Using the Internet for Education Research:

Creating Profiles of Schools and School Districts

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INTRODUCTION

Educational issues are receiving more attention today than perhaps in any other time in U.S. history. It is especially important that researchers in the College of Education know and understand how to use the vast amount of information being collected by local, state, and federal education agencies.

Education statistics are used for a number of purposes:

- Congress uses them to plan federal education programs, to apportion federal funds among the states, and to serve the needs of constituents.

- State and local officials are concerned with problems of staffing and financing public education.

- Educational organizations, such as the Michigan Department of Education and the Michigan Education Association, use the data for planning and research.

- The news media, such as national television networks, national news magazines, and many of the nation's leading daily newspapers frequently use NCES statistics to inform the public about matters such as school and college enrollment and expenditures per student.

- Business organizations use trend data on enrollments and expenditures to forecast the demand for their products and market demand for specific skills.

- The general public uses education statistics to become more informed and to make intelligent decisions concerning the educational issues of the day.

This workshop will help you learn to create a profile for an individual school, for a school district, or for multiple districts using data available on the Internet. We will examine data from agencies at a state and national level.

Comments and feedback are welcome to menchikb@msu.edu

Websites for Data on Schools, School Districts, and for Education Research
See *www.epc.msu.edu*

For a single building quickly
Census Tract Locator	www.census.gov
Census tract profiles from the 1990 Census	http://govinfo.kerr.orst.edu/index.html
Michigan School Report	http://www.mde.state.mi.us/
MEAP scores	http://www.meritaward.state.mi.us/
Student Enrollment	www.nces.ed.gov/ccd/

For multiple buildings
Michigan School Report	http://www.mde.state.mi.us/reports/msr/
MEAP scores	http://www.MeritAward.state.mi.us/merit/meap/results/data/index.htm
Common Core of Data	http://www.nces.ed.gov/ccd/
Achievement Data	http://www.state.mi.us/mde/cfdata/k12db/welcome.cfm
Financial Data	http://www.state.mi.us/mde/cfdata/k12db/welcome.cfm
Food and Nutrition	http://www.state.mi.us/mde/cfdata/k12db/welcome.cfm
Pupil Headcount Data	http://www.state.mi.us/mde/cfdata/k12db/welcome.cfm
Staff Counts	http://www.state.mi.us/mde/cfdata/k12db/welcome.cfm

For a school district quickly
Demographic, financial, administrative profiles from the 1990 Census and NCES data	http://govinfo.kerr.orst.edu/index.html
Michigan School Report	http://www.mde.state.mi.us/
MEAP	http://www.mde.state.mi.us/

For multiple districts
Michigan School Report	http://www.mde.state.mi.us/reports/msr/
Bulletin 1011: Revenues and Expenditures	http://www.state.mi.us/mde/reports/B1011/
Bulletin 1014: K-12 Financial Expenditure Data and Ranking	http://www.state.mi.us/mde/reports/B1014/index.html
MEAP scores	http://www.MeritAward.state.mi.us/merit/meap/results/data/index.htm
Common Core of Data	http://www.nces.ed.gov/ccd/
Achievement Data	http://www.state.mi.us/mde/cfdata/k12db/welcome.cfm
Financial Data	http://www.state.mi.us/mde/cfdata/k12db/welcome.cfm
Food and Nutrition	http://www.state.mi.us/mde/cfdata/k12db/welcome.cfm
Pupil Headcount Data	http://www.state.mi.us/mde/cfdata/k12db/welcome.cfm
Staff Counts	http://www.state.mi.us/mde/cfdata/k12db/welcome.cfm
FTE State Aid Counts	http://www.state.mi.us/mde/cfdata/k12db/welcome.cfm
Driver's Education	http://www.state.mi.us/mde/cfdata/k12db/welcome.cfm
SAIPE (Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates)	www.census.gov/income/saipe

KEY COMPONENTS OF THE 1990 CENSUS OF POPULATION AND HOUSING

 Much of the basic information that is necessary for a community profile comes from the decennial Census of Population and Housing. Although the data was collected nine years ago, as a society, we do not change rapidly. The Census Bureau is still the most important source of social, demographic, housing, and economic information for understanding what happens in small places. The Government Information Sharing Project Ð done by the library at Oregon State provides 5 sample profiles from the Census of Population and Housing. This is the best way to start any community profile. On the Internet, type in the address (http://govinfo.kerr.orst.edu/index.html). A number of datasets will appear.
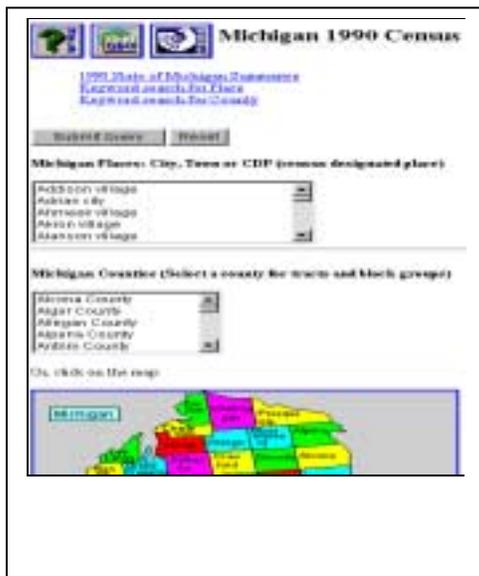
Click on 1990 Census of Population and Housing.
Then click on the state of Michigan

Click on Ingham County next, and it will bring up: A General Profile of Ingham County. Note that there are four other profiles available:

General Population Profile (age, household composition, race/ethnicity, housing)
Income (Income for households, families and non-families by source and poverty status)
Labor (labor force and commuting characteristics)
Housing (rent/mortgage as a percentage of income)
Social (school enrollment, disability status, language, ancestry.

These same profiles are available for any place, census tract, county, or state. Look through what is in each profile.

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Finding Data for a School District

A Quick Profile

Go to the **Government Information Sharing Project: http://govinfo.kerr.orst.edu/index.html**.
Click on School District Data Book Profiles, 1989-90. Then **click on the state of Michigan**. We
will look at characteristics from the Census of Population and Housing about a sample school district,
Lansing.

Note that you have two options for comparisons. You can
compare 1 district with the default areas of Michigan and the U.S.,
or you can select 2 other districts. For practice**, type in Lansing
and select custom areas as a comparison**.

**The system will report that there are two districts for Lansing
– Lansing and East Lansing. Select Lansing** and it will bring up
a screen allowing you to choose two districts for comparison.

**Select Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo to compare
with Lansing**. When you have highlighted your
choices, press **Submit.**

Take some time to look at the 6 different reports that
are available at this site. Some of the reports may be
outdated, but you can use them as a starting point,
and then look for newer information at
http://www.mde.state.mi.us/   or
http://www.nces.ed.gov/

Next, go to the Michigan Department of Education website: http://www.mde.state.mi.us/

Scroll through the list on the left side.
Under Topics, select **Click on at the
Reports and Statistics School Report**.
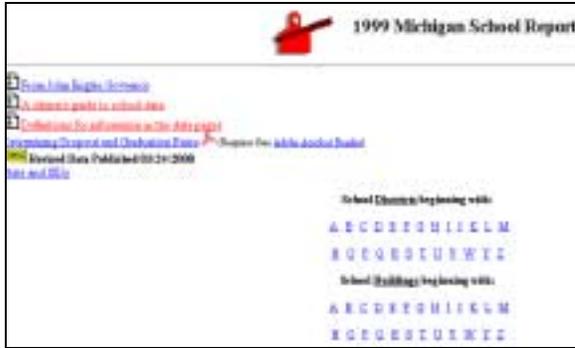
Note you can select a district or a school building. Under the School Districts, select L. Scroll through the list, **highlight Lansing Public School District, push Next**.

Note the school report is a compilation of many data reports. At another time, you can compare 3 school districts using Michigan School Report.
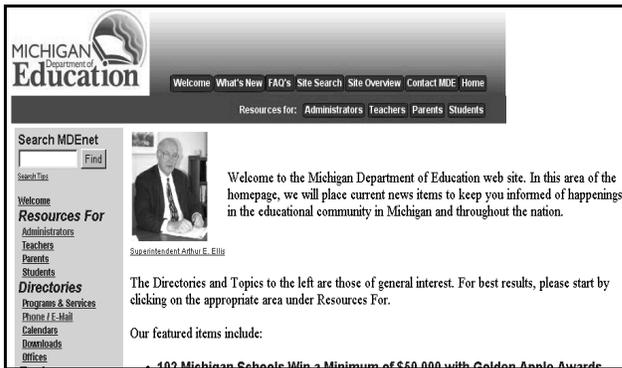
Return to the Home Page of MDE. In the left column, click on Michigan Merit Awards on the left hand column. This is the office which now handles MEAP scores. The MEAP scores are now the responsibility of the MI Dept. of the Treasury.
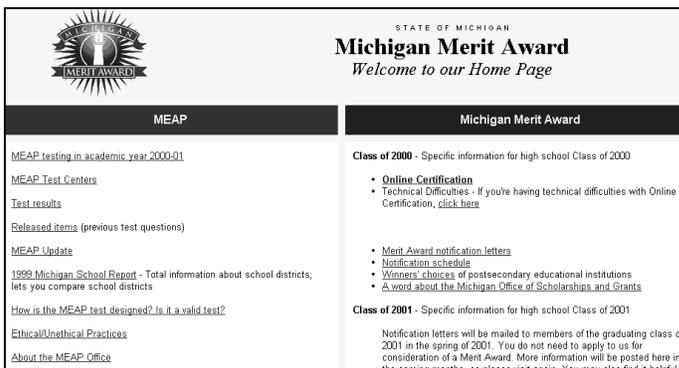
On the Michigan Merit Award Home Page, click on Test Results.
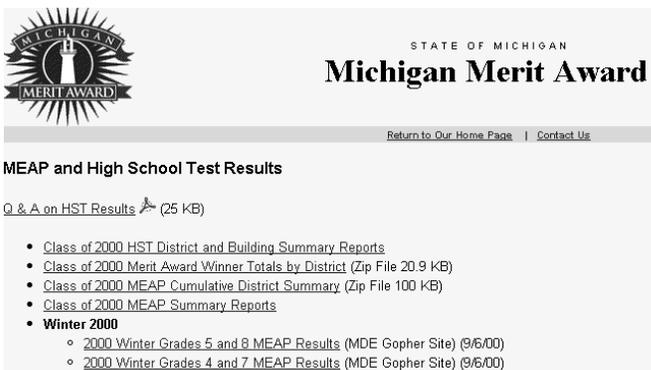
To see the most recent scores for 4 and 7th grades, click on Winter, 2000, grades 4 and 7. Following the links, and click on School Districts beginning with L, then click on Lansing.Public Schools. Compare the scores for several schools in Lansing.

Using the Census of Population and Housing for Education Research
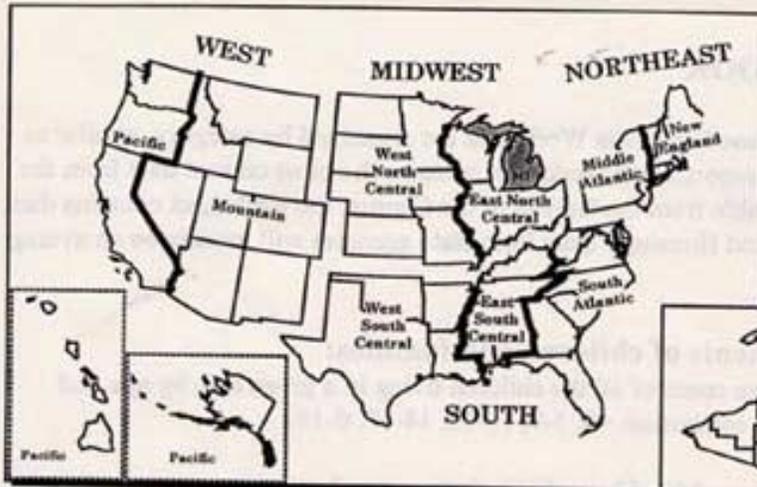
CENSUS GEOGRAPHY

The Census Bureau reports data for a number of geographic areas which are displayed on the map on the following page. There is data for all fifty states and the District of Columbia grouped into four census regions. Much of the data collected for cities and townships is also available for school districts and for neighborhoods around school buildings. In addition, data for school districts was complied from the 1990 Census of Population and housing.

Each state is composed of governmental units, such as counties. Within counties, there are minor civil division, such as townships and incorporated places, such as cities. Villages are not incorporated places and are embedded in townships in Michigan. There are also Census Designated Places – places with populations of 2,500 or more.

The state is further divided into census tracts. Census tracts often cross minor civil division boundaries. Tracts are useful for analyzing neighborhoods in urban areas. Tract level data is most helpful for understanding the characteristics of the neighborhood surrounding a school. The following pages show how tract data was used to understand neighborhood characteristics in the Lansing School District.

Each tract is divided into block groups. Blocks are the smallest geographic area that the Census collects information for. Blocks are generally bounded by streets and other physical features.

CENSUS GEOGRAPHY

WEST **MIDWEST** **NORTHEAST**

Pacific, West North Central, Mountain, East North Central, West South Central, East South Central, South Atlantic, Middle Atlantic, New England, Pacific, Pacific

SOUTH

ABOVE: The fifty States and the District of Columbia are grouped into four census regions, each composed of two or more geographic divisions.

MICHIGAN

Kent County

KENT COUNTY
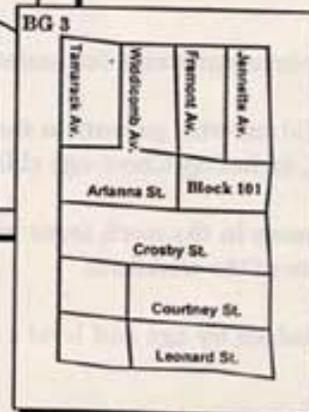
GRAND RAPIDS, Ada Twshp.
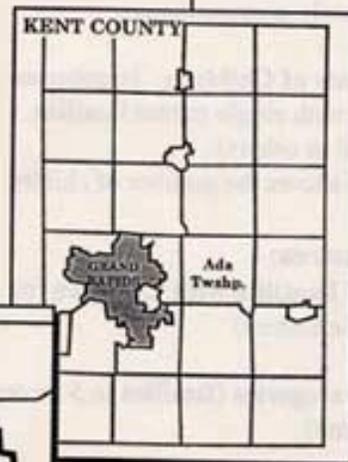
ABOVE AND LEFT: Each state is composed of governmental units such as counties (above) and within counties, minor civil divisions such as townships and incorporated places such as cities (left).

Tract 8.00

RIGHT: Census tracts are statistical subdivisions of counties and may cross minor civil division boundaries.

GRAND RAPIDS

Tract 8.00

BG 3

BG 3
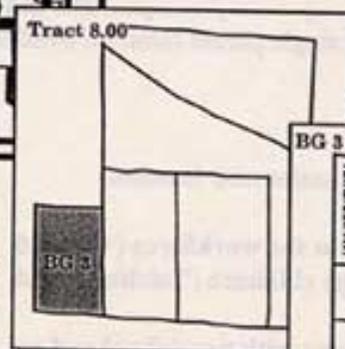
RIGHT: Block groups are subdivisions of census tracts and comprise all blocks with the same first digit in a tract.

Tamarack Av., Widdicomb Av., Fremont Av., Jennette Av., Arianna St., Block 101, Crosby St., Courtney St., Leonard St.
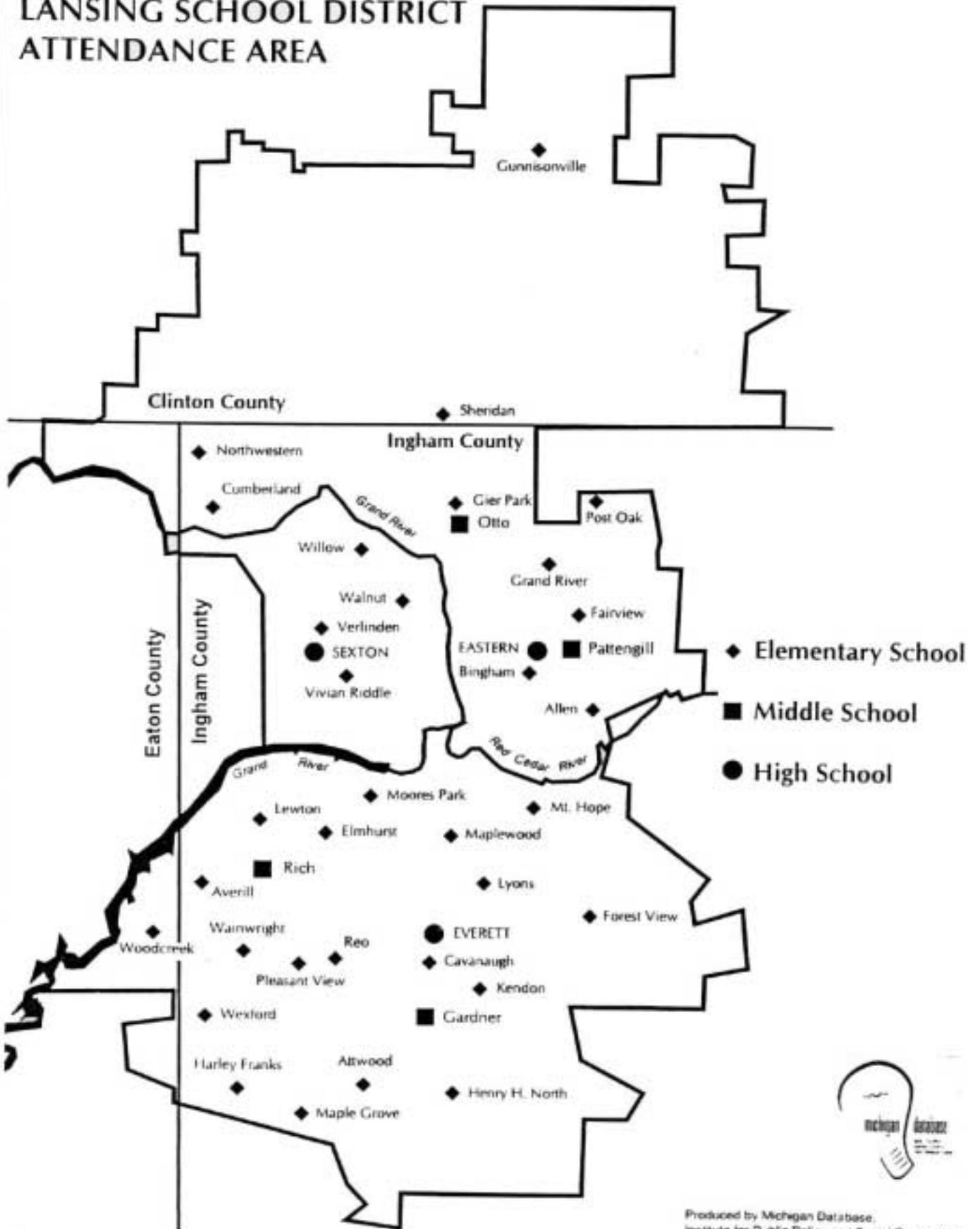
LEFT: Blocks, the smallest geographic area census information is collected for, are generally bounded by streets and other physical features.

scale varies in maps

LANSING SCHOOL DISTRICT ATTENDANCE AREA

Gunnisonville

Clinton County

Sheridan

Ingham County

Northwestern

Cumberland

Gier Park

Post Oak

Otto

Willow

Grand River

Grand River

Walnut

Fairview

Verlinden

EASTERN Pattengill

SEXTON

Bingham

Vivian Riddle

Allen

♦ **Elementary School**

■ **Middle School**

● **High School**

Eaton County

Ingham County

Grand River

Red Cedar River

Moores Park

Mt. Hope

Lewton

Elmhurst

Maplewood

Rich

Lyons

Averill

Forest View

Wainwright

EVERETT

Woodcreek

Reo

Cavanaugh

Pleasant View

Kendon

Wexford

Gardner

Harley Franks

Attwood

Henry H. North

Maple Grove

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LANSING SCHOOL DISTRICT CENSUS TRACTS

101.01

102.01

101.02

102.04

102.03

103.00

Clinton County

201.01

Ingham County   32.00

33.01

31.02

33.02

1.00

3.00   2.00

38.01

34.00

4.00 5.00 7.00   8.00

9.00 31.01

40.00

35.00

6.00

65.00 10.00

16.00

14.00

13.00

12.00

15.00 19.00

21.00

17.01

20.00

Eaton County

Ingham County

24.00

22.00

17.02

25.00

23.00

36.02

26.00

29.01

37.00

28.00

44.01

36.01

27.00

29.02

202.02

◆ Elementary School

■ Middle School

● High School

51.00

53.03 53.04

214.00

52.01

52.02

53.02

55.01

Produced by Michigan Database,
Institute for Public Policy & Social Research,
Michigan State University.

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1990 and Lansing School District Information Services Office, July 1988.
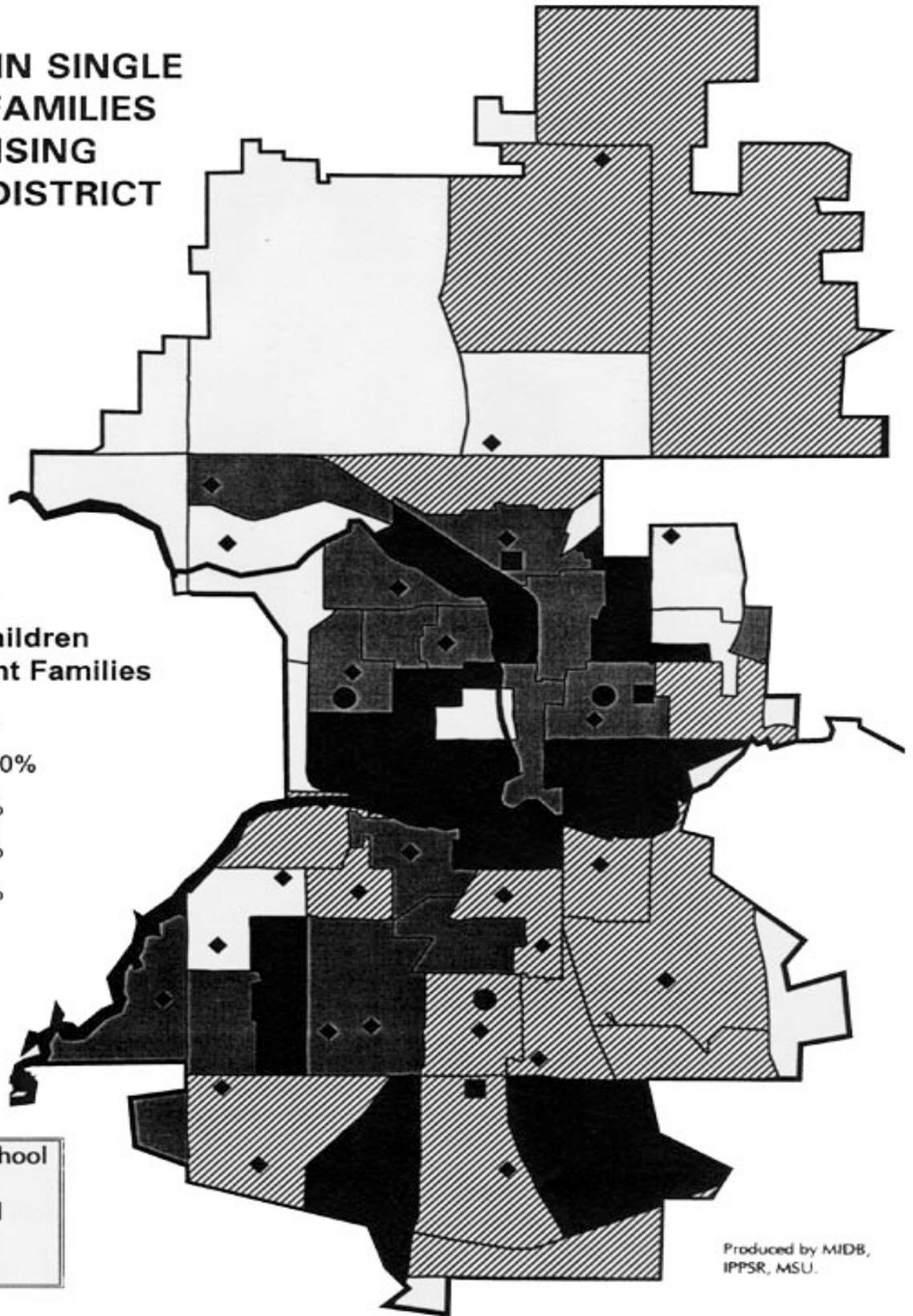
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CHILDREN IN SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES IN LANSING SCHOOL DISTRICT

Percentage of School Age Children in Single Parent Families

By Census Tract

- Less than 20%
- 20% to 30%
- 30% to 45%
- 45% to 70%

- ◆ Elementary School
- ■ Middle School
- ● High School

Produced by MIDB, IPPSR, MSU.

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1990 and Lansing School District Information Services Office, July 1988.

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Finding Data for a School Building

A Quick Profile

Assuming children are not bused far from their neighborhoods…. the easiest way to find the characteristics of a school building is to identify in what census tract the district is located. We know that school building boundaries may transcend census tracts boundaries, but this is the easiest way to understand the neighborhood characteristics of a school. *As an example for this workshop, we will write a profile for Allen School in Lansing*.   Go to the Census Bureau website, www.census.gov,

At the Census Bureau home page, **select Access Tools** from the options on the left column.
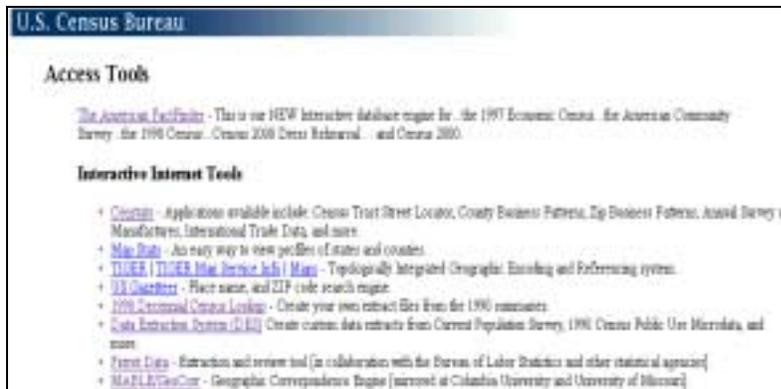
At the Access Tools, Interactive Internet Tools, **Select Censtats**.

Select Census Tract Street Locator.

Type in the address of the school. Search for Allen School, **1614 Kalamazoo Street, Lansing 48912**.

The resulting screen will bring up a number of choices – note that the number 1614 is on the even side of the street between 800 and 2598.

Note the tract number – we will use it elsewhere. The tract number is State =026, county 065, tract 12.

Hit Profile to see a brief profile of the neighborhood surrounding the high school. You will need to calculate percentages from the raw data. .

Now go to http://govinfo.kerr.orst.edu/index.html. And select the 1990 Census of Population and Housing. **Click on Michigan, then select Ingham County. Then select the tract number 0012, and hit the Get Tract button**. You will be able to see 5 basic profiles of this tract . This should provide you with most of the information you will want.

To add additional information about Allen School, go to http://www.mde.state.mi.us/.   G**o to the MI School Report**.   Then select A, for Allen School and look through the available characteristics.

Computer Resources at MSU

<u>Learn to Use Software</u>
MSU offers excellent free tutorials for a number of software programs, including Excel, Word,
 Powerpoint, and web design at

http://cbtraining.msu.edu/cbtweb/curicula/custom.htm

If you use Microsoft software, an excellent source of online tutorials is

http://www.microsoft.com/education/tutorial/default.asp

Kate Corby, the MSU Education librarian has a helpful webpage with a number of good connections:
http://www.lib.msu.edu/corby/education/

Free Useful Software Programs

Another helpful resource for research papers or documents is
http://winfiles.cnet.com/

At this site, you can download shareware for graphics, presentations, multimedia, etc.
In particular, I use Screen Capture Tools for PowerPoint presentations, as well as for the text of this
 workbook. There are a number of different Screen Capture Tools programs listed.