Public vs. Private School Student Performance

The U.S. Department of Education recently released a report, “Comparing Private Schools and Public Schools Using Hierarchical Linear Modeling,” by Henry Braun, Frank Jenkins and Wendy Grigg. The study found that students with equivalent demographic characteristics do as well or better in public schools as in private schools. When scores were adjusted for characteristics such as school size, location, and the composition of the student body, the average scores for public schools, for example, was significantly higher than the average for scores for private schools in 4th grade mathematics. The scores were not significantly different for reading.

Notes on ACS: The U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey (ACS) data is billed as “a nationwide survey designed to provide communities a fresh look at how they are changing” and change is critical to Stark County, home of the state’s premier P-16 Compact. Data reflecting 2005 was released in August by the U.S. Census Bureau. While ACS is an estimate, the survey is geared to allow communities to make informed judgments about growth and change during the ten years between conventional census surveys. ACS is subject to a margin of error 90% confidence and this margin in education attainment is +/- 1.3% for bachelor’s degree or higher.

Dr. Adrienne O’Neill gave a presentation – “Setting Large Goals, Using Data and a P-16 Council to drive Change” – to the Lake County Educational Service Center on September 7, 2006.