The Impact of Metco on MCAS Test Scores: An OLS and 2SLS analysis

Two datasets are provided for use in this analysis.

1) “Metco district enrollment.dta” includes data on each school district that was receiving Metco transfer students from Boston in the 2001-2 school year. It includes the following variables: the name of the district; its distance from the sending district (Boston);¹ the total number of Metco students enrolled in that district; the total number of students enrolled in the district; and the district number.

2) “metco_mcas2002.dta” includes data on performance on the statewide MCAS scores for every school in the state in the 2001-2 school year. An overview of the variables included is provided on the next page.

¹ The Metco program also included a transfer of students from Springfield to surrounding districts, but these districts will not be included in this analysis.
metco_mcas2002.dta variables

metco_mcas2002.dta contains grade-school-level MCAS data for the 2001-2002 school year, as well as some school characteristics.

type is a categorical variable that gives information about what type of district the school is in.  
1 == regular public school district (one that is generally named after a single town and whose district number is between 1 and 350)  
2 == public school district formed by towns combining together (district number between 600 and 780)  
3 == collaborative (a district where several districts collaborate to offer special programs and whose district number is between 504 and 576)  

metcodistrict is a dummy for whether the district received Metco students.

springfieldmetco is a dummy for whether the district received Metco students and is in the Springfield area.

The rest of the unlabeled variables have a three- or four-letter code. The first letter refers to the race. There are seven categories:  
a – Asian  
b – Black  
w – White  
h – Hispanic  
m – Mixed  
n – Native American  
t1 – Total

The second letter refers to the type of test. There are two categories:  
e – English Language Arts  
m – Mathematics

The third and fourth letters/digits show what information about the race/test pair the variable gives. There are nine categories:  
n1 – the number of people included in the mean  
p1 – the percentage of people of that race in the district included in the mean  
m – mean  
n2 – the number of people included in the data on the four MCAS score levels  
p2 – the percentage of people of that race in the district included in the data on the four MCAS score levels  
a – percentage of those included who fall in the “advanced” level  
b – percentage of those included who fall in the “proficient” level  
c – percentage of those included who fall in the “needs improvement” level  
d - percentage of those included who fall in the “failing/warning” level
[So, for instance, the variable hmn1 gives the number of people used to calculate hmm, the average math MCAS score for Hispanics.]

Other variables are labeled in the dataset.