

WHAT'S NEXT SLPS?

SURVEY + TEACH-IN RESULTS

St. Louis Public Schools (SLPS) faces a crisis: plummeting enrollment has caused the district to lose roughly 90,000 students since the 1970s. SLPS has responded to this crisis by closing and consolidating schools.

As Power Builders, we are members of the WEPOWER community. We have joined this work as a coalition of North STL parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, educators, and concerned citizens who believe school closures are an opportunity to reimagine what's next for SLPS.

The 'What's Next SLPS?' campaign calls on SLPS to approach school closures differently. What would school closures look like if SLPS partnered with the communities most impacted by them?

Over the past 8 months, we've read research, dissected local and national data, called local representatives, knocked on doors, and attended school board meetings. Through it all, we found the best approaches to school closures is to consider all options and put students, communities, and equity at the center.

The data represented here is the result of disseminating those solutions to our broader SLPS community. On the next several pages, we will highlight the responses to school closure challenges and procedures presented to a wide network of SLPS and community stakeholders.

DATA COLLECTED FROM:

400+

COMMUNITY MEMBERS

88

SCHOOLS
REPRESENTED

16

ZIP
CODES



Gabrielle,
Power Builder

EST. 2018

WEPOWER

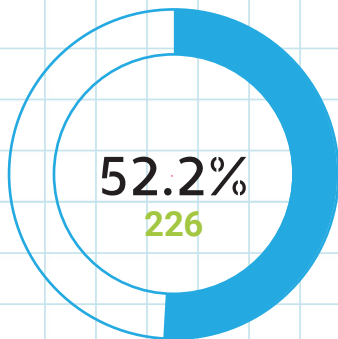
WWW.WEPOWERSTL.ORG/WHATS-NEXT-SLPS



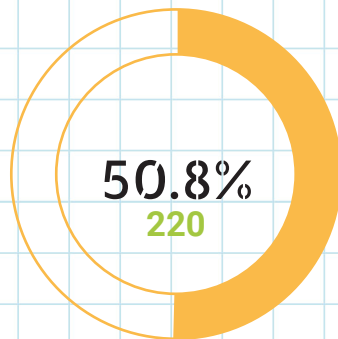
WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE ARE THE GREATEST BARRIERS TO OUR YOUTH ACCESSING A GREAT K12 PUBLIC EDUCATION IN THE CITY OF ST. LOUIS?

433 RESPONDENTS

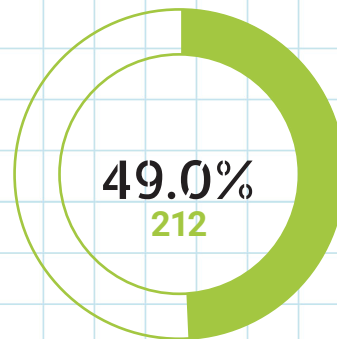
TOP 4 RESPONSES



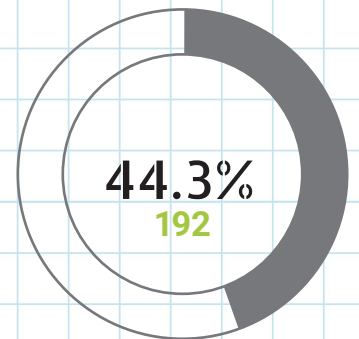
LIMITED FUNDS AND RESOURCES



SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS



TEACHER SALARY

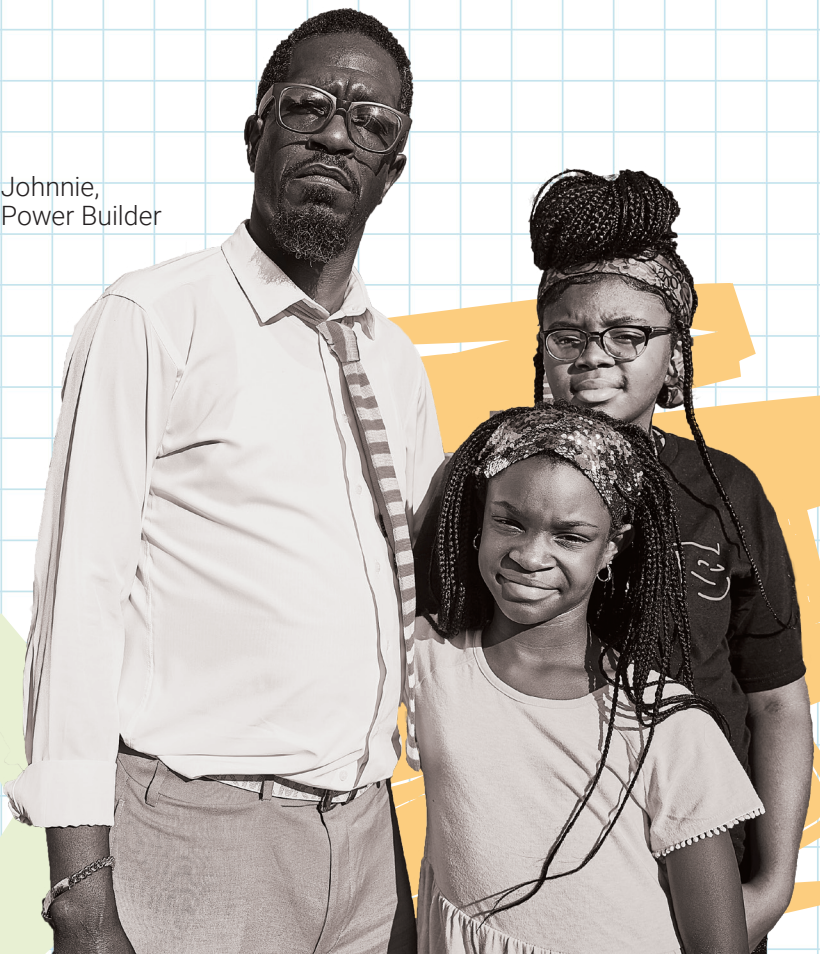


HOW FUNDS AND RESOURCES ARE ALLOCATED

ALL OTHER OPTIONS

- Academic Rigor
- Engagement Of Community
- School Culture And Environment
- School To Prison Pipeline - Discipline Practices
- Limited Extra Curricular Programs
- Literacy
- Teacher Quality
- Post-Secondary (After High School) Opportunities
- District Leadership (Administration And Elected Board)
- Location And Transportation

Johnnie,
Power Builder





DREAM: IMAGINE A TRANSFORMED PUBLIC K12 EDUCATION SYSTEM. WHAT WOULD THAT LOOK, SOUND, AND FEEL LIKE? WHAT WOULD BE DIFFERENT?

414 RESPONDENTS

COLLECTIVE VISION

WE DREAM OF A K12 PUBLIC EDUCATION SYSTEM THAT IS JOYFUL, INNOVATIVE, AND DRIVEN BY AN ENGAGED, CONNECTED, AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY OF STUDENTS, PARENTS, HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATORS AND ADMINISTRATORS, VISIONARY ELECTED LEADERS, AND NEIGHBORHOODS. WE DREAM OF A FUTURE WHERE THIS COMMUNITY OF PUBLIC EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS AND ADVOCATES HAVE A COLLECTIVE COMMITMENT TO CREATING AN EDUCATION SYSTEM THAT IS EQUITABLE, RESTORATIVE, AND LEVERAGES TECHNOLOGY TO SUPPORT STUDENTS WITH REALIZING THEIR FULLEST POTENTIAL AND CONTRIBUTING TO OUR CITY BECOMING A WORLD-CLASS HOME TO DIVERSE TALENT PREPARED FOR THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF TOMORROW. THE K12 PUBLIC EDUCATION SYSTEM WILL BE FULL OF HIGH-QUALITY OPTIONS FOR FAMILIES. HIGH-QUALITY OPTIONS WILL HAVE MODERNIZED BUILDINGS AND SPACES THAT FOSTER LEARNING AND SMALL CLASS SIZES THAT ALLOW FOR DIFFERENTIATED AND COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC AND SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SUPPORT. WE DREAM OF A K12 PUBLIC EDUCATION SYSTEM THAT HAS THE RESOURCES NECESSARY FOR EDUCATORS TO BE PAID COMPETITIVE WAGES AND FOR FUNDING TO BE EQUITABLY ALLOCATED TO MEET THE VARIED NEEDS OF STUDENTS AND SCHOOLS. WE DREAM OF A K12 PUBLIC EDUCATION SYSTEM THAT SERVES AS THE SPRINGBOARD FOR OUR CITY'S COLLECTIVE PROGRESS AND PROSPERITY IN THE 21ST CENTURY.

WHEN I DREAM BIG, I THINK OF...

"The district would be fully funded. Schools would have technology and be located in adequate facilities. Teachers would be competitively paid and certified to teach their subjects. Restorative justice practices would replace suspensions. High schools would have pathways for trades, mechanics, and skills necessary to fill jobs in high demand. Children of all races, abilities and socioeconomic strata would feel welcome and supported." - **SLPS Parent**

"It would look very different than what SLPS looks like today. Teachers would want to be employed there, they would have competitive salaries and good opportunity for evidence-based professional development. The environments would be positive and welcoming. Best practices would be used and taught. Communication amongst administrators/ decision-makers and teachers as well as parents would be effective." - **SLPS Principal**

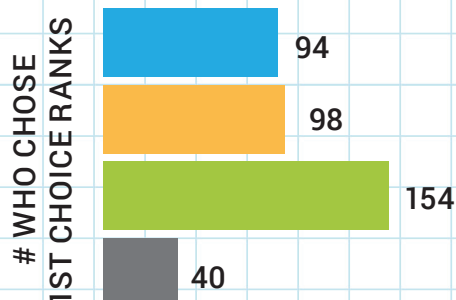


RANK YOUR TOP OPTIONS FOR HOW SLPS SHOULD APPROACH SCHOOL CLOSINGS AND CONSOLIDATION.

388 RESPONDENTS

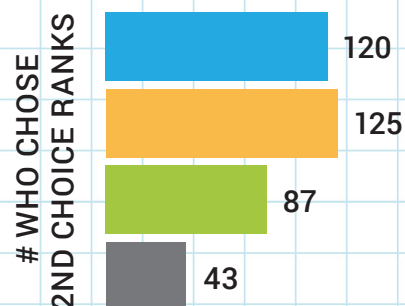
OVERALL 1ST CHOICE RANK

COMMUNITY USE: housing both schools and other public services in school buildings to ensure that space is fully utilized, there is sufficient revenue to maintain the building, and that students and community members can benefit from expanded local services.



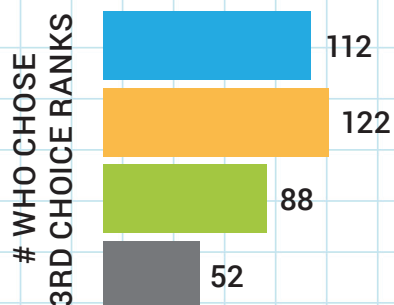
OVERALL 2ND CHOICE RANK

RELOCATION: moving schools out of aging buildings and into other facilities in better repair or that cost less to renovate.



OVERALL 3RD CHOICE RANK

CO-LOCATION: housing multiple school communities in one building to save on facilities costs and share resources. Sometimes done strategically to pair high and low performing schools.

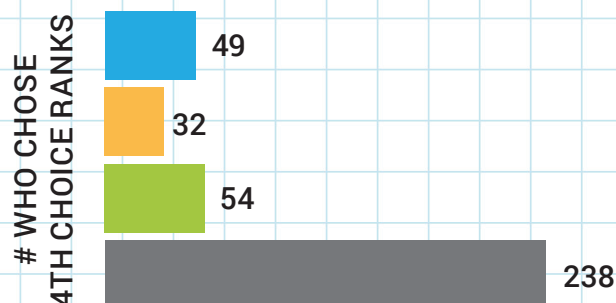


Jacquelyn,
Power Builder



OVERALL 4TH CHOICE RANK

CLOSURE AND CONSOLIDATION: closing schools and relocating students to other existing schools.





THE PERCENTAGES BELOW REPRESENT THE SHARE OF RESPONDENTS WHO EITHER AGREED OR STRONGLY AGREED WITH THE CORRESPONDING STATEMENTS.

65%

OF 398 RESPONDENTS

When schools close, SLPS should prioritize ensuring that students from closing schools are moved to schools with higher academic achievement.

79%

OF 399 RESPONDENTS

SLPS should be proactive: ensure that schools with falling enrollment receive support and additional resources to ensure their enrollment improves early on.

87%

OF 397 RESPONDENTS

SLPS should consider the burden on individual students and families if student commutes lengthen.

81%

OF 403 RESPONDENTS

SLPS should publicly and regularly acknowledge the legacy of racism in creating the conditions that lead to school closure.

79%

OF 396 RESPONDENTS

SLPS school board should solidify power-sharing into policy by creating formal roles for community members impacted by potential closures. These could include a district-wide community council, or individual school councils.

75%

OF 357 RESPONDENTS

SLPS should consider re-allocating staff time or hiring a position/positions dedicated to community engagement in the closure and reconfiguration process. Districts should prioritize applicants with strong community relationships in hiring for this role.

80%

OF 397 RESPONDENTS

SLPS should conduct an equity impact analysis as part of all decisions around closure and reconfiguration, and include community members in this process. Weigh equity heavily in decisions about school closure and reconfiguration.

83%

OF 399 RESPONDENTS

SLPS should consider impact beyond traditional academic measures: weigh the impact of a school closure on community relationships and morale, the impact on the surrounding neighborhood, and the legacy of history.

92%

OF 397 RESPONDENTS

SLPS must build relationships and share power with those impacted by closures.



HOW HAVE YOU BEEN IMPACTED BY SCHOOL CLOSINGS IN THE CITY OF ST. LOUIS?

KEY THEMES & INSIGHTS

CURRENT AND POTENTIAL SLPS FAMILIES LACK OPTIONS THAT ARE QUALITY AND ACCESSIBLE WITHIN THEIR COMMUNITY.

"We live in the central west end and have no academically viable options for a neighborhood school. It's ridiculous. For a city that wants to be top for attracting and retaining talent, this is a huge loss. We've had to bust our budget to go private. We finally tested "in" to the Kennard program. But even that is not a safety net because there is no true road to a public, amazing high school."

SCHOOL BUILDINGS OFTEN BECOME VACANT WITH NO MAINTENANCE, AND THEIR DILAPIDATION LEADS TO A DECREASE IN ECONOMIC STABILITY AND A LOSS OF A COMMUNAL ENVIRONMENT FOR FAMILIES IN THE SURROUNDING AREA.

"Neighborhoods in North St. Louis are decimated by the large amount of vacant and vandalized school buildings. That brings down the value of surrounding properties and thus the amount of revenue for the schools. Why is SLPS allowed to leave all these crumbling buildings instead of tearing them down?"

SCHOOLS WHO RECEIVE THE STUDENTS FROM CLOSED SCHOOLS AREN'T PREPARED AND RESOURCED TO SUPPORT THE NEW STUDENTS AND HAVE LIMITED CAPACITY TO MAINTAIN THEIR EFFECTIVENESS.

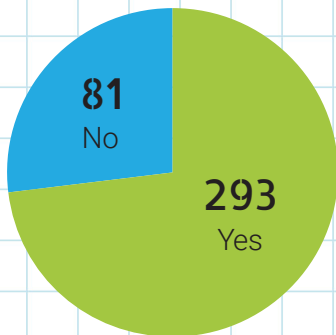
"I am an SLPS teacher in North City and am concerned about increased class sizes next year, especially considering that our school is already strapped for personnel and resources. We have not been fully staffed for nearly the entire school year."

EDUCATORS ARE OFTEN HARMED IN THE PROCESS OF SCHOOL CLOSINGS. THEY LOSE THEIR JOB, TRANSITION TO A LESS POSITIVE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT WITHIN THE DISTRICT, OR PROACTIVELY LEAVE THE DISTRICT DUE TO FEAR OF POTENTIALLY LOSING THEIR JOB.

"I was an educator that transferred districts because I feared school closure talks year after year."

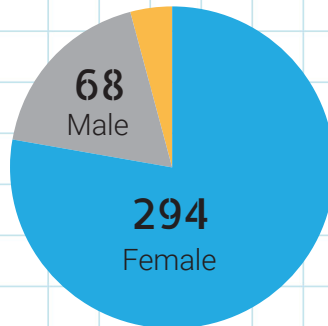
RESPONDANT DEMOGRAPHICS

**374
TOTAL**



**ARE YOU A
CITY OF STL
RESIDENT?**

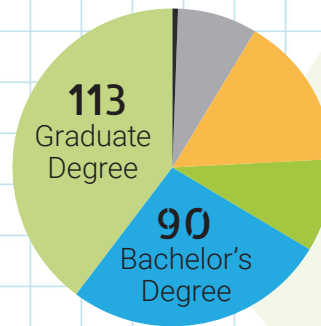
**367
TOTAL**



**GENDER
IDENTITY**

Gender Non-Binary
4

**366
TOTAL**



**EDUCATIONAL
ATTAINMENT**

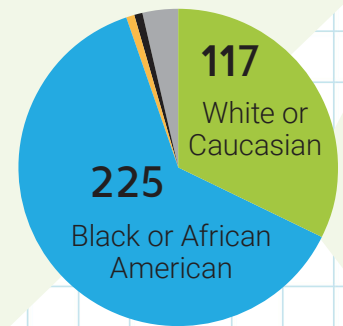
Less Than HS Degree
3

HS Degree or GED
27

Some College,
No Degree
53

Associate's Degree
31

**362
TOTAL**



**RACIAL AND
ETHNIC IDENTITY**

Hispanic or Latinx
3

Asian or Asian American
3

American Indian or
Indigenous
0

Native Hawaiian or
Alaska Native
0

Another Race
13

372 RESPONDENTS SLPS AFFILIATION: I AM A...

35% SLPS Parent Or Guardian A Child Enrolled In Kindergarten - 12th

15% SLPS Educator (Principal, Administrator, Teacher)

4% SLPS Employee (Not Educator)

1% SLPS Student

25% SLPS Graduate

9% Potential Or Future SLPS Parent Or Guardian

7% Charter School Parent Or Guardian A Child Enrolled In Kindergarten - 12th

2% Charter School Educator (Principal, Administrator, Teach In The Class)

0.3% Charter School Employee (Not Educator)

4% Potential Or Future Charter School Parent Or Guardian

1% Charter School Student

7% Retired Educator

24% Other Responses

**354 RESPONDENTS
HOUSEHOLD INCOME**

3% \$0 TO \$9,999

8% \$10,000 TO \$24,999

27% \$25,000 TO \$49,999

20% \$50,000 TO \$74,999

12% \$75,000 TO \$99,999

9% \$100,000 TO \$124,999

3% \$125,000 TO \$149,999

3% \$150,000 TO \$174,999

1% \$175,000 TO \$199,999

2% \$200,000 AND UP

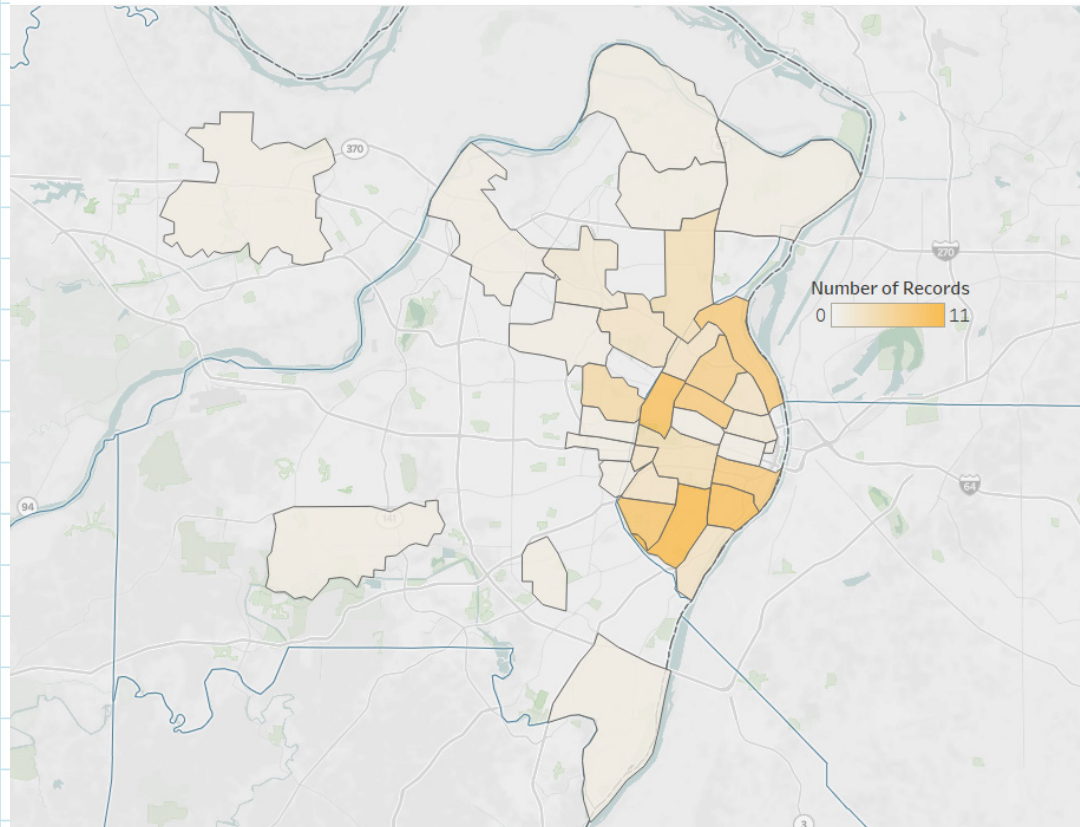
12% NO ANSWER

EST. 2018

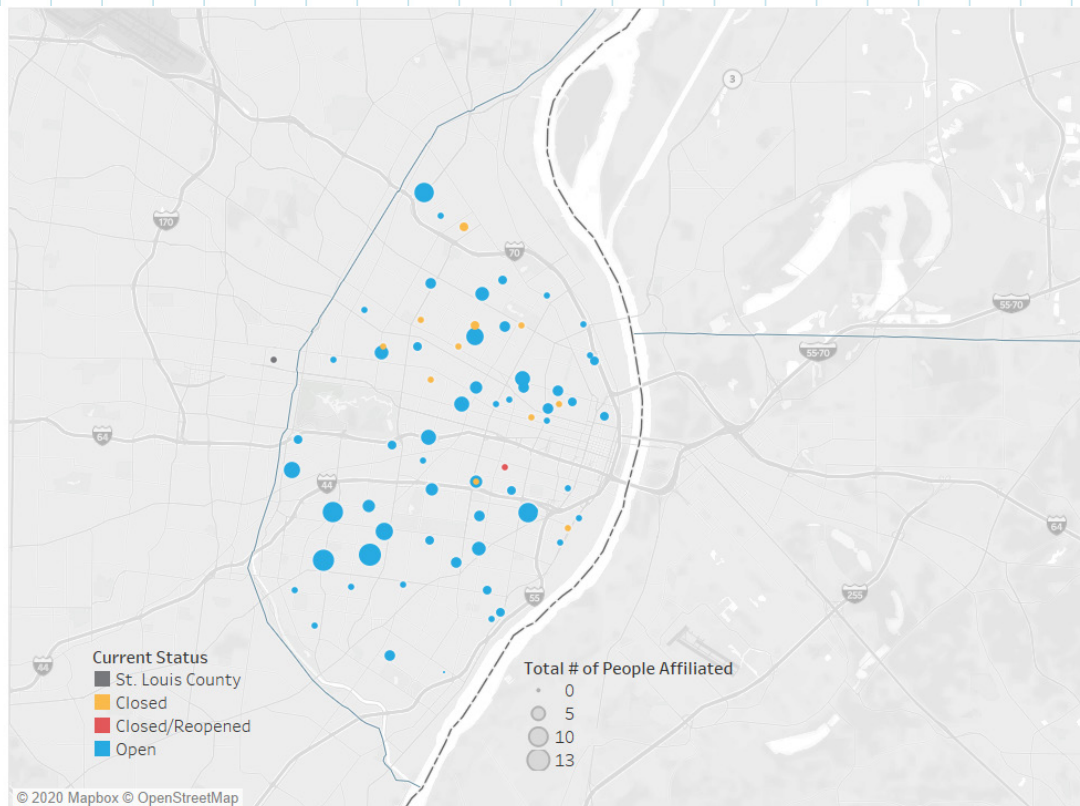
WEPOWER

RESPONDENTS GEOGRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION

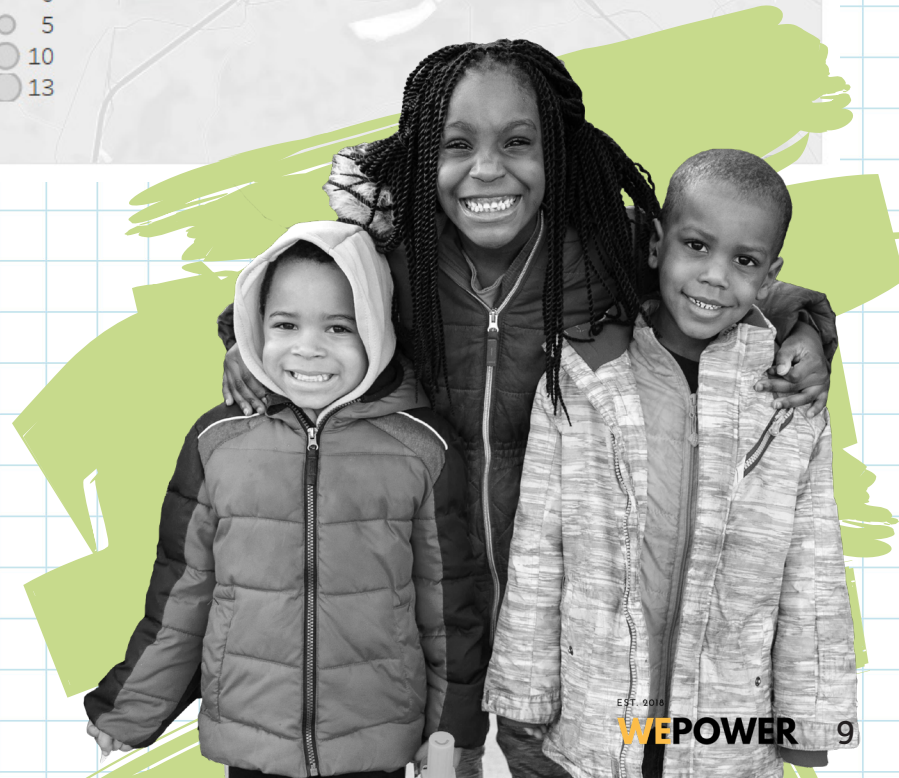
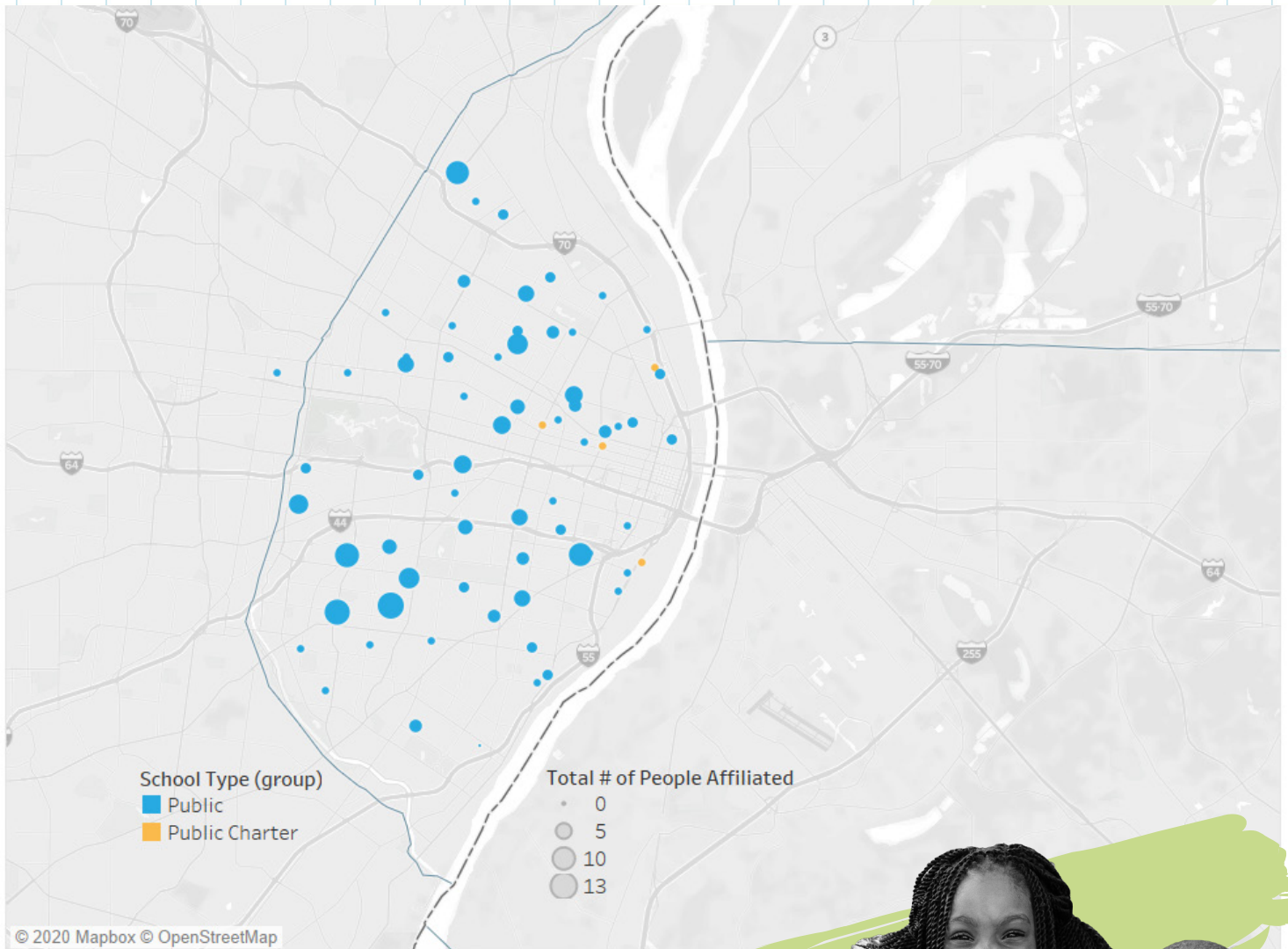
RESPONDENTS BY ZIP CODE



RESPONDENT SCHOOL AFFILIATION
BY OPEN STATUS



RESPONDENT SCHOOL AFFILIATION BY CHARTER VS. PUBLIC



TEACH-IN SUMMARY THEMES



**BASED ON WHAT YOU HEARD AND SAW TODAY,
WHAT OTHER IDEAS SHOULD BE CONSIDERED?**

**INCREASE
MARKETABILITY**

**EMBRACE THE
OPPORTUNITY TO
DIVERSIFY
PARTNERSHIPS**

**ANALYZE THE
ECONOMIC
IMPACTS
INTENTIONALLY**

**EXPLORE THE
IMPACTS OF IMPLICIT
AND EXPLICIT BIAS**

**INVITE IDEAS
FOR CREATIVE
SPACE USAGE**

**ILLUMINATE
AND IMPLEMENT
TRANSITIONAL
SUPPORTS**



**HOW HAVE OR HOW WILL SCHOOL
CLOSINGS IMPACT YOU?**

**COMMUNITY WAS
COMPROMISED**

**DIVISION WAS
CREATED WHEN
WE DIDN'T
UNDERSTAND THAT
SCHOOL CLOSINGS
IMPACT US ALL**

**SCHOOL CLOSING
INTENSIFIED THE
COMMUNITY'S
ECONOMIC PAIN**

**THE CURRICULUM
WAS COMPROMISED**

Jatuan,
Power Builder

