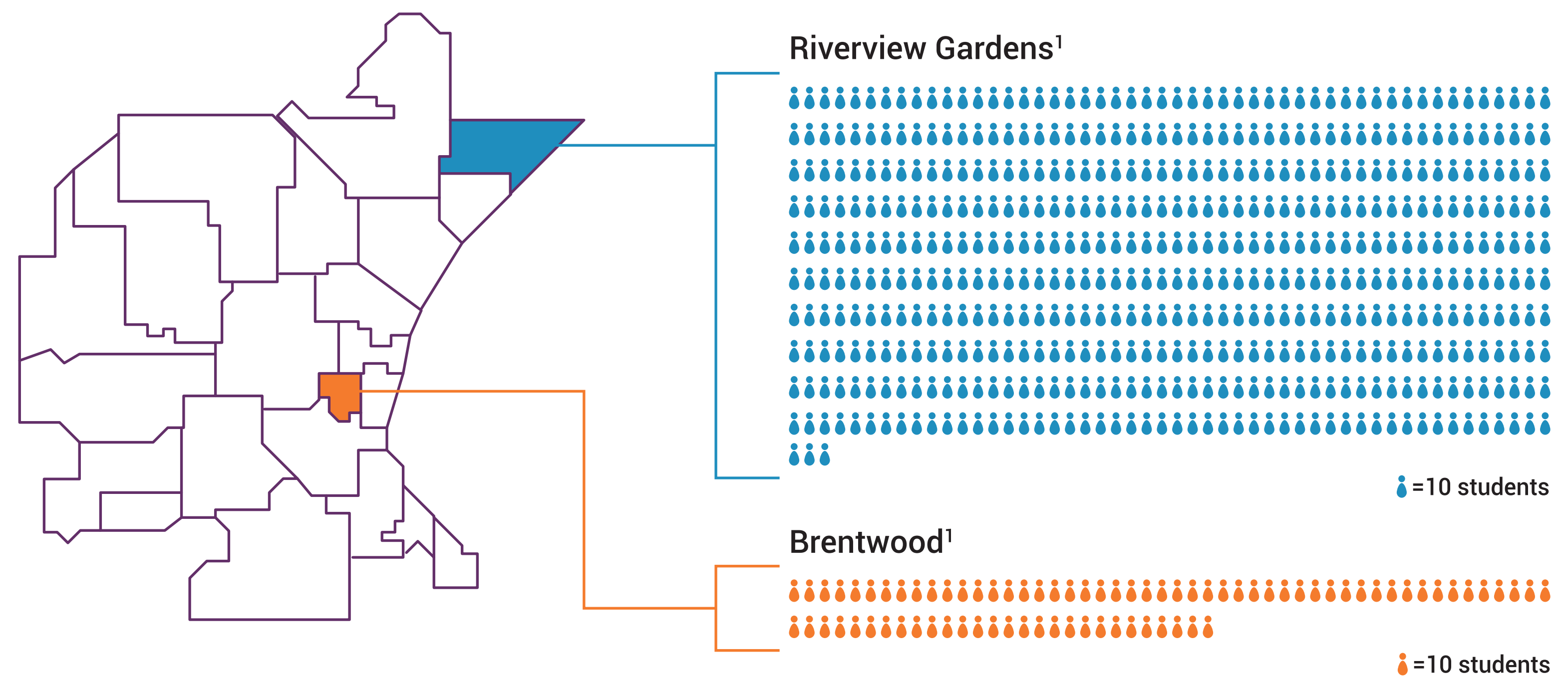


STILL SEPARATE ■ STILL UNEQUAL: PROPERTY TAXES & EDUCATION

Current models of funding education through property taxes are a main reason why education funding is so inequitable. What does that look like? Let's take a look at two school districts in the St. Louis region.

The Brentwood School District is tiny. It covers only 2.1 square miles. Riverview Gardens, in North County, covers 9.3 square miles.

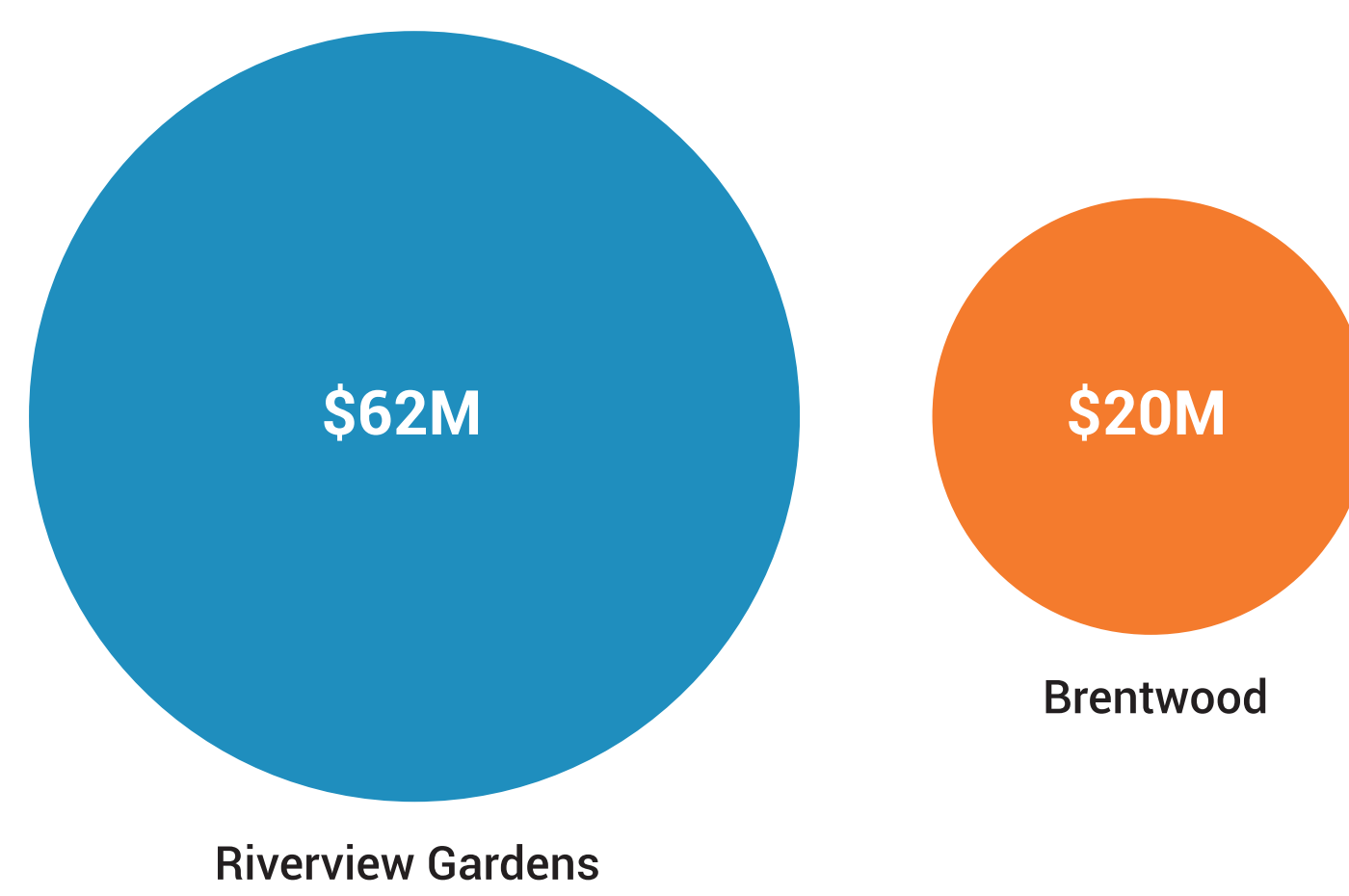
Brentwood also enrolls fewer students — just **784** students in 2018, compared to **5,310** in Riverview Gardens.



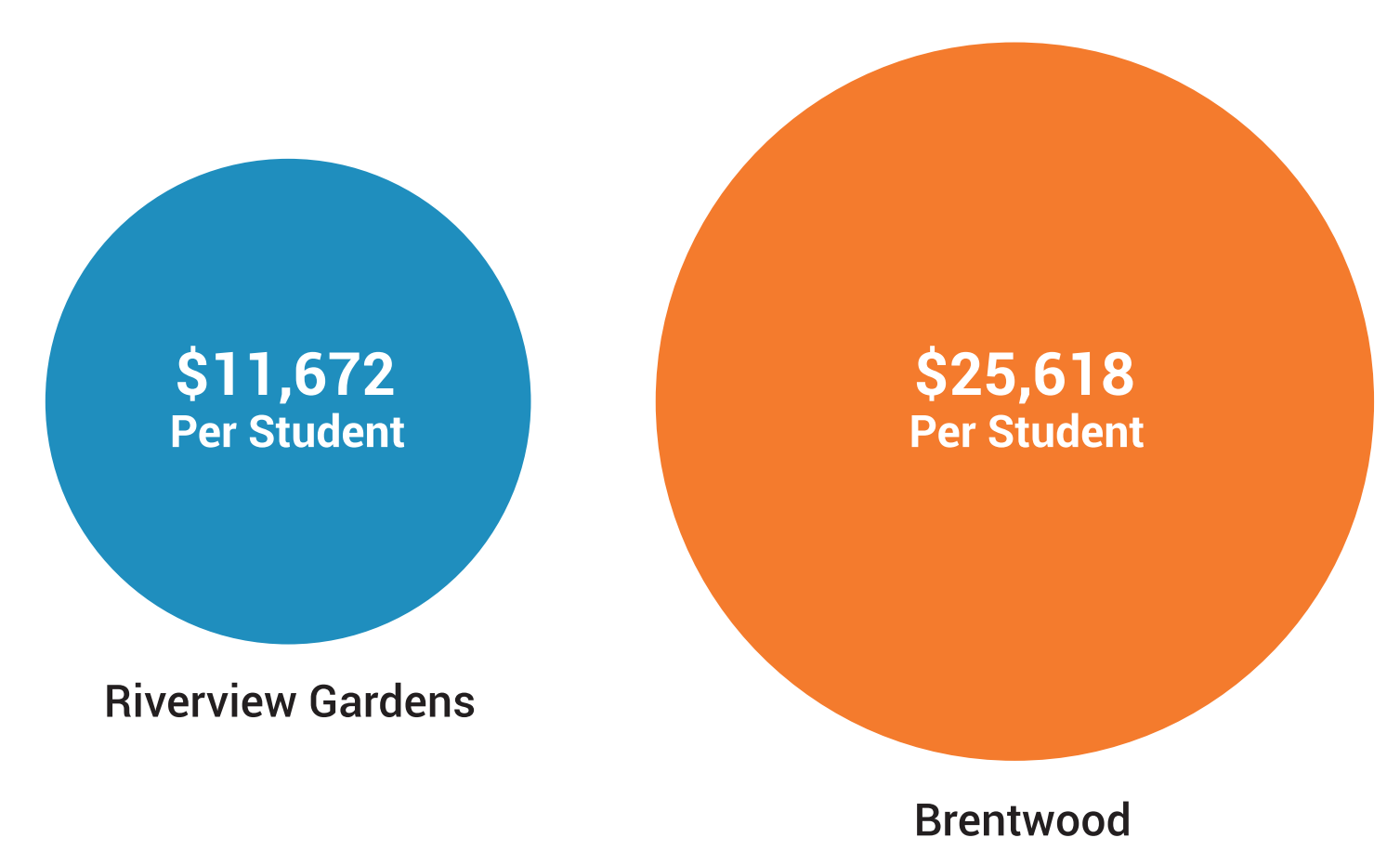
With almost seven times as many enrolled students as Brentwood, you'd expect Riverview Gardens to have a much bigger district budget. And it does: Riverview Gardens' 2018-2019 revenue was almost \$62 million, compared to just over \$20 million for Brentwood.

But when you look at that revenue per student, things look very different — Brentwood has **more than twice** the revenue per student that Riverview Gardens does.

Total District Revenue, 2018-2019²



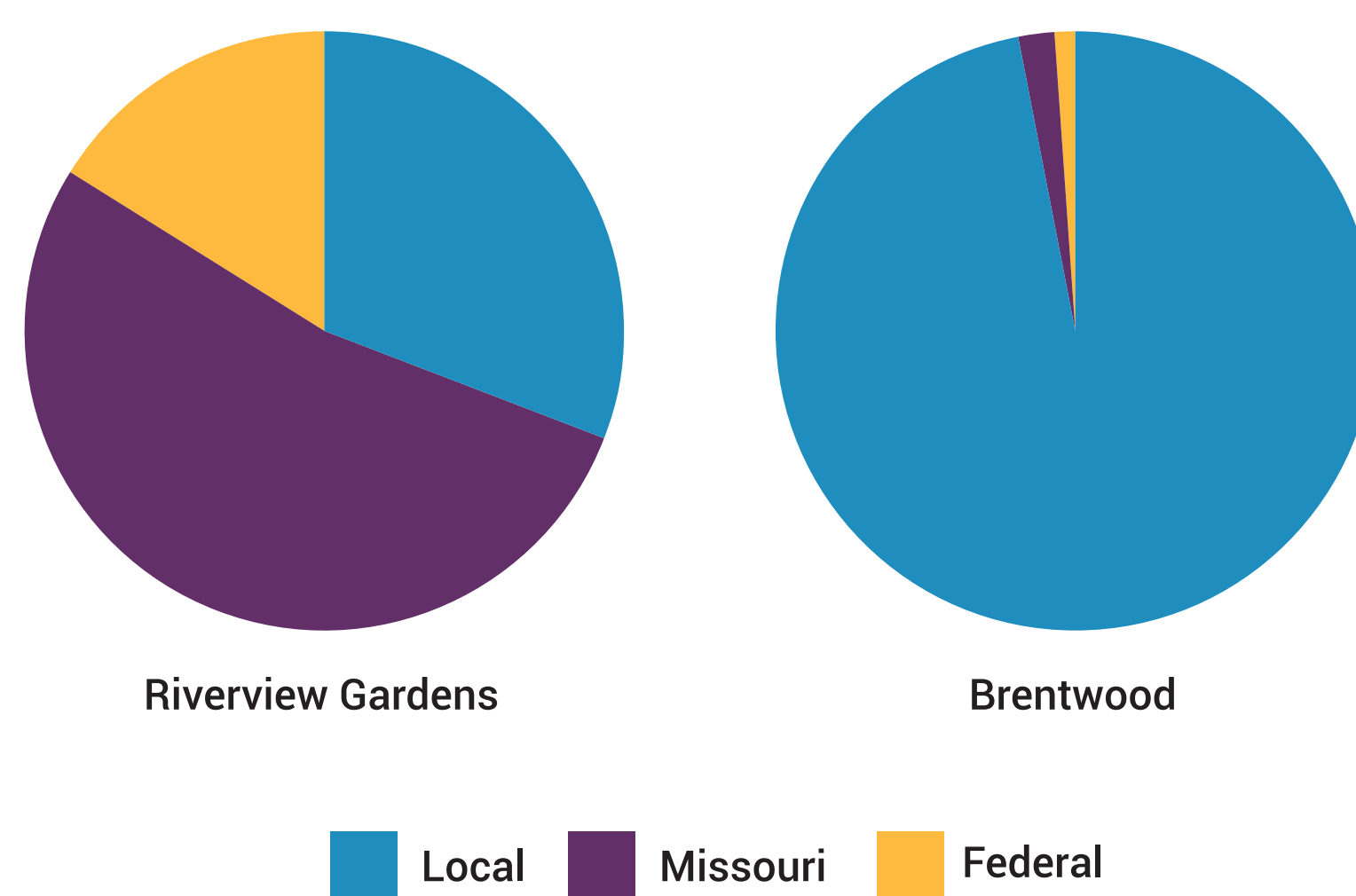
District Revenue per Student, 2018-2019²



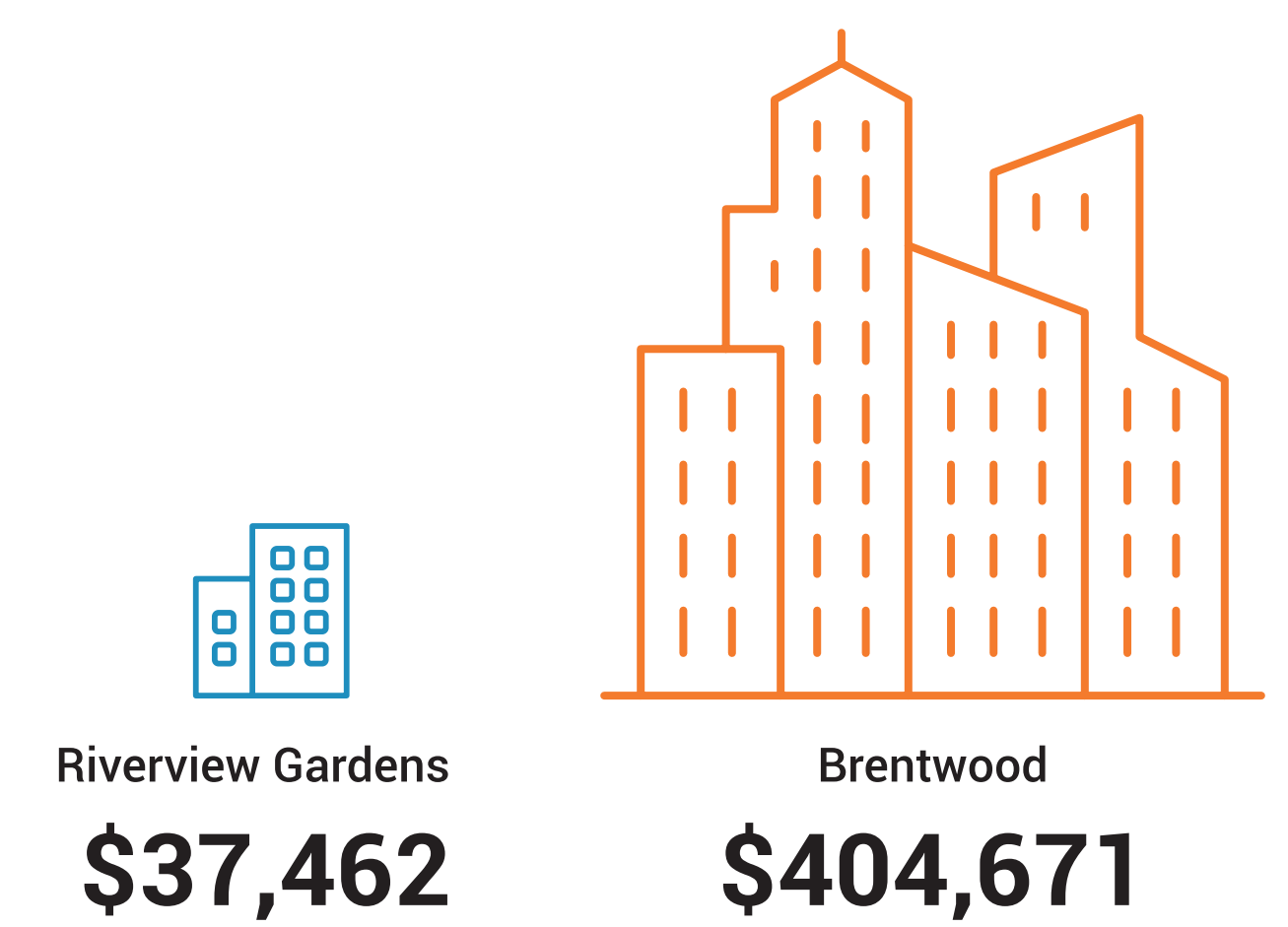
How does that happen? Well, it helps to understand where that revenue is coming from.

Why is local revenue **97%** of Brentwood's funding pie, but only **31%** of Riverview Gardens'? Because Brentwood has a lot more property wealth to collect property taxes on.

District Revenue per Student by Source, 2018-2019²



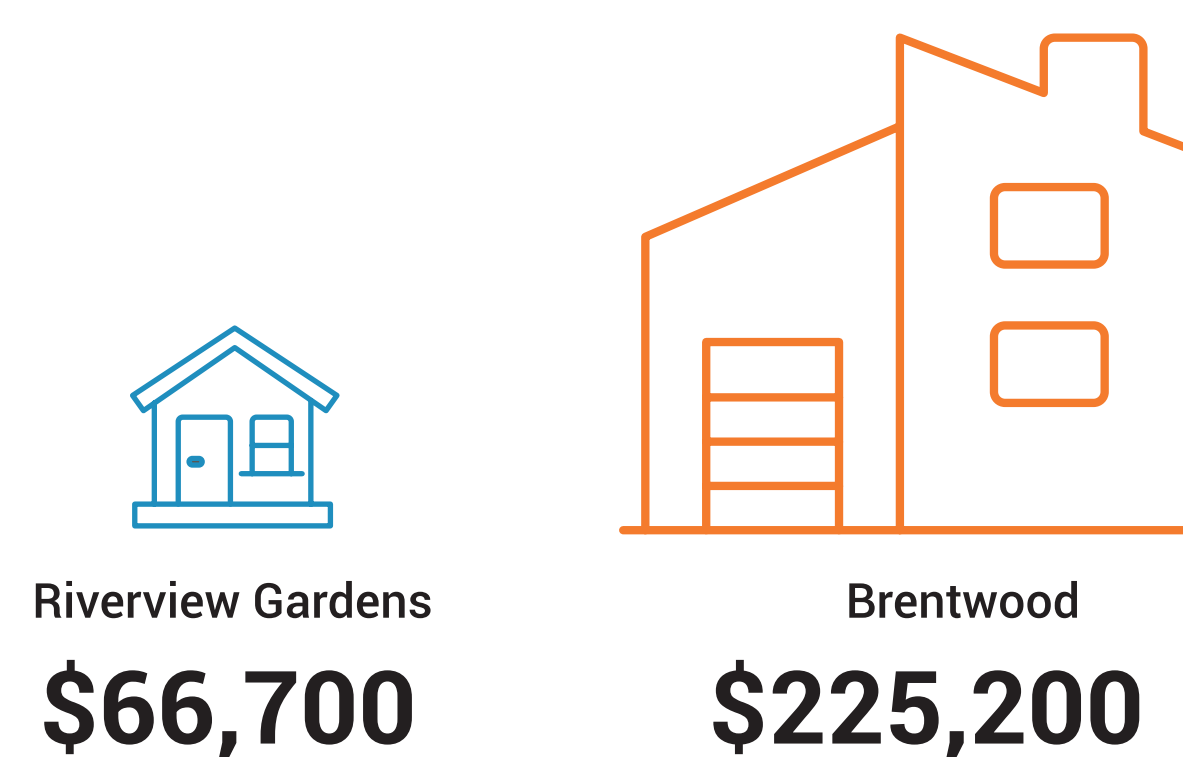
Total Property Valuations per Student, 2018-2019¹



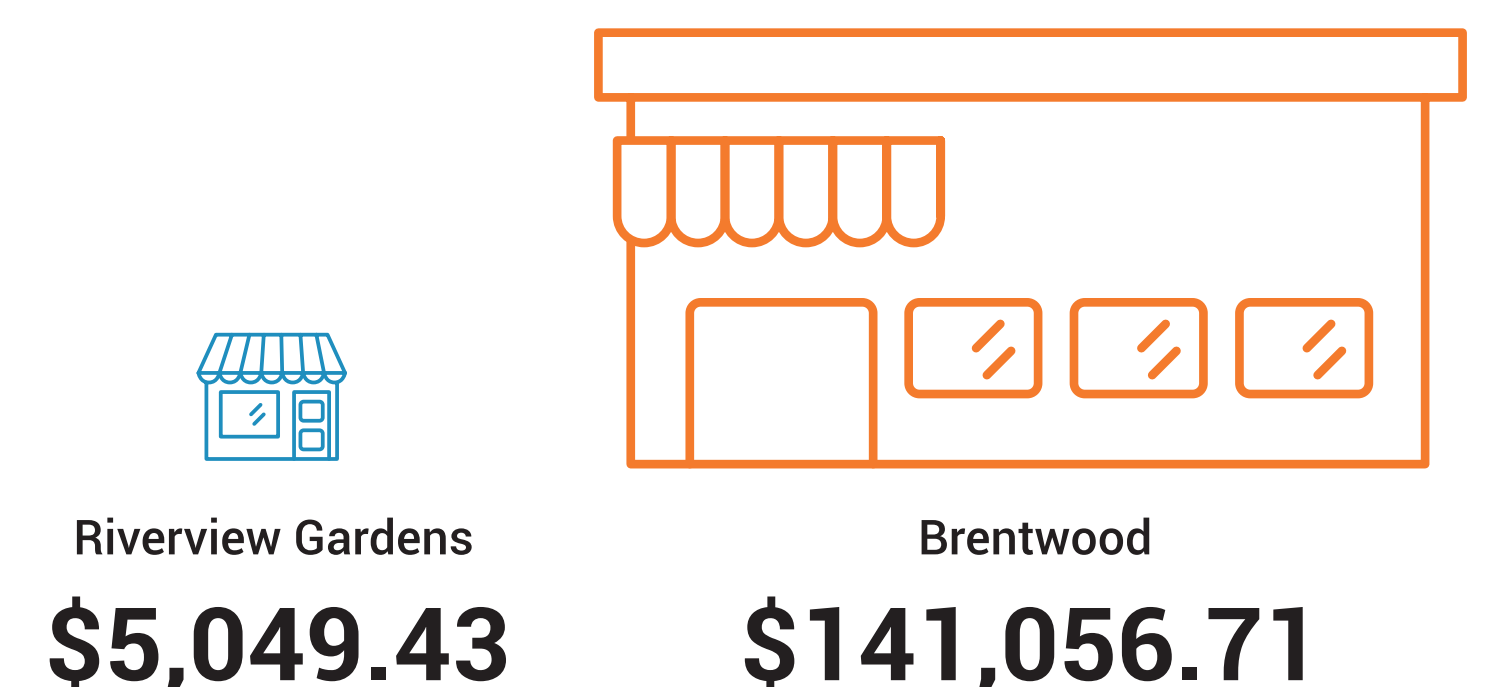
One driver of that disparity is the value of residential property.

Another is the value of commercial property. Thanks to businesses like Trader Joe's, Target, Whole Foods, Dierbergs, Best Buy, and many others nestled within its 2.1 square miles, Brentwood's 2018 assessed commercial property valuation per student was nearly **28 times** that of Riverview Gardens.

Median Home Value, 2018-2019³



Assessed Commercial Property Value per Student, 2018-2019⁴



Though the state provides more funding to Riverview Gardens to make up for its lower local funding capacity, it's not close to being enough to fund Riverview Gardens to the level of Brentwood — even though students in Riverview Gardens on average need more educational support, not less — 100% of Riverview Gardens' students receive free or reduced-price lunch, compared to just 25% in Brentwood.

Brentwood and Riverview Gardens aren't anomalies.

A similar pattern of concentrating commercial and residential property wealth in majority White districts plays out in Clayton (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, and that increase home values. And a long history of disinvestment and neglect have stifled property wealth in countless majority-Black districts.

That's why directly funding education through property taxes without any meaningful redistribution is inequitable — and another reason why education in St. Louis is still separate, and still unequal.

Learn more at stillunequal.org.