



# DATA-RICH JOURNALISM: DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS IN WISCONSIN'S SCHOOLS



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## ABOUT THE PROJECT

Our vision is to foster public engagement with critical social issues affecting Wisconsin. APL serves timely, issue-focused social science research to residents on a news media partner site, WisContext.org.

The contents of APL's reports target key social issues affecting Wisconsin residents: health and health disparities, rural life, electorate, aging, jobs, and education.

It leverages the knowledge base of the University to empower residents to gain an understanding of complex social issues, promote a more engaged public, and achieve the Wisconsin Idea.

One of the longest traditions surrounding the University of Wisconsin, the Wisconsin Idea signifies a general principle that education should influence people's lives beyond the boundaries of the classroom.

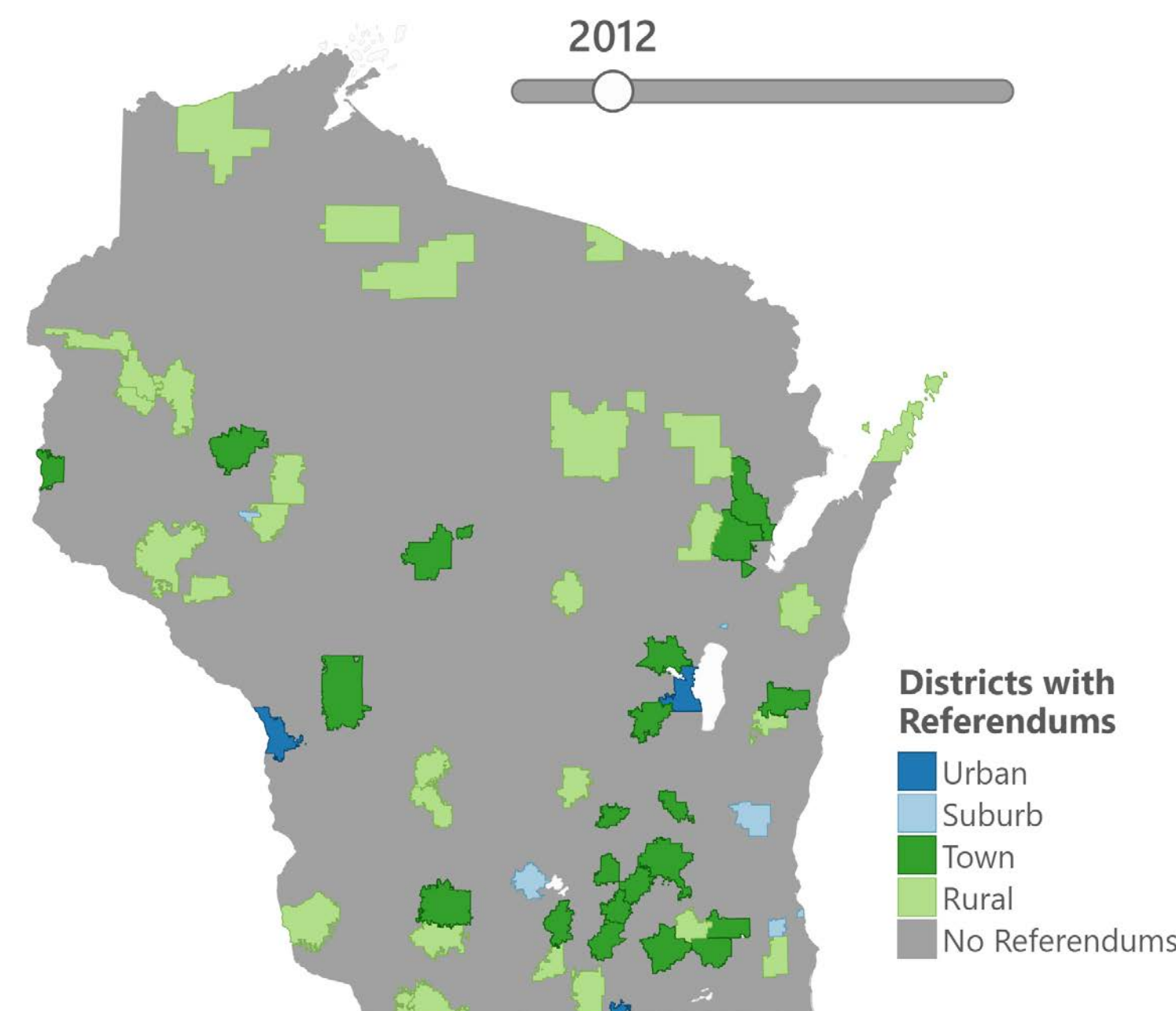
This project was funded by UW-Madison's Provost's Office through a 3-year Baldwin Wisconsin Idea grant.



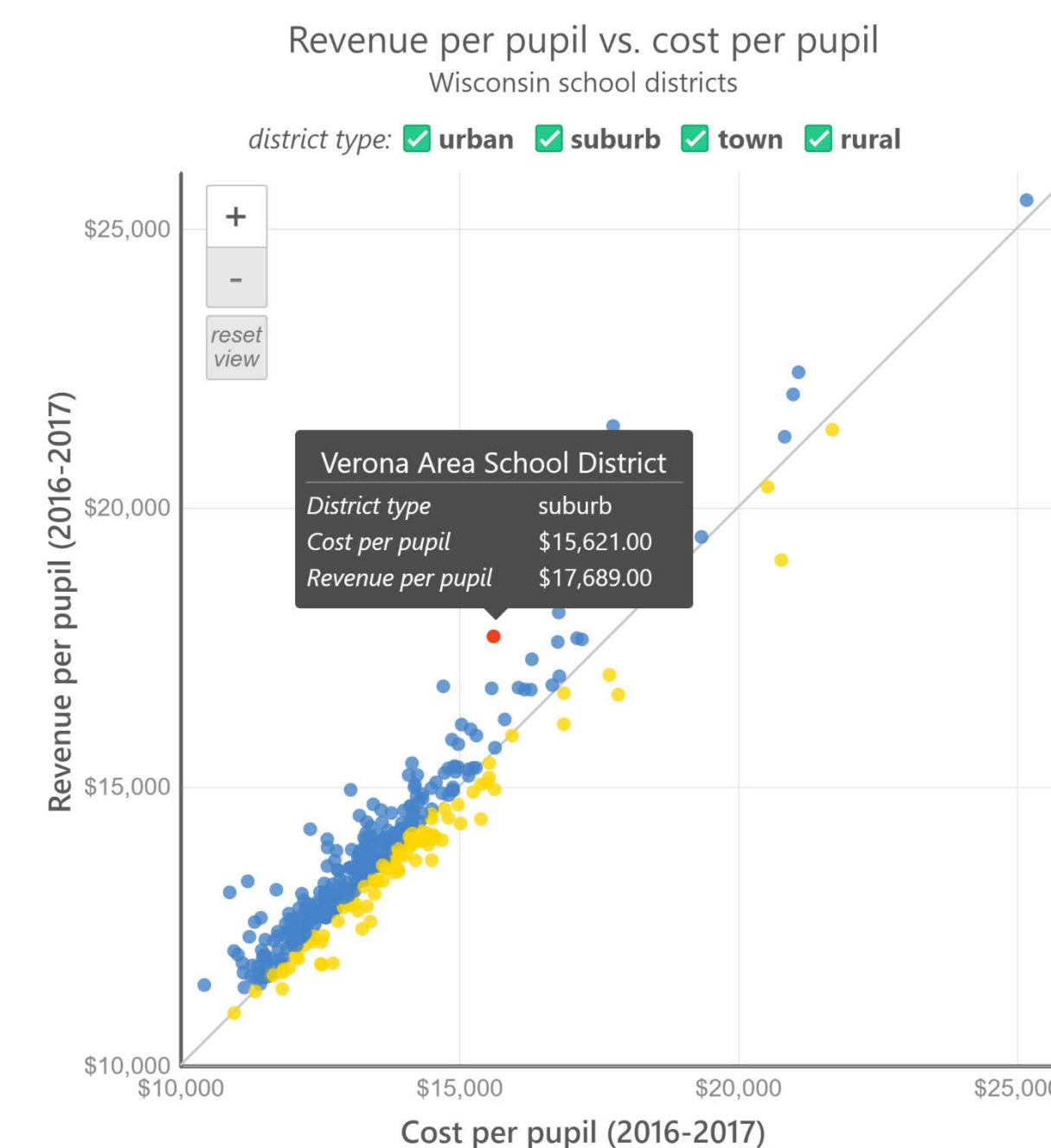
## METHODS

- Topic areas chosen in a collaborative manner by both organizations.
- APL works with WisContext staff to complete an essay once a month.
- WisContext takes the "long view" on topics so there is time to develop the topic.
- One challenge is writing about complicated subjects in a non-academic style.

### School District Referendums



## Comparing District Revenue to Costs



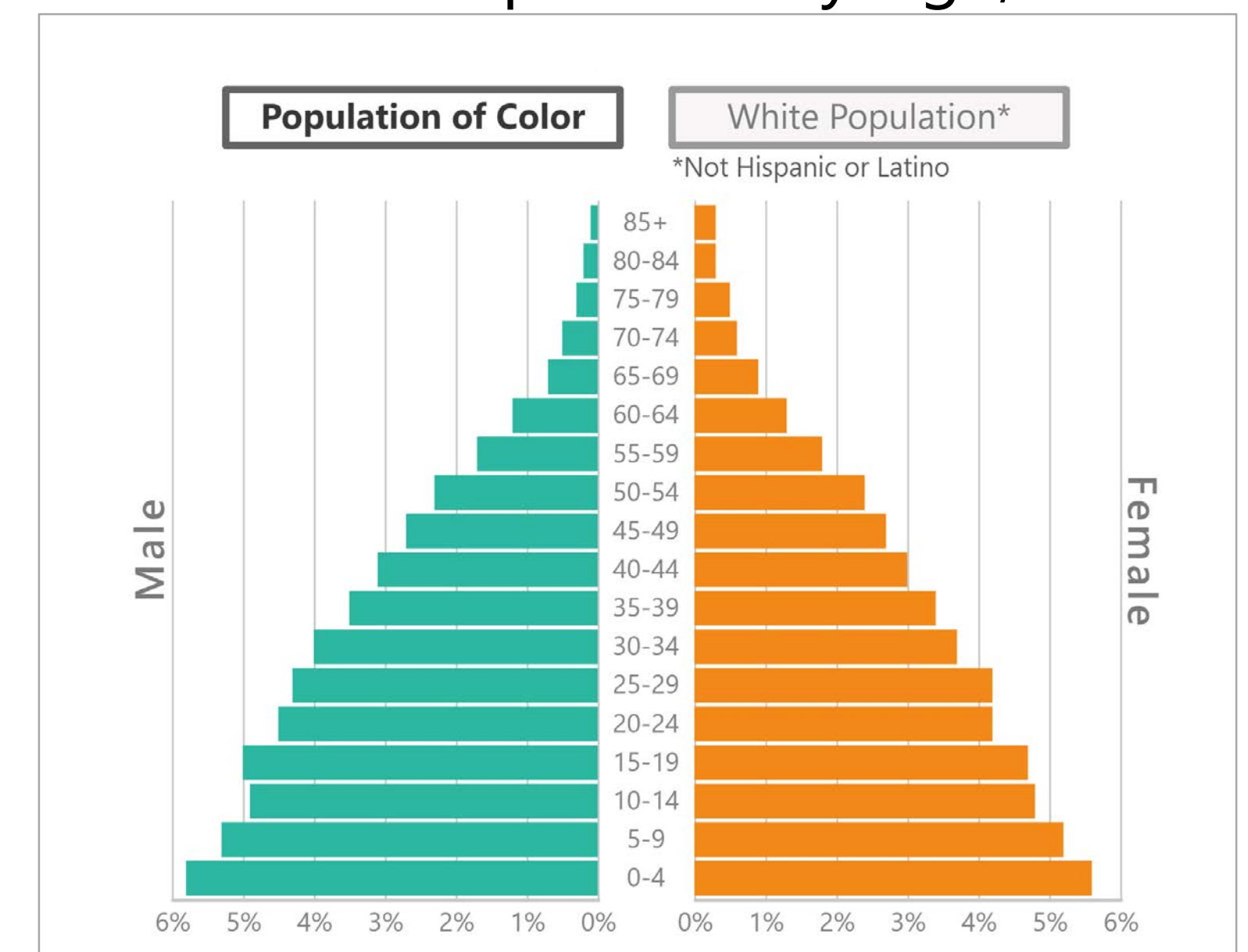
## CONSIDERATIONS

- WisContext uses a content management system (CMS).
- APL's interactive graphics require adding JavaScript code.
- Two methods for integrating graphics
  - Directly passing relevant code into CMS text editor.
  - Using an iframe to "open a window" onto the interactive graphic.

## CONCLUSIONS

- Challenges of the project
  - Time commitment for staff
  - Technical considerations
  - Writing in a non-academic style
- Rewards of the project
  - Research exposure
  - Financial benefit of grant dollars
  - Organizations mutually benefit

### Wisconsin Population by Age, 2010



## REFERENCES

WisCONTEXT:  
<https://www.wiscontext.org/>  
 Applied Population Laboratory:  
<https://apl.wisc.edu/shared/tad>