of readers with factual informative reporting which will help in the policy decision making process, and ultimately, to improve the quality of education for youth in Cleveland. Joy Brewington, Data Analyst at Catalyst Cleveland, says that "Knowing data helps shapes stories, and stories provide readers with the information they need to form opinion, make decisions, and take action. The audience wants facts, not theories. They want numbers."

In order to provide Catalyst readers with these facts, and in order to help highlight where real solutions can be implemented, Joy uses NEO CANDO to access a wide variety of social and economic indicators. Using NEO CANDO, Joy has instant access to school enrollment figures as well as factors that affect the communities and neighborhoods in which Cleveland youth live, such as child and individual poverty rates, family household makeup, crime rates, juvenile delinquency, educational attainment, public assistance and vital statistics, such as low birth rate and infant mortality. In addition to these social and economic indicators, Joy has accessed property characteristic information in order to examine tax abatements and understand their effect on school funding.

Joy finds the ability to breakdown the data to the neighborhood level especially helpful in examining trends and conditions in the communities in which youth live and go to school.

Joy Brewington



Catalyst Cleveland

Inequities between Cleveland Public Schools

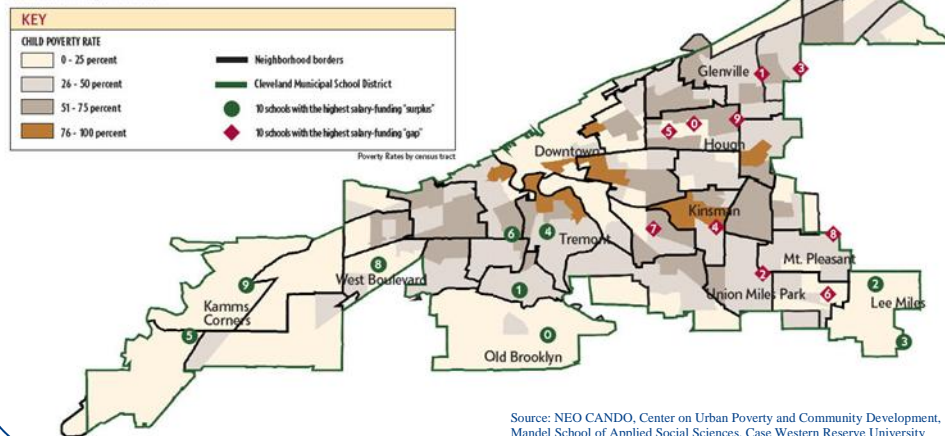
In the September/October 2006 edition of Catalyst Cleveland, the news magazine's staff examined the difference in teacher salary funding between Cleveland schools.

The ten schools with the greatest funding gap and the ten schools with the greatest funding surplus were compared. The funding gap/surplus is "the dollars a school gains or loses based on whether its average teacher pay is above or below \$60,143, the district average for elementary, K-8, and middle schools."

Using NEO CANDO, Joy was able to determine the child poverty rate for each census tract within the city of Cleveland. After overlaying the location of the gap/surplus schools onto a map, she was able to show that the schools with the greatest funding gaps were located in East-side neighborhoods with high poverty rates, and that schools with funding surpluses were located primarily in neighborhoods with lower poverty rates. To see the full report, visit www.catalyst-cleveland.org

Funding unequal between most east and west side schools

Teacher salaries are lower at east side schools that enroll higher percentages of African-American and low-income students, a Catalyst analysis shows. The three exceptions are Gracemount K-8, Emile deSauze Contemporary Academy and Memorial on the far east side.



Source: NEO CANDO, Center on Urban Poverty and Community Development, Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences, Case Western Reserve University

Map prepared by Catalyst Cleveland, using NEO CANDO and 2000 U.S. Census Data.