Public Abstract
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In this study I focus on two related topics on the economics of education: one is the teacher labor market and the other is factors affecting student academic achievement.

Chapter one empirically test the effect of state boundaries on beginning teacher job search behavior. The Beginning Teacher Longitudinal Survey (BTLS), a national survey data of beginning teachers, was employed. I run a linear regression to investigate the effect of state boundaries on the distance between the beginning teacher’s job and the Teacher Preparation Program (TPP) and find that beginning teachers tend to find jobs 'inland' when their TPP is near a state border. A mixed logit model with the McFadden Randomization Approach was applied to illustrate the border effect on the probability of employment in a given school. I find that a beginning teacher is 80 percent less likely to teach in a school on the other side of a state border from her TPP. I conclude that frictions associated with state borders, non-reciprocal teacher licensing being a likely candidate, distort early career job search for teacher candidates.

Chapter two examines the effect of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) payment method change on student achievement. Switching from cash to non-cash transactions influences street crime, then student attainment. A difference-in-difference method was used to capture the impact of the implementation of the Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) program, a county-level intervention, on students academic performance in Missouri during 1997 to 1998. I find the standardized math test score of the students in the counties that had implemented EBT program is 0.08 standard deviations higher in grade 8 than students in the counties still using paper checks. This estimate increases to 0.12 standard deviations in grade 4. These results provide evidence that switching to non-cash transactions can enhance student educational outcomes.