

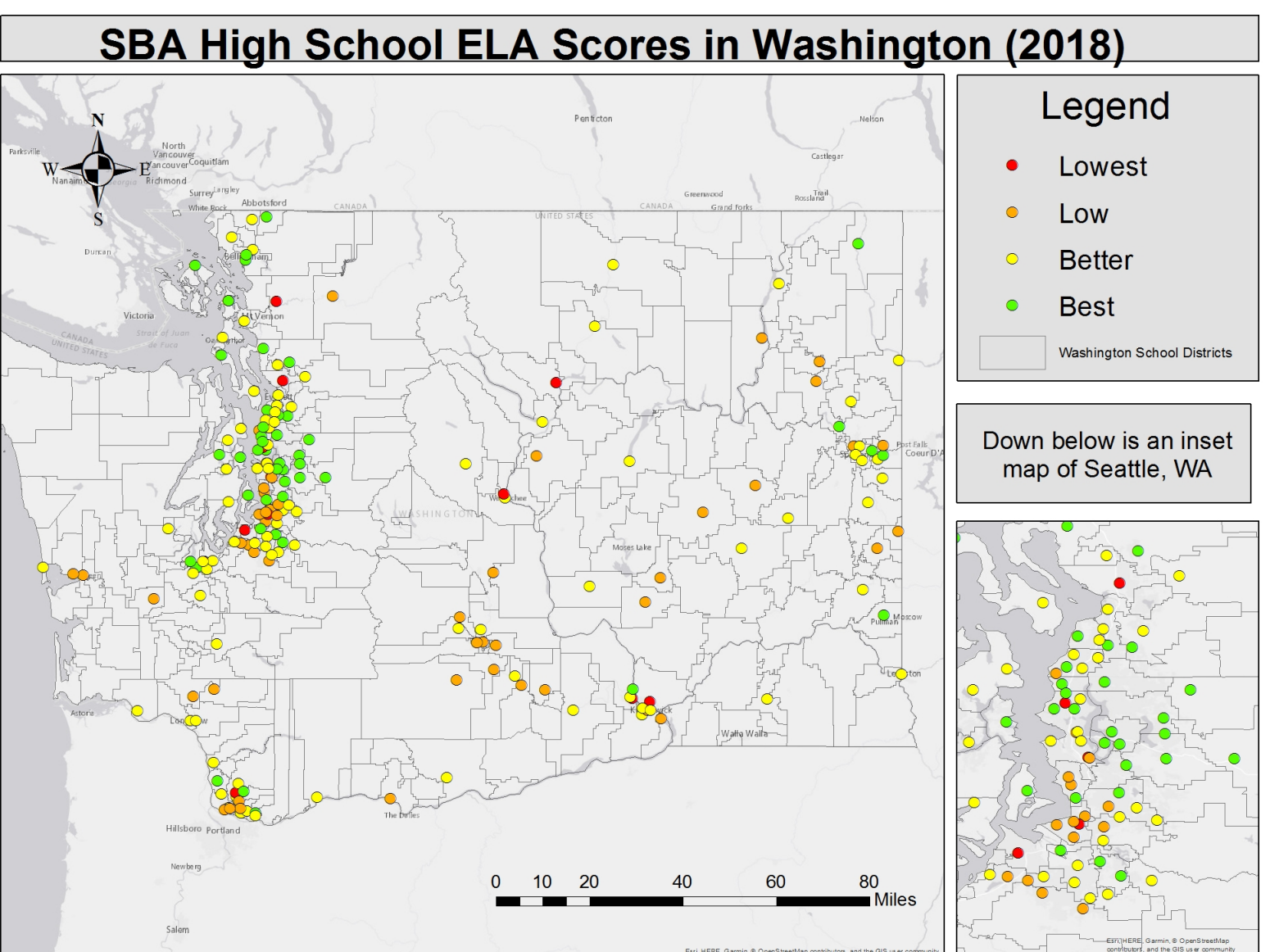
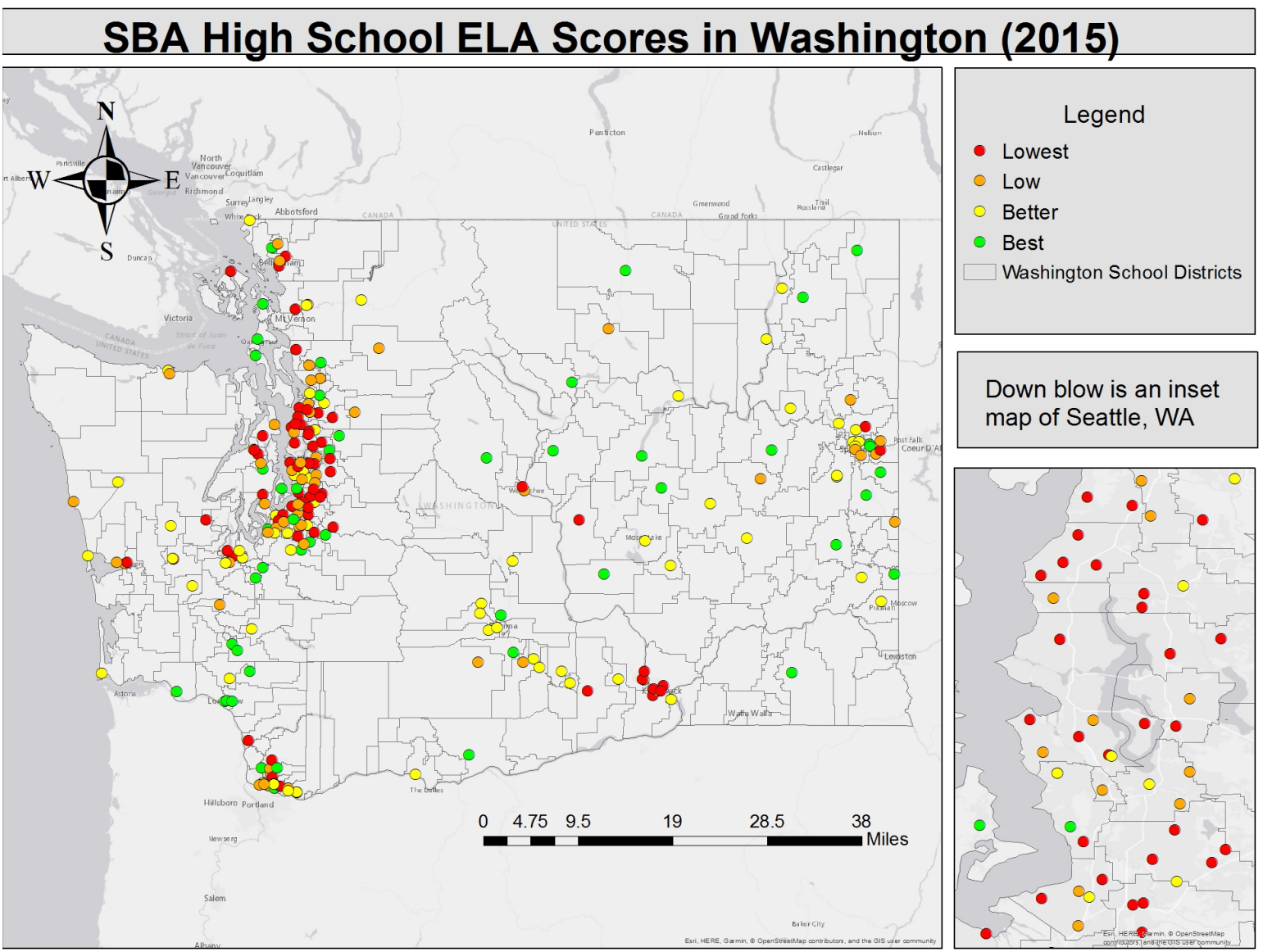
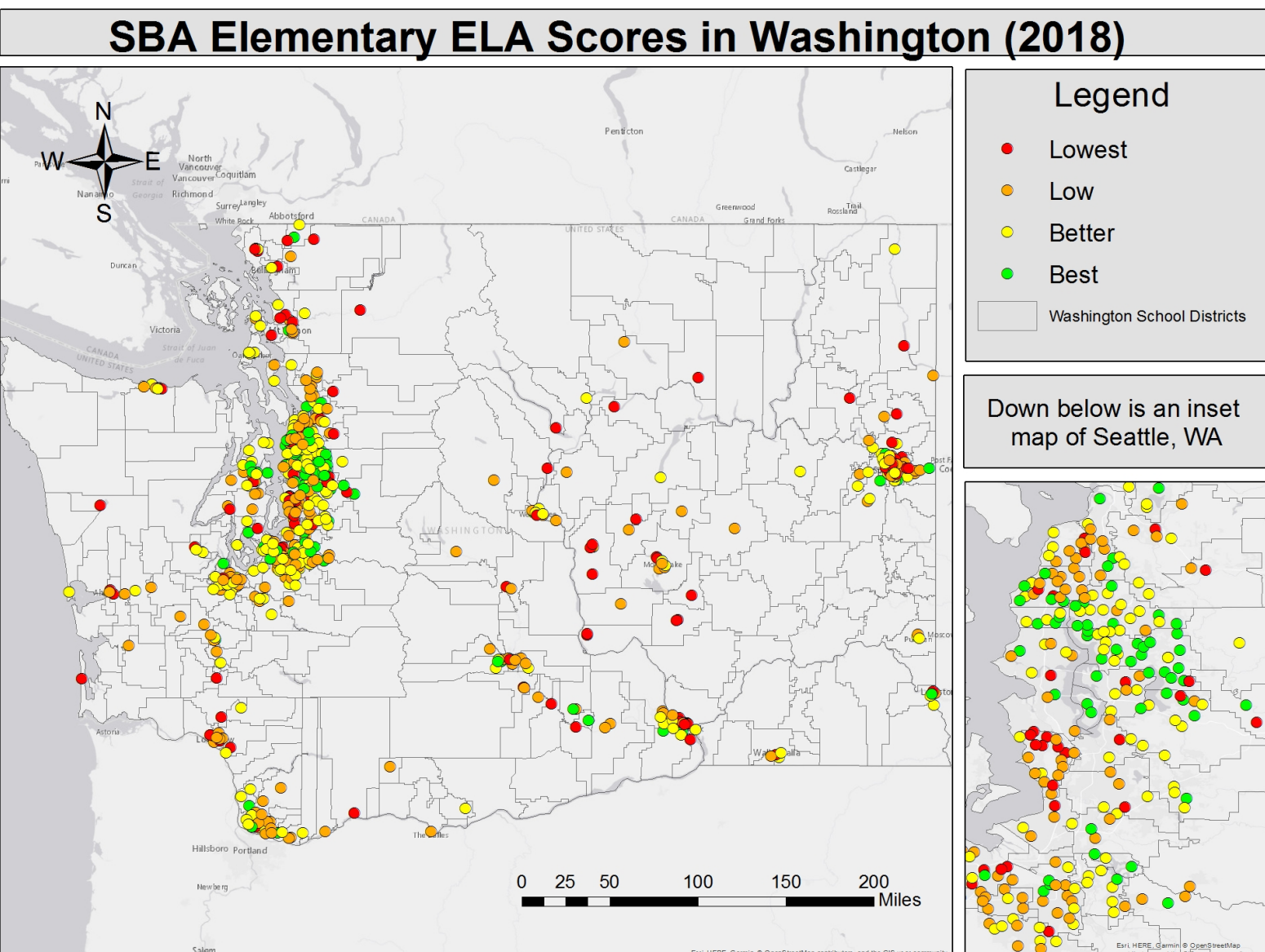
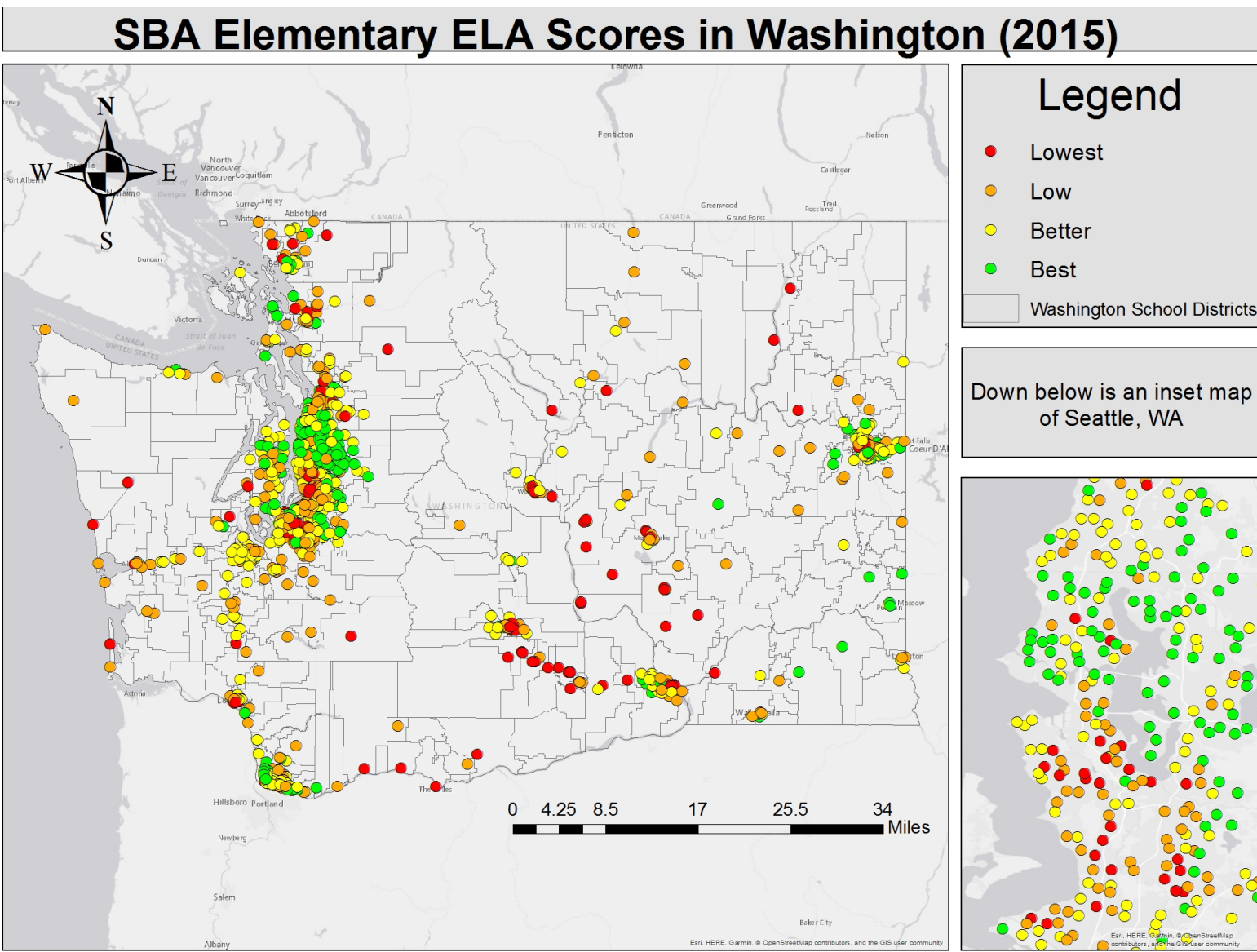
A Study of Public School Quality Improvement in Washington State

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Introduction and Purpose

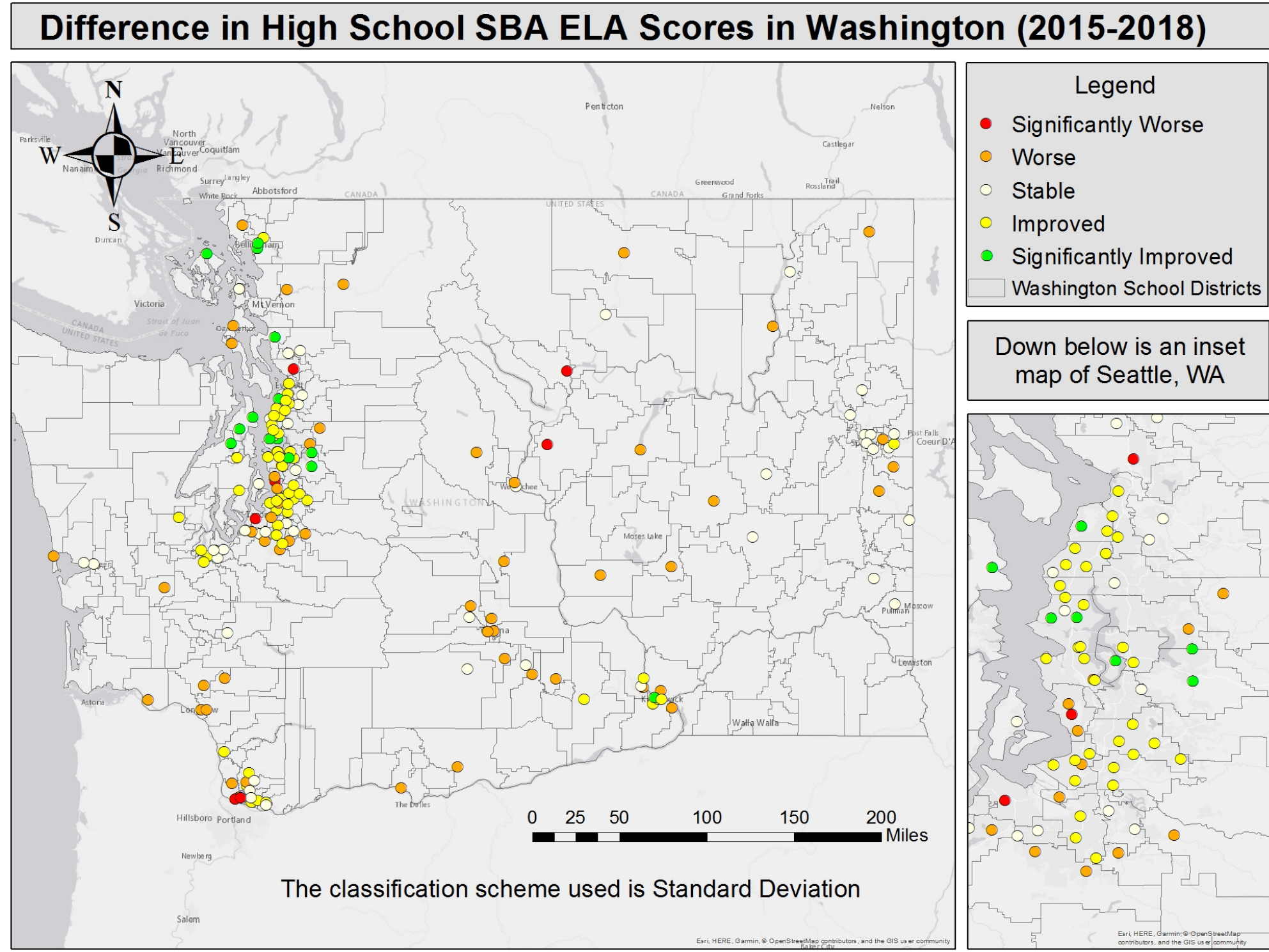
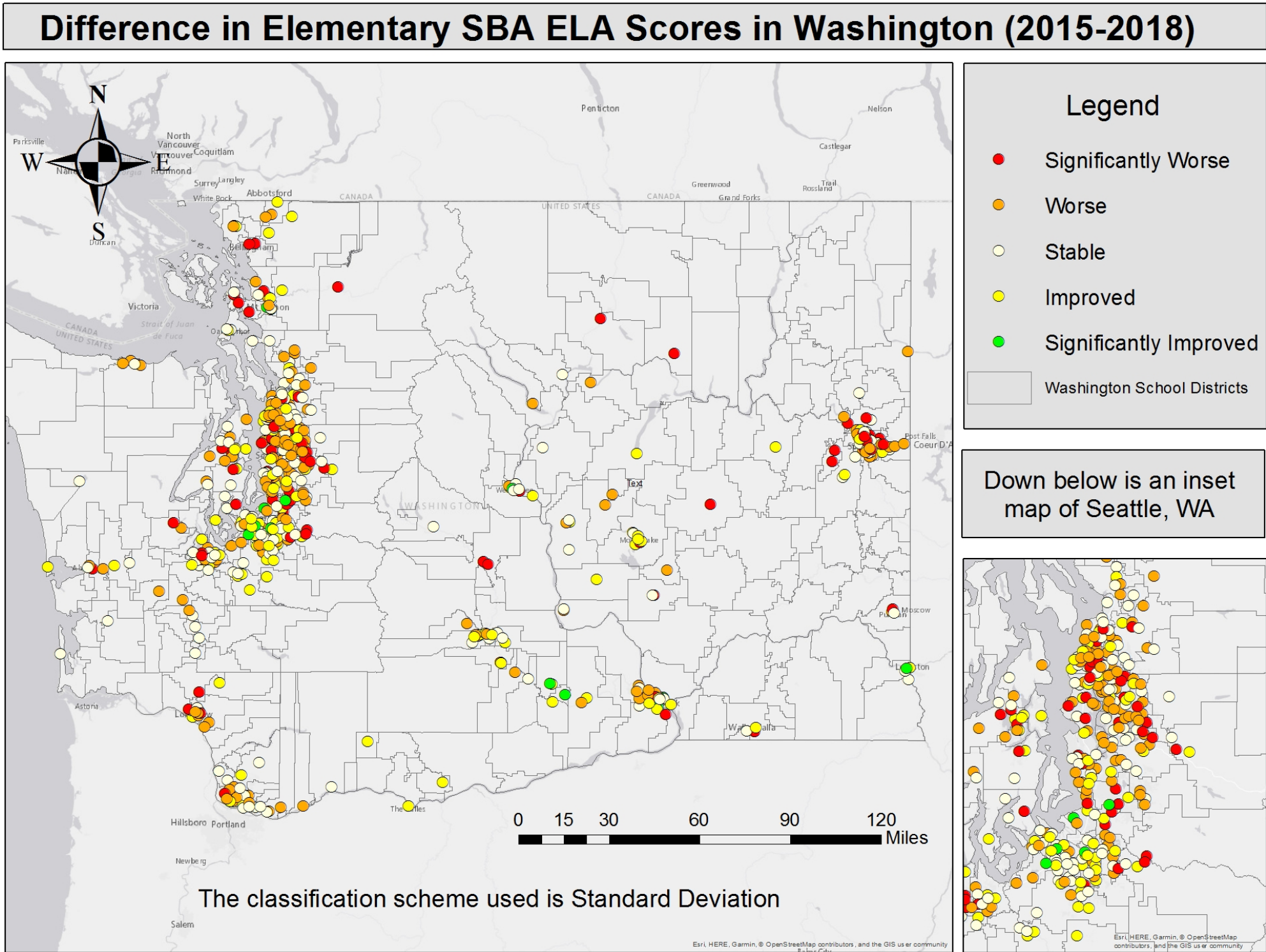
Teacher quality is an important factor for school districts when assessing the quality of the schools in the area. The purpose of this research is to address how the quality of schools in Washington state changed over the last five years as measured by the Smarter Balanced Assessment standardized test scores. Washington State public schools measure their instructors teaching abilities with standardized tests. In this study, we examine the Smarter Balance Test scores for every high school and elementary school in each district from 2015 to 2018 to determine which schools are improving (or lagging) over time.



Method

We were able to determine the schools and school districts where the SBA scores had either remained relatively consistent or had seen drastic change, as well as explored whether the ELA scores (English language arts) show different results for both elementary and high schools in the first year and last year of our analysis.

- Gathered data sources on previous standardized tests for elementary and high school grades
- Created maps of test scores for language arts SBA scores for 2015 and 2018
- Analyzed the differences between 2015 and 2018 SBA scores
- Determined what factors have caused certain school districts to remain stagnant in test scores
- Determined what factors have caused certain school districts to have changes in average test scores
- Determined whether the overall school quality in WA state has improved, remained consistent, or worsened based on the difference in SBA standard deviations for both elementary and high school



Key Findings and Conclusion

- There was a great deal of consistency over time for high school and elementary school.
- The Seattle region has seen the most improvement, where most schools saw improvement of 1 - 2 standard deviations, scoring an average of .5 to 1.8 points higher on a point scale of 1 to 4. This could possibly be due to certain areas having more families with considerably more educated parents as compared to other parts of the state.
- Eastern and southern Washington have all scored less on the Smarter Balanced Assessment over the years, only seeing a handful of schools improve in the Spokane and Vancouver region. Most of these schools fell .5 to 1.5 points over time. As this is for the English Smarter Balanced Assessment, English may not be the first language for many of the students in the rural, heavily Hispanic areas.
- Cities ultimately tend to produce higher Smarter Balanced Assessment results. However, the Smarter Balanced results are not seeing improvements in the manufacturing areas of south of Seattle, where poverty rates are highest. Those areas also have more students for whom English is not their first language, which is important to note as we have only focused on SBA's language art scores.

References

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