

**On the Road to Political Incorporation:  
The Status of Hispanics in the Town of Cicero, Illinois**

**Research Project**

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Between 1990 and 2000, the Hispanic<sup>1</sup> population in Cicero, Illinois grew by 175%. Accompanying this growth were increases in the representation of Hispanics in Cicero's administrative workforce, law enforcement officers, school board members, and even the Board of Trustees. Though it is evident that the Hispanic population has seen significant increases in their size and level of representation, have these factors actually led to the political incorporation of Cicero's Hispanic community? To answer this question, it becomes essential to begin with a brief distinction between political representation and political incorporation. For instance, while political representation refers to the representation of minorities on policymaking bodies (i.e. local, state, and/or federal elected officials), political incorporation refers to the extent to which group interests are effectively represented in policymaking, as measured by the representation of a minority group on coalitions which dominate city policy-making issues concerning individual minorities groups (Browning, Marschall & Tabb, 2003, 11). This is an important distinction to draw because in order to derive substantial benefits, minorities must achieve an equal or leading role in a dominant coalition committed to minority interests, in addition to gaining influence to city councils and the various bureaucracies that deliver important services (Judd & Swanstrom, 2002, 405). Therefore, if Cicero Hispanics have achieved the transformation from political representation to political incorporation, it would be evident in the effective representation of their policy agenda on policymaking.

To determine the status of political incorporation achieved by Hispanic residents in Cicero, Illinois, this study introduces the *Hispanic Political Incorporation Model* built upon Valerie C. Johnson's *Model of African-American Suburban Political Incorporation* and Rufus P. Browning, Dale Rogers Marshall & David H. Tabb's *Levels of Political Incorporation*. Through the *Hispanic Political Incorporation Model*, this study examines shifts in Cicero's socioeconomic and political characteristics, the emergence of a Hispanic political agenda, Hispanic educational concerns, and coalition building and activism activities, in order to determine the impact of these internal and external interactions on the transition from political representation to political incorporation. This model also provides a method for assessing the level of political incorporation (low, medium, or high) achieved by the Hispanic community, through an examination of the impact of internal and external interactions addressing the educational concerns of Cicero's Hispanic community.

In addressing the level of political incorporation achieved by Cicero Hispanics, this analysis begins with an overview of political incorporation literature. Upon this theoretic backdrop, a *Hispanic Political Incorporation Model* is developed and examined in terms of the interactions between internal socioeconomic and political factors and external coalition building, the formation of allegiances, and the impact on education policy concerning Cicero's Hispanic community. To conclude this analysis, the level of political incorporation is examined to determine if the Hispanic community has achieved a low-, medium- or high-level of incorporation. This study concludes with an overall assessment of the political status of the Hispanic community in Cicero, Illinois.

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<sup>1</sup> For this study, the term Hispanic and Latino are interchangeable references referring to individuals who reported being Hispanic in the 1990 & 2000 U.S. Census. This includes individuals born in the United States of Hispanic descent, or individuals who have come to the United States from Latin American countries.

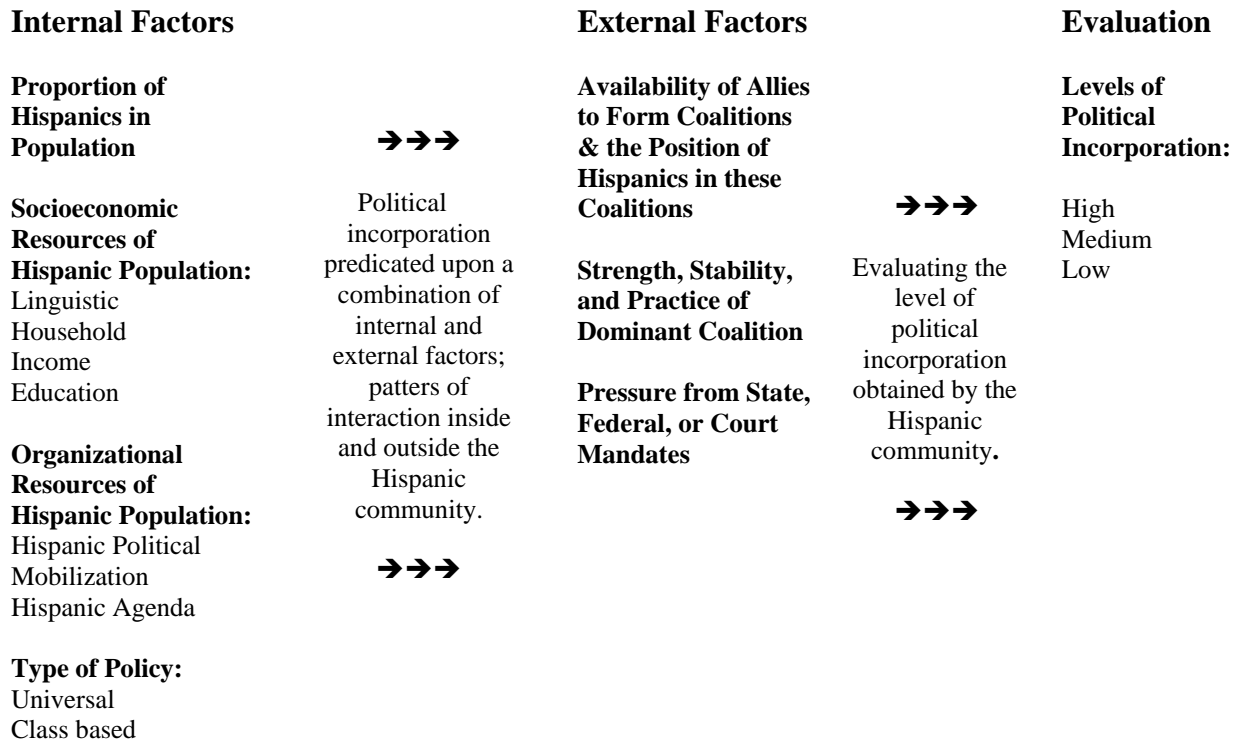
## **I. Establishing a Model of Hispanic Political Incorporation**

In developing a model that examines the level of Hispanic political incorporation in Cicero, this analysis begins with an overview of literature addressing the emergence of political incorporation. Through this theoretic overview, it is evident that there is some debate regarding the factors leading to political incorporation. For instance, to determine the impact of political mobilization on public policy, Browning, Marshall & Tabb (1985, 1986) conducted a study in 1984 on the mobilization of blacks and Hispanic communities in ten northern Californian cities. As noted in their findings, for African American minorities, biracial coalitions emerge as powerful vehicles for achieving political incorporation in local city politics. However, for Hispanic minorities, the creation of multiracial coalitions becomes essential to achieving political incorporation. Though Browning, Marshall & Tabb began to shed light on the emergence and significance of minority political mobilization on the transition to political incorporation, their work received mixed reviews. On the one hand, Munoz & Henry (1986) and Hero (1990) demonstrated the applicability and relevance of the coalition theory. On the other hand, Sonenshein (1986) and Mollenkopf (1986) found weaknesses with the optimistic view of biracial and multiracial coalition.

Recognizing the impact of various transitional factors, Valerie Johnson (2002) developed a model of political incorporation that combined both internal and external factors. In terms of internal factors, Johnson noted the importance of several key elements, including type of policy in question (universal, class based); proportion of African American in the population; their socioeconomic resources (education, income, and occupation); and, their organizational resources (mobilizing to elect African Americans and establishing cohesive policy agenda). In terms of external factors, Johnson noted the availability of allies to form coalitions and African American position in coalitions; strength, stability, and practices of dominant coalitions; in addition to pressure from the court system state or federal government mandates (17). Browning, Marshall & Tabb (2003) added to this research by defining level of political incorporation which measure political incorporation as being either: low (group is not represented; there are no officials from the group, and the group does not participate in the coalition that controls city government on issues which most concern them; medium (representation, but on councils dominated by a coalition which resists minority interests); or high (group has equal or leading role in a dominant coalition which is strongly committed to minority interests) (11).

Borrowing from the work of Johnson and Browning, Marshall & Tabb, Figure 1. (see following page) represents the model of Hispanic political incorporation employed in this study. In this model, political incorporation is determined by a combination of internal (Hispanic proportion in population; Hispanic socioeconomic resources; Hispanic organizational resources; and the type of policy being examined) and external forces (availability of allies to form coalitions; the strength, stability, and practices of dominant coalitions; and pressure for federal, state or local entities). If political incorporation is evident based on the interaction of these internal and external factors, it can then be examined in terms of the levels of incorporation actually achieved (i.e. low, medium or high).

**Figure 1. Model of Hispanic Political Incorporation**



In order to examine the impact of these internal and external factors on the level of political incorporation achieved by Hispanics in Cicero, this study employed data from a variety of sources. To study the internal factors of political incorporation, data associated with population and socioeconomic variables including population, linguistic, household, income and education characteristics, was obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau’s 1992 & 1997 U.S. Economic Census: Minority- and Women-Owned Business, 1990 & 2000 U.S. Census Data, and American FactFinder: Dataset: Geographic Area (Cicero, Illinois). Data associated with the student population and teaching staff for Cicero’s School District #99 and J. Sterling Morton High School District #201 was obtained from the Illinois State Board of Education’s 1998-2002 Illinois School Report Card. Information related to internal factors associated with Hispanic political mobilization, policy agenda, and education policy, in addition to external factors surrounding Cicero coalitions, was obtained from several sources, including: a comprehensive research study conducted by the Institute for Latino Studies, entitled *A Needs Assessment of Latinos in Berwyn and Cicero, Illinois*; media sources (television news transcripts, newspaper articles); official government websites sites associated with Cicero’s government, elected officials and representatives, school districts, and electoral process; in addition to the internet sites and media coverage surround Cicero coalitions, including the Interfaith Leadership Project, the Metropolitan Chicago Initiative, the Resurrection Project, and the Egan Urban Center. This combination of internal and external sources is essential in determining the impact of coalitions on the current political status of Hispanic’s in Cicero.

## **II. The Significance of Political Incorporation for Cicero Hispanics:**

Up to this point, much of the discussion has focused on the establishment of a theoretical backdrop for the *Hispanic Political Incorporation Model* employed in this study. Neglected thus far has been a discussion surrounding the significance of this political incorporation for Cicero's Hispanic community. As demonstrated in the subsequent section, achieving political incorporation is a necessity for Cicero's Hispanic community because of its growing population and consequent socioeconomic and political alienation. Another important reason to assess the level of political incorporation achieved by Hispanics revolves around Cicero's history as a racist and mob-ridden town, and the overall significance of this legacy on the election of Cicero's first Hispanic President, Ramiro Gonzalez. Therefore, to assess the level of political incorporation achieved by Hispanics in Cicero, the following analysis will bring to light the interactions between the internal and external factors employed in the model of Hispanic political incorporation.

## **III. Cicero, Illinois: Internal Socioeconomic & Political Factors**

As evident in Figure 1, there are several internal factors associated with Hispanic political incorporation, including the proportion of Hispanics in the population, the socioeconomic resources of Hispanics (linguistic, household, income, and education), the organizational resources of Hispanics (Hispanic political mobilization, and the emergence of a Hispanic agenda), and the type of policy in question (Hispanic education agenda).

### **A. Proportion of Hispanic in the Population:**

In terms of the racial and ethnic composition of Cicero, Illinois<sup>2</sup>, there have been significant shifts between the composition of Hispanic and white residents, and the overall composition of foreign-born residents. As evident in Table 1. (tables listed at the end), between 1990 and 2000, Cicero's population increased 27%, from a community of 67,436 to 85,616. As the population grew in size, so did the Cicero's Hispanic community which saw a 175% increase from 24,148 to 66,299 residents. However, as the Hispanic population increases in size, the percentage of white residents has decreased 19%, from 50,717 to 41,327 residents. These trends illustrate Cicero's radical ethnic transformation, where the Hispanic community has gone from constituting 36% of the population in 1990, to 77% in 2000. Accompany this ethnic shift, is evidence of white flight<sup>3</sup> where Cicero's white population has seen a significant decrease from 75% in 1990 to 48% in 2000. Paralleling the racial and ethnic transformations, are increases in number of Cicero's foreign-born Latin American population. As evident in Table 2., even though there have been increase in the number of foreign-born residents from Europe and Asia, the number of foreign-born Latin American residents has seen the greatest increase from 9,066 pre-

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<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of this study, the discussion will be focused on Cicero's Hispanic and White population. Though the 454% increase in the African American population and the 28% decreases in the Asian community are noteworthy, the fact that both African Americans and Asians compose less than 2% of Cicero's population deters further analysis.

<sup>3</sup> White flight is a reference to white families/individuals that move out of city as a result of increases in African American and/or Hispanic populations.

1980 to 15,354 in 2000. Today, Cicero has undergone a transformation from being a predominantly white non-Hispanic town, to a town where the majority of its residents are Hispanic, and the majority of foreign-born individuals are of Latin American origin.

## **B. Socioeconomic Resources of the Hispanic Population**

Shifts in the racial and ethnic composition of Cicero residents have also led to significant changes in the socioeconomic status of the town residents in terms of linguist, household, income, and education characteristics. When examining the linguistic breakdown of Cicero residents, decreases in English-only speaking household and English as the language spoken at home by individual residents, have undergone significant shifts. For instance, as noted in Table 3., English-only households have decreased 48% between 1990 and 2000, while Spanish-speaking households have seen drastic increases. Nevertheless, it is important to note that even though 149% of these Spanish-speaking households do not feel linguistically isolate, 173% of Spanish-speaking household have difficulty communicating in an English-language setting; thus feeling linguistically isolated. In terms of the language spoken at home by the individual family members, there has also been a decrease in the use of the English-language (75%) and an increase in the use of Spanish (188%). This further reinforces the notion that Cicero has undergone a radical racial and ethnic transformation between 1990 and 2000, and begins highlights some of the emerging problems associated with this change; in this case, linguistic isolation.

In terms of types of households, there have also been some interesting changes in the composition of Cicero families, and their place of residence. For instance, as noted in Table 4., between 1990 & 2000 married-white couples with children under the age of 18, decreased by 6%, while married-Hispanic couples increased by 170%. In addition, even though both white and Hispanic residents have seen increase in single-headed households, Hispanic single-male households have seen the greatest increase from 203 in 1990 to 1,507 in 2000 (a 642% increase). When examining the household tenure of Cicero residents, Table 5. further illustrates that with increases in the population of Hispanic residents, there have also been significant changes in the racial composition of residents who own or rent their place of residence. For instance, a white-flight pattern seems to be reinforced in the fact that between 1990 and 2000 there has been a 21% decrease in the number of white homeowners and an 11% decrease in the number of white renters. It is also significant to note that even though there have been ordinances<sup>4</sup> implemented to reduce the number of Hispanic residents and help deter white flight, there has been a 197% increase in the number of Hispanic homeowner and a 174% increase in the number of Hispanic renters. These trends illustrate that as white residents leave the town of Cicero, the number of households composed of Hispanic married-couples with children under 18, female-headed, and male-headed have seen drastic increases. In addition, even though political measures have been taken to curtail this influx of Hispanic families, the proportion of Hispanic renters and homeowners have also seen significant increases.

When examining the economic status of Cicero residents, there are also interesting trends surrounding the per capita income and poverty status of Hispanic residents, and the status of Hispanic-owned businesses. As illustrated in Table 6., the per capita income of white residents

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<sup>4</sup> These ordinances will be discussed in greater detail in the proceeding section.

decreased by 8.8% between 1989 and 1999, while Hispanic income increased by almost 6%. These decreases in the white per capita income may be attributed to the white flight patterns evident in the population shifts discussed thus far. It may be possible that even though some white residents are fleeing the town, the poorer residents have either decided, or been unable, to leave. For instance, in terms of white residents, between 1989 and 1999 there was a decrease in the number of residents with an income at or above poverty level (with the exception of the 6-11 age group). Paralleling this trend are increases in the number of white residents living below poverty level; including children under the age of 5, 5, 6 to 11, and individuals over the age of 18. Nevertheless, even though the per capita income of Hispanics saw an increase, it is important to note that the per capita income of whites was still higher. For instance, in 1989, the per capita income of whites was \$17,081 versus the \$10,932 income of Hispanic; in 1999, the per capita income of whites was \$15,581, versus a Hispanic income of \$11,555. In addition, even though the per capita income of Hispanics has seen an increase, the percentage of Hispanics living in poverty has also seen drastic increases in all age groups. However, not all Hispanics are doing poorly, as the percentage with an income at- or above- poverty level has also seen significant increases across the board. For those Hispanics who have found prosperity in Cicero, many have done so in the business sector. As evident in Table 7., the number of Hispanic firms have seen a 78% increase between 1992 and 1997, generating from \$16,456 in sales and receipts (in thousands) in 1992 to \$86,834 in 1997. However, even though the number of firms owned by women have decreased by 25%, firms owned by non-minority women have larger sales and receipts, ranging from \$157,204 in 1992, to \$215,072 in 1997. Consequently, even though the number of Hispanic firms has significantly increased, they are still making less financially than non-minority firms. These shifts in the per capita income, poverty status, and Hispanic business-ownership indicate that even though many Hispanics are prospering financially in Cicero, they have not achieved the levels of financial status obtained by many non-Hispanic residents. In addition, even though some Hispanics are securing financial stability, many are still living in poverty. A final noteworthy trend emerging from this economic data is the impact of the growth of Hispanic residents on the economic status of the white population. In other words, as the population of Hispanic resident's increases, the per capita income of whites and the number of white residents living above poverty level have also seen significant decreases.

The final socioeconomic resource of the Hispanic community revolves around the educational attainment of Cicero's adult population and the status of the education system for the children of the town. When examining the education of the adult population in Cicero, Table 8. illustrates that between 1990 and 2000 there has been a growing number of Hispanic residents who have less than a 9<sup>th</sup> grade education (196%), some high school but no diploma (181%), or are high school graduates (174%). In addition, even though there have been increases in the percentage of Hispanics who have associate, bachelor, graduate or profession degrees, these gains are overshadowed by the larger number of Hispanics who lack a basic high school education. In terms of the white residents, between 1990 and 2000 there have also been decreases in the percentage of high school graduates (33%), individuals with some college but no degree (25%), and individuals with associates (44%) or bachelors (39%) degree; in addition to slight increases in the percentage of white residents with a 9<sup>th</sup> grade education or less (4.6%). Combined, these trends indicate that there are growing numbers of Hispanic and white residents who lack a basic high school education.

Paralleling the educational problems of Cicero's adult population, are similar trends in the education of Cicero's youth. As noted in Table 9., Hispanic students have grown to compose the majority student body in Cicero schools. However, as illustrated by the US Department of Education (1999), even with the efforts of the J.S. Morton High School District, the Filmore Center for Human Services, and the Berwyn and Cicero Police Departments, Hispanic students are not doing any better than their parents. For instance, Hispanic teenagers compose 65% of the J. Sterling Morton High School District<sup>5</sup>. Of this percentage, 38% of the Hispanic student body qualifies for free- or reduced-lunches and 80% of the families qualify for public assistance; consequently, the school district has seen a 70% increase in families living in poverty. Teenage pregnancy have also increased to 1-2 new pregnancies reported each week, where the average age for these teenage mothers is 15.5 years. In addition to high poverty and teen pregnancy rates, the dropout and truancy rates are also higher than the state average. Complicating the education of Hispanic students is the poor quality of teachers working within the school districts. As noted by Grossman (2001), teachers working in Cicero school districts receive lower than average salaries, while working in high crime neighborhoods and among low disciplined students. As a result, teachers are not applying for jobs, and the one's that are applying are not bilingual and are under-qualified. For instance, for 42 open positions, only 80 applicants applied. Four bilingual education and 15 special education positions remain open; and, no Spanish-speaking teachers have applied for any teaching positions in Cicero. Due to teacher shortages, principals have been forced to break the law and hire substitute teachers as full-time employees. Complicating matters is the fact that many Cicero teachers, both full-time and substitute, have repeatedly failed the State's Basic Skills Exam (Grossman, 2001, 10).

Based on this overview, it is evident that Cicero, Illinois has undergone a radical transformation in terms of the racial and ethnic composition of its population, in addition to the linguistic, household, income, and education makeup of its residents as a direct result of the influx in the Hispanic community. Nevertheless, even though Hispanic's have now become the new majority, they have yet to attain the socioeconomic status achieved by non-Hispanic residents. Complicating matters is the political alienation targeting Hispanic residents. However, in order to understand the significance of this alienation, it is important to begin with a brief overview of Cicero's past. It is through an understanding of this Town's racial backdrop and history of organized crime that one can begin to comprehend the significance of Hispanics political incorporation in Cicero, Illinois.

### **C. Organizational Resources of Hispanic Population**

In order to discuss the organizational resources of the Hispanic population in terms of Hispanic political mobilization and the emergence of a Hispanic political agenda, it is important to discussion two important characteristics associated with Cicero politics. First of all, Cicero has deeply entrenched roots in racism and discrimination stemming from the 1950s. While original attempts to keep minorities out of the town were targeted at Africa Americans, with the influx in Hispanic residents, it will become evident in the following discussion that these trend have now shifted to this new minority group. Secondly, Cicero has also had a long tradition with organized crime stemming from the legacy of Al Capone to the influence of the Loren-Maltese Republican political machine. Consequently, politics in Cicero are not only discriminatory, but highly

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<sup>5</sup> Illinois' largest school district serving Berwyn, Cicero, Lyons, McCook, and Stickney.



corrupt and subject to numerous FBI investigations. Through this historic foundation, one can begin to understand the significance of the emergence of two key Hispanic candidates for Cicero Town President (Democratic Mario Joseph Moreno and Republican Ramiro Gonzalez), and the subsequent impact on Hispanic political mobilization and the emergence of a political agenda.

To begin with, the town of Cicero has been a location of racial turmoil for decades. In fact, it has been labeled “the Alabama of the North” because of its bigoted views. This history of racial segregation came to a pinnacle during the 1951 Cicero Riots. During these riots, the town revolted and turned militant when Harvey Clark Jr., a black man, attempted to break the color lines and move into a Cicero apartment building. Clark was greeted by police and mob activity, had most of his belongings destroyed by rioters, was forced to take court action, and was physically and emotionally abused. Because of the violence incited by this man’s decision to move into a bigoted town, the NAACP, Civil Right’s Leaders, the Courts, and the National Guard were called in to help integrate the town. (Travis, 1984; Anderson & Pickering, 1986; Ralph Jr., 1993). Fifty years later, Cicero continues to block “undesirables” from becoming integral members of their community. The difference is that Cicero’s racial targets are no longer African Americans, but a new underclass: Hispanic residents. For instance, on December 23, 1991, Cicero’s Board of Trustees passed an ordinance designed to exclude Hispanic families from seeking residency by limiting the number of persons who can occupy a residential dwelling based on the size of the dwelling. Their basis for this ordinance was that Hispanic families tend to have more children than white families. To complicate matters, the ordinance does not evict families who are already living in the town of Cicero and breaking the law because they are predominately white and non-Hispanic. Instead, only new residents are targeted; most of whom are Hispanics. Though the U.S. District Court ruled that this ordinance was a violation of the Fair Housing Act of 1988 and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (U.S.A. v. Town of Cicero, 1993, 1), Town officials continue to limit the influx of Hispanic residents, by cracking down on the use of basement and attic apartments (Institute for Latino Studies, 38).

Not only has Cicero attempted to restrict the influx of Hispanic residents, the town has also been successful in passing a series of anti-gang ordinances which encourage the racial profiling of Hispanic residents under the guise of anti-gang measures. For instance, with voter approval through referendum ballots, Cicero’s Board of Trustees successfully passed a gang ordinance targeting more than 600 gang members for deportation; juveniles and adults included. According to the Cicero Town President, Betty Loren-Maltese, “The parents are going to have to do what I call tough love. They [juveniles] should not be living at home with their mommies and daddies anyway” (ACLU, 1999a, 1). The second ordinance passed fined owners of property where known gang members live \$500.00 a day until the gang members left the premises. A third successful ordinance allowed police officers to seize and impound the cars of suspected gang members, without offering any evidence that the individual was engaged in a criminal offense. (ACLU, 1999b). The town of Cicero even went as far as to sue gang members for \$11 million to help pay for their wrongdoing. According to Loren-Maltese, “This is just another part of our war against the street gangs. They are loaded with gold chains, they are loaded with the best clothes, they have the best vehicles... So I think they have money” (Associate Press, 1999, 1). The lawsuit also sought to bar 268 listed gang defendants from congregating on corners, wearing gang colors, and carrying spray paint or marking pens. Though these Gang-Free Zone Ordinances were passed with overwhelming Hispanic support, these laws were framed in such a

way that a resident was basically voting “yes” if they were against gangs, “now that they better understand the proposal – and that about ¾ of the gang list is Hispanic – some Latinos are worried” (Belluck, 1999, 16). As echoed by the Interfaith Leadership Project, an outspoken local community organization, these laws single-out Latinos and potentially split-up families where children are deemed to be gang members. Dolores Ponce de Leon, the group’s community organizer, also noted that “instead of eviction, the town should try instituting educational programs” (Sandovi, 1999a, 12). The controversy over these Gang-Free Ordinances has even been picked up the Illinois ACLU, who successful sued the Town of Cicero and forced the rescinding of these ordinances (ACLA, 1999a,b)

To understand the actions and influences of Cicero’s elected officials, it thus becomes important to highlight the ties between organized crime and local politics. Through this linkage, it becomes evident that the interests of Cicero’s elected elite do not necessarily conform with the needs of the Town’s diverse constituency. In terms of the legacy of organized crime, beginning in the 1920s, Cicero became known as “The Walled City of the Syndicate.” Being the central headquarters for reputed mobsters Al Capone and Johnny Torrio, local politics became synonyms with organized crime – although not by choice. As noted by the Institute for Latino Studies, during the Prohibition Era, Capone used Cicero as his base for gambling, running alcohol, and other illegal activities. To show that he was in charge, Capone went as far as beating up the mayor of Cicero within the premises of City Hall (35). Through institutionalized fear, Capone was able to control politics and law enforcement in order to make a profit for his growing enterprises.

By the 1970s, this legacy of organized crime had become fully entrenched within Cicero’s highest levels of political office. What is noteworthy is that even though political corruption is eventually uncovered, this has not deterred individuals from taking advantage of the benefits obtained through illegal uses of powers. For instance, in 1975, Cicero Deputy Liquor Commissioner pled guilty to charges of taking bribes. Five years later, political corruption was still evident as the federal government placed gambling conspiracy charges against then-Cicero Town Assessor Frank Maltese<sup>6</sup>. After an FBI investigation in 1986, corruption still permeated the walls of City Hall as Cicero Liquor Commissioner Steve Bajovich was convicted of income tax violations (Institute for Latino Studies, 35). More recently, after a 2000 FBI political corruption probe, Town President Loren-Maltese was indicted for taking town money to finance her re-election campaign; using Illinois Specialty Risk Consultant Funds to invest in private ventures; in addition to making over \$10 million off of taxpayers money to buy lavish cars, homes, a golf course, a horse farm, and other treats for herself and her associates (Balderas, 2001; Pallusch, 2001). During this six-year federal probe, Cicero Human Resource Director, Edward Passero, was among a string of individuals arrested for corruption (Nicodemus, 2000). Though one would expect that these continuous FBI probes and subsequent prosecutions would deter political corruption in the Town of Cicero, the opposite appeared to take place. For instance, in response to charges of political corruption, President Betty Loren-Maltese suspended both the Police Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent after being informed that they had cooperated with the FBI (Balderas Sr., 2001). According to Niebur, “It was not until I began investigating Ram Towing and the irregularities in the Town’s towing practices that I was no

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<sup>6</sup> Frank Maltese would later go on to become Cicero President. Upon his death, in a closed session of the Board of Trustees, his wife Betty Loren-Maltese would be named Town President.

longer considered a reformer. I was suspended by the town president in retribution for my cooperation with the FBI and the state police in their investigation of the Town's towing practices and alleged corruption" (Compliant: Statement of Superintendent David Niebur, 1998, 1). Political allies who have turned against the Loren-Maltese administration have not been the only ones to feel the brunt of her displeasure with the challenge to her authority, the Hispanic community has also felt this retribution – and nothing illustrates this point better than the 2001 Cicero Elections for Town President.

In 2001, Democratic Cook County Commission Joseph Mario Moreno<sup>7</sup> announced his candidacy for the position of Cicero's Town President; as noted by Moreno, it was time to end corruption in Cicero. In response to this declaration, the Republican political machine began to search for ways to change the requirements for candidacy, build a mudslinging campaign, and partake in overall corrupt electoral practices. For instance, to thwart the efforts of Moreno, town officials attempted to get voters to support an ordinance that would change the residency requirement of a political candidate from one year to eighteen months, in order to keep Moreno from running in the 2001 election for town president. However, a lawsuit was filed in the US District Court of Chicago, alleging that this ordinance was a violation of the Voting Rights Act (US Department of Justice, 2000, 1). Along with this lawsuit, a motion from the Justice Department was submitted asking for an injunction against the referendum vote. The referendum was consequently called off after U. S. District Judge Charles Norgle ordered officials to "discourage voters from casting ballots on the proposed change and not to count any votes that are cast" (Robinson, 2000, 2). Although Loren-Maltese claimed that the law was not discriminatory and was instead designed to allow individuals to become acquainted with the town and its politics, many community groups supported the Courts decision. As noted by de Leon, even though Loren-Maltese has increased the number of Hispanics in town hall, this has not been enough; many people are growing increasingly tired of a corrupt leadership. Mario Pena, Lake County Coordinator for the Outreach Project for Citizenship, also opposed the residency restriction ordinance. After helping register more than 3,000 Hispanic voters, Pena noted that the ordinance would have had a chilling effect on Hispanics voters by preventing them from electing a Hispanic town president (Hein & Jackson, 2000, 6).

Because Loren-Maltese's attempts to keep Moreno off the Cicero ballots were unsuccessfully, a mudslinging campaign ensued against Moreno and electoral fraud quickly followed. For instance, as a result of numerous false accusations made by Loren-Maltese against Moreno, by the time the election came to a close, Moreno had been successfully framed as the domestic abuser, pro-gang, pro-drug candidate (Barilari, 2001; Reyes, 2001). To complicate matters, Cicero officials were placed under review by the Cook County State's Attorney after

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<sup>7</sup> Mario Moreno is the 7<sup>th</sup> District Democratic Cook County Commissioner, who has had an interesting history in Cicero politics. Though Moreno has emerged as an anti-Loren-Maltese candidate, with aspirations of ridding the town of its ties to organization crime, Moreno has failed to capture support of Cicero residents. As noted by Neal, Moreno is viewed as a "carpetbagger" by many Cicero residents. For instance, Moreno has only been a registered voter in Cicero for two years. To make matter worse, after losing to Loren-Maltese, Moreno bought a home on 14<sup>th</sup> and Halsted, and then proceeded to get the county to remap the district boundaries to include his new townhouse. In terms of his loyalty to the Town, this too has come under question as Moreno declares that if he win's his bid for Town President, he would continue to serve as Cook County Commissioner. In addition to mounting mudslinging campaigns by the Republican Party, Moreno has also accepted campaign contributions from two-time convict Joey Maltone's political action committee, which has ruined his credibility in terms of good government (2003).

breaking the law by allowing Republican precinct captains to collect and deliver completed absentee ballots (Sandovi, 2000b, 1). This violation was of great concern because Cicero not only has one of the highest numbers of absentee ballots in the area, but according to a random check of absentee ballot respondents, a high number of voters admitted to having their ballots collected by a Republican official. In response to these and other complaints from the Hispanic population, in addition to litigations from MALDEF (Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund), twenty-five federal observers were dispatched to monitor Cicero's 2001 municipal election. Under a settlement between federal officials and Cook County officials, the Justice department has been authorized to monitor elections in Cicero for the next five years (Frienden, 2001; MALFEF, 2003).

Although one would expect the Hispanic community to reject Loren-Maltese, her political base has not eroded. In fact, she has been continuously reelected and has even won over Hispanic opponents, as was the case with the 2001 election where Maltese received 9,492 votes (61%), while Moreno received 6,044 votes (39%). As explained by Kotowitz (2001), Loren-Maltese success can be largely attributed to her incorporation of Hispanics into her administration. Interestingly enough, even though she has placed Hispanics in her administration, these individuals are placed in positions with little power over the political corruptions of her administration (39). This was a point echoed by Moreno when he noted that Cicero's Hispanic voters needed to become more politically informed (Reyes, 1). Nevertheless, even though Moreno may have lost his battle for Cicero Town President, this did not deter him from challenging Loren-Maltese for Cicero's next presidential election.<sup>8</sup> However, little did Moreno know that on August 23, 2002, the FBI would eventually catch up with Loren-Maltese for taking part in a scheme to steal more than \$12 million from the town through mobbed-up insurance firms (Mendieta, 2002, 14). Subsequently, instead of running against Loren-Maltese in the next presidential elections, he would be running against a fellow Hispanic and former friend and political ally.

To fill the void left by Loren-Maltese, Ramiro Gonzalez<sup>9</sup> was unanimously appointed by Cicero's Board of Trustees on September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2002 to serve as Interim President until a new

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<sup>8</sup> In fact, during a celebration that followed the election results, a guest jokingly told Moreno "not to worry, with luck, the FBI will take care of her [Maltese]" (Reyes,1). To this, Moreno responded that even though he lost the race, the town of Cicero won a small battle against the corrupt government, "I don't think they [Maltese and Board of Trustees] will continue using taxpayer's money to harass the residents of Cicero" (Reyes, 1).

<sup>9</sup> Gonzalez has an interesting history in Cicero politics. In 1998, he ran for the town's Democratic committeeman, but was kept of the ballot through challenges. As noted by his opponent, Charles Hernandez, Gonzalez moved to Cicero to run against him, and was, in reality, a Loren-Maltese puppet. When his write-in campaign against Hernandez failed, Loren-Maltese's Republic organization invited Gonzalez to join the Republic Party, and offered him a job. With the help of the Loren-Maltese, Gonzalez's first successful campaign was in 1999, when he ran for a seat on the school board for Cicero Elementary School District 99 (Ford, 2002). In 2000, he was appointed by the Board of Trustees to fill a vacancy on the Board. In April 2001, Gonzalez was reelected by the resident of Cicero to continue serving as Trustee member (RamiroGonzalez.com, 2003). As noted by Gonzalez, "I am moving forward. I was part of a lot of the good that happened under President Loren-Maltese; we can't forget the good that did take place. I've never been shy of saying that Ms. Loren-Maltese was the one who gave me the opportunity to participate in the Republican organization, and from there came my political career" (Sandovi, 2003c). Though Gonzalez portrayed himself as a fighter of corruption, his close association and continuous contact with Loren-Maltese fueled some concern. As noted by Moreno, "Gonzalez, being handpicked by Loren-Maltese to be trustee is evidence that the new tow president will be controlled by her and other leaders of the town's Republican Party." (Ford, 2002).

election was held on April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2002. Although one would expect this to be a victory of Hispanic constituents, the appointment of Cicero's first Hispanic president received mixed reviews. For instance, during his six months as Interim President, Gonzalez vowed to end corruption in Cicero by hiring mob-fighter Wayne Johnson (former chief investigator for the Chicago Crime Commission) as Cicero's new police chief, and by launching a new anti-gang task force to address Cicero's crime problem (Neal, 2003). Though both these measures address issues that concern Hispanic constituents, Gonzalez has nonetheless failed to sever his ties with the Loren-Maltese political machine. Moreover, not only did he appoint Lorrain Walsh (office manager for the Cicero Township Republicans, and friend and supporter of Loren-Maltese) to fill the Board of Trustee's seat vacated by Loren-Maltese, Gonzalez also sidestepped an ordinance intended to protect whistleblowers (Lawrence, 2002). The lack of consistency between what he says to the English media versus the Spanish media has also complicated his reception among Hispanic constituencies. For instance, during an exclusive interview with *La Raza* Newspaper, Gonzalez was asked how he would address charges that he was closely allied to Loren-Maltese and this would lead to few change in Cicero politics. To this, Gonzalez responded "*yo soy una persona politicamente independiente. Esperen y veran.*" ("I am a person who is politically independent. Wait and see." (Balderas Sr. & Barilari, 2002, 2). This is noteworthy, in that in the English media, Gonzalez has depicted himself as an ally and staunch supporter of the Republic Party and Betty Loren-Maltese, and in the Hispanic media, he is presenting himself as an independent candidate while avoiding talk of his ties to Loren-Maltese. As a result of mixed messages expressed by Gonzalez during his tenure as Interim President; his ties to the corrupt Loren-Maltese Republican political machine; the domination of Loren-Maltese supporters on the Board of Trustees; his continued involvement with Loren-Maltese advisors; and, the fact that he has made no public statements against the corruption charges which placed Loren-Maltese in prison, many Cicero residents have come to believe that Loren-Maltese is still "calling the shots" even though in prison (Andrade, 2003; Sandovi, 2003c; Ford 2002; Lawrence, 2002; Bradley, 2003).

As a result of Gonzalez's actions during his six-month tenure as Interim President, and in light of the critical April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2003 election for Cicero Town President pitting Republic Ramiro Gonzalez against Democratic Mario Joseph Moreno, numerous coalitions emerged to not only mobilize Hispanic voters, but to help construct the Hispanic political agenda. In terms of Hispanic mobilization, several voter registration drives were held by community coalitions including: MALDEF, the Interfaith Leadership Project, the Outreach Project for Citizenship; in addition to efforts by *Latinos Progresando* (Chicago social-service agency providing assistance to Latino immigrants), Common Cause Education Fund (specializes in helping people become informed with the candidates), and Vote for Children (involves children in the political process while mobilizing communities with low voter turnout to increase voter participation). In addition to mobilizing the Hispanic electorate, numerous coalitions emerged to help in the articulation of a Hispanic agenda.

In light of this mobilized Hispanic electorate, the Institute for Latino Studies conducted a needs assessment of Cicero's Hispanic community. With help from the Metropolitan Chicago Initiative<sup>10</sup>, the Monsignor John J. Egan Urban Center<sup>11</sup>, the Resurrection Project<sup>12</sup>, and the

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<sup>10</sup> The Metropolitan Chicago Initiative (MCI) is subunit of the University of Norte Dame's Institute for Latino Studies. MCI is committed to advancing research, expanding knowledge, and strengthening Hispanic communities. It is predominantly staffed by Hispanics, and is quite vocal in brining to light the socioeconomic status of Hispanics

Interfaith Leadership Project<sup>13</sup>, numerous focus groups; one-on-one interviews with Cicero residents, business leaders, and community organizers; and town meetings were conducted in order to articulate the concerns of the Hispanic community and develop a Hispanic political agenda for the 2003 Cicero elections. Based on this assessment, it became evident that several areas concerned Hispanic residents; including (in order of importance): education, political representation and participation, crime and violence, health care, children and youth, immigration, social and human services, law enforcement, community representation and participation, housing, and employment issues (83). Though it would be interesting to explore each of these areas in greater detail, because this study is concerned with an examination of education policy, only this area will be examined. Therefore, in terms of the educational concern of Hispanic residents, the needs assessment of Cicero revealed a Hispanic Education Agenda surrounding the following concerns:

- More Space and Classrooms
- Better Funding for Education
- More Responsiveness from Elected Officials
- Adult Education Classes
- More Latino Teachers
- More ESL for Parents
- Bring People Together to Discuss Needs
- Create After-School, Summer, Prevention, and Day Care Programs
- Childcare for Parents in Adult Classes
- Parenting Classes
- Education Choices via Vouchers
- Bilingual and Bicultural Leadership
- Outreach for Troubled Teens
- Paid Parent Mentors for Classes
- Activities for Young People
- Programs Which Encourage Involvement From Families
- Study Success of Programs Intended to Teach English
- Help Students and Undocumented Students get into College
- Lower Dropout Rates
- Keep Kids Out of Gangs
- Cultural Training for Teachers
- Promote Parental Involvement in School
- Provide Gang Education for Parents (50-51)

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in Cicero. It is also an institution which also work with community coalitions in addressing Hispanic concerns (either through focus groups, town meetings, interviews, or other mobilization efforts).

<sup>11</sup> DePaul University's Monsignor John J. Egan Urban Center, is a predominantly African American research institution which collaborate with Chicago communities to help alleviate poverty, promote social justice, and address critical urban problems through teaching, service, and scholarship. It has also been involved with the community of Cicero through joint projects with MCI.

<sup>12</sup> The Resurrection Project is a predominantly Hispanic-led institution-based neighborhood organization whose mission is to create healthy communities through education, organization and community development. Though it works with predominantly with Hispanics in the Pilsen and Little Village communities, they have also worked extensively with MCI to address educational issues in Cicero, Illinois.

<sup>13</sup> The Interfaith Leadership Project is a Cicero institution-based organization which addresses government accountability, immigration issues, family literacy, neighborhood security, and leadership development to help empower the Hispanic community. While it works hand-in-hand with MCI, the Interfaith Leadership Project is one of the most vocal and active Cicero coalitions.

Though Hispanics had been mobilizing and a political and educational agenda had been established, this had little impact on the 2003 campaign for Cicero town president.

While many Hispanics would have liked to have seen their issues and concerns addressed by Mario Joseph Moreno and Ramiro Gonzalez, much of the 2003 campaign for town president revolved around mudslinging. To begin with, even though Moreno and Gonzalez have known each other since 1990 (when they worked together on Moreno's campaign for Cook County Commissioner), this did not stop Gonzalez and other Cicero officials from holding a press conference citing court documents that showed Moreno beat his wife and was jailed for refusing to pay child support (Guerro, 2002b). When it became evident that the incorrect records had been pulled up, the Moreno camp was attacked from a different angle. Though Moreno had a five-year contract to have his campaign billboard placed on most of the concrete advertising benches in town (beginning the 18<sup>th</sup> of February, 1998), within two weeks and in the dead of the night, "work crew acting on behalf of the town's new president, Ramiro Gonzalez, confiscated all of the Moreno benches and hauled them away to the equipment yard of a private contractor" (Brown, 2003, 2). The company, which had the contract to install and maintain the benches, was informed in writing that their contract would be up in a few days and that it would not be automatically renewed. In response to these attacks, Moreno criticized Cicero's School Board (of which Gonzalez is a member) noting that Cicero schools have the second-lowest test scores in the state, and that the junior high does not even have functioning sprinkler systems. To defend the position of the School Board, 13,000 letters challenging the accuracy of Moreno's statements, and printed on the trademark yellow paper of the Republican Party, were sent home with Cicero schoolchildren (Johnson, 2003). This action led to a news conference, put together by dozens of parents, calling on the School Board President, John Polk<sup>14</sup>, and Cicero President Gonzalez to resign for using school resources for a political campaign (Pallasch, 2003).

Though the residents of Cicero were split between the two candidates, and though little time had been spent discussing Hispanic agenda items, Ramiro Gonzalez gained the upper hand with the endorsement of Democratic US Representative Luis Gutierrez. As noted by Gutierrez, since taking over as president, Gonzalez has made local government more accessible by providing immigration and naturalization services. For instance, Gonzalez pushed an ordinance that allows town agencies to accept *matricula consular* – a Mexican national photo identification card – as a valid identification. Another reason Gutierrez broke party lines revolved around Moreno's decision to retain his county commissioner post even if elected president, and the fact that Moreno had made it known that Cicero will be a stepping stone to the US Senate (Neal, 2003b, 45; luisgutierrez.house.gov, 2003). With powerful endorsements from Gutierrez, and other high-ranking Republican and Democratic politicians, on April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2003, Ramiro Gonzalez captured 60% of the votes, and was reelected as Cicero's Town President. Though Mario Moreno obtained 96% of the Democratic vote (3,008 votes), the Republic Party is significantly stronger in Cicero. In this case, even a lower Republic support (74%), Gonzalez managed to capture 5,682 of the Republican vote – thus sealing his victory (VoteInfoNet, 2003). As a result of the outcome of this campaign, it is evident that while coalitions were effective in mobilizing the Hispanic electorate in Cicero, the efforts of coalitions who articulated the needs of this community in order to stimulate a political dialogue failed. In other words, because most of the

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<sup>14</sup> It is interesting to note that John Polk was one of Cicero's police officers called in to arrest Moreno on drunk driving charges during the 2001 Moreno – Loren-Maltese campaign; charges which were later dismissed.

election focused on mudslinging and competitions for political endorsements, the actual concerns of the Hispanic community were never truly addressed.

As illustrated by the internal factors of political incorporation, Cicero is a town in transition. In terms of its residents, Cicero has gone from being a predominantly non-Hispanic town, to a community where Hispanics compose the majority of its residents. Sadly, these racial and ethnic shifts have not led to Hispanic political incorporation, but to socioeconomic and political alienation. Nevertheless, even though the dominant coalitions (Cicero's Board of Trustees and Cicero's Republic Party) have made it difficult for Hispanics to challenge the town's historic legacy of discrimination and organized crime, with the help of numerous coalitions, Hispanic political mobilization has taken place and a Hispanic agenda has emerged. The question now becomes: have Hispanics gained political incorporation through the election of Cicero's first Hispanic town president Ramiro Gonzalez?

In order to determine if Cicero's Hispanic community has gained political incorporation, there must be evidence of an interaction between internal and external factors. Therefore, the following section will assess the efforts of coalitions working to address the educational concerns of Cicero's Hispanic community, in order to determine the impact of these efforts on the Hispanic education agenda. Through this discussion it will become evident that interactions inside and outside Cicero's Hispanic community have led to greater visibility in terms of the plight of Cicero's Hispanic students. Also evident is that in order to get the dominant political coalition to address the concerns of the Hispanic community, Latino-focused coalitions have had to form alliances with other coalitions, community groups, and even local, state, and federal agencies.

#### **IV. External Coalition Building, the Formation of Allegiances and the Impact on Education**

Though coalitions and community groups were unsuccessful in getting the 2003 political candidates to address issues on the Hispanic agenda, they have been successful in getting a dialogue going in terms of the Hispanics educational agenda. As evident in the education agenda articulated in the previous section, Hispanics are concerned with educational issues ranging from more class space to gang education for parents. To force political responsiveness from Cicero's elected officials, the Interfaith Leadership Project has worked on several projects with the J.S. Morton High School District, the Filmore Center for Human Services, and the Berwyn & Cicero Police Departments to help address issues of teen pregnancy, high dropout and truancy rates, Limited English Proficiency (LEP) issues, and the lack of after-school programs. As a result of these efforts, all Cicero local mental health agencies, public health agencies, recreational groups, and law enforcement entities have committed to a "Safe School / Healthy Students" project designed to "foster healthy child development, prevent the initiation of violence and abuse of alcohol and other drugs, and enhance mental health and social services to at-risk youths and their families" (U.S. Department of Education, 1999). Paralleling the work of the Interfaith Leadership Project is the continuous work of the Metropolitan Chicago Initiative. Through ongoing dialogues via educational forums between Cicero parents, teachers, community activists, and school administrators, MCI has also helped to unite diverse constituencies in order to jointly address the educational concerns of Cicero residents. In response to the efforts of these



projects, Cicero School District 99 and J. Sterling Morton High School District 201 have also taken an active role in addressing the educational concerns of the Hispanic community.

Cicero School District 99 represents fifteen elementary schools. In order to address the concerns of the Hispanic community, the district has undertaken several programs. To begin with, in 1999, District 99 created the Language Minority Services to establish a dialogue surrounding education. Through this program, meetings were conducted to evaluate and review programs for second language learners, and a committee consisting of parents, community members, teachers (bilingual, ESL, English), and administrators was created to assure that all students have an equal educational opportunity regardless of economic, social, or political status. To address Hispanic concerns surrounding the quality and diversity of Cicero teachers, District 99 also created *Goals 2000 Mentorship Program*. Through this program, first-year teachers are matched with a mentor to oversee their instructional and professional development, in addition to receiving training on how to teach second language learners. Lastly, in order to promote parental involvement in schools, District 99 also began the Parents as Educational Partners program. This program is led predominantly by Hispanics, and focuses on improving the literacy practices to Hispanic parents. Through this program, Hispanic parents are taught how to read to their children, how to work with their children who are reading in English, and how to support literacy even if the parent is illiterate (Cicero School District 99, 2003). Through these efforts, Hispanic parents have taken a greater role in the education of their children, and in the development of curriculums which effectively deal with the language barriers faced by many Hispanic children.

J. Sterling Morton High School District 201 has also risen to address the issues and concerns of Hispanic parents. Since 1997, District 201 has been working on several major goals, including the preparation of students for life after high school, decreasing dropout rates, improving academic scores, increasing student involvement in extracurricular activities, enhancing stability, improving the image of the district in the community, and controlling costs. To achieve these objectives, the district has created a Community Advisory Board, in addition to attendance initiatives, smaller learning communities, new graduation requirements, parent outreach programs, expanded bilingual outreach services, realigned curriculums, and after school support programs. This district has also increased the number of Hispanic role models, and increased student involvement and participation levels. As a result of these efforts, the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) awarded J. Sterling Morton High School District 201, the prestigious “Most Improved Hispanic High School of the Year 2001 & 2002 in the State of Illinois” award (J. Sterling Morton High School, 2003). Not only has the school district been active in addressing the concerns of the Hispanic community, but they have also spearheaded the construction of Unity Junior High School to address the overcrowding in Cicero schools.

As a direct result of efforts from community coalitions and Cicero school districts, many of the educational concerns of Hispanic residents have begun to see improvements. In terms of the student body, Table 10. illustrates that both school districts have seen increases in the instructional and operating cost per pupil between 1998 and 2002. In addition, attendance rates have also seen increases, while chronic truancy rates have decreased. In terms of District 201, there have also been increases in graduation rates, and decreases in dropout rates. In terms of Cicero teachers, Table 11. illustrates that both districts have shown increases in the representation of Hispanic teachers, and the number of teachers with Bachelor degrees. It is also

evident that more money is being spent on the salaries of teachers and administrators. However, though many of the concerns of Hispanic parents are being addressed, there are still many issues which need to be addressed. For instance, going back to Table 10., it is evident that as the percentage of Hispanic students increases, the percentage of low income students have also increased in both districts. In addition, in District 201, the ACT composite scores have also shown a significant decrease from 19.0 in 1998, to 16.9 in 2002. In terms of the teachers, Table 11. illustrates that in addition to decreases in the percentage of teachers with Masters degrees, there have also been decreases in the average teaching experience of Cicero teachers in both districts. In addition, even though teachers in District 201 have increased their contact with parents from 95% in 1998, to 97.1% in 2002; the contact between parents and teachers in District 99 has seen a decrease from 100% contact in 1998, to 94.8% contact in 2002. Therefore, even though community coalitions and Cicero school districts are making inroads on the educational concerns of Cicero's Hispanic community, there is still a great deal of work which needs to be done before the Hispanic education agenda is fully addressed.

## **V. Evaluating the Level of Hispanic Political Incorporation**

As evidenced throughout this study, when it comes to the Hispanic community in Cicero, there have been many interactions between internal and external forces. Through these interactions, the Hispanic community has been politically mobilized, a Hispanic agenda has been created, and the educational concerns of this community have begun to be addressed. However, it is also evident that these successes are not due to the dominant political coalition in Cicero, but to the efforts of community coalitions and alliances designed to bring to light these issues and concerns. Therefore, it becomes essential to determine the precise level of political incorporation achieved by Cicero Hispanics thus far.

To determine the level of political incorporation obtained by Hispanics in Cicero, the final element of the Model of Hispanic Incorporation must be evaluated. As noted in Figure 1., there are three levels of political incorporation: low, medium, and high. The first measure assesses a low level of political incorporation. In this case, the Hispanic community is not represented in local government; there are no Hispanic officials, and Hispanics do not participate in the coalition that controls city government on issues which concern them most. The second measure assesses a medium level of political incorporation. In this case, Hispanics are represented, but on councils dominated by coalitions which resist Hispanic interests. The final measure assesses a high level of political incorporation. In this case, Hispanics have an equal or leading role in the dominant coalition which is strongly committed to Hispanic interests.

In terms of a low-level of political incorporation, it is evident that Hispanics in Cicero do not fall into this classification. First of all, Loren-Maltese made a point of making Hispanic administrative appointments to prevent criticism from the Hispanic community and gain political support. Though these individuals were given little power, there was still a presence of Hispanics in her administration. The citizens of Cicero have also elected Hispanics to serve on Cicero School Board and Board of Trustees; in addition to electing Cicero's first Hispanic President, Ramiro Gonzalez. Secondly, not only are Hispanic individuals represented in local government, but the Hispanic community actively participates in coalitions that control city government on issues which affect them most. For instance, in terms of education, alliances between community

coalitions and the school districts, law enforcement agencies, and health institutions led to changes in the educational disparity affecting Hispanic students. Because of the presence of Hispanics in local government, and because the Hispanic community is so active in coalitions, this classification does not reflect the current status of Hispanic in Cicero.

When reflecting on the level of representation and participation of Hispanics in Cicero's local government, the second level of political incorporation seems more applicable. First of all, even with political corruption and organized crime, Hispanics have mobilized to elected Hispanic officials. However, because of this political corruption and organized crime, these Hispanics work within a dominant coalition which resists Hispanic interests. Complicating matters is the fact that even though Hispanics are represented, many of these individuals do not reflect the overall views and concerns of Cicero's Hispanic community. An advantage that the Hispanic community has when deal with resistance from Cicero's dominant coalition, involves their participation in coalitions which challenge the dominant ideology. Through the involvement of Hispanic in groups such as the Interfaith Leadership Project, the Metropolitan Chicago Initiative, MALDEF, the Filmore Center for Human Services, the Berwyn & Cicero Police Departments and Cicero school districts, Hispanics have been able to force elected officials to respond to many of their educational concerns.

Though the objective of the Hispanic community is to obtain a high-level of political incorporation, it is evident that they have yet to achieve an equal or leading role in Cicero's dominant coalition. It is also clear that Cicero's dominant coalition has yet to fully embrace and commit itself to Hispanic interests. However, the fact that Hispanics have gained a medium-level of political incorporation is quite significant. Not only does this show that Hispanics can overcome discrimination and socioeconomic and political alienation, this level of incorporation proves that Hispanics can mobilize and force change. With the mobilization of Hispanic residents, and the increased activism of this community, there is still hope for full political incorporation.

## **VI. Conclusion**

The objective of this study was to evaluate the level of political incorporation achieved by Hispanics in Cicero, Illinois through an examination of the interactions between internal and external forces. What has been learned is that even though Hispanics are now represented in local city government, this representation is in name only. In other words, many of these elected Hispanics tend to reflect the ideology of the local elite, rather than the issues and concerns of the Hispanic community. As a direct result of Cicero's long history of discrimination and organization crime, in addition to a lack of true Hispanic political representation, the Hispanic community has also been left to address issues socioeconomic and political alienation on their own. Consequently, numerous coalitions have stepped in to help mobilize the Hispanic electorate and articulate the issues and concerns of this community. In addition, though Hispanics have yet to attain a full level of political incorporation, through their involvement with coalitions and the alliances of these coalitions with groups linked to the dominant Cicero coalition, Hispanics have managed to force a medium level of political incorporation. However, Hispanics still have a long road to go before becoming equal and leading actors in Cicero politics.

In order for Hispanics to achieve full political incorporation, they must become even more politically active and savvy. Though the mobilization of Hispanics, the formation of a political agenda, and the activeness of this community on coalitions have led to greater political recognition, there is still a great deal of corruption in Cicero. The Hispanic community also needs to realize that because of their growing numbers, Hispanic candidates will emerge who, even though Hispanic in name and appearance, do not reflect the needs of the Hispanic community as a whole. Therefore, even though the election of a Hispanic town president is significant, how advantageous is this? Especially, if the Hispanic President fails to ally himself with the Hispanic community and fails to share their concerns. Consequently, in addition to becoming more politically active and savvy, Hispanics need to recruit new leadership and endorse candidates who are truly committed to the needs and concerns of Cicero's Hispanic community. Though political incorporation has been achieved, in order to attain a high level of incorporation, much work needs to be done.

## Tables

**Table 1. Cicero, Illinois: Population Characteristics, 1990 & 2000**

Population	1990	2000	% Change from '90 to '00
<b>White</b>	50,717 75%	41,327 48%	-19%
<b>Black</b>	173 0.26%	958 1%	454%
<b>Asian</b>	1,157 1.72%	828 1%	-28%
<b>Hispanic</b>	24,148 36%	66,299 77%	175%
<b>Total</b>	67,436 100%	85,616 100%	

**Note:** 1990 and 2000 column % are based on column totals; the column % totals exceed 100% because individuals may select more than one ethnic/racial category.

**Sources:** U.S. Census Bureau; American FactFinder: U.S. Census 2000, Detailed Tables for Cicero, Illinois. Available Online: [<http://factfinder.census.gov/>] (Downloaded: 24 Nov 2003).  
U.S. Census Bureau; 1990 US Census Data: Database C90STF3A, Summary Level State (IL) Place (Cicero). Available Online: [<http://homer.ssd.census.gov/cdrom/lookup/1069657302>] (Downloaded: 24 Nov 2003).

**Table 2. Cicero, Illinois: Foreign-Born Population by Region of Birth and Year of Entry**

	Total	Before 1980	1980– 1989	01/1990 - 03/2000
<b>European</b>	<b>1370</b>	207	167	996
<b>Asian</b>	<b>865</b>	205	293	367
<b>Latin American</b>	<b>35,101</b>	9,066	10,681	15,354

**Source:** U.S. Census Bureau; Census 2000 Summary File 3, Matrices P21, P23 & PCT20. American FactFinder: "Dataset: Geographic Area: Cicero Town, Illinois." Available Online: [<http://factfinder.census.gov/>] (Downloaded: 23 Nov 2003).

**Table 3. Household Language & Linguistic Isolation**

<b>Household Language</b>	<b>1,990</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>% Change</b>
<b>English Only</b>	13,386	6,967	-48%
<b>Spanish - Linguistic Isolation</b>	1,816	4,958	173%
<b>Spanish - No Linguistic Isolation</b>	3,758	9,356	149%

<b>Language Spoken at Home</b>	<b>1,990</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>% Change</b>
<b>English</b>	35,584	19,534	-45%
<b>Spanish</b>	18,612	53,603	188%

**Sources:** U.S. Census Bureau; American FactFinder: U.S. Census 2000, Detailed Tables for Cicero, Illinois. Available Online: [<http://factfinder.census.gov/>] (Downloaded: 24 Nov 2003).  
 U.S. Census Bureau; 1990 US Census Data: Database C90STF3A, Summary Level State (IL) Place (Cicero). Available Online: [<http://homer.ssd.census.gov/cdrom/lookup/1069657302>] (Downloaded: 24 Nov 2003).

**Table 4. Cicero, Illinois: Household Type by Race, 1990 & 2000**

	<b>Married w/ Children Under 18 Years of Age</b>			<b>Female Household, No Husband Present</b>			<b>Male Household, No Wife Present</b>		
	<b>1990</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>%Change</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>%Change</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>%Change</b>
<b>White</b>	4,227	3,955	-6%	1,169	1,430	22%	302	713	136%
<b>Hispanic</b>	3,020	8,152	170%	624	1,654	165%	203	1,507	642%

**Sources:** U.S. Census Bureau; American FactFinder: U.S. Census 2000, Detailed Tables for Cicero, Illinois. Available Online: [<http://factfinder.census.gov/>] (Downloaded: 24 Nov 2003).  
 U.S. Census Bureau; 1990 US Census Data: Database C90STF3A, Summary Level State (IL) Place (Cicero). Available Online: [<http://homer.ssd.census.gov/cdrom/lookup/1069657302>] (Downloaded: 24 Nov 2003).

**Table 5. Cicero, Illinois: Household Tenure by Race, 1990 & 2000**

	<b>Owner Occupied</b>			<b>Renter Occupied</b>		
	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>% Change</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>% Change</b>
<b>White</b>	31,563	25,058	-20.6%	17,833	15,869	-11.0%
<b>Hispanic</b>	12,825	38,114	197.2%	10,149	27,813	174.0%

**Sources:** U.S. Census Bureau; American FactFinder: U.S. Census 2000, Detailed Tables for Cicero, Illinois. Available Online: [<http://factfinder.census.gov/>] (Downloaded: 24 Nov 2003).  
 U.S. Census Bureau; 1990 US Census Data: Database C90STF3A, Summary Level State (IL) Place (Cicero). Available Online: [<http://homer.ssd.census.gov/cdrom/lookup/1069657302>] (Downloaded: 24 Nov 2003).

**Table 6. Cicero, Illinois: Per Capita Income & Poverty Status by Age, 1989 & 1999**

	Per Capita Income		
	1989	1999	% Change
<b>White</b>	\$17,081	\$15,581	-8.8%
<b>Hispanic</b>	\$10,932	\$11,555	5.7%

	Income at or Above Poverty Level: White			Income Below Poverty Level: White		
	1989	1999	% Change	1989	1999	% Change
<b>Under 5 Years</b>	2,978	2,829	-5.0%	703	814	15.8%
<b>5 Years</b>	692	526	-24.0%	102	204	100.0%
<b>6 to 11 Years</b>	3,052	3,588	17.6%	829	910	9.8%
<b>12 to 17 Years</b>	3,103	2,850	-8.2%	649	429	-33.9%
<b>18 to 64 Years</b>	26,274	20,728	-21.1%	3,085	3,268	5.9%
<b>65 to 74 Years</b>	4,582	1,985	-56.7%	415	181	-56.4%
<b>75 Years and Over</b>	3,156	2,593	-17.8%	377	190	-49.6%

	Income at or Above Poverty Level: Hispanic			Income Below Poverty Level: Hispanic		
	1989	1999	% Change	1989	1999	% Change
<b>Under 5 Years</b>	2,617	6,576	151.3%	616	1,681	172.9%
<b>5 Years</b>	602	1,251	107.8%	95	356	274.7%
<b>6 to 11 Years</b>	2,470	6,965	182.0%	701	1,872	167.0%
<b>12 to 17 Years</b>	2,047	5,905	188.5%	598	1,225	104.8%
<b>18 to 64 Years</b>	11,525	32,982	186.2%	2,314	5,750	148.5%
<b>65 to 74 Years</b>	182	801	340.1%	51	64	25.5%
<b>75 Years and Over</b>	43	305	609.3%	17	21	23.5%

**Note:** "Consumer Price Index Conversion Factors 1800 to 2013" employed to Convert to Dollars of 2002" R.C. Sahr, Oregon State University Political Science Department. Available Online: ([www.orst.edu/Depts/pols\\_sci/fac/sahr/cf166503.xls](http://www.orst.edu/Depts/pols_sci/fac/sahr/cf166503.xls)).

**Sources:** U.S. Census Bureau; American FactFinder: U.S. Census 2000, Detailed Tables for Cicero, Illinois. Available Online: [<http://factfinder.census.gov/>] (Downloaded: 24 Nov 2003).  
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**Table 7. Cicero, Illinois: 1992 & 1997 Economic Census of Minority- & Women-Owned Businesses**

	Firm Numbers			Sales & Receipts (\$1000)		
	1992	1997	% Change	1992	1997	% Change
<b>Universe (All Firms)</b>	2,121	2,655	25.2%	\$724,359	\$2,708,661	273.9%
<b>Total Minorities</b>	473	765	61.7%	\$25,176	\$98,297	290.4%
<b>Hispanic</b>	397	708	78.3%	\$16,456	\$86,834	427.7%
<b>Women</b>	663	497	-25.0%	\$157,204	\$215,072	36.8%

**Note:** Universe (All Firms): refers to all businesses, without regard to race, ethnicity, or gender of business owner; Firms: business organization or entity consisting of one domestic establishment or more; Sales & Receipts: total sales, shipments, receipts, revenues, commissions, & income from trades/business.

"Consumer Price Index Conversion Factors 1800 to 2013" employed to Convert to Dollars of 2002" R.C. Sahr, Oregon State University Political Science Department. Available Online: ([www.orst.edu/Depts/pols\\_sci/fac/sahr/cf166503.xls](http://www.orst.edu/Depts/pols_sci/fac/sahr/cf166503.xls)).

**Sources:** U.S. Census Bureau; 1997 Economic Census of Minority- and Women-Owned Businesses: Cicero, Illinois. Available Online: [<http://www.census.gov/epcd/mwd97/il/IL14351.html>] (Downloaded: 23 Nov 2003). GovStats - Commerce, Counties, and Agriculture; "1992 Economic Census: Cicero, Illinois Minority- and Women-Owned Business: Cicero, Illinois." Available Online: [[http://govinfo.kerr.orst.edu/php/econ\\_census\\_92/report.php](http://govinfo.kerr.orst.edu/php/econ_census_92/report.php)] (Downloaded: 23 Nov 2003).

**Table 8. Cicero, Illinois: Educational Attainment by Race, 1990 & 2000**

	Less than 9th Grade			9-12, No Diploma			High School Graduate (or Equivalent)			Some College: No Degree		
	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	% Change
<b>White</b>	5,504	5,755	4.6%	8,092	5,041	-37.7%	10,956	7,302	-33.4%	4,950	3,699	-25.3%
<b>Hispanic</b>	4,280	12,667	196.0%	2,300	6,464	181.0%	2,241	6,149	174.4%	1,239	3,009	142.9%

	Associate's Degree			Bachelor's Degree			Graduate / Professional Degree		
	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	% Change
<b>White</b>	1,674	939	-43.9%	1,742	1,070	-38.6%	679	689	1.5%
<b>Hispanic</b>	404	823	103.7%	340	802	135.9%	98	370	277.6%

**Sources:** U.S. Census Bureau; American FactFinder: U.S. Census 2000, Detailed Tables for Cicero, Illinois. Available Online: [<http://factfinder.census.gov/>] (Downloaded: 24 Nov 2003).

U.S. Census Bureau; 1990 US Census Data: Database C90STF3A, Summary Level State (IL) Place (Cicero). Available Online: [<http://homer.ssd.census.gov/cdrom/lookup/1069657302>] (Downloaded: 24 Nov 2003).



**Table 9. Cicero, Illinois: School Enrollment by Race, 1990 & 2000**

	Nursery or Preprimary School Enrollment			Elementary or High School Enrollment		
	1990	2,000	%Change	1990	2,000	%Change
<b>White</b>	816	487	-40%	8,278	8,799	6%
<b>Hispanic</b>	520	1,112	114%	6,491	17,802	174%

**Sources:** U.S. Census Bureau; American FactFinder: U.S. Census 2000, Detailed Tables for Cicero, Illinois. Available Online: [<http://factfinder.census.gov/>] (Downloaded: 24 Nov 2003).  
 U.S. Census Bureau; 1990 US Census Data: Database C90STF3A, Summary Level State (IL) Place (Cicero). Available Online: [<http://homer.ssd.census.gov/cdrom/lookup/1069657302>] (Downloaded: 24 Nov 2003).

**Table 10. Cicero, Illinois: School District Characteristics by Student, 1998-2002**

Cicero School District 99	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
% White	12.1	9.6	8.0	6.3	6.6
% Hispanic	86.3	88.9	90.8	92.3	92.4
% Low Income	70.5	67.5	67.7	69.9	71.8
% Limited English Proficiency	47.6	45.8	41.1	48.2	48.7
% Attendance	94.1	93.9	94.9	94.6	94.8
% Mobility	31.3	35.7	31.9	32.6	30.4
% Chronic Truancy	1.8	1.5	1.7	1.2	1.2
Instructional Expenditure Per Pupil	\$2,914	\$2,983	\$3,087	\$3,251	\$3,331
Operating Expenditure Per Pupil	\$4,748	\$4,974	\$5,111	\$5,266	\$5,691

J.S. Morton High School District 201	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
% White	33.9	31.4	28.6	26.9	25.4
% Hispanic	63.6	66.2	69.2	71.1	72.6
% Low Income	43.2	42.6	43.0	66.2	52.4
% Limited English Proficiency	16.1	16.9	19.0	12.0	7.5
% Dropouts	9.4	8.4	5.7	5.7	4.7
% Graduation Rate	69.4	67.3	65.4	74.7	75.5
% Attendance	88.2	85.3	88.4	89.3	89.8
% Mobility	33.8	34.3	31.3	39.9	26.0
% Chronic Truancy	15.3	10.1	26.0	4.7	8.7
ACT Composite Score (All Tested)	19.0	18.6	18.2	18.3	16.9
Average Class Size	19.9	19.9	19.2	17.5	18.7
Instructional Expenditure Per Pupil	\$5,383	\$5,488	\$5,788	\$5,624	\$5,796
Operating Expenditure Per Pupil	\$9,251	\$9,384	\$9,880	\$9,683	\$9,742

**Note:** % White & % Hispanic: reported racial-ethnic groups; Low Income: students are from families receiving public aid, living in institutions for neglected or delinquent children, being supported in foster homes with public funds, or eligible to receive free or reduced-price lunches; Limited English Proficiency: students are those found to be eligible for bilingual education; Attendance: students attended school every day; Mobility: number of students who enroll in or leave a school during the school year (students may be counted more than once); Chronic Truancy: students who were absent from school without valid cause for 10%+ of the last 180 days; Average Class Size: total enrollment for a grade divided by number of classes for that grade reported for the first school day in May; Dropouts: number of grade 9-12 students who dropped out during the school year; Graduation Rate: calculated by comparing the previous year graduates with the number of students enrolled in ninth grade in the current year; ACT Composite Scores: district scores range from 1 (lowest) to 36 (highest); Instructional Expenditure Per Pupil: includes the direct costs of teaching pupils or the interaction between teachers and pupils; Operating Expenditures Per Pupil: includes instructional Expenditures, costs of Public Support Services, Instructional Staff Support Services, School Administration, Business Support Services, Central Support Services, Community Services, Debt Services, Payments to Other Governmental Units for Services Provided; and Central Administration.

**Note:** "Consumer Price Index Conversion Factors 1800 to 2013" employed to Convert to Dollars of 2002" R.C. Sahr, Oregon State University Political Science Department ([www.orst.edu/Depts/pols\\_sci/fac/sahr/cf166503.xls](http://www.orst.edu/Depts/pols_sci/fac/sahr/cf166503.xls)).

**Source:** Illinois State Board of Education. "1998-2002 Illinois School Report Card." Available Online: [<http://206.166.105.128/ReportCard/rchome.asp>] (Downloaded: 10 Nov 2003).

**Table #. Cicero, Illinois: School District Characteristics by Teachers, 1998-2002**

<b>Cicero School District 99</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>
<b>% White</b>	83.0	80.4	79.0	77.1	76.3
<b>% Hispanic</b>	16.8	19.2	20.9	22.7	23.4
<b>Average Teaching Experience (Years)</b>	11.7	10.6	10.8	10.8	10.7
<b>Teachers with Bachelor's Degree (%)</b>	65.7	69.7	65.7	67.7	66.6
<b>Teachers with Master's Degree &amp; Above (%)</b>	34.3	30.3	34.3	32.3	33.4
<b>Contact with Parents (%)</b>	100.0	100	100.0	95.6	94.8
<b>Average Teacher Salary</b>	\$35,861	\$35,802	\$37,131	\$38,271	\$39,521
<b>Average Administrator Salary</b>	\$73,395	\$70,859	\$76,875	\$75,732	\$80,190

<b>J.S. Morton High School District 201</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>
<b>% White</b>	97.6	94.8	94.8	92.3	89.9
<b>% Hispanic</b>	2.1	4.4	4.6	6.9	8.4
<b>Average Teaching Experience (Years)</b>	13.3	12.6	13.0	12.3	12.4
<b>Teachers with Bachelor's Degree (%)</b>	31.4	37.5	36.4	39.1	35.7
<b>Teachers with Master's Degree &amp; Above (%)</b>	68.6	62.5	63.6	60.6	64.3
<b>Contact with Parents</b>	95.0	89.0	95.8	93.4	97.1
<b>Average Teacher Salary</b>	\$53,474	\$54,113	\$56,578	\$56,826	\$58,617
<b>Average Administrator Salary</b>	\$79,418	\$82,418	\$84,898	\$86,293	\$88,603

**Note:** Teachers include all personnel categorized by the district as classroom teachers; *Contact with Parents*: personal contact includes parent-teacher conferences, parental visits to school, school visits to home, telephone conversations, and written correspondence.

"Consumer Price Index Conversion Factors 1800 to 2013" employed to Convert to Dollars of 2002" R.C. Sahr, Oregon State University Political Science Department ([www.orst.edu/Depts/pols\\_sci/fac/sahr/cf166503.xls](http://www.orst.edu/Depts/pols_sci/fac/sahr/cf166503.xls)).

**Source:** Illinois State Board of Education. "1998-2002 Illinois School Report Card." Available Online: [<http://206.166.105.128/ReportCard/rhome.asp>] (Downloaded: 10 Nov 2003).

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Merrick Scott Rayle, The Board of Fire Protection and Public Safety Commissioners of

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