



# STILL SEPARATE, STILL UNEQUAL

A CALL TO LEVEL THE UNEVEN  
EDUCATION PLAYING FIELD IN ST. LOUIS

## Excerpt: Education Environment

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FERGUSON

SEPTEMBER 2020



## **STILL SEPARATE, STILL UNEQUAL: A CALL TO LEVEL THE UNEVEN EDUCATION PLAYING FIELD IN ST. LOUIS**

Published September 30, 2020 by Forward Through Ferguson.

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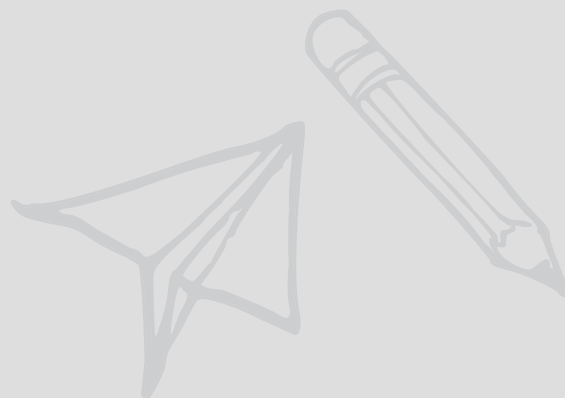
The Center for Civic Research and Innovation (CCRI)  
for data collection, management, and analysis partnership

and

Dr. Colin Gordon, University of Iowa  
for population mapping support and analysis

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# INTRO LETTER

*"Today, education is perhaps the most important function of state and local governments... In these days, it is doubtful that any child may reasonably be expected to succeed in life if he is denied the opportunity of an education. Such an opportunity, where the state has undertaken to provide it, is a right which must be made available to all on equal terms. . ."*

Chief Justice Earl Warren wrote these words in the Supreme Court's unanimous 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling that school segregation was unconstitutional because separate education was inherently unequal. At the heart of that text is the recognition that education is integral to the foundation of democracy and the American Dream.

Nearly 65 years later, for Black students in the St. Louis region especially, that foundation is cracked; that dream is deferred. As the title of this tool suggests, our education system is still separate and still unequal. The pages that follow present evidence of this and next steps for creating equity-centered change.

We are releasing this tool as our city, state, country, and world are in the throes of the COVID-19 pandemic. Our education system is confronting unprecedented challenges that have emphasized its profound brokenness—despite the heroic efforts of educators. Every student and their family is being affected. And, for some, this systematic instability and ineffectiveness of the education system is nothing new. In this convergence of understanding—and in the magnitude of the pre-existing and new crises—we see a path forward for truly transformational systems change.

It won't be easy. And, it's a path we can choose together by recognizing the root causes that have held too many St. Louis families in a perpetual education crisis and held back our entire region in the process. Doing so will require acknowledging hard truths and letting go of bad habits. Daring to resist the allure and temptation to "fix" things back to the status quo. It will require us to lay down our scarcity mentality and fragmentation to make way for approaches that boldly lean into abundance—a radical belief that we can redesign our

education system to center more kids in its promise and opportunity. That's how we unlock transformation.

In the face of a global pandemic that is reminding us of the interconnectedness of our fates, now is the time to let go of insularity, short-sighted, and self-interested measures that benefit some kids but neglect or even condemn others. Instead we need egoless partnership that centers improving outcomes for Black and Brown children over territory and competitive individualism. We need approaches that prioritize direct engagement, relationship building, mutual capacity building, and followership of community members and leaders most directly proximate to the structural inequities in our education system.

In light of the crisis and opportunity of this moment, Forward Through Ferguson is deepening its commitment to education equity. The Still Unequal tool will be the foundation for our work in that space over the next three to five years. In addition to partnering and building capacity, we will be throwing our weight behind three of the next steps named in the pages that follow **1. Continuing to grow understanding** and tell the story of the structural inequities in the St. Louis regional education landscape, **2. Collaboratively redefining regional indicators** of a quality education, and **3. Establishing the Education Design & Finance task force** as recommended by the Ferguson Commission to create a transformative space to grow a community mandate for policy and system action on education in our region.

We hope you will join us in this work to become the designers and guarantors of a new 21st century promise to our children, current and future. A new, decidedly St. Louis compact for all our kids: access to a quality education and the opportunity to thrive.



## BOARD CO-CHAIRS:

Adelaide Lancaster and R. Nelson Williams

# [ 1 ]

## TOPLINE FINDINGS & NEXT STEPS

We're all familiar with the racial outcome gaps that litter our education landscape: the achievement gap, the discipline gap, the summer slide. They have been mainstays of the St. Louis educational system for as long as we can remember despite many efforts to close them. Educators and advocates alike feel a common exhaustion, hopelessness, and powerlessness upon seeing those gaps persist across generations of children.

We assert that those past efforts largely failed because they did not engage with the sources of the outcome disparities: the structure of our education system. We further assert that our education system is doing exactly what it was built to do: affording better opportunities to White, wealthy students at the expense of poor, Black students.

We applied a systems lens (a practice of uncovering the underlying, interconnected, and sometimes "behind-the-scenes" factors that contribute to what we see and experience) to our educational landscape across a four-point arc:

- segregation
- property taxes
- funding
- educational environment.

Each of these issues relates to one another in complex ways that ultimately sculpt our childrens' educational experiences and outcomes.

**THE FOLLOWING PAGES SHOW THE TOP FINDINGS FROM EACH OF THOSE FOUR SECTIONS.**



# TOPLINE FINDINGS

## → FUNDING

### THE ST. LOUIS REGION'S EDUCATION FUNDING LANDSCAPE IS HIGHLY UNEVEN AND IT'S NOT AN ACCIDENT

#### BACKGROUND SUMMARY:

Funding for education in our region comes mostly from local sources (56%), followed by state sources (30%), followed by federal sources (7%). Local funding is inequitable; state funding is volatile; federal funding is restrictive. High-need districts disproportionately feel all of these shortcomings. The Foundation Formula is Missouri's way of determining how much state funding a district receives, and several aspects of it are inequitable by design.

#### FINDINGS SNAPSHOT:

- + On average, majority White districts in St. Louis receive and spend more funding per student than Majority Black districts (median difference = \$1,698 more received and \$2,076 more spent in 2018-2019). The highest-spending majority White district spent \$8,412 (nearly 40%) more per student than the highest-spending majority Black district and 2.4 times (about \$18,000) more per student than the lowest spending districts.
- + On average, majority Black districts receive a greater portion of their funding from state sources (31% vs. 14%), while majority White districts draw more from local sources (82% vs. 58%).

This is problematic for at least 3 reasons:

- ▶ Missouri provides very little state-level funding for education. As a percentage of total revenues only one other state (NH) provides less.

- ▶ The state mechanism for filling the gaps in local funding (the Foundation Formula) is fundamentally inequitable.
- ▶ State education funding is volatile because it is appropriated each year by politicians. In its 15 years of existence, the Foundation Formula has only been fully funded 3 times.

#### MONEY BUYS BETTER OPPORTUNITIES.

The "success to the successful"<sup>1</sup> archetype reminds us that structural forces are just as powerful a condition of success as individual ability. The educational outcome disparities we witness are highly dependent on initial circumstances (teacher quantity and quality, counselors, social workers, curricular quality, extracurricular options, etc.) and expectations. Those circumstances tend to come with additional costs and therefore to favor White students.

#### MAJORITY WHITE VS. MAJORITY BLACK DISTRICTS

**\$1,698**

MORE FUNDING RECEIVED PER STUDENT

**\$8,412**

MORE SPENT PER STUDENT IN HIGHEST SPENDING DISTRICT

**82%**

OF FUNDING FROM LOCAL SOURCES COMPARED TO 58%

# → PROPERTY TAXES FUNDING EDUCATION THROUGH PROPERTY TAXES IS INEQUITABLE

## BACKGROUND SUMMARY:

Property taxes are the biggest wedge of the local funding pie. The bulk of property value in a district tends to come from residential properties, though commercial property can be a powerful—and under-discussed—contributor to education coffers. School districts set their tax rates each October, but if they want to set it above a certain ceiling, they must get voter approval.

## FINDINGS SNAPSHOT:

- + The Foundation Formula is supposed to fill the gaps left by uneven local funding. But the strong, positive relationship between the property wealth in a district and the local and state revenue it receives suggests the Formula is not working.
- + This is partly because of the vast difference in property wealth in our region: the median assessed value of the property in majority White districts was \$181,899/student compared to \$97,751 in majority Black districts.
- + To make up for their lower property values, majority Black districts tend to have higher tax levy ceilings than majority White districts (on average \$4.7804 per \$100 of assessed value vs. \$4.2732)—meaning their residents voted to tax themselves more heavily, despite having about half the income (median of \$41,107 vs. \$79,729).
- + But even with higher taxes, majority Black districts don't come close to raising what White wealthy districts can raise at the local level.

### MAJORITY WHITE DISTRICTS

**\$181,899**

MEDIAN ASSESSED  
VALUE OF PROPERTY

**\$79,729**

MEDIAN INCOME

**\$4.2732**

TAX LEVY CEILING PER  
\$100 OF ASSESSED  
VALUE

### MAJORITY BLACK DISTRICTS

**\$97,751**

MEDIAN ASSESSED  
VALUE OF PROPERTY

**\$41,107**

MEDIAN INCOME

**\$4.7804**

TAX LEVY CEILING PER  
\$100 OF ASSESSED  
VALUE



READ THE VISIONS FOR  
EDUCATION EQUITY OF THESE  
REAL ST. LOUIS FAMILIES ONLINE  
AT [WWW.STILLUNEQUAL.ORG](http://WWW.STILLUNEQUAL.ORG)

## → SEGREGATION

# FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL POLICIES AND PRACTICES LED TO DE JURE AND THEN DE FACTO SEGREGATION IN OUR REGION AND SCHOOLS

### BACKGROUND SUMMARY:

A long history of overtly racist federal, state, and local policies in our housing, transportation, and other systems followed by race neutral policies that did nothing to correct for the inequalities of their predecessors have created the landscape of inequality that we see today, and are the primary drivers of district wealth disparities.

### FINDINGS SNAPSHOT:

- + For the most part, St. Louis schools have grown more segregated over the past thirty years.
- + Dissimilarity Index (DI; a common measure of segregation) scores for our region's school districts largely stayed level during the 90s. However, as the VICC desegregation program waned, in large part because of the ending in 1999 of the official 1983 order, schools started slipping back towards re-segregation and DI scores increased.
- + In 2019, the tri-county (St. Louis City, County, and St. Charles County) public school district Dissimilarity Index score was 0.71, meaning 71% of Black or White students would have had to move districts for schools to reflect the underlying population.
- + Today, our region's schools are almost as segregated as the nation's schools were before meaningful integration took place. By comparison, in 1968, soon after *Brown v. Board of Education* ruled segregated schools unconstitutional, but before most districts had moved to integrate, the Dissimilarity Index nationwide was about 0.80<sup>2</sup>.
- + As a result of de facto (i.e., not legally mandated) segregation, 78% of public school students in the St. Louis region attended a racially concentrated school district in 2019, where the vast majority (75% or more) of enrollment is of one race. Even more Black students (85%) attended a racially concentrated school.

### "EXPENSIVE TO EDUCATE"

Throughout this tool we discuss types of students that are "more expensive to educate" or students with "greater needs." These include students that are eligible for free or reduced price lunch (FRL), English language learners, and students with a disability. In our region, Black students are more likely to have greater needs, primarily because they are more likely to be financially underprivileged. We should remember that, ultimately, the reason for those greater needs can oftentimes be traced back to systemic racism and implicit bias impeding access to opportunity and financial well-being.

### DISSIMILARITY INDEX

**.80**

1960 NATIONWIDE DISSIMILARITY INDEX BEFORE INTEGRATION

**.71**

2019 TRI-COUNTY DISSIMILARITY INDEX

**78%**

OF PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS IN THE ST. LOUIS REGION ATTEND A RACIALLY CONCENTRATED SCHOOL DISTRICT



## → ED ENVIRONMENT

# RACIALIZED DIFFERENCES IN FUNDING CONTRIBUTE TO DIFFERENCES IN EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

### BACKGROUND SUMMARY:

The Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP) is the state's accountability system for reviewing and accrediting public school districts. It forms the foundation of how we determine whether a school district is "accredited." MSIP 6, the current system, makes important improvements over MSIP 5 by emphasizing measures of school culture and climate, data transparency and utilization, and equity and access to quality education. However, state standards take little consideration of important factors that affect a school's ability to educate its students like poverty, funding, and student mobility. This shortsightedness is a symptom of state-level education structures that are not doing enough to ensure the quality of education received by low income Black students.

### FINDINGS SNAPSHOT:

- + For 3 of the 4 measures we looked at, majority Black districts in the St. Louis region were more heavily staffed than majority White districts. This makes sense, since these districts tend to have students with greater needs.
- + However, teachers at majority Black districts are paid, on average, 10% or \$6,221 less. Administrators are paid 13% or \$14,909 less. The highest paid teachers are in Clayton, where they get paid \$78,723 on average. This is 61% or \$30,000 more than the average salary of a teacher in SLPS—the largest educator of Black children in the region.
- + In some ways, the pay disparities are understandable: administrators and teachers at majority White districts tend to have more years of experience and more advanced degrees. Teachers in majority Black districts are 4.7x more likely to be in their first year of teaching.
- + This likely contributes to the less rigorous course offerings at majority Black school districts. Majority White districts offer 3x as many AP courses as majority Black districts. 43% of majority Black districts don't offer calculus. Not a single majority White district fails to offer this course. Over 1 in 4 Black students in our region attend a school district that either doesn't offer Calculus or any AP courses. Less than 1% of White students attend such a district.

### EDUCATION ENVIRONMENT IN MAJORITY BLACK DISTRICTS

<b>\$6,221</b>	<b>4.7X</b>	<b>43%</b>
AMOUNT <b>LESS</b> ON AVERAGE TEACHERS IN MAJORITY BLACK DISTRICTS ARE PAID	MORE LIKELY FOR TEACHERS IN MAJORITY BLACK DISTRICTS TO BE IN 1ST YEAR OF TEACHING	OF MAJORITY BLACK DISTRICTS DON'T OFFER CALCULUS

### DIFFERENCES IN EXPECTATIONS LEAD TO DIFFERENCES IN OUTCOMES LEAD TO DIFFERENCES IN EXPECTATIONS

Students at majority Black school districts have fewer advanced courses to choose from. We tell our Black students something about our expectations of them when we don't offer them the opportunity to take advanced courses. Left unprepared by their secondary education, Black students tend to go on to struggle more with college-level coursework—if they manage to overcome the structural barriers to making it to college (including having not taken college prep courses). That diminished performance reinforces low expectations of Black students. It becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy built into the system.

- segregation → property taxes
- funding → educational environment
- cross cutting → pursuing in 2021

## NEXT STEPS

Forward Through Ferguson is committed to being part of the work to move our education system forward. That's why we're sharing these Next Steps near the beginning of this tool: to underscore that this is not the endpoint, nor is it the beginning of our work together. This fight for Racial Equity—dismantling systemic racism and re-designing systems to support excellent outcomes for all kids—will have headwinds, no doubt. But it's a goal worth fighting for, in partnership, so our kids can inherit a better St. Louis.

We've organized the next steps by level (local, regional, and state) with tags for the core focuses of this tool (education environment, property taxes, funding, segregation, and cross cutting). We've marked with a star a few that FTF will be pursuing in the next year. ★

### CALLING ALL ACCOUNTABLE BODIES

Transforming our education system must be the work of many. We invite community members, education advocates, researchers, elected officials, educators, education administrators, colleagues from intersecting sectors (e.g., business, transportation, economic development, etc.), and state-level officials to find their roles in the next steps below.

## LOCAL+COMMUNITY LEVEL

### ★ GROW BROAD COMMUNITY UNDERSTANDING OF THE STRUCTURAL INEQUITIES IN THE ST. LOUIS REGIONAL EDUCATION LANDSCAPE INCLUDING:

- The Foundation Formula and its structural weaknesses and potential paths for improvement toward equitable funding.
- The inequities of pouring property taxes directly into school districts without redistribution and awareness of alternative models.
- The historical and modern-day drivers of educational segregation from the individual up to the systemic level and, understanding of the approaches available at each level for facilitating integration, and capacity for directly or indirectly implementing those approaches.
- The state standards program (MSIP) and the ways past versions have disproportionately harmed majority Black districts and defined "performance" based on an ideal majority White district.

### CORRECT THE OFTEN DOMINANT NARRATIVE OF BLACK KIDS' INDIVIDUAL FAILURE AS THE DRIVER OF OUTCOME DISPARITIES.

- Through an antiracist, anti-bias approach, use storytelling, healing, and youth agency to challenge the deep-seated notions held by adults and children alike, that people of color are less able and willing to work and learn. Replace them with an understanding of the differences in opportunity and expectations (i.e., implicit bias and systemic racism) that drive differences in outcomes disparities.

### CRAFT A COMMON DEFINITION AND VISION OF RACIAL EQUITY IN EDUCATION.

- Engage the community's collective imagination of what an anti-racist school system could and should look like. Form those visions and that definition into the foundation of regional transformation efforts.

### BUILD THE POWER AND AGENCY OF FAMILIES ACROSS RACIAL LINES TO ADVANCE AN EQUITABLE EDUCATION SYSTEM.

- Grow the awareness and power of Black families to demand and shape change.
- Grow the capacity of White families and other families with privilege to use their power to increase educational equity.

## ST. LOUIS REGIONAL LEVEL

### GROW NEXT-LEVEL, REGIONAL EDUCATION PARTNERSHIPS TO ORGANIZE AND STRATEGIZE ON EQUITY-CENTERED ADVOCACY.

→ Increase cross-district relationships and partnerships to support regional organizing and strategy for education access and quality.

### ★ DEVELOP A REGIONAL SET OF EDUCATION EQUITY INDICATORS THAT EXPAND BEYOND THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP TO CENTER CHILD WELLBEING AND STRUCTURAL DETERMINANTS OF EDUCATION QUALITY

→ Redefine regional indicators of what a quality education consists of, including measures that move beyond academic performance to measure social and emotional health, growth, and school climate.

→ Measure the development and promotion pipeline for teachers of color. Require school districts to report teacher demographic data, including race.

→ Strengthen the region's education data and accountability infrastructure, including access to high quality, individual-level, longitudinal data.

### ★ ESTABLISH THE EDUCATION DESIGN & FINANCE TASK FORCE AS RECOMMENDED BY THE FERGUSON COMMISSION TO CREATE A SPACE AND A MANDATE FOR THINKING TRANSFORMATIONALLY ABOUT EDUCATION IN OUR REGION.

→ Create a community-based task force to engage residents, educators, and stakeholders in the redesign of education funding and accountability mechanisms, including the regional allocation of property taxes, the Missouri Foundation Formula, and state standards programs.

## MISSOURI STATE LEVEL

### DEVELOP A STATEWIDE COALITION FOR PURSUING STATE-LEVEL POLICY CHANGES

→ Bring together education stakeholders across the state to build buy-in for shifting policy, including parents, teachers, superintendents, unions, and business leaders

### IN PARTNERSHIP WITH DIVERSE STAKEHOLDERS, IDENTIFY STATEWIDE ADVOCACY TARGETS. POTENTIAL OPTIONS INCLUDE:

→ Modify the Foundation Formula to ensure equity is centered by, for example, removing Hold Harmless provisions that ensure that already privileged school districts receive funding in excess of what the formula otherwise says they need.

→ Amend the Missouri state constitution to strengthen education rights by explicitly naming a commitment to an "adequate" and equitable education for all children.

→ Redistribute local funds before infusing them into school districts drawing from existing, successful models in other regions, including pooling property taxes by county.

→ Improving state standards program (MSIP) by further applying an equity lens.

As systems scientist and noted thinker Donella Meadows urges us, the most deeply entrenched of our problems "will yield only as we reclaim our intuition, stop casting blame, see the system as the source of its own problems, and find the courage and wisdom to restructure it."<sup>3</sup> In so many ways, be it out of a desire to guarantee the best opportunities for their children or a deep-seated belief that Black children are worthy of less, the disproportionately White, privileged, and powerful architects of our education and intersecting systems have codified into those systems policies, processes, and practices that favor them and theirs. Many of us with similar privilege embody that same scarcity mentality and reinforce those systems by tacitly acting within them.

**WE BUILT THE SYSTEM. WE ARE THE SYSTEM. THE SYSTEM IS CLEARLY UNJUST. WE HAVE TO CHANGE THE SYSTEM.**

## PARTING THOUGHTS

All of our next steps boil down to the same thing: **CHALLENGE THE NARRATIVE THAT OUTCOME DISPARITIES RESULT FROM INDIVIDUAL FAILURES AND, INSTEAD, LOOK FOR THE ROOT CAUSES.**



# [ 2 ]

## INTRODUCTION

### EDUCATION AND THE AMERICAN DREAM

Embedded deep in the American psyche is a belief in the power of education. We urge our children and each other that, paired with hard work, an education is the best guarantee of lifelong well-being, prosperity, and success.

There is some truth to this wisdom. Individuals with more education are more likely<sup>4</sup> to have higher paying jobs, live in safer neighborhoods, have better social and emotional skills, engage in healthier behaviors, and ultimately be healthier, both physically and mentally. The individual

benefits of education roll up to yield economically and civically thriving societies. The Supreme Court understood this when they wrote, in the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling that deemed segregation in schools unconstitutional, that “education is perhaps the most important function of state and local governments.”

Education forms the bedrock upon which we base our vision of intergenerational upward mobility—of children rising to heights unseen by their parents. But, for some, this bedrock is cracked and shaky.

## WHAT THIS REPORT IS AND WHAT IT IS NOT

**Our charge at Forward Through Ferguson is to demystify the policies and practices that hold back Black and Brown St. Louisans while benefiting White ones, grow transparency and buy-in, and then leverage community partnerships to transform systems toward Racial Equity. By their very nature, systems are complex. Their components interact with each other, and with parts of outside systems, in multiple and layered ways.**

## SO, THIS REPORT IS:

- + A deep dive into four structural barriers to Racial Equity in our education system—funding, property taxes, housing and development policies, and educational environment.
- + A spotlight on some of the ways in which they are interrelated.
- + A foundation for continued conversation, advocacy, and action that FTF, partners, and community members will pursue.

## THIS REPORT IS NOT:

- ▶ A comprehensive run-down of all the structural barriers in our education system
- ▶ A definitive explanation of how each barrier relates to the others.
- ▶ Claiming that one barrier is solely caused by the other. A more robust examination is needed to assert, with any degree of rigor and testability, the causal connections between system factors and components.

# AN ABUNDANCE OF GAPS

The “achievement gap,” the “learning gap,” the “summer slide,” the “discipline gap”: our education landscape is littered with evidence of how Black students tend to perform worse than their White classmates. Countless reports have plumbed the depths of these gaps, many observing the slow—or even backwards—progress being made to close them.

These cracks are so deep and persistent that they’ve become, for many, permanent disfigurements on our education topography. They are, as executive director of We Stories and education advocate Adelaide Lancaster notes, “a reality that educators are painfully aware of, that keeps them up at night, and that, in many ways, seems beyond their ability to control.”

The reality is that the sources of those outcome disparities do, in fact, largely sit outside of the purview of individual school superintendents or principals or even school boards.



# THE BROKEN PROMISE OF EDUCATION

In the United States, all children are promised a free public education. But the quality of that education is not guaranteed. In 1973, less than twenty years after *Brown v. Board*, the Supreme Court ruled on *Rodriguez v. San Antonio Independent School Board* and upended a burgeoning movement for education finance reform. The Equal Protection Clause of the Constitution, scholars and advocates argued, prohibited school districts in wealthy neighborhoods from being funded better than districts in poor neighborhoods.

In *Rodriguez v. San Antonio*, the Supreme Court disagreed, finding that the government was not obligated to fund school districts equitably. The Supreme Court's decision pushed the education finance reform movement back to the state level, where the question became whether individual state constitutions prohibited unequal school funding—a case that was generally easier to make because most state constitutions contain a specific education provision, which the U.S. Constitution lacks.

Unfortunately, Missouri's constitutional commitment to education is weak. It does not require "adequate" or equitable funding or high quality education but merely that the state spend 25% of its revenue on schools.<sup>5</sup> Nonetheless, in 1993, in *Committee for Educational Equality v. State of Missouri*,<sup>6</sup> the school finance system was successfully challenged on equity grounds (namely on disparities in interdistrict per-student spending) and found unconstitutional. In response, the General Assembly passed legislation increasing school funding and improving funding equity. The current Foundation Formula (the state system for allocating education funding) emerged from this effort.

In 2004, nearly half the school districts in the state came together again in *Committee for Educational Equality v. State*<sup>7</sup> to claim that the Missouri school funding system had once more become inequitable and under-funded, and therefore denied students their right to adequate educational resources and opportunity. The case was among the most complex constitutional trials<sup>8</sup> to make its way through the state and, in 2009, the state Supreme Court found that an adequate education is not a fundamental right and that students across the state are not entitled to equal funding. In their ruling, they explained, "Education is not a fundamental right under the United States Constitution's equal protection provision... And, although Missouri's Constitution may contain additional protections, Missouri courts have followed the general federal approach to defining fundamental rights... Notably, no expressed right to equitable education funding exists..." nor does the state constitution "describe a free-standing right to 'adequate' funding."<sup>9</sup>

In short, a series of decisions codified into law have allowed inequities to continue to be baked into our education system, primarily through a funding model that bears the legacies of systemic racism and that concentrates resources in privileged and disproportionately White districts.

**THAT IS TO SAY, WE HAVE SYSTEMATICALLY BROKEN THE PROMISE OF EDUCATION FOR BLACK AND BROWN STUDENTS (AND POOR STUDENTS IN GENERAL). IT SHOULD BE NO SURPRISE THAT EDUCATION OUTCOME DISPARITIES PERSIST.**

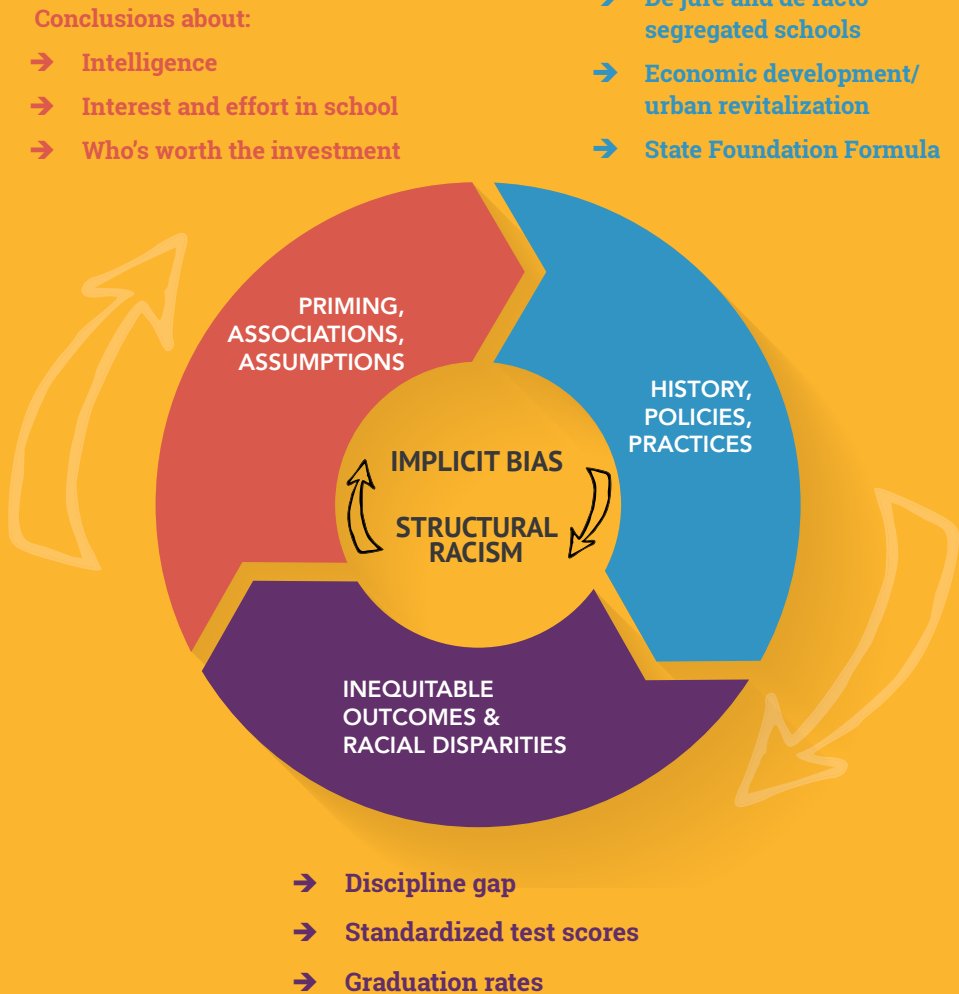
## EDUCATION EQUITY

For the purpose of this *Still Unequal* report, we are defining education equity as the state in which one's educational outcomes cannot be predicted by their race—when our education system works well for all students so that disparities are closed and all children have justice and the opportunity to thrive.

# UP AHEAD

When we limit our critique of our education system to reports on the outcome gaps, we fail to acknowledge that, for Black and Brown students, the education system was not built to give them the same quality of education that their White classmates receive. In a sense, by producing unequal outcomes, that system is doing exactly what it was intended to do—providing extra privilege to our White children at the cost of the success and well-being of our Black children. The focus on these outcome gaps, while important measures of student experience, tend to distract us from investigating and transforming the deeply structural ways our education system is designed to distribute resources inequitably.

Even worse, conversations that focus on performance gaps without engaging with the opportunity gaps that drive them tend to reinforce toxic narratives of individual failure—of Black kids who don't work as hard and don't have as much grit, of parents who don't care as much. At the core of those stories are deeply planted ideas of biological determinism, or the belief that Black people are less intelligent, capable and, ultimately, human. We argue this misplaced blame shields and perpetuates an unjust system.



*The interplay of implicit bias and structural racism in schools. Adapted from The National Equity Project.*

Instead of languishing in the education outcome gaps, this report is going upstream to examine some of the underlying structural inequities that create them.

We applied a systems lens (a practice of uncovering the underlying, interconnected, and sometimes “behind-the-scenes” factors that contribute to what we see and experience) to our educational landscape. We will start by looking at funding, and then move upstream to property

taxes, and then further upstream to historical and modern era housing policies. We then discuss some of the systemic differences in educational environments to which funding inequities contribute.

Throughout we will share ways of taking action to eliminate the structural barriers to education equity, because that is how we keep our promise to all of our children and give them the high quality education they deserve.



# [ 3 ]

## NOTE ON METHODS

→ IN CASE YOU'RE INTERESTED, HERE'S A QUICK RUNDOWN OF HOW WE COMPLETED THIS PROJECT.

### SCOPE

We examined the 28 traditional public school districts in St. Louis City, St. Louis County, and St. Charles County. When we refer to the “region” we mean this tri-county area. We did not include Special School District<sup>10</sup> (SSD), the parallel system for providing education to students with disabilities in St. Louis County. About 24,000 (13% of St. Louis County) students receive special education services or technical education from SSD. Excluding SSD is a major gap in this study. A great deal of research, including our own, shows that the disability education infrastructure is complex, confusing, and laden with bias, all of which make it harder for Black students with disabilities to get appropriate services and fair treatment.<sup>11-14</sup> Profound racial outcome disparities<sup>15</sup> underscore all of this. We made the difficult decision to exclude SSD because it is so fundamentally different in terms of its structure and function from the other public school districts we were studying. We would love to support a close structural investigation of SSD in partnership with the district and advocates close to it.

We know that counties just over the river in Illinois are, in many ways, incontrovertibly part of our region, but we decided to focus on the Missouri-side because of the data collection, analysis, and interpretation complexities associated with introducing another state’s education policies, structures, and histories into the mix.

Finally, by focusing on traditional public school districts, we are largely ignoring the region’s private and public charter schools. Those schools educate about 16% of the school-aged kids in the region. The questions we’re asking in this report are undeniably important to ask about the charter and private school systems. However publicly available data are much harder to come by for those schools, an obstacle that we encourage regional efforts to improve educational data infrastructure to tackle.



# DATA SOURCES

We make note of the specific data sources we used in each section of this report, but, in general, we used administrative data provided by school districts in the form of annual financial reports, as well as data provided by school districts to the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (MO DESE) and to the federal Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights (namely through the Civil Rights Data Collection). Wherever possible, we used data for the 2018-19 school year, though on occasion we had to go as far back as 2015-16. Historical data are, well, historical and therefore came from a variety of sources and times.

# AVERAGES VS. OUTLIERS

We used two different approaches to developing our quantitative understanding of equity in our region's educational apparatus: one that uses averages and one that uses outliers. The first approach compared indicators at majority White school districts to the same indicators at majority Black school districts (based on 2018-2019 enrollments). For this approach we chose to calculate district-level averages as opposed to school building- or individual-level averages. In a statistical sense, calculating individual-level averages is more accurate and less susceptible to ecological fallacy, which can occur when drawing conclusions with data aggregated at higher levels. We went with the district-level averages because so much education policy is made at the district level. There are also weaknesses related to calculating unweighted mean averages and means of means. To overcome some of these weaknesses, we generally used the median average. The median has the advantage of being

less susceptible to outliers or extreme values and therefore more representative of the observed data when those data are not symmetrically distributed.

For the second approach, we intentionally looked at the outliers, not as an aberration, but as an instance of the education system more fully exemplifying some of its tendencies. In that sense, the outliers are not an anomaly that we should feel comfortable disregarding, but an illuminating opportunity to learn what is possible—for better or for worse. Within the majority White and majority Black school district sets, we looked at districts at the very top and the very bottom of distributions (if this is confusing, you'll see what we mean—it's one of those things that's harder to explain than to show). This approach invites us to wonder why the "best" are the best and the "worst" are the worst and what it means for us to allow such variation in educational experience, oftentimes only miles apart from one another. This approach also pushes us to stop excusing the outliers because of their exceptionality.

In addition to these approaches to summarizing what we see, we also provide all the district-specific data at the end of this report, for those interested in a more granular perspective.

# SHARING DATA

If you want to dig into the numbers yourself, we invite you to check out the appendix at the end of this tool for district-by-district data, as well as our online appendix at [www.stillunequal.org](http://www.stillunequal.org).





[ 4 ]

# EDUCATION IN ST. LOUIS: THE BASICS

BEFORE WE DIG INTO THE WAY WE STRUCTURE AND FINANCE  
EDUCATION IN OUR REGION, HERE ARE SOME BASICS TO KNOW ABOUT IT.

Unless stated otherwise, the information in this section comes from the most recent  
2020 update from the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

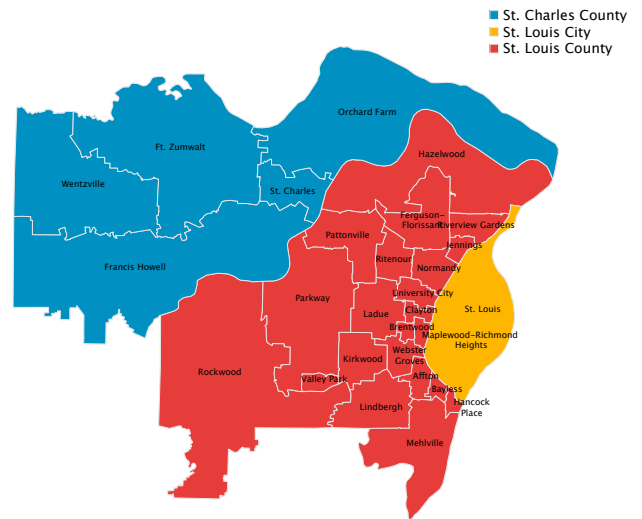
# THE KIDS

- There were just under 310,000 (309,368) school-age children (age 5-19) in 2018 living in St. Louis City, St. Louis County, and St. Charles County. That’s about the size of CPS, the public school district for all students in Chicago.
- In keeping with overall population distribution, the majority of those children lived in St. Louis County (59.0%), followed by St. Charles County (25.3%). Just over 15% lived in St. Louis City.
- Across the region, most children (62.9%) were White, while 28.7% were Black, 3.7% were Asian, and 4.8% were Hispanic/Latinx.
- However, racial makeup varies widely from county to county. While St. Louis County’s racial demographics reflect the region’s overall (61.2% White, 30.0% Black, 4.3% Asian, 4.4% Hispanic), St. Louis City’s demographics are flipped, with 29.7% White and 61.4% Black as well as 2.7% Asian and 6.2% Hispanic. St. Charles County’s children are less racially diverse, with 87.4% White, 5.0% Black, 2.8% Asian, and 4.8% Hispanic.

# THE SCHOOLS

- Education in our region is quite fragmented, with our roughly 310,000 students distributed across 29 public school districts, 17 charter school networks, and 180 private schools (private school numbers are from 2017-2018). By comparison, Baltimore—another metropolitan area divided between the city and the county—serves roughly 194,000 students across 2 public school districts.
- Public school districts tend to, in turn, be fragmented. The sole public school district in St. Louis City, St. Louis Public School district (SLPS), is made up of 72 traditional public

MAP OF ALL SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN ST. LOUIS CITY, ST. LOUIS COUNTY, AND ST. CHARLES COUNTY



schools. The City is also home to all 17 charter networks in the region, which in turn comprise 37 different charter schools. There are also 30 private schools in the City.

- Fragmentation in school districts as well as municipal governments and services has led to wide variations in school district characteristics. This is most observable in St. Louis County, where you will find districts that are huge (e.g., Hazelwood, with 32 schools and 17,014 students) and districts that are comparatively tiny (e.g., Brentwood with 5 schools and 784 students). You will also find highly racially and socioeconomically segregated school districts, with North County school districts being mostly Black and lower income, West County and Central/Mid-County districts being mostly White and higher income, and South County districts being mostly White and low-to-middle income.

## EDUCATION LANDSCAPE

<b>29</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>17</b>
PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS	PRIVATE SCHOOLS	CHARTER SCHOOL NETWORKS

## THE PRIVATE-PUBLIC-CHARTER SHUFFLE

- + Dissatisfaction with the public school system has led many students to charter and private school alternatives, especially in St. Louis City. Less than half (41%) of the school-aged children in St. Louis City are enrolled in traditional public schools. At least 23% are enrolled in a charter school (we could only find data for 15 of the 17 charter networks). That leaves somewhere around a quarter enrolled in private schools. The subset of private schools reporting enrollment figures in 2018 accounted for 13% of city students.
- + Public school students are more likely to be Black. The student body that attends St. Louis Public Schools is 79% Black, 13% White, 3% Asian and 5% Hispanic. Comparatively, the student

body that attends public charter schools in St. Louis is about 68% Black, 19% White, 1.5% Asian and about 7% Hispanic.

- + Charter schools are only an option in St. Louis City. In St. Louis and St. Charles Counties, private schools are the major option outside of public schools. In St. Louis County, 29% of students are not enrolled in a public school. The private schools reporting enrollment figures in 2018 enrolled about 17% of St. Louis County students. In St. Charles County, 26% of students receive education through an alternative to public schooling, with about 12% of students reporting enrollment at private schools.

### ST. LOUIS METRO AREA SCHOOL DEMOGRAPHICS BY COUNTY AND SCHOOL TYPE

#### OVERALL

	# OF SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN	% OF SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN	% WHITE	% BLACK	% ASIAN	% HISPANIC
ST. LOUIS CITY	48,556	15.7%	29.7%	61.4%	2.7%	6.2%
ST. LOUIS COUNTY	182,696	59.1%	61.2%	30.1%	4.3%	4.4%
ST. CHARLES COUNTY	78,116	25.3%	87.4%	5.0%	2.8%	4.8%
<b>TOTAL METRO AREA</b>	<b>309,368</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>62.9%</b>	<b>28.7%</b>	<b>3.7%</b>	<b>4.8%</b>

#### TRADITIONAL PUBLIC

	# OF SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN	% WHITE	% BLACK	% ASIAN	% HISPANIC
ST. LOUIS CITY	19,771	13.0%	79.1%	2.7%	5.1%
ST. LOUIS COUNTY	133,891	49.5%	35.8%	5.2%	4.8%
ST. CHARLES COUNTY	57,876	79.5%	7.2%	3.0%	5.4%
<b>TOTAL METRO AREA</b>	<b>211,538</b>	<b>54.3%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>4.4%</b>	<b>5.0%</b>

#### CHARTER PUBLIC

ST. LOUIS CITY	11,094	18.9%	67.6%	1.4%	7.4%
ST. LOUIS COUNTY**	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
ST. CHARLES COUNTY**	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>TOTAL METRO AREA</b>	<b>11,094</b>	<b>18.9%</b>	<b>67.6%</b>	<b>1.4%</b>	<b>7.4%</b>

#### PRIVATE

ST. LOUIS CITY	5,131	62.5%	25.5%	5.1%	10.0%
ST. LOUIS COUNTY	27,046	75.1%	9.8%	3.9%	3.7%
ST. CHARLES COUNTY	7,722	93.1%	1.7%	2.1%	1.6%
<b>TOTAL METRO AREA</b>	<b>39,899</b>	<b>77.0%</b>	<b>10.2%</b>	<b>3.7%</b>	<b>4.1%</b>



Public and charter school data come from MO DESE for the 2020 school year; Private school numbers come from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Private School Survey (PSS) for 2017-18. \*\* Data not available because there are no charter school networks in St. Louis County or St. Charles County.

A young boy with short hair, wearing a red polo shirt, looks directly at the camera with a serious expression. In the background, another child is visible, wearing a patterned shirt and having their arm raised. The entire image has a blue and purple color overlay.

**[ 5 ]**

**STRUCTURAL INEQUITY:  
FUNDING**

## → FUNDING

# THE ST. LOUIS REGION'S EDUCATION FUNDING LANDSCAPE IS HIGHLY UNEVEN AND IT'S NOT AN ACCIDENT

### BACKGROUND SUMMARY:

Funding for education in our region comes mostly from local sources (56%), followed by state sources (30%), followed by federal sources (7%). Local funding is inequitable; state funding is volatile; federal funding is restrictive. High-need districts disproportionately feel all of these shortcomings. The Foundation Formula is Missouri's way of determining how much state funding a district receives, and several aspects of it are inequitable by design.

### FINDINGS SNAPSHOT:

- + On average, Majority White districts in St. Louis receive and spend more funding per student than Majority Black districts (median difference = \$1,698 more received and \$2,076 more spent in 2018-2019). The highest spending majority White district spent \$8,412 (nearly 40%) more per student than the highest spending majority Black district and 2.4 times (about \$18,000) more per student than the lowest spending districts.
- + On average, majority Black districts receive a greater portion of their funding from state sources (31% vs. 14%), while majority White districts draw more from local sources (82% vs. 58%).
- + This is problematic for at least 3 reasons:
  - ▶ Missouri provides very little state-level funding for education. As a percentage of total revenues only one other state (NH) provides less.
  - ▶ The state mechanism for filling the gaps in local funding (the Foundation Formula) is fundamentally inequitable.
  - ▶ State education funding is volatile because it is appropriated each year by politicians. In its 15 years of existence, the Foundation Formula has only been fully funded 3 times.

## SELECTED NEXT STEPS

- Grow broad community understanding of the structural inequities in the St. Louis regional education landscape including the Foundation Formula and its structural weaknesses and potential paths for improvement toward equitable funding.
- Grow next-level education partnerships to organize and strategize on equity-centered advocacy to redesign education funding and accountability mechanisms, including the Missouri Foundation Formula.

- In partnership with diverse stakeholders, identify statewide advocacy targets. Potential options include modifying the Foundation Formula to ensure equity is centered by, for example, removing Hold Harmless provisions that ensure that already privileged school districts receive funding in excess of what the Formula otherwise says they need.

# BACKGROUND

In the 2018-19 school year, Missouri public schools spent just over \$12.8 billion<sup>16</sup> to educate 881,352<sup>17</sup> students. About half (58%) of these funds came from local and county government coffers. Another 31% came from the state and 8% came from the federal government. This level of state funding puts Missouri in 49th<sup>18</sup> place for state revenue as a percentage of total revenue. These three sources, local, state, and federal, provide the bulk of funding for education in our region. Here are the essentials to know about each.

## LOCAL FUNDING: THE HIGHLY INEQUITABLE AND REGRESSIVE LARGEST PIECE OF THE PIE

Local funding makes up the greatest wedge of the education funding pie in Missouri (and 21 other states,<sup>19</sup> including the District of Columbia). Most of those local dollars come from property taxes on residences, farms, and businesses. Other sources of local funding include 50% of dollars generated by a statewide sales tax known as Proposition C, a state-assessed railroad and utility tax, and other local taxes, including those at the municipal or county level. We have more to say about the use of local property taxes to directly fund education... and we say it in Section 6! Right now we'll just say that there is vast variation in property wealth by district, so this funding source alone is highly inequitable and regressive, with districts with low levels of property wealth (and usually higher proportions of low income students with greater needs due to structural inequities) receiving less funding.

## STATE FUNDING: THE GREAT EQUALIZER...AT LEAST IN THEORY

How much funding a district receives from the state is determined through the Missouri Foundation Formula. Despite being the result of legal action (*Committee for Educational Equality v. State of Missouri*, 1993) that found the previous system of education finance to be

unconstitutionally inequitable, the current formula has received low marks for still being inequitable and inadequately transparent.<sup>20</sup> However, in 2009, the state Supreme Court found the Formula to be in keeping with the state's constitutional commitment to education, which makes no stipulations about quality, equity, or adequacy, and simply requires 25% of state revenue to go to education.

### STICK WITH US HERE

We're going to walk through the logic of the current Foundation Formula because you've got to know the rules to break them, or rather, make them more equitable. [Check out the infographic for a visual map of our explanation.]

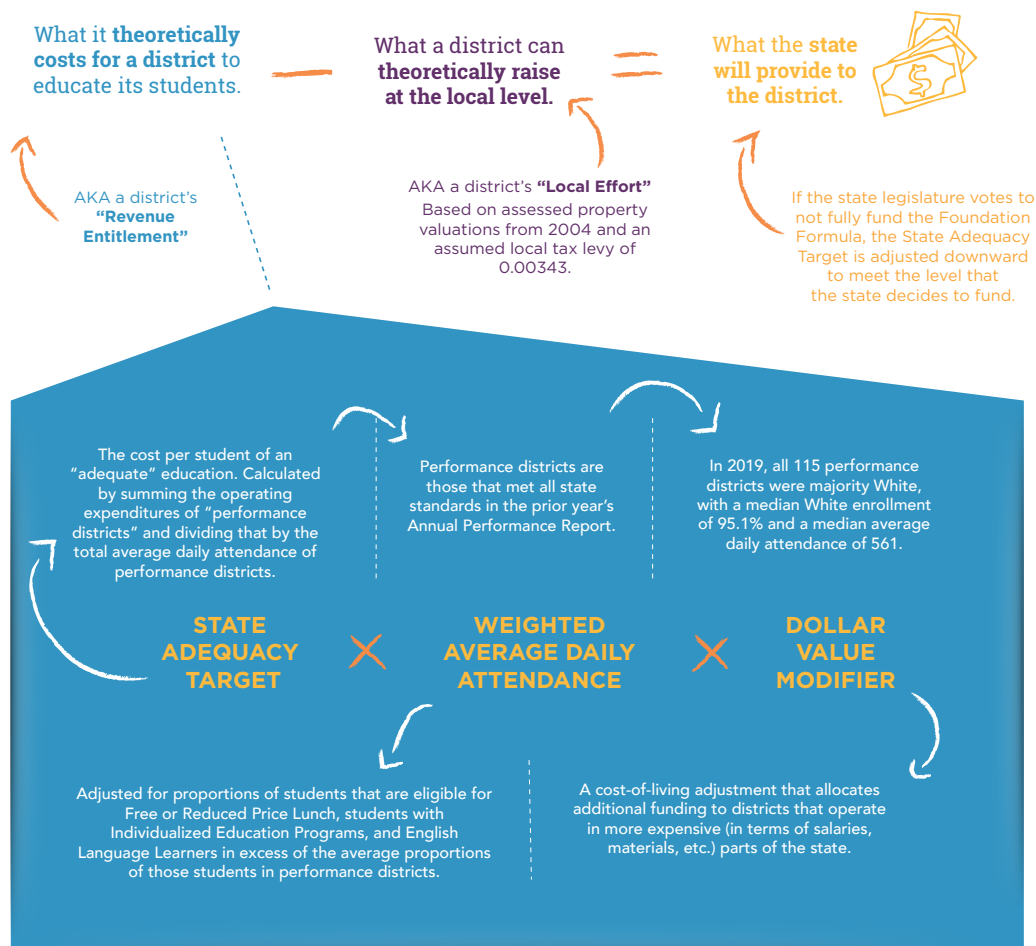
In theory, though, the Formula is supposed<sup>21</sup> to ensure adequacy by providing all students with the resources needed to succeed. The Formula is largely based on the number and type of students in a given district and on the local funds it can draw on. It calculates a **"revenue entitlement"** representing the total amount of local and state dollars a district is "entitled" to receive, and then it subtracts out the local component to leave the state funding responsibility. That entitlement is calculated based on three factors:

1. A given district's attendance or "weighted average daily attendance," including enrollment of students that tend to be more costly to educate (e.g., students with disabilities, students receiving free and reduced price lunch, and students with limited English proficiency);

2. The state's determination of the cost of educating one student, or the "state adequacy target." For the 2020-2021 school year, this amounts to \$6,375 per weighted average daily attendance. It is calculated based on the operating expenditures of "performance districts" divided by their attendance. Performance districts are defined in state statute<sup>22</sup> as those that have met all the indicators on the Missouri Schools Improvement Program (MSIP) Annual Performance Report (APR).
3. A cost-of-living modification or "dollar value modifier." This modifier allots more funding to districts located in parts of the state where costs (e.g., salaries, maintenance, transportation, building supplies, etc.) are higher.

Once a district's entitlement is calculated, the state then determines the "local effort," or the share of that entitlement that should come from local funding sources. Local effort is determined using assessed property values from 2004 (for reasons and with regressive implications discussed below), local taxes collected for education during the 2004-2005 school year, and a flat estimated local tax rate of \$3.43 per \$100 of assessed property valuation. The state is on the hook for the balance left over when a district's local effort is subtracted from its revenue entitlement. The Formula makes use of multiple "hold-harmless" provisions that ensure that a district's funding can only go up from the 2005-2006 levels when the formula was last set.

## THE BASICS OF THE STATE FOUNDATION FORMULA







The original price tag for the state’s portion of the Formula was \$800 million in 2005. It was to be phased in over seven years, and for a few years it was on track. Then the recession hit. In 2009, legislators removed a 5% cap on formula spending growth,<sup>23</sup> believing that revenues would grow fast enough to keep up (they didn’t). For these, among other reasons, the Foundation Formula was only fully funded for the first time in 2017<sup>24</sup>—after adding the spending cap back—and again in 2018<sup>25</sup> and 2019.<sup>26</sup> Due to COVID-19, \$123 million<sup>27</sup> will be withheld from funding the Foundation Formula in 2020.

As this yo-yoing history shows, state funding for education can be quite volatile because it is re-appropriated every year. This volatility makes planning difficult, especially for higher-need districts that disproportionately rely on state funding.



## FEDERAL: RESTRICTIVE AND WANING FUNDING

The United States Constitution outlines education as a responsibility borne primarily at the state and local levels. In keeping with this, the federal government has historically contributed funds to *supplement*—not replace—state and local funds. Federal funds tend to be programmatic or grant-based and also tend to focus on specific groups of students, including low-income students, students with disabilities, and English language learners.

Some examples of these programs include Title I (also known as No Child Left Behind and later, after some changes, the Every Student Succeeds Act) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Because of the targeted nature of these programs, federal funds tend to come with more restrictions.

Federal dollars have decreased<sup>28</sup> in the past decade from a high of 0.49% of GDP in 2010 to 0.20% in 2020.

### FEDERAL FUNDING DOLLARS

0.49%

OF GDP  
ALLOCATED  
IN 2010



0.20%

OF GDP  
ALLOCATED  
IN 2020

## INEQUITABLE BY DESIGN

You might hope, at least in theory, that local, state, and federal support for education would purposefully come together to even the playing field and ensure every student is provided the funding they need to get a quality education. It turns out there are structural reasons and tactics used by policymakers to subvert that intent.

Some of these reasons, like the direct reliance on property taxes and other local sources of funding, will be discussed in Section 6. A few others to note at this point are some major shortcomings in the Foundation Formula.

## 4 OF THE MAJOR FLAWS OF THE MISSOURI FOUNDATION FORMULA

### 1. THE HOLD-HARMLESS PROVISION.

**IN SHORT: THE STATE, BENDING TO LEGAL PRESSURE, BUILT A FOUNDATION FORMULA THAT DID MORE TO ENSURE ADEQUATE AND EQUITABLE FUNDING FOR ALL STUDENTS, BUT LEGISLATORS BUILT A BACK DOOR OUT OF IT FOR THE DISTRICTS THAT WERE FAVORED BY THE OLD SYSTEM.** “Hold harmless”

measures keep a school district’s state funding from decreasing by allowing them to receive funds based on the old Foundation Formula if the current (2006) formula would give them less funding of the two.

In other words, this provision tends to keep funds going to districts that do not need them, which may be why, between 1995 and 2014, Missouri was one of few states whose state and local funding became *more* regressive.<sup>29</sup>

In the 2019 school year, 186<sup>30</sup> (about one third) of the 527 school districts in the state were held harmless. While these measures were intended to ease the transition to the current formula and ensure an ever-growing funding base for education, they also preferentially shunt funds to small and/or wealthy school districts instead of redirecting them to districts with higher need.

**THE HOLD-HARMLESS PROVISION IS, IN FACT, HARDLY HARMLESS FOR MANY LOW-INCOME DISTRICTS.**

## HERE ARE SOME WAYS THAT HOLD-HARMLESS PLAYS OUT IN PRACTICE:

▶ Districts with fewer than 350 students are guaranteed at least as much total state funding as they received in 2005-2006. Education policy scholar James Shuls explains,<sup>31</sup> “In theory, this means a school district could lose almost all of its students and still receive the same amount of total dollars as it received in 2005–06. Missouri City School District #56 is an example. In 2011, the school district dropped from 33 students to 18. The total state contribution remained the same. As a result, the school district’s per-pupil expenditure rose from \$12,570 per-pupil to \$16,379 per-pupil.” Shul found that, in 2016, the five highest-spending school districts in the state all took advantage of the hold-harmless provision. They had an average district-wide enrollment of 84 students.

▶ Districts with more than 350 students receive at least the level of state funding per Weighted Average Daily Attendance as they did in 2005–06.

▶ The property wealth hold harmless measure benefits districts with high property values. By using 2004 property value assessments, the formula underestimates the ability of property-wealthy districts to raise revenue. In 2017-18,<sup>32</sup> 14 of the 22 public school districts in St. Louis County received extra “hold-harmless” funding, including some of the wealthiest districts in the state. These districts received about \$39 million in state funding in excess of what the Foundation Formula says they need. Brentwood received an additional \$537 per average daily attendance, Ladue received an additional \$578, and Clayton received an extra \$562 per ADA. As the same report points out, “St. Louis County districts with student populations of less than 50 percent [free and reduced lunch] benefit disproportionately, receiving

more than half of all hold-harmless dollars allocated within the county. In fact, five out of eight of these districts are property wealthy and wouldn’t be eligible for *any* state revenue under the Foundation Formula without the hold-harmless provisions” (emphasis added).

## 2. STATEWIDE BALLOT PROPOSITIONS CAN BYPASS THE FORMULA.

Statewide funding propositions are allowed to bypass the Foundation Formula and be distributed without consideration of need. The biggest example of this is Proposition C,<sup>33</sup> a 1% state sales tax passed in 1982, that awards districts the same \$988<sup>34</sup> per weighted daily attendance, regardless of local funding ability.

## 3. VALUING “PERFORMANCE” IN PRACTICE VALUES WHITE SCHOOLS.

The cost of education in the Foundation Formula, or the State Adequacy Target is defined by “performance” school districts, or schools that scored perfectly on the state’s annual performance report.<sup>35</sup> These districts tend to be disproportionately small and White when compared to districts in the St. Louis region. In 2019, all 115 performance districts were majority White with a median White enrollment of 95.1% and a median average daily attendance of 561 students (see appendix for data).

## 4. FUNDING BY ATTENDANCE MISSES UNDERSERVED STUDENTS.

By tying funding to average daily attendance, school districts with high numbers and proportions of low-income students, students with disabilities, and English language learners (groups who are all more likely to be transient and chronically absent<sup>36</sup>) lose funding for students that actually cost more to educate.

# WHAT WE LOOKED AT

## DISTRICT DEMOGRAPHICS

SOURCE: MO DESE

- + **% BLACK**  
THE PERCENT OF 2018-2019 ENROLLMENT THAT WAS BLACK
- + **% WHITE**  
THE PERCENT OF 2018-2019 ENROLLMENT THAT WAS WHITE
- + **% LATINX**  
THE PERCENT OF 2018-2019 ENROLLMENT THAT WAS HISPANIC
- + **% FRL**  
THE PERCENT OF 2018-2019 ENROLLMENT THAT QUALIFIED FOR FREE OR REDUCED PRICE LUNCH
- + **% ENGLISH LEARNER**  
THE PERCENT OF 2018-2019 ENROLLMENT WHOSE native language is not English<sup>37</sup>
- + **% SPECIAL EDUCATION**  
THE PERCENT OF STUDENTS IN 2018-2019 WITH INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS (IEPS) DUE TO INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY, EMOTIONAL DISTURBANCE, SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITY, OTHER HEALTH IMPAIRMENT, AUTISM, OR SPEECH/LANGUAGE IMPAIRMENT

## DISTRICT REVENUES

SOURCE: DISTRICT COMPREHENSIVE ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORTS (CAFRs)\*

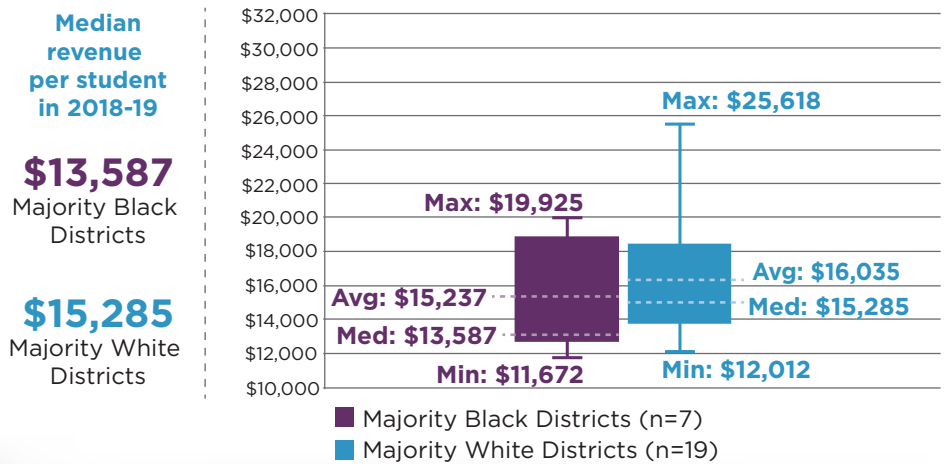
- + LOCAL REVENUE PER STUDENT FUNDING RECEIVED IN 2018-2019 FROM LOCAL DISTRICT PROPERTY TAXES DIVIDED BY ENROLLMENT
- + STATE REVENUE PER STUDENT FUNDING RECEIVED IN 2018-2019 FROM THE STATE DIVIDED BY ENROLLMENT
- + FEDERAL REVENUE PER STUDENT FUNDS RECEIVED IN 2018-2019 FROM THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT DIVIDED BY ENROLLMENT
- + OTHER REVENUE PER STUDENT FUNDS RECEIVED IN 2018-2019 NOT DERIVED FROM LOCAL, STATE, FEDERAL GOVERNMENTS.

Note: Each of the indicators were examined by district as well as for majority White and majority Black districts. These classifications were made using 2018-2019 enrollment data from the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (MO DESE).

# WHAT WE FOUND

## ON AVERAGE MAJORITY WHITE DISTRICTS RECEIVE MORE FUNDING PER STUDENT THAN MAJORITY BLACK DISTRICTS

TOTAL REVENUE PER STUDENT IN 2018-2019

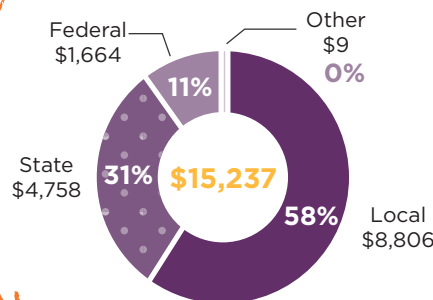


The highest earning majority White district, Brentwood, received **\$5,693 (nearly 30% more)** per student than the highest earning majority Black district, SLPS.

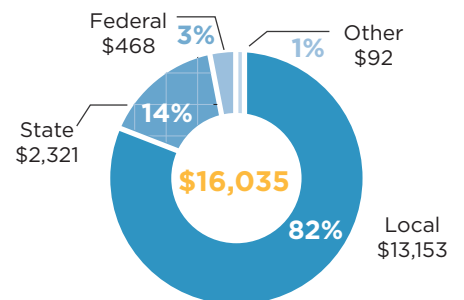
Brentwood received over **2.0 times more (about \$14,000) per student** than the lowest earning districts (both majority White [Mehlville] and majority Black [Riverview Gardens]).

## Majority Black districts receive a greater portion of their funding from state sources, while majority White districts draw more from local sources.

Average revenues per student by source for majority Black districts in 2018-2019



Average revenues per student by source for majority White districts in 2018-2019

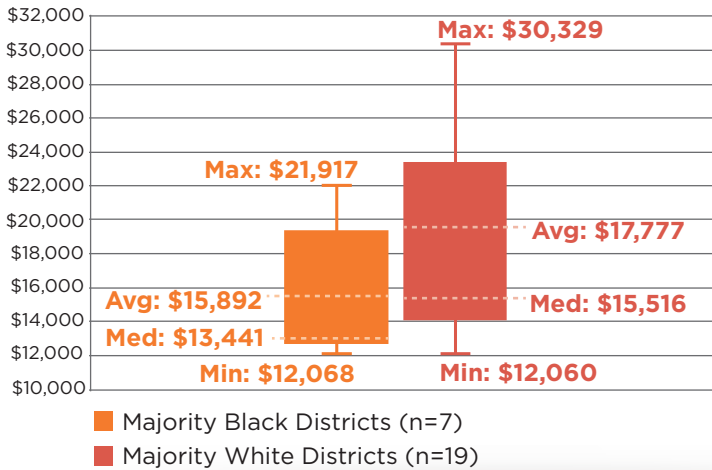


### This is problematic for at least 3 reasons:

- 1 Missouri provides **very little state-level funding** for education. As a percentage of total revenues, **only one other state (NH) provides less.**
- 2 The state mechanism for filling the gaps in local funding (the Foundation Formula) is **fundamentally inequitable.**
- 3 State education funding is volatile because it is appropriated each year. In its 15 years of existence, the foundation formula has **only been fully funded 3 times.**

# THE ST. LOUIS REGION'S INEQUITABLE EDUCATION FUNDING LANDSCAPE

**ON AVERAGE MAJORITY WHITE DISTRICTS SPEND MORE PER STUDENT THAN MAJORITY BLACK DISTRICTS**  
TOTAL EXPENDITURE PER STUDENT IN 2018-2019



**Median expenditure per student in 2018-19**

**\$13,441**  
Majority Black Districts

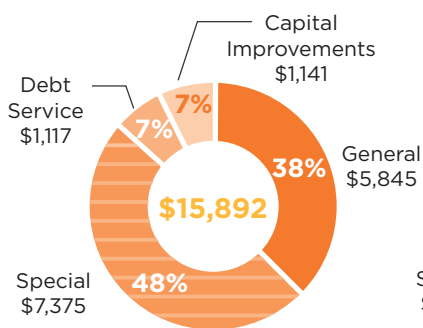
**\$15,516**  
Majority White Districts

The highest spending majority White district, Clayton, spent **\$8,412 (nearly 40%) more** per student than the highest spending majority Black district, Normandy.

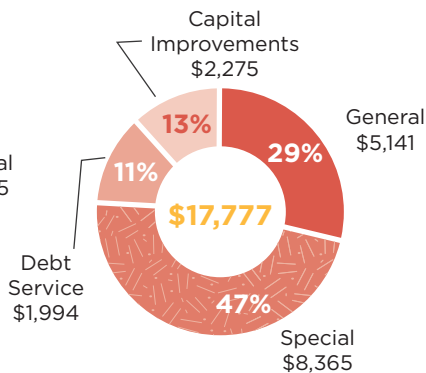
Clayton also spent **2.4 times more (about \$18,000) per student** than the lowest spending districts (both majority White [Bayless] and majority Black [Riverview Gardens])

**Because of the extra room in the budget, majority White schools are able to spend more on capital improvement projects; they are also able to take on more debt.**

Average expenditures per student by source for majority Black districts in 2018-2019



Average expenditures per student by source for majority White districts in 2018-2019



Because of COVID-19, the Foundation Formula for the 2020-21 school year **will fall short by \$123M**—which will **disproportionately hurt majority Black schools** that rely more heavily on state funding.

## WHAT WE LOOKED AT

### DISTRICT EXPENDITURES

SOURCE: DISTRICT COMPREHENSIVE ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORTS (CAFRs)\*

- + **TOTAL EXPENDITURES PER STUDENT**  
ALL DOLLARS SPENT BY A DISTRICT IN 2018-2019 DIVIDED BY ENROLLMENT
- + **GENERAL EXPENDITURES PER STUDENT**  
FUNDS TYPICALLY USED FOR GENERAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES INCLUDING NON-CERTIFIED EMPLOYEES' EXPENDITURES, PUPIL TRANSPORTATION COSTS, OPERATION OF PLANT, FRINGE BENEFITS, STUDENT BODY ACTIVITIES, COMMUNITY SERVICES, THE FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM, AND ANY EXPENDITURES NOT REQUIRED OR PERMITTED TO BE ACCOUNTED FOR IN OTHER FUNDS.
- + **SPECIAL EXPENDITURES PER STUDENT**  
FUNDS TYPICALLY USED FOR EXPENDITURES FOR CERTIFIED EMPLOYEES INVOLVED IN ADMINISTRATION AND INSTRUCTION INCLUDING REVENUES RESTRICTED BY THE STATE AND LOCAL TAX LEVY ALLOCATIONS FOR TEACHER SALARIES AND CERTAIN BENEFITS.
- + **DEBT SERVICE EXPENDITURES PER STUDENT**  
FUNDS TYPICALLY USED TO ACCOUNT FOR THE ACCUMULATION OF RESOURCES FOR AND THE PAYMENT OF PRINCIPAL, INTEREST AND FISCAL CHARGES ON LONG-TERM DEBT.
- + **CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT EXPENDITURES PER STUDENT**  
FUNDS TYPICALLY USED TO ACCOUNT FOR THE PROCEEDS OF LONG-TERM DEBT, TAXES AND OTHER REVENUES RESTRICTED FOR ACQUISITION OR CONSTRUCTION OF MAJOR CAPITAL ASSETS AND ALL OTHER CAPITAL OUTLAY.

\*Note: Our financial numbers likely differ from DESE numbers. This is largely because DESE data excludes some types of expenditures including capital outlay, debt service, community services, non-instruction/support, adult education, and Title I expenditures. Using data from CAFRs, we were able to include these categories of spending that DESE leaves out, though we cannot pinpoint spending in most of these additional categories with the exception of capital outlay and debt service.



## MAJORITY WHITE SCHOOL DISTRICTS SPEND MORE PER STUDENT

The current Foundation Formula was passed by legislators in 2005 with the stated purpose of ensuring adequate funding for education in all of Missouri's school districts and leveling the playing field between property-rich and property-poor districts. And yet, in 2018-19, the median White school district received \$15,285, or 12% more, per student compared to \$13,587 for the median majority Black school district. Theoretically, such a difference should happen only if the students in the higher paid district cost more to educate (e.g., receive free or

reduced cost lunch, are English language learners, or have a learning disability). If anything, the exact opposite is more likely to be the case, which makes this funding difference all the more inequitable.

Take, for example, the majority White and majority Black districts that received the most funding. In 2018, Brentwood received \$5,698 or nearly 30% more per student than SLPS (\$25,618 vs. \$19,925). This is despite the fact that SLPS enrolled a much higher proportion of students that are more costly to educate: while one in four of Brentwood's students are eligible for free or reduced cost lunch, 100% of SLPS' students qualify. SLPS also enrolls more students with special education needs and that are English language learners.

## WEALTHY WHITE DISTRICTS GET MORE STATE FUNDING THAN THEY SHOULD BECAUSE OF HOW THE FOUNDATION FORMULA WAS STRUCTURED

Brentwood gets more than its fair share of funding because the funding system ensures it. As discussed in the Background section, the hold harmless provisions in the Foundation Formula allow Brentwood to receive extra funding based on lower property valuations from 2004 despite the fact that its property has increased in value considerably since then. The hold harmless policy, which

was intended to set a floor for education funding and ease the transition to the Formula when it was created, today ensures that Brentwood and other districts like it get state dollars that they do not actually need based on their current property wealth. In 2017-2018 Brentwood received an extra \$537 per average daily attendance.<sup>32</sup> That property wealth is why majority White school districts get a much larger portion of their funding from local sources (82% compared to 58% for majority Black school districts). The flip side of this is that majority Black school districts, in addition to generally getting fewer dollars per student overall, rely more heavily on state funding than majority White school districts (31% of funding vs. 14% of funding). Majority Black school districts also get a larger portion of their funds from the federal government (11% vs. 3% for majority White school districts).

## NOT ALL FUNDING SOURCES ARE EQUAL

Where education dollars come from matters. First, majority Black school districts are disproportionately dependent on the state of Missouri for dollars—and Missouri provides very little state-level funding for education. As a percentage

of total revenues, only one other state (NH<sup>18</sup>) provides less. Second, the state mechanism for filling the gaps in local funding (the Foundation Formula) is, as we've discussed, fundamentally inequitable. Third, state education funding is volatile because it is appropriated each year. In its 15 years of existence, the Foundation Formula has only been fully funded 3 times. Because of COVID-19, the Foundation Formula for the 2020-21 school year will fall short by \$123M<sup>27</sup>—which will disproportionately hurt majority Black schools. Local funding tends to be far more stable.

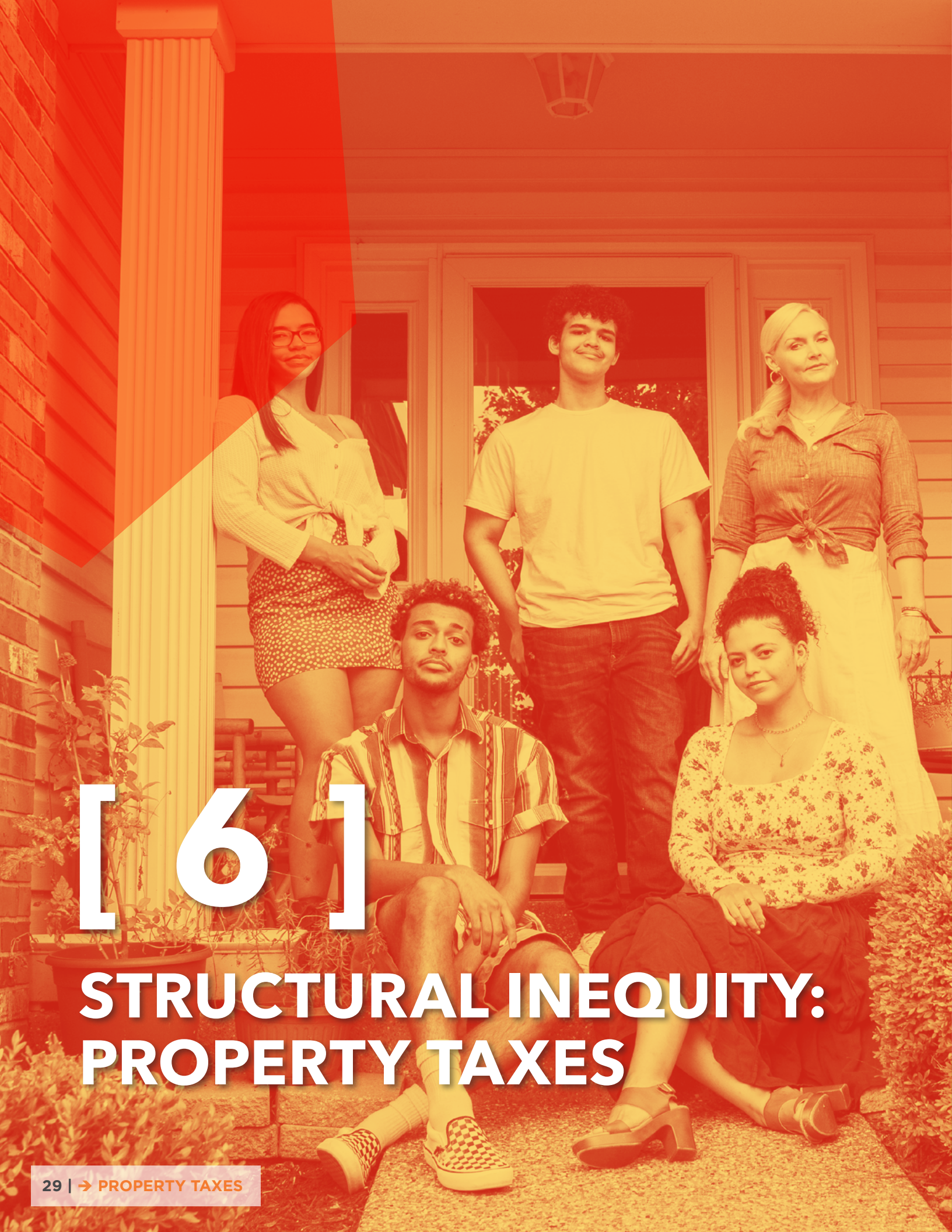
## ST. LOUIS' MAJORITY BLACK DISTRICTS HAVE LESS TO SPEND ON STUDENTS

The natural consequence of receiving less funding than majority White school districts is that majority Black districts also spend less per student. In 2018-19, the median majority Black district spent \$13,441 per student, while the median majority White district spent \$15,516. Clayton, the highest spending majority White district, spent \$30,329/student, while Normandy, the highest spending majority Black district spent \$21,917. As with revenue,

a similar pattern emerges: Clayton spends more on its students despite the fact that Normandy's students are nearly 10 times more likely to receive free or reduced cost lunch. The lowest spending districts, both majority White (Bayless) and majority Black (Riverview Gardens), each spent about \$12,000 per student. \$12,000 compared to \$30,000—the difference is mind boggling. Clayton was deemed the best public high school<sup>38</sup> in the state in 2019. It's no wonder. We should seriously ask ourselves why all of our children don't deserve the kind of education that \$30,000 could buy them.

### RESOURCES FOR LEARNING MORE ABOUT THESE TOPICS

- **The Stealth Inequities of School Funding, 2012.** By Bruce Baker and Sean Corcoran of the Center for American Progress.
- **Funding Missouri's Public Schools Comes Down to One Not-So-Simple Formula, 2016.** By Dale Singer, Tim Lloyd, and Kameel Stanley.
- **How Do School Funding Formulas Work? 2017.** By The Urban Institute.
- **Dismissed: America's Most Divisive Borders, 2019.** By EdBuild.
- **Is School Funding Fair? A National Report Card, 2017.** By: Bruce Baker, Danielle Farrie, Monete Johnson, Theresa Luhm and David G. Sciarra.



# [ 6 ]

## STRUCTURAL INEQUITY: PROPERTY TAXES



# FUNDING EDUCATION THROUGH PROPERTY TAXES IS INEQUITABLE

## BACKGROUND SUMMARY:

Property taxes are the biggest wedge of the local funding pie. The bulk of property value in a district tends to come from residential properties, though commercial property can be a powerful—and under-discussed—contributor to education coffers. School districts set their tax rates each October, but if they want to set it above a certain ceiling, they must get voter approval.

## FINDINGS SNAPSHOT:

- + The Foundation Formula is supposed to fill the gaps left by uneven local funding. But the strong, positive relationship between the property wealth in a district and the local and state revenue it receives suggests the Formula is not working.
- + This is partly because of the vast difference in property wealth in our region: the median assessed value of the property in majority White districts is \$181,899/student compared to \$97,751 in majority Black districts.
- + To make up for their lower property values, majority Black districts tend to have higher tax levy ceilings (\$4.7804 per \$100 of assessed value on average vs. \$4.2732)—meaning their residents voted to tax themselves more heavily, despite having about half the income (median of \$41,107 vs. \$79,729).
- + But even with higher taxes, majority Black districts don't come close to raising what White wealthy districts can raise at the local level.

## MAJORITY WHITE DISTRICTS

**\$181,899**

MEDIAN ASSESSED VALUE OF PROPERTY

**\$79,729**

MEDIAN INCOME

**\$4.2732**

TAX LEVY CEILING PER \$100 OF ASSESSED VALUE

## MAJORITY BLACK DISTRICTS

**\$97,751**

MEDIAN ASSESSED VALUE OF PROPERTY

**\$41,107**

MEDIAN INCOME

**\$4.7804**

TAX LEVY CEILING PER \$100 OF ASSESSED VALUE

## SELECTED NEXT STEPS

→ Grow broad community understanding of the structural inequities in the St. Louis regional education landscape including the practice of directly infusing property taxes into school districts without redistribution and awareness of alternative models.

→ Grow next-level education partnerships to organize and strategize on equity-centered advocacy to redesign education funding and accountability mechanisms, including local allocation of property taxes.

→ In partnership with diverse stakeholders, identify statewide advocacy targets. Potential options include redistributing local funds before infusing them into school districts drawing from existing, successful models in other regions, including pooling property taxes by county.

# BACKGROUND

In the previous section, we learned how overall funding for education varies widely across the 28 districts in St. Louis City and St. Louis County, despite a state funding model that is intended to even things out. We hinted in that section at what we will more fully discuss now: that variability is driven by funding variations at the local level because of huge variability, in turn, in the value of the property contained within districts.

To back up a step, though: “local” sources of funding actually refer to multiple potential pots of money. By far, the largest of those pots is property taxes, but other local sources include a one cent statewide sales tax as a result of Proposition C and other revenue streams. In this section, we will focus on property taxes because, as explained, it dominates the local funding pool of money.

Most Missourians pay property taxes. We pay taxes on real estate we may own—houses, commercial buildings, farms if we have one. We pay taxes on our stuff, including personal property like cars, boats, or farming equipment. Each of those types of

properties is assessed at a different rate set by the state, with commercial property assessed higher than residential or agricultural (32% vs. 19% vs. 12%). Every so often, we get a notice that our property taxes are due. Many of us feel better about writing those checks knowing that at least some of the dollars we’re handing over are going to a worthy cause, like education.

Among the taxing authorities who set their taxing rates each October are school districts; libraries; and ambulance, fire, and light districts. Those rates are subject to ceilings or maximums<sup>39</sup> set by state law that allow for cost of living adjustments or increases approved by voters. These rates are applied to the assessed value of a person’s property. For example, a home worth \$100,000 has an assessed value of \$19,000 (19% for residential properties). If that home is in a district with a 5.0% tax rate for residential properties, then the homeowner would owe \$5.00 for every \$100 of assessed value, or \$950, that would be earmarked for their school district.



While school districts have some discretion over the rate they set every fall, if they want to raise it above a certain point, they have to get voter approval. Chances are you've heard of, maybe even voted on, various measures to raise more funding for education. Occasionally these measures are statewide, but usually they take the form of local ballot measures to allow the district to raise its property tax rate or to issue a bond that allows a district to borrow money for certain large purchases (e.g., purchasing land, constructing new buildings, etc.) Maplewood Richmond Heights,<sup>40</sup> Brentwood, Webster Groves,<sup>41</sup> Francis Howell,<sup>42</sup> and Wentzville<sup>43</sup> school districts all successfully passed bond issues recently. Tax levies are less common, though Wentzville, Maplewood Richmond Heights and Webster Groves are among the districts that have passed tax increases<sup>44</sup> in the past 10 years.

How effective those tax increases are depends, of course, on the value of the property being taxed. Here we run into at least two issues that greatly impede equitable local fundraising capacity. First, because of a long history of policymaking designed to concentrate wealth and whiteness (discussed in Section 7), some parts of our region have experienced decades of disinvestment and, as a result, their property values have stagnated or fallen. We've all heard of the Delmar Divide,<sup>45</sup> where palatial homes on the south side of the street gaze upon poverty to the north. Second, some school districts benefit from higher numbers of profitable businesses who pay higher taxes (business property is taxed at the highest rate—32% compared to 19% for residential property).

## WHAT WE LOOKED AT

### DEMOGRAPHICS

SOURCE: AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY-EDUCATION 2014-2018

- + **MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME**  
MEDIAN ANNUAL INCOME FOR ALL HOUSEHOLDS IN A GIVEN DISTRICT IN 2018-2019

### DISTRICT OPERATING TAX RATE

SOURCE: MO DESE

- + **TAX RATE CEILING FOR OPERATING FUNDS**  
THE MAXIMUM TAX RATE A DISTRICT COULD LEVY IN 2018-2019 TO COVER ALL OPERATING EXPENSES (NOT DEBT COLLECTION)
- + **TOTAL ADJUSTED TAX RATE FOR OPERATING FUNDS**  
THE ACTUAL EFFECTIVE TAX RATE LEVIED IN 2018-2019 TO COVER ALL OPERATING EXPENSES (NOT DEBT COLLECTION)

### PROPERTY VALUES

- + **ASSESSED VALUATION**  
THE ASSESSED VALUE OF ALL TAXED PROPERTY IN A DISTRICT IN 2018-19 TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION THE DIFFERENT STATE-LEVEL TAXING RATES FOR DIFFERENT TYPES OF PROPERTY (E.G., COMMERCIAL PROPERTY, RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY, AGRICULTURAL PROPERTY, ETC.)  
SOURCE: AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY-EDUCATION 2014-2018

- + **ASSESSED VALUATION OF COMMERCIAL PROPERTY**  
THE ASSESSED VALUE OF COMMERCIAL PROPERTY ONLY.  
SOURCE: SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGETS AND TAX HEARING NOTICES (NOT AVAILABLE FOR ALL DISTRICTS)

- + **ASSESSED VALUATION PER STUDENT**  
ASSESSED VALUATION DIVIDED BY ENROLLMENT IN 2018-2019.  
SOURCE: MO DESE

### + MEDIAN HOME VALUE

MEDIAN HOME VALUE IN 2018  
SOURCE: AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2014-2018

### DISTRICT REVENUE

SOURCE: DISTRICT COMPREHENSIVE ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORTS (CAFRS)

- + **TOTAL REVENUE PER STUDENT FROM LOCAL + STATE SOURCES**  
FUNDING RECEIVED FROM LOCAL SOURCES IN 2018-19 DIVIDED BY 2018-2019 ENROLLMENT + FUNDING RECEIVED FROM THE STATE IN 2018-2019 DIVIDED BY 2018-2019 ENROLLMENT.

Note: Each of the indicators were examined by district as well as for majority White and majority Black districts. These classifications were made using 2018-2019 enrollment data from the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (MO DESE).

# WHAT WE FOUND

The Foundation Formula is supposed to fill the gaps left by the unevenness of local funding for education. But it's not working. If it was, we wouldn't see a strong, positive relationship between the property wealth in a district (its "assessed valuation per student") and the local and state revenue it receives.

One reason why we see this pattern is because wealth varies so much that the state can't even things out.

## MEDIAN ASSESSED VALUE PER STUDENT IN 2018-19

**\$97,751**

MAJORITY BLACK DISTRICTS

**\$181,899**

MAJORITY WHITE DISTRICTS

The majority White school district with the greatest property wealth (Clayton - \$428,446/student) has \$173,117 more in assessed property value per student than the majority Black school district with the greatest property wealth (U City - \$255,329/student).

The greater property wealth in majority White districts comes from both residential and commercial properties that are worth more.

## MEDIAN HOME VALUE IN 2018-19

**\$91,400**

MAJORITY BLACK DISTRICTS

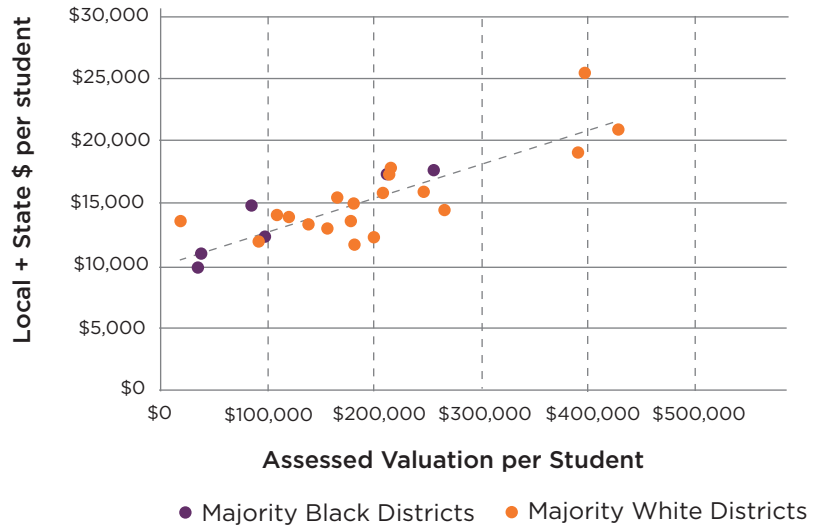
**\$215,700**

MAJORITY WHITE DISTRICTS

# FUNDING EDUCATION THROUGH PROPERTY TAXES IS INEQUITABLE

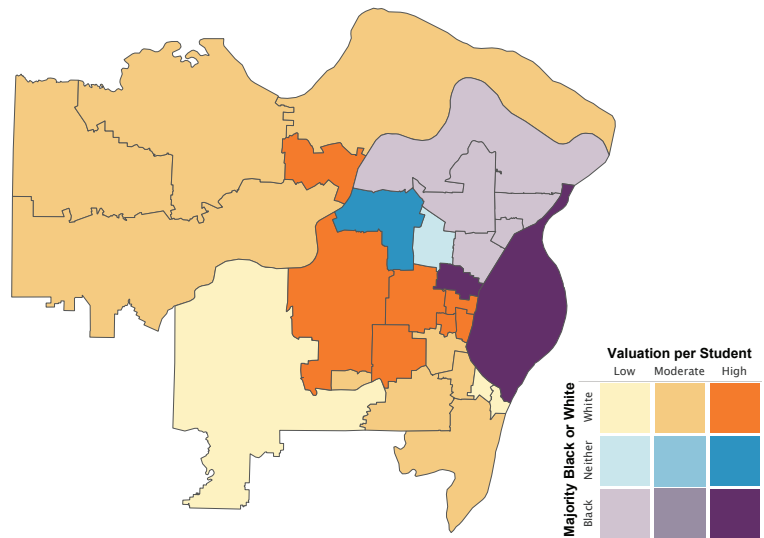
## THE NOT-SO-EVEN PLAYING FIELD

DISTRICT PROPERTY WEALTH AND REVENUE, 2018-2019



## MAJORITY WHITE DISTRICTS MORE LIKELY TO HAVE HIGHER ASSESSED VALUE PER STUDENT

ASSESSED VALUE BY DISTRICT, 2018-2019



Majority White districts are more likely to be home to vibrant commercial districts that contribute property taxes at higher rates than residential properties.

### CLAYTON

**\$428,446**

HIGHEST PROPERTY WEALTH PER STUDENT IN MAJORITY WHITE DISTRICT

### UNIVERSITY CITY

**\$255,329**

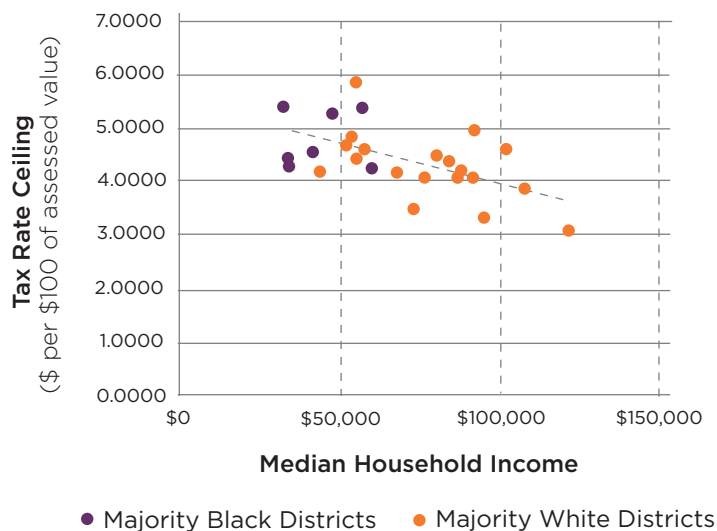
HIGHEST PROPERTY WEALTH PER STUDENT IN MAJORITY BLACK DISTRICT

**\$173,117**

MORE AVERAGE PROPERTY WEALTH PER STUDENT IN CLAYTON VS. UNIVERSITY CITY

## WEALTHY SCHOOL DISTRICTS TAX THEMSELVES LESS

DISTRICT MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME AND VOTER-APPROVED TAX RATE CEILING, 2018-19

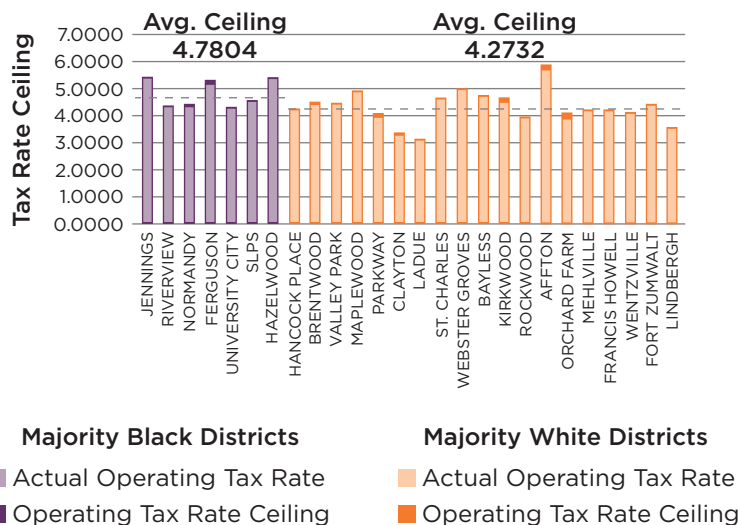


The greater property wealth in many majority White school districts means they can raise enough money without taxing themselves as much as property-poorer districts.

To raise the maximum property tax they can levy (i.e., the “tax rate ceiling”) above a certain point, districts need voter approval. Majority Black districts tend to have higher tax ceilings (4.7804 vs. 4.2732)—meaning their residents voted to tax themselves more heavily, despite having about half the income on average.

## PROPERTY-POOR DISTRICTS SET HIGHER TAX CEILINGS AND OPERATE CLOSER TO THOSE CEILINGS

ACTUAL OPERATING TAX RATE AND OPERATING TAX RATE CEILING BY DISTRICT, 2018-19



## MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN 2018-19

**\$41,107**

MAJORITY BLACK DISTRICTS

**\$79,729**

MAJORITY WHITE DISTRICTS

Majority Black districts are also more likely to be close to hitting their tax ceilings. And again, since incomes in these districts are lower, paying these amounts in taxes hurts more.

But at the end of the day, even if they tax themselves more, the property in majority Black districts just isn't worth enough to even come close to the revenues generated in wealthier, whiter districts.

Consider this thought experiment: with a 4.4632% school district tax rate, the median household in Kirkwood pays about \$2,900, or about 2.9% of their income, in taxes to their school district. For the median household in Jennings to pay a similar amount, the district would have to bump its tax rate up from 5.3889%—already one of the highest in the region—to over 22%, which works out to 9.1% of median household income. It's just not possible. And the state Foundation Formula isn't adequately correcting for that fact.

## THERE IS A STRONG, POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PROPERTY WEALTH AND STATE + LOCAL EDUCATION FUNDING EVEN THOUGH THERE SHOULDN'T BE

Directly funding education through property taxes without any meaningful redistribution is inequitable. This is not a statement of opinion; it is a statement of fact. The Foundation Formula was developed with the stated aim of correcting for this fact. But there's what policymakers said they wanted the Formula to do and then there's what they actually built it to do, and those things are very different. As we asserted in the previous section, in so many ways (e.g., hold harmless provisions, treatment of high-need student populations, the way the formula determines the cost of education, etc.) the Foundation Formula is doing exactly what it was structured to do: give White wealthy districts an unneeded boost.

We can see that same trend from a new vantage point if we look at the relationship between the value of all the property within a district's boundaries (as measured in its "assessed valuation per student") compared to the district's local and state revenue per student. If the Foundation Formula was working to ensure adequacy, we would expect to see a negative relationship between these two variables: districts with lower property wealth would get more funding because their students are more likely to be costly to educate.

Short of this, we might expect to see essentially no relationship between assessed value and local + state funding, which would suggest that, holding the extra costs of educating low income students aside, state funding was bringing poorer districts up to parity with wealthier districts. In practice,

we see neither of these things. Instead, we see the opposite of what we should see if equity was centered: there is a strong positive relationship between property wealth and state + local funding for education.

Districts with more wealth to draw on put more dollars into their classrooms. Again, this is partly because the Foundation Formula was poorly built to execute on its theoretical mission. Another part of it, though, is that there is vast variability in wealth from district-to-district, and state funding can't smooth that out because there simply isn't enough of it.

## MAJORITY WHITE DISTRICTS HAVE MUCH GREATER RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL PROPERTY WEALTH

The median assessed property value for majority Black districts is \$97,751 per student. For majority White districts, it's almost two times higher, at \$181,899. The majority White school district with the greatest property wealth (Clayton at \$428,446/student) has \$173,117 more in assessed property value per student than the majority Black school district with the greatest property wealth (U City at \$255,329/student).

The greater property wealth in majority White districts is driven primarily by both residential and commercial properties that are worth more. For example, the median home in majority White districts is worth \$215,700, while in majority Black districts it's worth \$91,400. We weren't able to find data on commercial wealth for all the districts we studied, but we were able to find some, mostly through the notices, like this one from Rockwood<sup>46</sup> in 2019, that districts have to put out before levying taxes. We wondered how commercial property values fit into the overall local funding pie from one district to another. Keep in mind that commercial

property is assessed at 32% compared to 19% for residential property, so, we reasoned, districts with vigorous business presences have a sizable advantage over districts that do not.

## LET'S LOOK AT THE EXAMPLE OF BRENTWOOD COMPARED TO RIVERVIEW GARDENS

Tucked in North County, beleaguered<sup>47</sup> Riverview Gardens covers an area of 9.3 square miles.<sup>48</sup> Brentwood, one of the four school districts in the city of Richmond Heights, is smaller, at 2.1 square miles. However, Brentwood punches above its weight when it comes to business activity. Trader Joes, Target, Whole Foods, Dierbergs, Best Buy, and many others can all be found within a quarter mile radius of one another. Anyone who has been to the Target in the Promenade at Brentwood on a Saturday knows all too well just how busy that shopping area is.

That's a big part of why, in 2018, nearly 35% (\$110,588,460)<sup>49</sup> of Brentwood's assessed valuation of \$317,262,750 came from commercial property. By contrast, 13.6% (\$26,812,490)<sup>50</sup> of Riverview Gardens' \$198,924,110 of assessed value came from

commercial property. The assessed value of the commercial property in Brentwood is more than four times higher than in Riverview Gardens, even though Riverview Gardens is nearly five times bigger in geographic size.

The kicker is this: in 2018, Riverview Gardens enrolled 5,310 students. That same year, Brentwood enrolled 784 students. The massive commercial property wealth represented by all those stores is funneled into education benefits for less than 800 students, most of them White and upper-middle class. Put another way, Brentwood had \$141,056 of assessed commercial property value per student, over 28 times more than the \$5,049 per student in Riverview Gardens. A similar pattern plays out in Clayton, which is home to the Galleria; Kirkwood (West County mall); and many other majority White districts that benefit from thriving businesses that people come from all over the region to use.

Right about now would be a good time to start reflecting (if you weren't already) on why those thriving businesses are where they are, what was there before them, and why there are so many fewer such businesses in low-income majority Black districts. We'll circle back around to that in Section 7.

### BRENTWOOD

**2.1**

SQUARE MILES

**\$110,588,460**

ASSESSED VALUATION FROM COMMERCIAL PROPERTY

**784**

ENROLLED STUDENTS IN 2018

**\$141,056**

ASSESSED COMMERCIAL PROPERTY VALUE PER STUDENT

### RIVERVIEW GARDENS

**9.3**

SQUARE MILES

**\$26,812,490**

ASSESSED VALUATION FROM COMMERCIAL PROPERTY

**5,310**

ENROLLED STUDENTS IN 2018

**\$5,049**

ASSESSED COMMERCIAL PROPERTY VALUE PER STUDENT

## MAJORITY BLACK DISTRICTS TEND TO PAY HIGHER TAXES

The greater property wealth in many majority White school districts means they can raise enough money without taxing themselves as much as property-poorer districts. To raise the maximum property tax they can levy (i.e., the “tax rate ceiling”) above a certain point, districts need voter approval. Majority Black districts tend to have higher tax ceilings (\$4.7804 per \$100 of assessed value vs. \$4.2732) meaning their residents voted to tax themselves more heavily, despite having about half the income on average. Majority Black districts are also, on average, closer to hitting their tax ceilings. And again, since incomes in these districts are lower, paying these amounts in taxes hurts more. But at the end of the day, even if they tax themselves more, the property in majority Black districts just isn’t worth enough to even come close to the revenues generated in wealthier, Whiter districts.

Consider this final thought experiment: with a 4.4632% school district tax rate, the median household in Kirkwood pays about \$2,900, or about 2.9% of their income, in taxes to their school district. For the median household in Jennings to pay a similar amount, the district would have to bump its tax rate up from 5.3889%—already one of the highest in the region—to over 22%, which works out to 9.1% of median household income. It’s just not feasible (it’s also not allowed by state law). And the state Foundation Formula wasn’t built to adequately correct for that fact.

### RESOURCES FOR LEARNING MORE ABOUT THESE TOPICS

- **FundEd: State Policy Analysis.** 2020. By EdBuild.
- **Budget Basics: K-12 Education.** 2017. By Missouri Budget Project.
- **Missouri.** 2020. By the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy
- **Real Estate Assessment and Property Taxation.** 2011. By David Stokes, Christine Harbin, and Josh Smith of The Show-Me Institute.
- **Why America’s Schools Have a Money Problem.** 2016. By NPR.







[ 7 ]

**STRUCTURAL INEQUITY:  
SEGREGATION**

## → SEGREGATION

# FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL POLICIES AND PRACTICES LED TO DE JURE AND THEN DE FACTO SEGREGATION IN OUR REGION AND SCHOOLS

### BACKGROUND SUMMARY:

A long history of overtly racist federal, state, and local policies in our housing, transportation, and other systems followed by race neutral policies that did nothing to correct for the inequalities of their predecessors have created the landscape of inequality that we see today, and are the primary drivers of district wealth disparities.

**TRI-COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT SEGREGATION SCORE IS NEARLY AS HIGH AS IT WAS BEFORE MEANINGFUL NATIONWIDE INTEGRATION EFFORTS IN THE 1960s**

### FINDINGS SNAPSHOT:

- + For the most part, St. Louis schools have grown more segregated over the past thirty years.
- + Dissimilarity Index (DI; a common measure of segregation) scores for our region's school districts largely stayed level during the 90s. However, as the VICC desegregation program waned, in large part because of the ending in 1999 of the official 1983 order, schools started slipping back towards re-segregation and DI scores increased.
- + In 2019, the tri-county (St. Louis City, County, and St. Charles County) public school district Dissimilarity Index score was 0.71, meaning 71% of Black or White students would have had to move districts for schools to reflect the underlying population.
- + Today, our region's schools are almost as segregated as the nation's schools were before meaningful integration took place. By comparison, in 1968, soon after *Brown v. Board* ruled segregated schools unconstitutional, but before most districts had moved to integrate, the Dissimilarity Index nationwide was about 0.80.
- + As a result of de facto (i.e., not legally mandated) segregation, 78% of public school students in the St. Louis region attend a racially concentrated school district, where the vast majority (75% or more) of enrollment is of one race. Even more Black students (85%) attend a racially concentrated school.

**.80**

1960 NATIONWIDE DISSIMILARITY INDEX BEFORE INTEGRATION

**.71**

2019 TRI-COUNTY DISSIMILARITY INDEX

**78%**

OF PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS IN THE ST. LOUIS REGION ATTEND A RACIALLY CONCENTRATED SCHOOL DISTRICT

## SELECTED NEXT STEPS

- Grow broad community understanding of the structural inequities in St. Louis education including the historical and modern-day drivers of educational segregation from the individual up to the systemic level and cultivate an understanding of the approaches available at each level for facilitating integration, and capacity for directly or indirectly implementing those approaches.

# BACKGROUND

As we saw in Section 6, our education landscape is deeply divided along racial and socioeconomic lines, with majority Black districts having access to a fraction of the property wealth found in majority White districts, especially districts in mid-County and West County. Why is that? What led to these patterns of concentrated wealth and Whiteness and vice-versa? In some ways, the answer is as simple as this: federal, state, and local policies made it exceedingly difficult for Black families to obtain property, and, when they did, if that property became too valuable, local forces used their authority and power to take it. Ultimately, the wild unevenness in wealth and (as we'll see in section 8) quality in our school districts is rooted in a history of racism and public policy, and, as a result, economic decline.

## HOUSING POLICY, NATIONALLY AND LOCALLY, HAS A LONG HISTORY OF RACISM...

For as long as Black individuals have had the right to own land, there have been limitations and

conditions constraining that freedom to suit the preferences of White lawmakers and property owners. For a period, namely during the era of the New Deal, many federal, state, and local housing policies were explicitly racist. One of the starkest examples of this is the establishment of the Federal Housing Administration in 1934. The FHA is the primary way in which the federal government catalyzes home ownership. It is credited with suburbanizing America and helping to build the (White) middle class. However, for decades, it worked explicitly on the behalf of White Americans: Black homebuyers were not eligible for FHA-backed loans or received far less favorable terms. Arguing that Black home ownership in or even near burgeoning suburbs would drive down the property values of the White-owned homes they were insuring, the FHA drew maps of metropolitan areas<sup>51</sup> in the country color-coding Black neighborhoods red to indicate that they were too risky to insure. It demanded developers build walls<sup>52</sup> to keep Black individuals from crossing over into White neighborhoods. It insisted on the inclusion of restrictive covenants<sup>53</sup> in the deeds for the properties they insured to guarantee that the homes would never be sold to

Black individuals. The policies implemented at a national level by the FHA and other bodies set the tone for state and local policies that nurtured the racist beliefs held by countless individuals.

As historian Colin Gordon points out,<sup>54</sup> St. Louis was, in fact, a national leader in segregationist innovation. In the early 1900s, St. Louis was one of a few cities to formalize racial segregation with the so-called St. Louis Law. The boilerplate language used by the St. Louis Real Estate Exchange in their contracts outlining who could own the properties they sold included "a restriction against selling, conveying, leasing, or renting to a negro or negroes, or the delivery of possession, to or permitting to be occupied by a negro or negroes of said property." Such restrictive covenants were found unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in 1948 because of the St. Louis case, *Shelley v. Kraemer*. But the segregation they created was sustained by private discrimination in real estate and lending, and by public policies such as local land-use zoning.

The homes and neighborhoods the FHA helped develop went on to be the primary vehicle to the middle class for their

owners and their families. Affordably priced at twice the median national income in 1950, today they are worth six to eight times the national median income. That increase in equity sent kids to college. It sheltered owners from financial storms as they aged. It served as a springboard for the next generation's ambitions. These were advantages that were uniquely—and intentionally—afforded to White homeowners. They are major drivers of why, today, Black wealth is one tenth the size of White wealth.<sup>55</sup>

## ...THE INTERSTATE SYSTEM HAS A LONG HISTORY OF RACISM, TOO

Highways, the FHA urged in its *Underwriting Manual*, were a great way of separating Black neighborhoods from White neighborhoods. The interstate highway system was created in the 1950s and 1960s. While the federal government took on most of the costs, local officials were often able to influence the paths. In metropolises across the country,<sup>56</sup> those expressways, highways, and interstates were frequently pointed right through “blighted”, majority Black, low-income neighborhoods, displacing millions.<sup>57</sup> St. Louis was no exception.<sup>58</sup> To build Interstate 55, the Black neighborhood of Pleasant View was razed. Interstate 44 pushed Black families out of The Hill and demolished parts of Meacham Park, an established Black neighborhood in Kirkwood.

## LET'S GO BACK TO BRENTWOOD FOR A SECOND

Those transportation thoroughfares also shunted economic activity towards some areas, away from others, and directly through still others. Remember the Brentwood School District, home to just under 800 mostly White, wealthy students? It wasn't always that way. At the intersection of Eager Road and Brentwood Boulevard, where you

now will find a bustling commercial hub, was once the Black neighborhood of Howard-Evans place. Established in 1907,<sup>59</sup> Howard-Evans Place predated the Great Migration and was home to the workers of the Evens & Howard Fire Brick Co and their families. Recalled<sup>59</sup> as one of the first places a Black family could buy a new home in St. Louis, it went on to become a bastion of the Black middle class. By the 1970s, because of its prime location, Howard-Evans Place had captured the attention of others. Highway expansion, redevelopment plans, and Metrolink expansion all threatened the neighborhood multiple times starting in 1977. Finally, in 1995, the neighborhood association agreed to a buyout, leading to the development of Brentwood Promenade.

When the buyout took place, the City of Brentwood valued the property of Howard-Evans Place at \$3.6 million.<sup>59</sup> After Brentwood Promenade was developed, it was valued at \$30 million.<sup>59</sup> The Promenade also encouraged an additional \$300 million<sup>59</sup> in development in Brentwood over the next five years, including the redevelopment of Brentwood Square Town Center, Brentwood Pointe, and the Villas at Brentwood. Today, the economic benefits of that thriving retail center are enjoyed almost solely by the small and affluent Brentwood school district.

A similar pattern of Black displacement to allow for development that disproportionately benefits White St. Louisans has been repeated throughout the region, from Clayton,<sup>60</sup> to Mill Creek Valley,<sup>61</sup> to Meacham Park.<sup>62</sup>

## SCHOOLS BOTH CONTRIBUTE TO AND ARE IMPACTED BY SEGREGATION

Schools were part and parcel of the overt and implicit ways in which racial lines were drawn in our region; indeed, they were among the last

of our institutions to desegregate. While *Brown v. Board of Education* found segregated schools to be unconstitutional in 1954, it took decades for desegregation to actually happen. This led to a second ruling by the Supreme Court in 1955, often called Brown II, that ordered states to integrate with “all deliberate speed,” which in practice was vague enough to allow segregationist states to delay. Missouri dragged its feet until it removed the language from its constitution in 1976<sup>63</sup>—22 years after *Brown v. Board of Education* and longer than most states in the south. (If you’re wondering, some states, like Alabama, still officially require racially segregated public education<sup>64</sup> under state law). While the Supreme Court decision invalidated these portions of state constitutions, their continued existence long after the nationwide order banning segregation points to an unwillingness to let go of formalized structures for excluding Black students. Meaningful desegregation in St. Louis only occurred years later in 1983 with the implementation of an inter-district transfer program, over a decade after a court

decision on the pivotal 1972 case of *Liddell v. Board of Education of City of St. Louis*.<sup>65</sup>

The suit argued that Black students enrolled in SLPS received a lower quality education. While school boundary lines were constantly being redrawn, they always kept Black children in Black schools and segregated classrooms. The case moved through the court system for the next two decades. In 1980, the judge overseeing the case proposed a voluntary exchange program between City and County districts. This required the support of county school districts, which many only gave when the overseeing judge threatened to consolidate City and County school districts. In 1983, a voluntary agreement was reached and approved by all 23 districts—though notably North County majority-Black districts were excluded from the exchange program—and was implemented by the Voluntary Interdistrict Coordinating Council (VICC). Pushback from the state on its culpability and financial responsibility extended the case for another decade, and, while



the VICC program was up and running throughout that time, it wasn't until 1993 that all parties in the lawsuit came to an agreement. Around the same time, the Supreme Court handed down its verdict on *Missouri v. Jenkins*, which invalidated the inter-district desegregation strategy in Kansas City. Fearing that the state of Missouri would finally get its way and end the VICC program through the courts, the parties from the *Liddell* case agreed to a second settlement agreement. The VICC program was cemented through 2008-09 (and renewed in 2007, 2012, and 2016, for likely the last time<sup>66</sup>) and became the largest and longest running<sup>67</sup> desegregation program in the country. The magnet school program was also born out of the agreement.

The backdrop to the *Liddell* case was the 1974 Supreme Court case *Milliken v. Bradley*, which is credited for allowing schools to remain segregated when it found that segregation was allowed if it was not explicitly stated in policy.

## “RACE NEUTRAL” IS NOT NEUTRAL

In the wake of the Civil Rights Act and other landmark legislation like the Fair Housing Act and jurisprudence like *Brown v. Board of Education*, we have seen a shift away from overtly (de jure) racist policy. But striking down those policies did not undo the damage they did—the inequalities they planted. Left untreated, those inequalities have flourished, fertilized by the benign neglect and passive acceptance of current day “race neutral” policies. As a result, the patterns we see in health,<sup>68</sup> wealth,<sup>69</sup> and well-being<sup>70</sup> in the St. Louis region bear a haunting resemblance to the redlining maps of decades ago.

## WHAT WE LOOKED AT

### DISTRICT DEMOGRAPHICS

SOURCE: MO DESE

- + **% BLACK**  
THE PERCENT OF 2018-2019 ENROLLMENT THAT WAS BLACK
- + **% WHITE**  
THE PERCENT OF 2018-2019 ENROLLMENT THAT WAS WHITE
- + **% LATINX**  
THE PERCENT OF 2018-2019 ENROLLMENT THAT WAS HISPANIC
- + **% FRL**  
THE PERCENT OF 2018-2019 ENROLLMENT THAT QUALIFIED FOR FREE OR REDUCED PRICE LUNCH
- + **% ENGLISH LEARNER**  
THE PERCENT OF 2018-2019 ENROLLMENT WHOSE native language is not English<sup>37</sup>
- + **% SPECIAL EDUCATION**  
THE PERCENT OF STUDENTS IN 2018-2019 WITH INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS (IEPS) DUE TO INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY, EMOTIONAL DISTURBANCE, SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITY, OTHER HEALTH IMPAIRMENT, AUTISM, OR SPEECH/LANGUAGE IMPAIRMENT

### SEGREGATION

- + **DISSIMILARITY INDEX**  
THE MOST COMMONLY USED MEASURE OF SEGREGATION APPLIED TO THE TRI-COUNTY REGION, ST. LOUIS COUNTY, AND ST. CHARLES COUNTY, WITH SCHOOL DISTRICTS AS THE UNIT OF ANALYSIS. YEARS OF ANALYSIS WERE 1991-2019. SEE NOTE BELOW FOR ADDITIONAL EXPLANATION. SOURCE: CALCULATED FROM HISTORICAL ENROLLMENT DATA PROVIDED BY MO DESE
- + **BLACK AND WHITE MIGRATION PATTERNS**  
THE NUMBER OF BLACK AND WHITE PEOPLE LIVING IN EACH SCHOOL DISTRICT IN ST. LOUIS CITY AND COUNTY FROM 1950 TO 2010, MAPPED BY CENSUS TRACT. CREDIT: COLIN GORDON. SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS
- + **RACIAL CONCENTRATION**  
WHETHER A SCHOOL DISTRICT WAS MADE UP OF 75%+ enrollment<sup>71</sup> OF A SINGLE RACE IN 2018-2019. SOURCE: MO DESE

## MORE ABOUT THE DISSIMILARITY INDEX

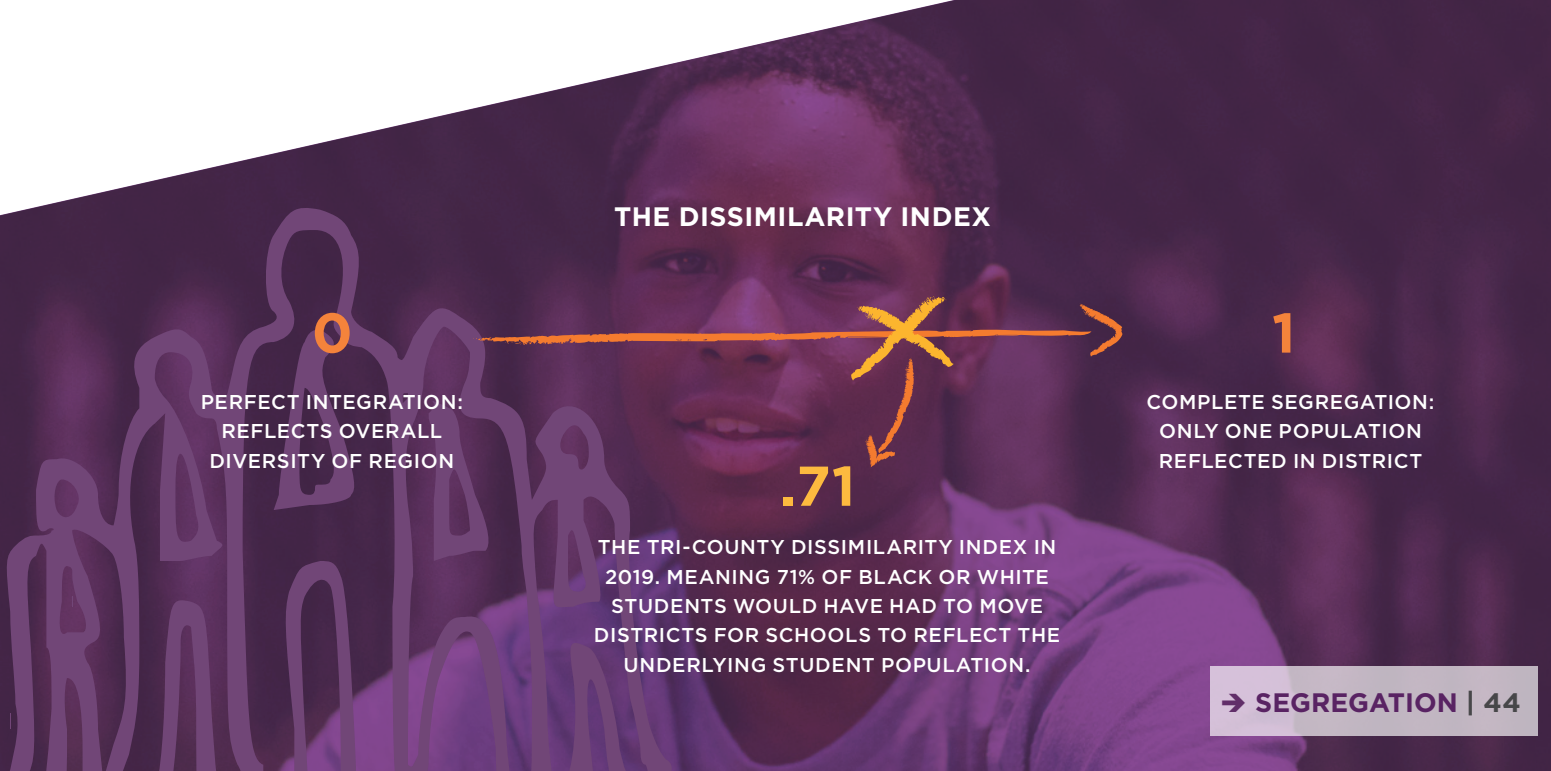
Segregation can be measured in several ways. In fact, the concept of segregation has been broken down into 5 fundamental dimensions<sup>72</sup>: evenness, exposure, concentration, centralization, and clustering. Evenness is probably what most people think of when they define segregation. It refers to the way different sub-populations are physically distributed in a space, be it a city, a state, or a school district. Populations are less segregated when sub-populations are more evenly distributed. The most commonly used indicator of evenness is the Dissimilarity Index<sup>73</sup> (DI). The DI looks at the sub-population makeup of sub-divisions in the overall geography being studied. It measures the percentage of a sub-population that would have to move for each sub-division to have the same population breakdown as the overall geography. The index ranges from 0.0 (perfect integration: the sub-divisions perfectly reflect the diversity of the overall region) to 1.0 (complete segregation: the sub-divisions contain only one sub-population).

For our analyses, we considered counties and the school districts they are made up of. We calculated Dissimilarity Index values for the public school districts in St. Louis County, St. Charles County; the combination of St. Louis City and St. Louis County; and the tri-county region made up of St. Louis City,

St. Louis County, and St. Charles County. Using data from MO DESE, we calculated DI scores for each of these geographies for the years from 1991 to 2019. Because St. Louis City is made up of a single public school district, we could not calculate a Dissimilarity Index score for it alone.

Because we used school districts as the unit of analysis, our DI calculations do not take into account what was happening between schools within a district or outside of the public school system. That means some dynamics we only see indirectly. For example, if a new charter school opened, its numbers would not directly be incorporated into our calculations, but we might be able to observe the effect of that opening because of the students who *left* the public school system and the decline in enrollments as a result. Other dynamics we are unable to detect at all. For example, students moving from private schools to charters or vice versa wouldn't be captured in our analyses.

Nonetheless, the DI scores provide an informative snapshot of segregation in our public schools during the peak of the VICC program in the late 90s, the decline of that program in the 2000s, and the triggering of the transfer law in the 2010s (more about this in Section 8).



# WHAT WE FOUND

## → SEGREGATION

For the most part, our schools have grown **more segregated** over the past thirty years.

This graph shows Dissimilarity Index (DI) scores for the region based on public school districts. DI scores tell us what percent of Black or White students would have to move for school districts to reflect the racial diversity in the underlying population. Scores range from 0 to 1, with 0 indicating perfect integration and 1 indicating complete segregation. **DI scores over 0.6 are considered high levels of segregation.**

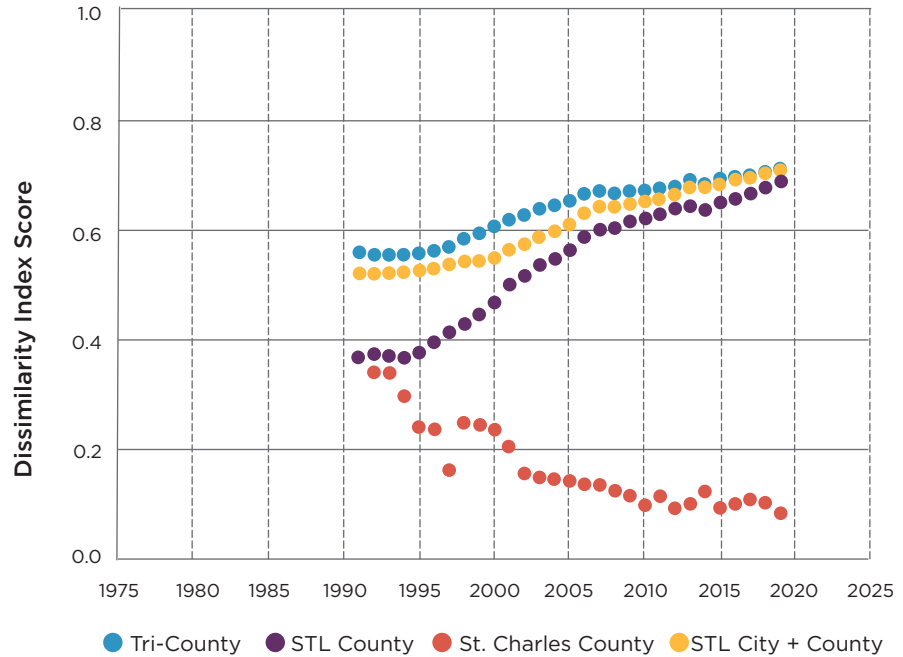
The VICC desegregation program began enrolling students in 1983 and, by 1999, it had **reached its peak, enrolling 14,000 students.** Most of those students were Black, from the City, and using the program to go to school in the County.

That program is probably why, **until about 2000, dissimilarity index scores remained pretty level** in St. Louis City + County.

As the VICC program waned, in large part because of the ending in 1999 of the official 1983 order, schools started **slipping back towards re-segregation and DI scores increased.**

# FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL POLICIES AND PRACTICES LED TO DE JURE AND

## SEGREGATION IS GROWING IN MOST OF THE REGION'S SCHOOL DISTRICTS DISSIMILARITY INDEX, 1991-2019




**DI scores have trended steadily upward in most of the region. St. Charles County is an exception. Because it is quite homogenous and White, small movements of Black students into its schools lead to large improvements in DI scores.**


**1954**  
*Brown v. Board*  
The Supreme Court overturns the "separate but equal" doctrine and orders public school integration "with all deliberate speed."

**1972**  
*Liddell v. Board*  
Minnie Liddell and the Concerned Parents of North St. Louis sue to desegregate the St. Louis Public Schools.


**1983**  
**Voluntary Inter-district Transfer Plan**  
St. Louis County school districts agree to a voluntary inter-district transfer program with the city, financed by the state.




**1950s**



**1960s**



**1970s**



**1980s**

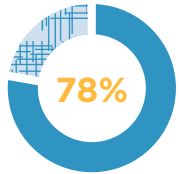
**1963**  
**Intact Busing**  
A practice by which children in majority-Black schools were bussed to empty classrooms in majority white schools, but kept separated.

**1980**  
**Court-Ordered Desegregation**  
On appeal, the judge in *Liddell v. Board* finds the city and state guilty of maintaining school segregation and requires the creation of a desegregation plan.

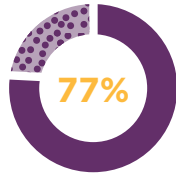


# THEN DE FACTO SEGREGATION IN OUR SCHOOLS AND REGION

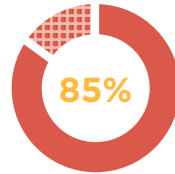
**THE VAST MAJORITY OF OUR STUDENTS ATTEND A RACIALLY CONCENTRATED SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
ENROLLMENT IN RACIALLY CONCENTRATED SCHOOLS, OVERALL AND BY RACE, 2018-2019



**Of all students** attended a racially concentrated school district



**Of White students** attended a racially concentrated school district



**Of Black students** attended a racially concentrated school district

## Racially Concentrated

- Jennings
- Riverview Gardens
- Normandy Schools
- Ferguson-Florissant
- University City
- SLPS
- Hazelwood
- Webster Groves
- Kirkwood
- Rockwood
- AfftonOrchard Farm
- Mehlville
- Francis Howell
- Wentzville
- Fort Zumwalt
- Lindbergh Schools

## Not Racially Concentrated

- Ritenour
- Pattonville
- Hancock Place
- Brentwood
- Valley Park
- Maplewood - Richmond Heights
- Parkway
- Clayton
- Ladue
- St. Charles
- Bayless

**2010**

### Turner v. Clayton

Loss of accreditation at St. Louis Public Schools in 2007 invokes the Missouri transfer law and creates friction with the existing VICC program.

**2016**

### Final VICC Extension

New enrollments in VICC are allowed to continue through the 2023-24 school year, after which the program will end.



**1990s**



**2000s**



**2010s**



**2020s**

**1999**

### 2nd VICC Settlement Agreement

Although school district participation in VICC becomes voluntary and the state no longer finances it, VICC continues.

**2014**

### Normandy Schools Collaborative

Loss of accreditation at Normandy invokes the Missouri transfer law and prompts the creation of a not-yet-accredited district under state oversight.

In 2019, the tri-country **dissimilarity index score was 0.71** meaning 71% of Black or White students would have had to move districts for schools to reflect the underlying student population.

By comparison, in 1968, soon after *Brown v. Board of Education* ruled segregated schools unconstitutional, but before most districts had moved to integrate, the dissimilarity index nationwide was about 0.80.

Today, our region's schools are **almost as segregated as the nation's schools were before meaningful integration** took place.

As a result of de facto (i.e., not legally mandated) segregation, **78% of public school students attended a racially concentrated school district**, where 75% or more of enrollment is of one race. **Even more Black students (85%) attended a racially concentrated school.**

**17 out of the 28** school districts we examined were racially concentrated.

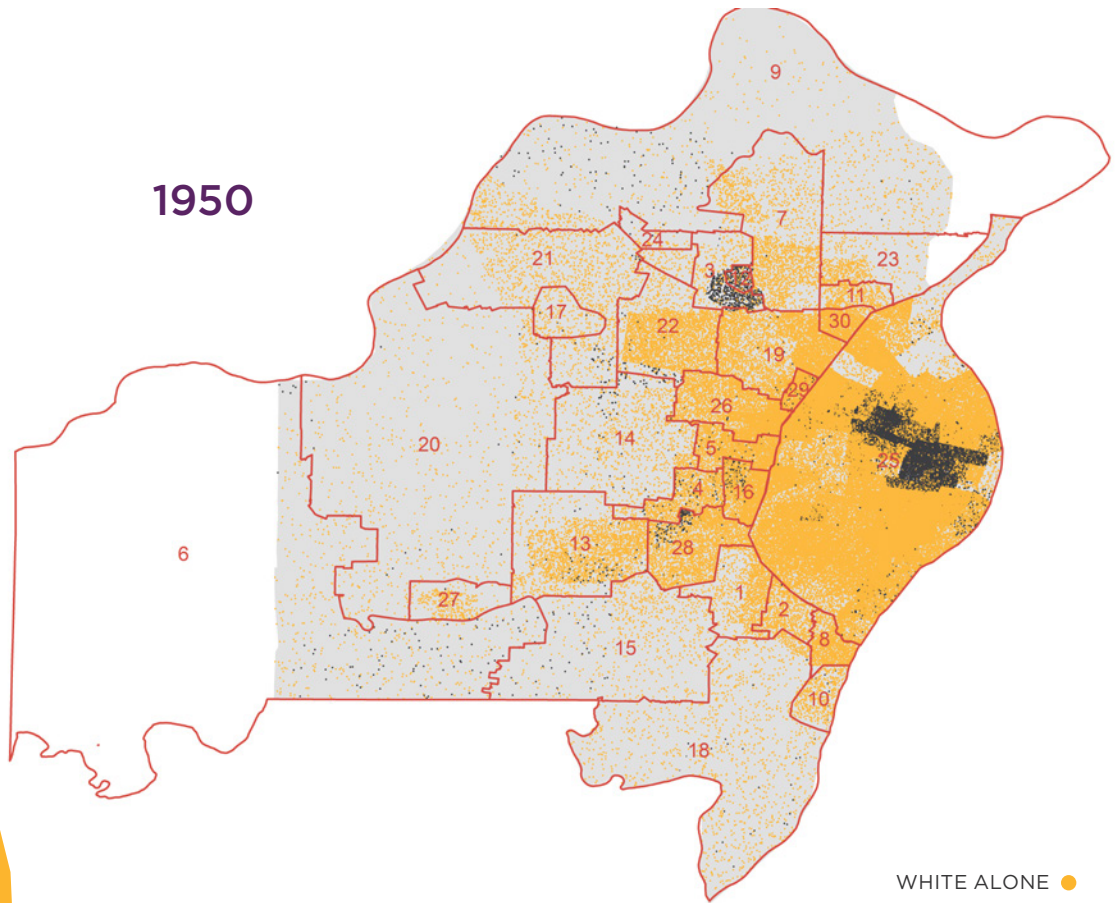
# WHITE FLIGHT HOLLOWED OUT ST. LOUIS CITY

Population maps shown in the figure below produced by Colin Gordon use U.S. Census data from 1950 to 2010 and concurrent school district lines to show how Black and White individuals moved throughout St. Louis City and St. Louis County and beyond. As Dr. Gordon explains,<sup>74</sup> in the 50s and 60s we see the terrible influence of overtly racist housing policies that dictated where Black homeowners were allowed to live, brought to life by the individual practices of real estate agents, developers, and White home owners. Many White individuals and families left the City during these years. As the decades rolled by, “race neutral” policies, like zoning ordinances that prohibited multi-family housing units, replaced racist policies

but did little to correct for the segregation that had taken root—segregation that was now self-sustaining. The City continued to bleed population. Between 1970 and 1980, it lost almost 170,000 people, over 25% of its population. Black residents continued to spread, following the opportunity taken by fleeing White residents. They settled largely in north St. Louis City, south St. Louis City, and north St. Louis County. Few made it to the privileged reaches of west County. The White population continued moving farther out from the City, to the western edge of St. Louis County and beyond. This trend has continued. As of the 2010 census, St. Charles County had grown by 27% since 2000 and had a larger population than the City.

## 1950 DISTRICTS

1. AFFTON
2. BAYLESS
3. BERKELEY
4. BRENTWOOD
5. CLAYTON
6. EUREKA
7. FERGUSON-FLOISSANT
8. HANCOCK PLACE
9. HAZELWOOD
10. JEFFERSON BARRACKS
11. JENNINGS
12. KINLOCH
13. KIRKWOOD
14. LADUE
15. LINDBERGH-GRANDVIEW
16. MAPLEWOOD-RICHMOND HEIGHTS
17. MARYLAND HEIGHTS
18. MEHLVILLE
19. NORMANDY
20. PARKWAY CONSOLIDATED
21. PATTONVILLE
22. RITENOUR
23. RIVERVIEW GARDENS
24. SCUDDER
25. ST. LOUIS
26. UNIVERSITY CITY
27. VALLEY PARK
28. WEBSTER GROVES
29. WELLSTON
30. WEST WALNUT MANOR

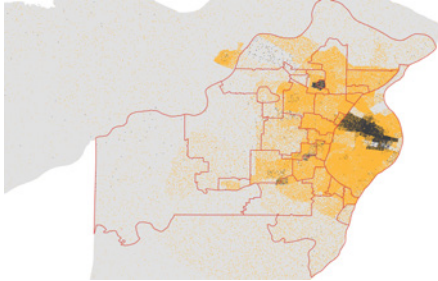


ONE DOT = TEN PERSONS, MAPPED BY CENSUS TRACT

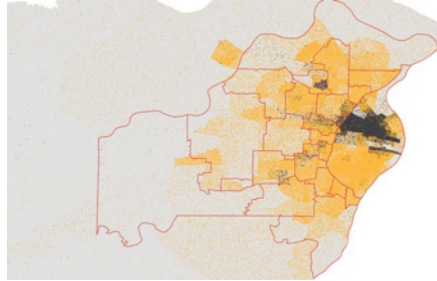
\*\*\*\* NOT ALL OF ST. LOUIS COUNTY ASSIGNED CENSUS TRACTS IN 1950

# WHITE FLIGHT LEADS TO THE ABANDONMENT OF ST. LOUIS CITY

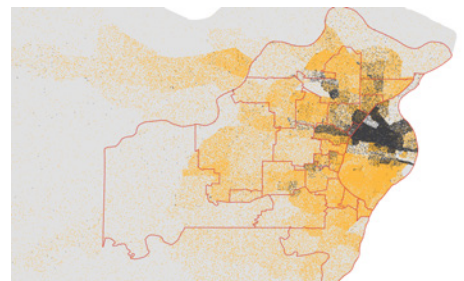
1960



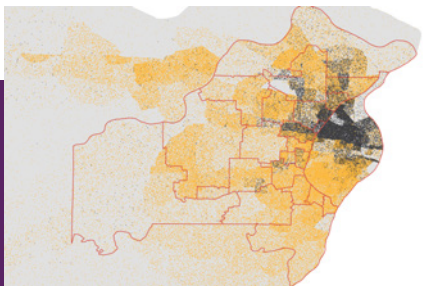
1970



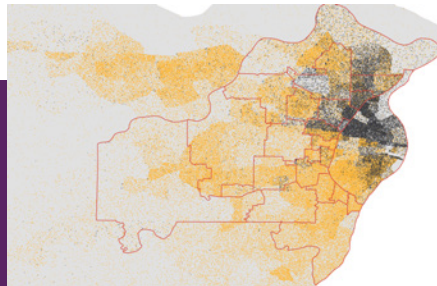
1980



1990



2000

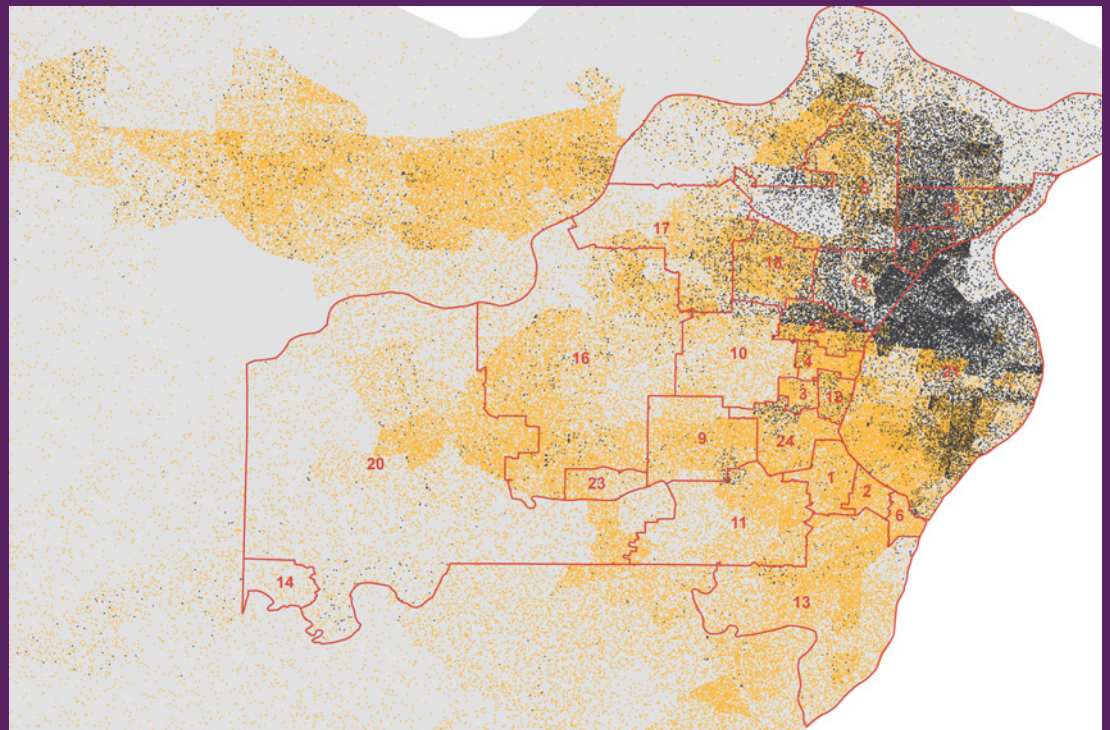


*Credit: Colin Gordon. See additional maps and explanation from Dr. Gordon at <http://mappingdecline.lib.uiowa.edu/map/> and in the books referenced at the end of this section.*

2010

## 2010 DISTRICTS

1. AFFTON
2. BAYLESS
3. BRENTWOOD
4. CLAYTON
5. FERGUSON-FLORISSANT
6. HANCOCK PLACE
7. HAZELWOOD
8. JENNINGS
9. KIRKWOOD
10. LADUE
11. LINDBERGH
12. MAPLEWOOD-RICHMOND HEIGHTS
13. MEHLVILLE
14. MERAMEC VALLEY
15. NORMANDY
16. PARKWAY
17. PATTONVILLE
18. RITENOUR
19. RIVERVIEW GARDENS
20. ROCKWOOD
21. ST. LOUIS
22. UNIVERSITY CITY
23. VALLEY PARK
24. WEBSTER GROVES



## SCHOOL DISTRICTS GENERALLY GREW MORE SEGREGATED DESPITE VICC

We pick up this story in the early 1990s in our school districts. As our analysis of Dissimilarity Index (DI) scores shows, for the most part, our schools have grown more segregated over the past thirty years. DI scores measure the percent of the population that would have to move to create (in our case) school districts that reflect the racial diversity of the region. Scores range from 0 to 1, with 0 indicating perfect integration and 1 indicating complete segregation; scores over 0.6 are considered high levels of segregation.<sup>75</sup>

In 1991, the tri-county region (St. Louis City, St. Louis County, and St. Charles County), had a DI score of 0.56. About 1 in 2 Black or White students would have had to change school districts to create a public education landscape that modeled the diversity of the public school students living in those three counties. Reading between the lines, we see that the high levels of segregation for the region overall were driven, in 1991, by racial unevenness in St. Louis City and St. Charles County. The DI score for St. Louis County

was actually considerably lower at 0.36, due in large part to a relatively large Black population that was more distributed. That changed, though. In the ensuing years, White students continued to leave St. Louis City. Many kept going through St. Louis County, settling in St. Charles County.

This White flight further segregated schools in St. Louis City and County, driving the DI scores up for this subset of the region. St. Charles County's school districts were almost entirely White in 1991. In fact, Black enrollments were so low in some districts, like Francis Howell, the largest district in St. Charles, that they could not be counted without compromising privacy. When Francis Howell enrolled 204 Black students in 1992, the DI score for all of St. Charles County dropped from 0.52 to 0.34. Over the past 30 years, St. Charles County's DI scores have dropped as the County's Black population slowly grew. Today, there are about 4,200 Black students across all of the public schools in St. Charles County. There are nearly 89,000 Black school-aged children in the region.

We can't fully celebrate St. Charles County school districts' low segregation scores because they disguise the fact that most Black students are still segregated away from those

districts to begin with. There's even less to celebrate in St. Louis City and County.

Despite the efforts of the VICC desegregation program, Black and White enrollments in public school districts in the City and County have grown more uneven in the past 30 years. The VICC program began enrolling students in 1983 and, by 1999, it had reached its peak, enrolling 14,000 students. Most of those students were Black, from the City, and using the program to go to school in the County. That program is probably why, until about 2000, Dissimilarity Index scores remained pretty level in St. Louis City + County. As the VICC program waned, in large part because of the ending in 1999 of the official 1983 order, schools started slipping back towards re-segregation and DI scores increased. The school districts in north St. Louis County were not part of the VICC program and those districts have largely remained intensely segregated.

## SCHOOLS ARE NEARLY AS SEGREGATED TODAY AS IN 1968, BEFORE DESEG

In 2019, the tri-county Dissimilarity Index score was

0.71 meaning 71% of Black or White students would have had to move districts for schools to reflect the underlying student population. As a result of de facto (i.e., not legally mandated) segregation, 78% of public school students attended a racially concentrated school district, where 75% or more of enrollment is of one race. Even more Black students (85%) attended a racially concentrated school. 17 out of the 28 school districts we examined were racially concentrated.

By comparison, in 1968, soon after *Brown v. Board* ruled segregated schools unconstitutional, but before most districts had moved to integrate, the Dissimilarity Index nationwide was about 0.80.<sup>2</sup> Today, our region's schools are almost as segregated as the nation's schools were before meaningful integration took place. And as *Brown v. Board* unequivocally stated in 1954,<sup>76</sup> "separate educational facilities are inherently unequal."



## RESOURCES FOR LEARNING MORE ABOUT THESE TOPICS

- **Citizen Brown**, 2019. By Colin Gordon.
- **The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America**, 2017. By Richard Rothstein.
- **Mapping Inequality: Redlining in New Deal America**, 2018. By Robert Nelson and colleagues.
- **Mapping Decline: St. Louis and the Fate of the American City**, 2009. Colin Gordon.



# [ 8 ]

## STRUCTURAL INEQUITY: EDUCATION QUALITY & ENVIRONMENT

# RACIALIZED DIFFERENCES IN FUNDING CONTRIBUTE TO DIFFERENCES IN EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

## FINDINGS SNAPSHOT:

- ▶ For 3 of the 4 measures we looked at, majority Black districts in the St. Louis region were more heavily staffed than majority White districts. This makes sense, since these districts tend to have students with greater needs.
- ▶ However, teachers at majority Black districts are paid, on average, 10% or \$6,221 less. Administrators are paid 13% or \$14,909 less. The highest paid teachers are in Clayton, where they get paid \$78,723 on average. This is 61% or \$30,000 more than the average salary of a teacher in SLPS—the largest educator of Black children in the region.
- ▶ In some ways, the pay disparities are understandable: administrators and teachers at majority White districts tend to have more years of experience and more advanced degrees. Teachers in majority Black districts are 4.7x more likely to be in their first year of teaching.
- ▶ This likely contributes to the less rigorous course offerings at majority Black school districts. Majority White districts offer 3x as many AP courses per 1,000 students as majority Black districts. 43% of majority Black districts don't offer calculus. Not a single majority White district fails to offer this course. Over 1 in 4 Black students in our region attend a school district that either doesn't offer Calculus or any AP courses. Less than 1% of White students attend such a school—and the White students who do lack access to these courses are all enrolled in a majority Black district.

## BACKGROUND SUMMARY:

The Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP) is the state's accountability system for reviewing and accrediting public school districts. It forms the foundation of how we determine whether a school district is "accredited."

MSIP 6, the current system, makes important improvements over MSIP 5 by emphasizing measures of school culture and climate, data transparency and utilization, and equity and access to quality education. However, state standards take little consideration of important factors that affect a school's ability to educate its students like poverty, funding, and student mobility. This shortsightedness is a symptom of state-level education structures that are not doing enough to ensure the quality of education received by low-income Black students.

## SELECTED NEXT STEPS

- Grow broad community understanding of the structural inequities in the St. Louis regional education landscape including the state standards program (MSIP).
- Grow next-level education partnerships to organize and strategize on equity-centered advocacy to redesign education funding and accountability mechanisms, including the state standards programs.

- In partnership with diverse stakeholders, identify statewide advocacy targets. Potential options include improving state standards program (MSIP) by further applying an equity lens.

# BACKGROUND

School districts with more money can buy their students a better education. This is actually a fairly contentious statement. There is a decades-long debate over whether what matters in school funding is how you spend the money or how much you spend. In favor of the former idea is research that finds that there is no link<sup>77</sup> between funding and academic achievement. Applying a racial lens, other studies<sup>78</sup> have found<sup>79</sup> that, even in wealthy school districts, Black students tend to under-perform. In favor of the power of funding to improve educational outcomes are studies<sup>80</sup> that find that states that underwent education funding reform with an eye on equity and adequacy saw improvements in the racial achievement gap. Research has also found<sup>81</sup> that steadily increasing school spending leads to better long-term outcomes for poor students, including a decrease in the likelihood of being poor as adults, an increase in the odds of graduating, and an increase in earnings as an adult. In short, as one article summarizes,<sup>82</sup> “spending more in troubled schools won’t automatically lead to better student outcomes. But, when the dollars are spent wisely and consistently, research suggests, they can have a profound effect in the classroom.” Extra dollars translate to higher paid teachers, newer and

safer buildings, more course offerings, additional extracurricular options, and better technology, all of which can contribute to better outcomes.

It can be difficult to get a line of sight between the countless ways a district can spend money and the actual improvement of the quality of education they provide to their students. But we do have a few standardized ways of measuring education quality. Chief among them is the Missouri state education standards system.

## MSIP IS THE STATE’S EDUCATION ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

The Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP) is the state’s accountability system for reviewing and accrediting public school districts. While there are federal standards requirements for funding through the Every Student Succeeds Act, Missouri’s plans for meeting those requirements are minimal<sup>83</sup> because of the state’s investment in the MSIP system. MSIP has been in place since 1990<sup>84</sup> and, since then, has gone through six iterations. The current standards, MSIP 6, were approved in February of 2020<sup>85</sup> and will go into effect in 2022.

### MISSOURI STATE EDUCATION STANDARDS

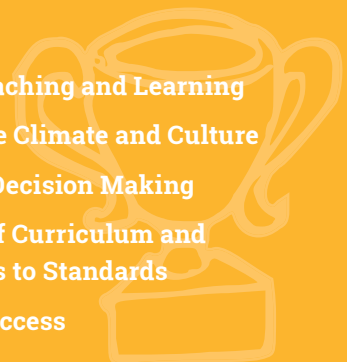
#### MSIP 5 (2013) DOMAINS

- ▶ Academic Achievement
- ▶ Subgroup Achievement
- ▶ High School Readiness or College and Career Readiness
- ▶ Attendance Rate
- ▶ Graduation Rate



#### MSIP 6 (2020) DOMAINS

- ▶ Leadership
- ▶ Effective Teaching and Learning
- ▶ Collaborative Climate and Culture
- ▶ Data-based Decision Making
- ▶ Alignment of Curriculum and Assessments to Standards
- ▶ Equity and Access





MSIP 6<sup>86</sup> is made up of indicators in six domains: Leadership, Effective Teaching and Learning, Collaborative Climate and Culture, Data-based Decision Making, Alignment of Curriculum and Assessments to Standards, and Equity and Access. By comparison, the MSIP 5 domains were<sup>87</sup> Academic Achievement, Subgroup Achievement, High School Readiness or College and Career Readiness, Attendance Rate, and Graduation Rate. The MSIP 6 standards are new enough that there isn't much documented critique from school districts, advocacy organizations, professional associations, and the like to share opinions on how they compare to MSIP 5 standards. However, early analysis suggests that MSIP 6 makes important improvements over MSIP 5 by emphasizing measures of school culture and climate, data transparency and utilization, and equity and access to quality education. Much remains to be seen as the specifics of the new standards are made public in the coming years.

## MO EDUCATION STANDARDS ARE IMPROVING BUT ARE STILL FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED

However, Missouri's approach to state standards for education seem divorced from reality in some key ways. For example, they take little consideration of important factors that affect a school's ability to educate its students like poverty, funding, and student mobility.

Essentially, the current standards ask low-income districts to perform on the same level as middle-income and wealthy districts when they 1) have less funding per student and 2) have more students that are more expensive to educate. We aren't suggesting that low-income, majority Black school districts should be given a lower set of standards to meet. In fact, there's evidence<sup>88</sup> to suggest<sup>89</sup> that standards have been engineered to allow school districts that are failing in fundamental ways to

still receive an overall passing grade, which is deeply problematic. Rather, we are suggesting that the lack of an equity lens on state standards is symptomatic of state-level education structures that are not doing enough to ensure the quality of education received by low income Black students.

## PERFORMANCE ON MSIP IS THE PRIMARY WAY THE STATE DETERMINES ACCREDITATION STATUS

It's essential that we get these standards right, because they form the foundation of how we determine whether a school district is "accredited," or performing adequately and whether our students are getting the high quality education they deserve. School districts receive their accreditation status each year after an Annual Performance Report that measures and shares their achievement on the MSIP standards. The State Board of Education monitors districts that are provisionally accredited. If a district remains provisionally accredited for long enough, or if something drastically changes for the worse, it risks becoming unaccredited, which allows the state to step in and exercise stricter control over the district—for example, by disbanding the district's school board and establishing a state-supervised school board.

Loss of accreditation also triggers a provision of the 1993 Outstanding Schools Act that allows students of unaccredited schools to transfer to an accredited school at the expense of their home district. This right was affirmed by the state Supreme Court in the 2013 *Breitenfield vs. School District of Clayton* case filed after SLPS lost its accreditation in 2007. Between 2013 and 2017, thousands of Black students from Riverview Gardens and Normandy school districts, which lost accreditation in 2007 and 2012 respectively, used this mechanism to leave those districts in favor of fully accredited districts.

## THERE'S A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE IN THE EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENTS OUR STUDENTS FACE

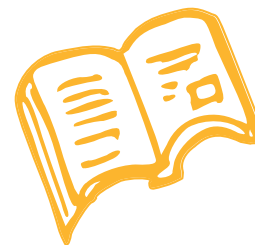
The educational environments those students encountered at their transfer schools were, in many ways, wildly different from what they left. An article from the time paints an astonishing picture of what school in Normandy was like when it lost accreditation.<sup>90</sup> It begins:

*"Cameron Hensley is an honors student at Normandy high school with plans for college. But this year his school quit offering honors courses. His physics teacher hasn't planned a lesson since January. His AP English class is taught by an instructor not certified to teach it."*

And continues,

*"Hensley, 18, began his senior year to find his favorite teachers gone. Electives such as business classes and personal finance were no longer offered...He has written no papers or essays since fall, he said, aside from scholarship applications. He started reading a novel that the class never finished. Partly because of a lack of electives, he ended up taking fashion design first semester. He has no books to take home. He's rarely assigned homework."*

Hensley had the option to transfer but chose to stay and correct what he, at the time, thought was an unfair misconception of his school district. Transferring would have likely led him to Francis Howell, a well-resourced district catering to an almost entirely White student population.



# WHAT WE LOOKED AT

## DISTRICT DEMOGRAPHICS

SOURCE: MO DESE

- + **% BLACK**  
THE PERCENT OF 2018-2019 ENROLLMENT THAT WAS BLACK
- + **% WHITE**  
THE PERCENT OF 2018-2019 ENROLLMENT THAT WAS WHITE
- + **% LATINX**  
THE PERCENT OF 2018-2019 ENROLLMENT THAT WAS HISPANIC
- + **% FRL**  
THE PERCENT OF 2018-2019 ENROLLMENT THAT QUALIFIED FOR FREE OR REDUCED PRICE LUNCH
- + **% ENGLISH LEARNER**  
THE PERCENT OF 2018-2019 ENROLLMENT WHOSE native language is not English<sup>37</sup>
- + **% SPECIAL EDUCATION**  
THE PERCENT OF STUDENTS IN 2018-2019 WITH INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS (IEPS) DUE TO INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY, EMOTIONAL DISTURBANCE, SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITY, OTHER HEALTH IMPAIRMENT, AUTISM, OR SPEECH/LANGUAGE IMPAIRMENT

## STAFFING RATIOS

- + **STUDENT : TEACHER RATIO**  
THE RATIO OF STUDENTS IN GRADES K-12 TO REGULAR CLASSROOM TEACHERS (EXCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATION, REMEDIAL READING, TITLE I AND VOCATIONAL TEACHERS).  
SOURCE: MO DESE

### + FTE COUNSELORS / SOCIAL WORKERS / PSYCHOLOGISTS PER 1,000 STUDENTS

THE NUMBER OF FULL TIME EQUIVALENT COUNSELORS, SOCIAL WORKERS, OR PSYCHOLOGISTS PER 1,000 STUDENTS IN 2015.

SOURCE: CRDC\*

### + FTE SWORN LEOS PER 1,000 STUDENTS

THE NUMBER OF FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT SWORN LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS PER 1,000 STUDENTS IN 2015. A "SWORN" LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER HAS full arrest powers<sup>91</sup> GRANTED BY THE STATE AND IS USUALLY ARMED.

SOURCE: CRDC

### + FTE NURSES PER 1,000 STUDENTS

THE NUMBER OF FULL TIME EQUIVALENT NURSES IN A DISTRICT PER 1,000 STUDENTS IN 2015. SOURCE: CRDC

## COMPENSATION

SOURCE: MO DESE

- + **AVERAGE ADMINISTRATOR SALARY**  
THE AVERAGE ADMINISTRATOR SALARY, NOT INCLUDING FRINGE BENEFITS.
- + **AVERAGE TEACHER SALARY**  
THE AVERAGE SALARY MADE BY AN EDUCATOR ACROSS 12 MONTHS IN 2018-19

## QUALIFICATIONS

- + **% PROFESSIONAL STAFF WITH ADVANCED DEGREES**  
THE PERCENTAGE OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF WHOSE HIGHEST DEGREE IS ABOVE A BACHELOR'S DEGREE.  
SOURCE: MO DESE

### + YEARS OF EXPERIENCE OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF

THE AVERAGE YEARS OF PUBLIC/CHARTER SCHOOL EXPERIENCE FOR ALL MEMBERS OF THE DISTRICT'S PROFESSIONAL STAFF.

SOURCE: MO DESE

### + % OF TEACHERS IN FIRST YEAR OF TEACHING

THE PERCENT OF TEACHERS IN A DISTRICT IN THEIR FIRST YEAR OF TEACHING IN 2015-16.

SOURCE: CRDC

## COURSE OFFERINGS

SOURCE: CRDC

- + **# OF AP COURSES OFFERED PER 1,000 STUDENTS**  
THE NUMBER OF ADVANCED PLACEMENT COURSES OFFERED BY A DISTRICT PER 1,000 STUDENTS IN 2015-16.
- + **# OF ALGEBRA II COURSES OFFERED PER 1,000 STUDENTS**  
THE NUMBER OF ALGEBRA II CLASSES OFFERED BY A DISTRICT PER 1,000 STUDENTS ENROLLED IN 2015-16.
- + **# OF CALCULUS COURSES OFFERED PER 1,000 STUDENTS**  
THE NUMBER OF CALCULUS CLASSES OFFERED BY A DISTRICT PER 1,000 STUDENTS ENROLLED IN 2015-16.

## OVERALL QUALITY

SOURCE: MO DESE

- + **ACCREDITATION STATUS**  
WHETHER THE DISTRICT WAS ACCREDITED (A) OR PROVISIONALLY ACCREDITED (P) IN 2019.

\*CRDC is the Civil Rights Data Collection provided by the federal Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights.

# WHAT WE FOUND

In terms of 3 of the 4 measures we looked at, **majority Black districts were more heavily staffed than majority White districts**, which makes sense, since these districts tend to have students with greater needs.

However, those teachers and administrators (and, it stands to reason, the staff, though we do not have data on this) are paid less on average.

Teachers at majority Black districts are paid, on average, 10% or \$6,221 less. Administrators are paid 13% or \$14,909 less.

The highest paid teachers are in Clayton, where they get paid \$78,723 on average.

This is 61% or \$30,000 more than the average salary of a teacher in SLPS—the largest educator of Black children in the region.

### Notes for tables:

**Bold** indicates the subset of districts with the better performance for a given indicator.

Unless otherwise noted, figures provided are medians.

FTE = "Full Time Equivalent".

## RACIALIZED DIFFERENCES IN FUNDING CONTRIBUTE TO DIFFERENCES IN EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

### STAFFING

UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED, NUMBERS REFLECTED ARE PER 1,000 STUDENTS



Student:Teacher Ratio

**Majority Black Districts 16.0**  
Majority White Districts 16.0



FTE Sworn LEOs

Majority Black Districts 0.8  
**Majority White Districts 0.7**



FTE Nurses

**Majority Black Districts 2.2**  
Majority White Districts 1.7



FTE Helping Professionals

**Majority Black Districts 4.9**  
Majority White Districts 4.2

### COMPENSATION

NUMBERS REFLECTED ARE AVERAGES



Teacher Salary

Majority Black Districts \$57,463  
**Majority White Districts \$63,684**



Administrator Salary

Majority Black Districts \$105,243  
**Majority White Districts \$120,152**

## QUALIFICATIONS

NUMBERS REFLECTED ARE MEDIANS



% Teachers in  
1st Year Teaching

Majority Black Districts	11.6%
<b>Majority White Districts</b>	<b>2.8%</b>



Avg Years of Experience,  
Professional Staff

Majority Black Districts	12.1
<b>Majority White Districts</b>	<b>13.6</b>



% of Professional Staff  
w/ Advanced Degrees

Majority Black Districts	56%
<b>Majority White Districts</b>	<b>81%</b>



# AP Classes per  
1000 Students

Majority Black Districts	1.2
<b>Majority White Districts</b>	<b>3.6</b>



# Algebra 2 Classes  
per 1000 Students

Majority Black Districts	1.9
<b>Majority White Districts</b>	<b>3.3</b>



% of Districts w/  
No Calculus Classes

Majority Black Districts	43%
<b>Majority White Districts</b>	<b>0%</b>

## COURSE OFFERINGS

In some ways, the pay disparities are understandable: administrators and teachers at majority White districts tend to have **more years of experience and more advanced degrees**.

Teachers in majority Black districts are **4.7x more likely to be in their first year of teaching**.

In 4 majority White districts, **less than 1 percent of teachers are in their first year of teaching**. By contrast, over **40% of the teachers in Normandy Schools Collaborative are in their first year**.

Less qualified teachers are not as equipped to teach advanced or college prep courses.

Majority White districts offer **3x as many AP courses**.

**43% of majority Black districts don't offer Calculus. Not a single majority White district fails to offer this course.**

*Sworn LEO = A law enforcement officer with full arrest powers granted by the state, usually armed.*

*"Helping Professionals" consist of social workers, counselors, and psychologists.*

As we established in Section 5, St. Louis majority White districts tend to receive more funding, especially from the local level, which is generally more stable and less restrictive than state and federal funding. So, what do those additional dollars buy majority White districts?

## MAJORITY BLACK SCHOOL DISTRICTS ARE MORE HEAVILY STAFFED

Not necessarily more staff. It may come as a surprise, but, majority Black districts in the St. Louis region were more heavily staffed than majority White districts in terms of three of the four indicators we looked at. While majority White schools had more teachers, majority Black districts had more administrators, nurses, social workers, counselors, and school psychologists per 1,000 students than majority White districts.

This makes a certain amount of sense: students at majority Black students, as we discussed earlier, tend to have greater needs. They are more likely to live in food insecure households,<sup>92</sup> to have less access to healthcare,<sup>93</sup> and to have experienced (and/or be experiencing) trauma.<sup>94</sup> School administrators know that kids with unmet basic needs cannot learn well—they also know that absenteeism due to unmet needs translates to less funding for the district. Meeting those needs takes resources. So we see schools scrambling to stretch already-insufficient budgets to provide students with the essentials.

In 2019, Jennings bought vans<sup>95</sup> from Enterprise Rent-A-Car to transport homeless students to school. A few years earlier they opened two foster homes<sup>96</sup> for homeless students. Some SLPS schools have washing machines<sup>97</sup> for students to use. Several schools in the area have school-based health centers<sup>98</sup> that provide medical, behavioral health, and social services. Low income, majority Black school districts simply have to do more for their students.

## BUT EDUCATORS AT MAJORITY BLACK DISTRICTS ARE PAID LESS

While some staffing ratios are higher at majority Black school districts in St. Louis, the same cannot be said for compensation. Teachers and administrators (and, it stands to reason, the staff, though we do not have data on this) are paid less on average than their counterparts at majority White school districts. Teachers at majority White districts are paid, on average, 10% or \$6,221 more. Administrators are paid 13% or \$14,909 more. The highest paid teachers are in Clayton, where they get paid \$78,723 on average. This is 61% or \$30,000 more than the average salary of a teacher in SLPS—the largest educator of Black children in the region. Valley Park, a small majority White district of less than 1,000 students, pays its administrators \$144,651 on average—nearly \$50,000, or 53%, more than the average administrator pay of \$94,823 at SLPS.

## EDUCATORS AT MAJORITY BLACK DISTRICTS HAVE FEWER TRADITIONAL CREDENTIALS

In some ways, the pay disparities are understandable: administrators and teachers at majority White districts are, on the whole, more qualified in the most traditionally quantifiable ways. Professional staff have, on average, 1.5 additional years of experience and are 38% more likely to have an advanced degree. Teachers in majority Black districts were 4.7x more likely to be in their first year of teaching in 2015, the most recent data we have.

There's nothing wrong with being a new teacher. We aren't saying new teachers don't work just as hard or care just as much as veteran educators. We're saying that teaching is incredibly difficult. As a result, nearly half<sup>99</sup> of new teachers quit within

their first five years. Amidst a national shortage for qualified teachers, this is both cause and effect of underqualified teachers<sup>100</sup> in under-supported classroom settings. If departures happen in the middle of the school year, they are associated with a loss of 32-72 days<sup>101</sup> of instructional time. In four majority White districts (Parkway, Clayton, Kirkwood, and Rockwood), less than 1 percent of teachers are in their first year of teaching. By contrast, over 40% of the teachers in Normandy Schools Collaborative were in their first year in 2015-2016.

## FEWER QUALIFIED TEACHERS MEANS FEWER ADVANCED COURSES

A less qualified teaching staff has implications for the classes a district is able to offer. One of the central charges of our public education system is to prepare students for success in life, and, as discussed, a primary vehicle for that success is a college degree. But many of our Black students attend schools that structurally do not provide them with the course options needed to get into and succeed in college.

For example, majority White districts offer 3.0x as many advanced placement (AP) classes as majority Black districts. They also offer more Algebra II and Calculus courses. In fact, 43% of majority Black districts didn't offer Calculus in 2015, the most recent data we have for this indicator. Not a single majority White district fails to offer this course. About 28% of all the Black students in our region attend a school district that either doesn't offer Calculus or any AP courses. Less than 1% of White students attend such a school (and those who do are enrolled in a majority Black district).

Setting aside the countless conversations we've heard and read about achievement rates in those courses, we are drawn to a more fundamental question:

### **WHAT ARE WE TELLING THOSE ONE IN FOUR BLACK STUDENTS ABOUT OUR EXPECTATIONS FOR THEM WHEN WE DON'T EVEN OFFER THEM THE OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE ADVANCED COURSES?**

## RESOURCES FOR LEARNING MORE ABOUT THESE TOPICS

- **A Senior Year Mostly Lost for a Normandy Honor Student, 2015.** By Elisa Crouch.
- **Understanding Teacher Shortages: 2018 Update, 2018.** By the Learning Policy Institute.
- **Teacher Quality Gaps in U.S. Public Schools: Trends, Sources, and Implications, 2019.** By Dan Goldhaber, Vanessa Quince, and Roddy Theobald.



# [ 9 ]

## CLOSING THOUGHTS

We like to talk about bootstraps in this country. They are a deeply rooted part of our national ethos of rugged individualism: if we work hard enough we can achieve anything. The flip side of this thinking is that people who have not “achieved” have failed because of their own missteps, lack of work ethic, determination, grit—you get the idea. As *New York Times* columnist Nicholas Kristoff points out,<sup>102</sup> most people don’t realize that when the saying “lift yourself up by your bootstraps” was first coined in 1834,<sup>103</sup> it was a joke used to describe an impossible and absurd feat. Embedded in the contrast between how the phrase was originally intended and how it is currently used are the seeds

of our lack of awareness of how policy and systems set the conditions for people to thrive (or not): the ground upon which we plant our boots.

As we’ve seen in the case of education, that ground isn’t always stable. For some, namely our Black and low-income students, the ground is thin and brittle. Hardly able to support them. For others, especially the wealthy and White, the ground is strong and sturdy: reinforced by the resources extracted and redirected by systems of education funding, property development, and transportation, to name just a few, that were engineered to benefit White individuals at the expense of all others.



**OVER THE COURSE OF THIS REPORT, WE HAVE TALKED ABOUT SEVERAL HISTORICAL AND CURRENT-DAY EXAMPLES OF SYSTEMIC FLAWS IN THE ST. LOUIS REGION'S EDUCATION SYSTEM.**

- + We began with the fact that, in general, majority White school districts get and spend more money per student than majority Black districts.
- + We learned about how the Foundation Formula was built to favor wealthy, predominantly White districts. We discussed how the entire reason for the Foundation Formula is to even out the profound inequities that result from gathering most of our education funding from local taxes. We observed how the Formula predictably and consistently fails at achieving that goal.
- + We saw how poor Black districts tax themselves at a higher rate in a desperate attempt to raise money for schools, but how their property simply isn't worth enough to come close to raising what their neighbors can raise thanks to the legacies of policies like FHA loan restrictions, red lining, and restrictive covenants.
- + We heard about districts like Brentwood, Rockwood, Clayton, and Maplewood Richmond Heights, and Webster Groves, that reap the benefits of having robust commercial districts that we all use. We examined how the location of those commercial districts in predominantly White, wealthy neighborhoods is not an accident.

- + We reflected on the fact that de jure (or by law) segregation in our education system left our region only recently and begrudgingly—and in its place left de facto segregation.
- + We saw a glimpse of the starkly different educational environments that exist miles apart from each other—districts full of teachers working hard, though some for a fraction of the pay. Districts full of students with dreams and endless potential, though some stifled.

We have dug out the earth under poor Black students to shore up the ground under wealthy White students. At the heart of why we allow these injustices to persist are deeply held prejudices about who deserves an education, who is teachable and to what extent, and where, as a result, we are justified in investing resources—or not. This is the self-sustaining interplay between implicit bias and structural racism.

Though we talked about root causes in educational environments, funding, property taxes, and segregation, that list is hardly complete. We could keep going. We could talk about income inequality, and food deserts, and mass incarceration—any of the many manifestations of racial bias amassed in systems in ways that show up in classrooms. So many of our social ills deposit into our education system, where we ask educators to slap a bandaid on them.

**IN THE MIDST OF A GLOBAL HEALTH CRISIS IT SEEMS FITTING TO REMIND OURSELVES THAT DIAGNOSIS DETERMINES TREATMENT.**



**OUR DIAGNOSIS: THE ACHIEVEMENT**

**GAPS THAT WE ARE CONSTANTLY**

**REMINDED OF ARE SYMPTOMS OF**

**STRUCTURAL INEQUITIES IN OUR SYSTEM**

**OF EDUCATION. THE OUTCOME GAPS**

**AREN'T THE MALADY THEMSELVES.**

**THE TREATMENT THAT FOLLOWS:**

**TRANSFORM THE SYSTEM.**

We know it's possible, because we've done it before. As we shared in Section 7, court-ordered desegregation of U.S. schools took place roughly from the 1960s to the 1980s. It was focused primarily in the South, where de jure segregation was strongest and, as a result, school segregation dropped dramatically, especially in the Southeast. Studies<sup>104</sup> have found<sup>105</sup> that each year that a Black child was educated in a desegregated school increased the probability of graduating, decreased the risk of incarceration, increased annual earnings, and improved health. Overall, five years in a desegregated school yielded a 25% increase in annual income and a self-assessed health status of someone seven years younger. By the fourth year after a desegregation order, average spending per-student had increased by \$1,000 or 36%. The outcomes (achievement, graduation) improved because the underlying system became more equitable.

Well resourced and supported court-ordered desegregation is one example of taking a systems-based approach to improving education equity. Implementing that solution in an education landscape as fragmented as ours would likely be less effective and more complex. As noted in the Next Steps throughout this report, there are many others. All of them boil down to the same thing: look upstream. Question the system we're all a part of; ask how the challenges we face are not the product of an external force, but of our internal structures. As systems scientist and noted thinker Donella Meadows urges us,<sup>3</sup> the most deeply entrenched of our problems "will yield only as we reclaim our intuition, stop casting blame, see the system as the source of its own problems, and find the courage and wisdom to restructure it."

**WE BUILT THE SYSTEM. WE CAN RE-BUILD IT BETTER. THAT'S HOW WE'LL CHANGE THE OUTCOMES.**





[ 10 ]

THE APPENDIX

## ENDNOTES

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# SELECT DATA

The tables below share the data we used to inform the discussion above, provided by district, overall, and by majority-White and majority-Black sub-groups. We examined several other indicators that we were not able to include in this tool. If you'd like to check those out, please visit our online repository at [www.stillunequal.org](http://www.stillunequal.org)

MAJORITY BLACK DISTRICT  
MAJORITY WHITE DISTRICT

School District	Enrollment	% Black	% White	% Hispanic	% FRL	% ELL	% Special Ed	Total Revenue Per Student	Local Revenue Per Student
Jennings	2,429	99%	0%	1%	100%	0%	17%	\$12,662	\$4,531
Riverview Gardens	5,310	98%	1%	1%	100%	1%	16%	\$11,672	\$3,614
Normandy Schools Collaborative	3,171	95%	2%	2%	97%	2%	13%	\$17,035	\$7,155
Ferguson-Florissant R-II	9,945	83%	9%	4%	100%	1%	17%	\$13,587	\$8,233
University City	2,588	80%	11%	4%	99%	3%	15%	\$18,719	\$14,663
St. Louis City Public Schools	19,778	79%	13%	5%	100%	10%	14%	\$19,925	\$15,249
Hazelwood	17,014	79%	16%	2%	64%	1%	16%	\$13,061	\$8,200
Ritenour	6,242	42%	27%	20%	100%	12%	17%	\$12,237	\$7,090
Pattonville R-III	5,889	33%	43%	12%	46%	8%	16%	\$18,106	\$15,638
Hancock Place	1,436	21%	61%	7%	100%	7%	15%	\$15,035	\$8,739
Brentwood	784	20%	61%	6%	25%	6%	13%	\$25,618	\$24,832
Valley Park	846	19%	66%	5%	42%	3%	14%	\$16,396	\$14,749
Maplewood-Richmond Heights	1,386	19%	63%	5%	36%	4%	14%	\$18,708	\$16,596
Parkway C-2	17,613	16%	60%	5%	20%	6%	15%	\$15,494	\$13,754
Clayton	2,652	15%	60%	5%	10%	4%	11%	\$21,691	\$20,247
Ladue	4,234	15%	57%	5%	10%	5%	12%	\$19,344	\$18,387
St. Charles R-VI	4,754	14%	71%	9%	40%	7%	17%	\$18,372	\$14,616
Webster Groves	4,499	13%	77%	4%	14%	1%	13%	\$15,285	\$12,900
Bayless	1,659	12%	66%	5%	63%	19%	18%	\$12,486	\$7,229
Kirkwood R-VII	5,788	10%	78%	4%	12%	1%	14%	\$16,006	\$14,916
Afton 101	2,570	8%	75%	6%	37%	4%	14%	\$14,088	\$11,779
Rockwood R-VI	20,897	8%	76%	4%	13%	3%	14%	\$13,828	\$11,672
Orchard Farm R-V	1,921	8%	79%	7%	29%	3%	14%	\$16,168	\$11,388
Mehlville R-IX	10,010	8%	80%	4%	26%	11%	16%	\$12,012	\$9,554
Francis Howell R-III	16,701	7%	80%	5%	18%	3%	12%	\$13,840	\$9,726
Wentzville R-IV	16,789	7%	82%	5%	14%	1%	14%	\$14,164	\$8,641
Fort Zumwalt R-II	17,711	6%	79%	5%	21%	3%	15%	\$13,781	\$9,165
Lindbergh Schools	6,931	2%	85%	4%	14%	5%	14%	\$12,346	\$11,025
<b>Average</b>	<b>7,555</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>\$15,774</b>	<b>\$11,939</b>
<b>Average for majority Black districts</b>	<b>8,605</b>	<b>87%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>\$15,237</b>	<b>\$8,806</b>
<b>Average for majority White districts</b>	<b>7,325</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>\$16,035</b>	<b>\$13,153</b>
<b>Difference: MW - MB districts</b>	<b>(1,280)</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>\$798</b>	<b>\$4,347</b>
<b>Median for majority Black districts</b>	<b>5,310</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>\$13,587</b>	<b>\$8,200</b>
<b>Median for majority White districts</b>	<b>4,499</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>\$15,285</b>	<b>\$11,779</b>
<b>Difference in MW and MB median</b>	<b>(811)</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>\$1,698</b>	<b>\$3,579</b>

School District	State Revenue Per Student	Federal Revenue Per Student	Other Revenue Per Student	Total Expenditure Per Student	General Expenditure Per Student	Special Expenditure Per Student	Debt Service Expenditure Per Student	Capital Improvement Expenditure Per Student	Tax Rate Ceiling Operating Funds	Total Adjusted Tax Rate Operating	Ceiling - Total Adjusted
Jennings	\$6,370	\$1,762	\$ -	\$12,727	\$5,138	\$6,924	\$396	\$269	5.3889	5.3889	0.0000
Riverview Gardens	\$6,231	\$1,814	\$13	\$12,068	\$5,121	\$5,821	\$752	\$373	4.2964	4.2964	0.0000
Normandy Schools Collaborative	\$7,650	\$2,231	\$ -	\$21,917	\$7,054	\$7,421	\$1,383	\$6,059	4.3849	4.3049	0.0800
Ferguson-Florissant R-II	\$4,147	\$1,208	\$ -	\$13,441	\$4,951	\$7,827	\$285	\$377	5.2807	5.1980	0.0827
University City	\$2,890	\$1,165	\$ -	\$19,077	\$7,339	\$9,009	\$2,136	\$593	4.2469	4.2469	0.0000
St. Louis City Public Schools	\$2,044	\$2,631	\$ -	\$19,275	\$7,102	\$7,569	\$1,577	\$135	4.5160	4.5160	0.0000
Hazelwood	\$3,971	\$836	\$53	\$12,736	\$4,211	\$7,056	\$1,288	\$182	5.3490	5.3490	0.0000
Ritenour	\$4,277	\$870	\$ -	\$11,428	\$3,732	\$6,845	\$729	\$121	4.9502	4.9502	0.0000
Pattonville R-III	\$1,701	\$767	\$ -	\$12,299	\$5,991	\$9,471	\$1,407	\$4,430	5.2973	4.9739	0.3234
Hancock Place	\$5,260	\$1,019	\$18	\$14,238	\$4,713	\$7,847	\$1,054	\$624	4.1912	4.1912	0.0000
Brentwood	\$547	\$239	\$ -	\$24,918	\$8,512	\$11,953	\$1,525	\$2,928	4.4701	4.3740	0.0961
Valley Park	\$988	\$657	\$3	\$23,578	\$4,748	\$9,814	\$1,925	\$7,090	4.4408	4.4408	0.0000
Maplewood-Richmond Heights	\$1,289	\$660	\$162	\$17,281	\$5,597	\$8,221	\$2,895	\$540	4.8411	4.8411	0.0000
Parkway C-2	\$675	\$273	\$792	\$16,207	\$4,819	\$8,600	\$1,372	\$1,417	4.0492	3.8972	0.1520
Clayton	\$657	\$617	\$170	\$30,329	\$7,047	\$12,133	\$10,589	\$560	3.3339	3.2435	0.0904
Ladue	\$714	\$243	\$ -	\$23,299	\$5,174	\$9,379	\$3,144	\$5,602	3.0715	3.0715	0.0000
St. Charles R-VI	\$2,687	\$1,069	\$ -	\$21,689	\$6,419	\$9,870	\$1,120	\$4,281	4.5912	4.5912	0.0000
Webster Groves	\$2,016	\$317	\$53	\$14,237	\$4,452	\$8,280	\$1,162	\$343	4.9245	4.9245	0.0000
Bayless	\$4,609	\$649	\$ -	\$12,480	\$4,214	\$6,852	\$411	\$1,002	4.6571	4.6571	0.0000
Kirkwood R-VII	\$924	\$165	\$ -	\$14,875	\$4,689	\$7,839	\$1,307	\$1,041	4.6074	4.4632	0.1442
Afton 101	\$1,809	\$448	\$52	\$13,738	\$4,559	\$6,921	\$699	\$1,559	3.8739	3.8739	0.0000
Rockwood R-VI	\$1,941	\$194	\$21	\$15,516	\$4,820	\$7,307	\$1,536	\$1,853	5.8194	5.4694	0.3500
Orchard Farm R-V	\$4,160	\$503	\$118	\$23,462	\$5,963	\$8,435	\$1,267	\$7,796	4.0684	3.8395	0.2289
Mehlville R-IX	\$2,133	\$325	\$ -	\$12,060	\$3,951	\$6,516	\$ -	\$1,593	4.1480	4.1480	0.0000
Francis Howell R-III	\$3,305	\$497	\$313	\$14,978	\$4,944	\$7,509	\$1,092	\$1,433	4.1862	4.1862	0.0000
Wentzville R-IV	\$5,158	\$365	\$ -	\$17,776	\$4,543	\$6,703	\$4,494	\$2,036	4.0532	4.0532	0.0000
Fort Zumwalt R-II	\$4,091	\$512	\$13	\$14,443	\$4,172	\$8,641	\$960	\$671	4.3617	4.3617	0.0000
Lindbergh Schools	\$1,134	\$148	\$40	\$12,654	\$4,341	\$6,116	\$1,335	\$862	3.5025	3.5025	0.0000
<b>Average</b>	<b>\$2,978</b>	<b>\$792</b>	<b>\$65</b>	<b>\$17,204</b>	<b>\$5,297</b>	<b>\$8,103</b>	<b>\$1,709</b>	<b>\$1,992</b>	<b>4.4608</b>	<b>4.4055</b>	<b>0.0553</b>
<b>Average for majority Black districts</b>	<b>\$4,758</b>	<b>\$1,664</b>	<b>\$9</b>	<b>\$15,892</b>	<b>\$5,845</b>	<b>\$7,375</b>	<b>\$1,117</b>	<b>\$1,141</b>	<b>4.7804</b>	<b>4.7572</b>	<b>0.0232</b>
<b>Average for majority White districts</b>	<b>\$2,321</b>	<b>\$468</b>	<b>\$92</b>	<b>\$17,777</b>	<b>\$5,141</b>	<b>\$8,365</b>	<b>\$1,994</b>	<b>\$2,275</b>	<b>4.2732</b>	<b>4.2174</b>	<b>0.0559</b>
<b>Difference: MW - MB districts</b>	<b>-\$2,437</b>	<b>-\$1,195</b>	<b>\$83</b>	<b>\$1,885</b>	<b>-\$704</b>	<b>\$990</b>	<b>\$877</b>	<b>\$1,134</b>	<b>-0.5072</b>	<b>-0.5398</b>	<b>0.0326</b>
<b>Median for majority Black districts</b>	<b>\$4,147</b>	<b>\$1,762</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$13,441</b>	<b>\$5,138</b>	<b>\$7,421</b>	<b>\$1,288</b>	<b>\$373</b>	<b>4.5160</b>	<b>4.5160</b>	<b>0.0000</b>
<b>Median for majority White districts</b>	<b>\$1,941</b>	<b>\$448</b>	<b>\$18</b>	<b>\$15,516</b>	<b>\$4,748</b>	<b>\$8,221</b>	<b>\$1,307</b>	<b>\$1,433</b>	<b>4.1912</b>	<b>4.1912</b>	<b>0.0000</b>
<b>Difference in MW and MB median</b>	<b>-\$2,206</b>	<b>-\$1,314</b>	<b>\$18</b>	<b>\$2,076</b>	<b>-\$390</b>	<b>\$800</b>	<b>\$19</b>	<b>\$1,060</b>	<b>-0.3248</b>	<b>-0.3248</b>	<b>0.0000</b>

School District	At Ceiling?	Assessed Valuation	Assessed Valuation Per Student	Median Home Value	Median Household Income	Racially Concentrated	Accreditation Status	Ratio Students: Teachers	Ratio Students: Admin	Admin per 1,000 student	Years Experience Professional Staff
Jennings	Yes	\$92,564,540	\$38,108.09	\$67,900	\$32,176	Yes	A	18	187	5.3	15.7
Riverview Gardens	Yes	\$190,423,640	\$35,861.33	\$66,700	\$34,039	Yes	P	17	163	6.1	10.5
Normandy Schools Collaborative	No	\$270,121,380	\$85,184.92	\$75,100	\$33,118	Yes	P	15	171	5.8	11
Ferguson-Florissant R-II	No	\$972,132,160	\$97,750.85	\$91,400	\$47,131	Yes	A	16	139	7.2	13.7
University City	Yes	\$660,791,690	\$255,329.09	\$273,700	\$59,770	Yes	A	15	127	7.9	11.5
St. Louis City Public Schools	Yes	\$4,201,814,836	\$212,448.92	\$147,100	\$41,107	Yes	A	16	177	5.6	8.7
Hazelwood	Yes	\$1,669,337,000	\$98,115.49	\$118,200	\$57,025	Yes	A	16	231	4.3	13.5
Ritenour	Yes	\$547,885,130	\$87,773.97	\$85,900	\$46,720	No	A	17	178	5.6	13.4
Pattonville R-III	No	\$1,372,985,520	\$233,144.09	\$153,100	\$56,520	No	A	16	200	5	14.2
Hancock Place	Yes	\$157,044,500	\$109,362.47	\$93,200	\$43,671	No	A	17	180	5.6	14.6
Brentwood	No	\$311,706,040	\$397,584.23	\$225,200	\$79,729	No	A	11	114	8.8	14
Valley Park	Yes	\$174,992,060	\$206,846.41	\$159,800	\$55,149	No	A	14	141	7.1	13.6
Maplewood-Richmond Heights	Yes	\$297,752,990	\$214,829.00	\$197,400	\$53,583	No	A	13	126	7.9	12.3
Parkway C-2	No	\$4,684,978,070	\$265,995.46	\$287,700	\$91,850	No	A	16	204	4.9	14.3
Clayton	No	\$1,136,240,380	\$428,446.60	\$614,500	\$95,369	No	A	12	161	6.2	17.5
Ladue	Yes	\$1,654,225,570	\$390,700.42	\$579,500	\$121,447	No	A	14	202	5	14.9
St. Charles R-VI	Yes	\$1,018,756,648	\$214,294.63	\$173,700	\$57,669	No	A	14	183	5.5	12.5
Webster Groves	Yes	\$809,473,870	\$179,923.07	\$261,100	\$92,433	Yes	A	15	162	6.2	14.4
Bayless	Yes	\$152,398,580	\$91,861.71	\$130,100	\$51,942	No	A	18	141	7.1	10.4
Kirkwood R-VII	No	\$1,424,650,980	\$246,138.73	\$347,000	\$102,089	Yes	A	16	232	4.3	15
Aftton 101	Yes	\$3,741,365,540	\$179,038.40	\$143,000	\$108,133	Yes	A	17	225	4.4	14.1
Rockwood R-VI	No	\$396,841,690	\$154,413.11	\$324,200	\$54,604	Yes	A	18	206	4.9	13.9
Orchard Farm R-V	No	\$316,734,792	\$164,880.16	\$212,000	\$76,028	Yes	A	18	142	7	10.8
Mehlville R-IX	Yes	\$1,820,805,200	\$181,898.62	\$199,100	\$67,458	Yes	A	16	257	3.9	13.6
Francis Howell R-III	Yes	\$2,597,576,668	\$155,534.20	\$215,700	\$87,744	Yes	A	18	219	4.6	15.1
Wentzville R-IV	Yes	\$2,017,502,720	\$120,168.13	\$231,400	\$86,903	Yes	A	19	257	3.9	12.1
Fort Zumwalt R-II	Yes	\$2,454,610,160	\$138,592.41	\$208,000	\$84,368	Yes	A	17	238	4.2	12.9
Lindbergh Schools	Yes	\$1,372,738,740	\$198,057.82	\$221,800	\$73,266	Yes	A	18	277	3.6	12.7
Average	NA	\$1,304,230,396	\$185,082	\$210,839	\$67,537	NA	NA	15.96	187.14	5.64	13.2
Average for majority Black districts	NA	\$1,151,026,464	\$117,543	\$120,014	\$43,481	NA	NA	16.14	170.71	6.05	12.1
Average for majority White districts	NA	\$1,396,862,905	\$212,556	\$253,916	\$78,076	NA	NA	15.84	193	5.52	13.6
Difference: MW - MB districts	NA	\$245,836,441	\$95,013	\$133,902	\$34,595	NA	NA	-0.30	22.29	-0.53	1.53
Median for majority Black districts	NA	\$660,791,690	\$97,751	\$91,400	\$41,107	Yes	A	16.00	171	5.85	11.5
Median for majority White districts	NA	\$1,136,240,380	\$181,899	\$215,700	\$79,729	Yes	A	16.00	202	4.95	13.9
Difference in MW and MB median	NA	\$475,448,690	\$84,148	\$124,300	\$38,622	NA	NA	0.00	31	-0.9	2.4

School District	% Professional Staff w/ Advanced Degrees	Avg. Administrator Salary	Avg. Teacher Salary	FTE Sworn LEOs per 1,000 student	FTE Security Guards per 1,000 student	FTE Nurses per 1,000 student	Counselors/ social workers/ psychs per 1000	# AP Courses Offered per 1,000 students	# Alg Classes per 1000 Students	# Calc Classes per 1000 Students	% Teachers in First Year
Jennings	68%	\$98,372	\$65,212	0.8	0.8	2.1	4.5	0.0	0.8	0.0	7.8
Riverview Gardens	42%	\$90,863	\$50,489	2.5	2.8	2.6	5	0.0	1.9	0.2	6.5
Normandy Schools Collaborative	56%	\$106,460	\$56,992	1.3	2.8	1.9	4.7	0.3	1.9	0.0	40.1
Ferguson-Florissant R-II	67%	\$115,687	\$60,875	0.0	2.0	2.2	3.4	1.2	1.7	0.0	11.8
University City	56%	\$120,846	\$60,666	1.5	0.0	2.7	5.4	4.6	5	1.2	11.6
St. Louis City Public Schools	51%	\$94,823	\$48,723	0.0	5.4	2.5	5.3	3.7	3.3	0.4	19
Hazelwood	69%	\$109,651	\$59,284	0.6	1.1	2.1	4.9	1.9	4.7	1.5	5.1
Ritenour	73%	\$106,555	\$62,624	1.8	0.0	1.6	3.7	1.4	3.5	0.0	4.4
Pattonville R-III	78%	\$131,834	\$69,691	1.2	0.0	2	3.8	3.2	2.4	0.7	5.2
Hancock Place	79%	\$132,250	\$65,054	2.1	0.0	1.4	3.5	4.2	2.1	0.7	4.1
Brentwood	80%	\$133,530	\$65,595	2.3	0.0	3.8	7	1.3	5.1	1.3	7.5
Valley Park	85%	\$144,651	\$65,131	1.2	0.0	1.2	7.7	7.1	4.7	1.2	2.7
Maplewood-Richmond Heights	83%	\$117,193	\$58,910	0.7	0.0	2.2	5.1	3.6	5.1	0.7	2.0
Parkway C-2	82%	\$118,186	\$69,856	0.8	0.0	1.7	4.2	3.9	3.3	0.7	0.3
Clayton	95%	\$130,291	\$78,723	0.8	0.0	2	4.5	9.4	3.8	2.3	0.0
Ladue	85%	\$129,798	\$71,469	0.2	0.0	1.9	4	5.4	3.8	1.9	2.8
St. Charles R-VI	74%	\$120,388	\$55,822	0.6	0.0	2.1	4.4	4.6	2.9	0.8	7.2
Webster Groves	81%	\$111,182	\$69,669	0.4	0.0	2.2	5.1	3.1	2.7	1.1	1.5
Bayless	68%	\$119,161	\$55,580	1.2	0.0	0.6	3.6	1.2	1.8	0.6	6.7
Kirkwood R-VII	84%	\$126,225	\$70,303	0.7	0.0	1.7	2.9	3.5	3.6	1.9	0.3
Aftton 101	81%	\$116,890	\$64,075	0.6	0.0	1.8	3.3	2.2	3.3	0.7	0.2
Rockwood R-VI	75%	\$113,758	\$62,622	0.8	0.0	1.6	4.1	3.9	3.1	1.2	1.4
Orchard Farm R-V	73%	\$117,988	\$59,874	0.5	0.0	1.6	4.3	2.1	3.1	0.5	5.9
Mehlville R-IX	75%	\$107,161	\$58,729	0.7	0.2	2.4	3.3	1.6	4.6	0.4	3.1
Francis Howell R-III	83%	\$115,481	\$62,766	0.5	0.1	2	4.5	4	2.6	0.7	1.3
Wentzville R-IV	80%	\$107,238	\$59,705	0.3	0.2	1.4	3.1	1	2.8	0.5	3.7
Fort Zumwalt R-II	74%	\$109,734	\$57,309	0.5	0.5	1.4	4.2	2.9	4.6	1.7	3.0
Lindbergh Schools	82%	\$111,787	\$58,817	0.0	0.0	1.2	2.5	4.3	2.6	0.9	5.4
Average	74%	\$116,357	\$62,306	0.9	0.6	1.9	4.4	3.1	3.2	0.8	6.1
Average for majority Black districts	58%	\$105,243	\$57,463	1.0	2.1	2.3	4.8	1.7	2.8	0.5	14.6
Average for majority White districts	80%	\$120,152	\$63,685	0.8	0.1	1.8	4.3	3.6	3.5	1.0	3.1
Difference: MW - MB districts	NA	\$14,909	\$6,222	-0.18	-2.09	-0.51	-0.46	1.96	0.69	0.57	-11.45
Median for majority Black districts	56%	\$106,460	\$59,284	0.8	2.0	2.2	4.9	1.2	1.9	0.2	11.6
Median for majority White districts	81%	\$117,988	\$62,766	0.7	0.0	1.7	4.2	3.6	3.3	0.8	2.8
Difference in MW and MB median	NA	\$11,528	\$3,482	-0.13	-2.03	-0.48	-0.62	2.4	1.41	0.65	-8.8



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