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# Solidifying Segregation or Promoting Diversity? School Closure and Rezoning in an Urban District

Genevieve Siegel-Hawley

Kimberly Bridges

Thomas J. Shields

*University of Richmond*, [tshields@richmond.edu](mailto:tshields@richmond.edu)

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## **Solidifying Segregation or Promoting Diversity? School Closure and Rezoning in an Urban District**

Driven by population shifts, budget constraints, aging facilities, accountability policies and rapidly expanding school choice options, school closures have become increasingly common in urban districts. A recent study by the Pew Charitable Trust indicated that six major cities, including D.C., Chicago and Detroit, closed 197 schools between 2001 and 2010. In the past several years, at least 20 schools were shut down in each of those cities (Pew, 2011). Closure generally necessitates redrawing attendance boundaries, which is connected to critical decisions about which students and communities will attend which schools. Numerous urban systems like D.C., Chicago, New York City and Portland around the country have recently or are currently engaged in major rezoning efforts. Given these shifts, it becomes increasingly important for leaders to understand what is at stake during discussions about school closure and redrawing attendance boundaries.

The fallout from the political processes associated with closure and rezoning can be negative and far-reaching (Author, 2013; Dumas, 2011; Finnigan & Lavner, 2012, Valencia, 1986), particularly when actions are not planned thoroughly and effectively with strong buy-in from multiple stakeholders. Because closure and rezoning affects the racial and economic composition of schools—and because research continues to show that schools with high levels of student poverty and high concentrations of underrepresented minority students are associated with less experienced teachers (Clotfelter, Ladd & Vigdor, 2005), higher levels of teacher turnover (Jackson, 2009), lower academic achievement (Borman et al., 2005), higher dropout rates (Balfanz & Letgers, 2008), and lower levels of college attendance (Billings, Demings & Rockoff, 2014) than other types of school settings—such processes have extremely important implications for segregation, resegregation and integration.

This article explores the politics and impacts of an urban closure and rezoning process in Richmond, Virginia at a time when it, like many urban school districts, faces an influx of white, middle class families (Cucchiara, 2013; Frey, 2014; Stillman, 2012 ). With these demographic shifts come important new opportunities to increase the number of diverse schools in urban school systems still confronting the reality of government-backed segregation (Anyon, 1997). Specifically, we examine the political factors animating the school closure and rezoning, as well as the racial consequences of it for schools and school zones.

We found that the political process of closing one school and redrawing numerous elementary school attendance boundaries in Richmond was associated with a dramatic increase in racial segregation between elementary attendance zones over a short period of time. Leadership changes and political considerations drove a rapid and antagonistic decision-making process that minimized broad-based public participation and privileged the voices of affluent, white families in a city school system that is roughly 10% white (NCES, 2011). Yet from the fallout emerged a diverse coalition of community leaders concerned about the rapid and opaque process, the closure of an a relatively high-performing elementary school and the further segregation of an already highly segregated school system.

We begin with a review of the literature dealing with rezoning attendance boundaries and school closures, followed by our theoretical framework dealing with the politics of change in urban schools. We then describe our data and mixed methods approach, as well as a two-pronged analysis of the closure and rezoning process. Ultimately, we offer several potential avenues for leaders to promote diverse schools in ways that better leverage recent urban population shifts across the country.

## **Literature Review**

The following section outlines what we already know about the related processes of rezoning attendance boundaries and closing urban schools. After reviewing the mechanisms by which school attendance zones influence school and housing decisions, we delve into the research on the politics of redrawing school boundaries and closing schools.

Before doing so, however, we want to define several key terms that appear throughout the article. School segregation, as used here, refers both to the intentional isolation of students by race, (Dorsey, 2013; Powell, 2005), which is clearly against the law, as well as policies that have the effect of promoting racial isolation (Dorsey, 2013), which is murkier legal territory (Keyes, 1973; Ryan, 2010). The term desegregation indicates the removal of legal and policy barriers to bringing students of different races into the same schools (King, 1962), a concept we use interchangeably with the phrase “diverse schools.” The word integration implies a much more comprehensive process, however, one that brings students together on the same footing to begin the difficult but critically important work of building meaningful relationships and equal opportunities across racial lines (Allport, 1954; Horsford, 2013; King, 1962). We mean something similar when we discuss “diverse and equitable schools.” Finally, resegregation refers to policies and practices that move school systems away from desegregation, not to mention integration.

### **How School Attendance Boundaries Influence Schools and Neighborhoods**

School attendance boundaries help delineate residential communities. The names given to schools and associated zones quickly become synonymous with their racial and economic characteristics, acting as an important signal to families deciding between schools and neighborhoods (Weiher, 1992). For advantaged families, the racial makeup of schools is often a central driver in the school-housing decision-making process (Lareau & Goyette, 2014; Pearce,

1980). A study of 42 largely white and middle- to-upper class suburban families who moved “for the schools” found that the many did not visit prospective schools or explore publicly available indicators of school quality like test scores (Holme, 2002). Instead, advantaged families relied on simplistic school labels—on the order of “good” or “bad”—that passed through informal networks made up of acquaintances of similar social standing. Those labels were closely linked to school racial and socioeconomic composition; whiter, wealthier settings were the most highly regarded. More recent qualitative research from the Philadelphia area uncovered similar themes among advantaged families (Lareau, 2014), underscoring the ongoing salience of race and class in the selection of neighborhoods and schools. It follows that the politics of shifting which neighborhoods are connected to the most highly sought after schools are contentious.

### **Politics of Redrawing Attendance Boundaries**

Though research on the politics of school rezoning processes is very limited, and largely focused on suburban areas, a few key lessons emerge. First, white and affluent families often become highly involved in rezoning debates as they seek to influence the process to their advantage (Holme, Diem & Welton, 2013; Wiley, Shircliffe & Morley, 2012). Second, a handful of studies have shown that school officials tend to gerrymander the lines in ways that segregate students (Richards, 2014; Author, 2013; Orfield & Luce, 2010). Third, communities of color have mobilized in response to segregative rezoning processes, in some cases by filing lawsuits (e.g., *Everett v. Pitt County Board of Education*, 2012; *Spurlock v. Fox*, 2013).

The thorny politics of school rezoning also apply to the closure of schools in certain communities. Decisions to close schools tap into questions about community voice, the vitality and identity of neighborhoods and the relationship between different branches of government

(Green, 2015; Weatherly, Narver & Elmore, 1983). Like the redrawing of attendance lines, which very often accompany school closures, these processes are inherently political.

### **Politics of School Closures**

Political pressure to close schools comes from different arenas. Research shows that fiscal tension between municipal governments and school administrations—particularly when schools rely upon municipalities for funding—plays a role in school closure decisions though actual savings tend to be less than anticipated (Finnigan & Lavner, 2012; Valencia, 1984). Advocates of neoliberal school reform may also exert pressure to close traditional public schools in an effort to ramp up corporate privatization and marketization efforts (Basu, 2007; Buras, 2011).

Regardless of the political and economic forces animating school closures, the process is generally controversial (Irwin & Seasons, 2012; Weatherly et al., 1983). Though educational outcomes for students affected by closures vary depending on the type of school attended by the newly-displaced students (see, e.g., Carlson & Lavertu, 2015; Kirsher & Gaertner, 2015), the pitfalls seem clear for surrounding communities. As one researcher put it, “Shuttering a school can...have widespread and lingering consequences for a neighborhood, often falling disproportionately on poorer communities” (Lytton, 2011; see also Green, 2015). Closures are also linked to decreased public support for school bonds and levies, reduced parental involvement and flight to private schools (Valencia, 1984).

Worldwide studies examining the school closure processes find that they tend to advantage communities and families with plentiful resources (Bondi, 1988; Dumas, 2011; Finnigan & Lavner, 2012; Weatherly et al., 1983). One recent study of a mid-sized urban school district found that higher-income families relied upon a variety of mechanisms, both formal and

informal, to influence the process (Finnigan & Lavner, 2012). These families were able to successfully avoid school closures in their communities by mobilizing parent-teacher organizations, rallying large numbers of stakeholders to attend public hearings and contacting school board members, among other tactics. By contrast, school leaders noted an absence of communication from stakeholders connected to the school they ultimately decided to close (Finnigan & Lavner, 2012).

While inequities in political participation may occur during the formal school closure process, communities have fought back in the aftermath. In a growing number of cases, including the one under study, advocates have filed lawsuits or civil rights complaints alleging that schools closures discriminated on the basis of race and/or income (*Smith v. Henderson*, 2013).

Several studies have attempted to outline best practices for the difficult process of closing schools. An older but intensive exploration of school closures in Seattle recommended that school officials adopt a long-range, comprehensive view of facility needs based on sound data and involve stakeholders from local government, citizen organizations, diverse school communities and the private sector (Weatherly et al., 1983). Recommendations from a more contemporary source suggest hiring external experts to facilitate the closure process and establishing objective criteria for decision-making (Pew, 2011).

Importantly, while a limited number of prior studies separately explore the political processes related to school closures and redrawing school attendance boundaries, no one research project has brought these different streams together in an effort to understand how they impact segregation in a demographically changing urban school system. We seek to begin filling this gap with the following case study. Before we delve into the context and specifics of

Richmond City Public Schools (RPS), though, we outline the theoretical underpinnings of our study.

### **Theoretical Framework**

We draw upon a seminal study of racial politics in major urban school systems to analyze the politics and consequences of a contemporary urban school closure and rezoning process. In *The Color of School Reform*, Jeffrey Henig and colleagues examined the politics of education reform in the black-led cities of DC, Atlanta, Detroit and Baltimore (as part of a larger study of 11 districts). The study highlighted the presence of “enclave schools,” or school settings that are disproportionately white and/or wealthy compared to other schools in an urban district (Henig et al., 1999). Families participating in enclave schools tended to be highly involved but their involvement was largely limited to their single school setting. As these families channeled energy and resources into improving the enclave school, a more systemic focus on improvement was lost—and inequities often worsened.

The hyperlocal involvement of white parents in enclave schools contributed to racial mistrust as non-affiliated parents noted the advocacy, fundraising and support surrounding enclave settings (Henig et al., 1999). That mistrust heightened when it came time for school systems to consider how to assign or reassign students to schools. During those moments—which often include rezoning efforts—savvy parents vied to either access or maintain rights to enclave settings (Diem & Frankenberg, 2013; Holme et al., 2013; McDermott, Frankenberg & Diem, 2013; Wiley et al., 2012).

Race, as a lasting and powerful filter through which different groups understand the past and the present, the personal and the structural, can impact the trust- and coalition-building necessary to promote civic capacity for positive change in urban schools (Henig et al., 1999).

Yet the lack of civic capacity, the authors argued, generally meant that the status quo in central cities, regardless of whether or not black leadership is at the helm, trended toward politics as usual. They found that local officials gravitated toward actions with “short term and certain electoral payoffs” (Henig et al., 1999, p. 275) and/or substituted symbolic action for tangible school improvement. In all four cities studied, superintendents were replaced with reform leaders, three of whom, interestingly enough, were soon replaced themselves (Henig et al., 1999). Leadership changes on elected school boards were also in evidence. Both Atlanta and Detroit saw reform candidates sweep into elected office. However, as interviewees in different sites noted, the churn in leadership may have impeded rather than advanced reform (Henig et al., 1999).

### **Research Design**

Case studies are useful tools for examining how and/or why particular events occurred in a local context (Shavelson & Towne, 2002). Drawing on the case of Richmond, Virginia, we use mixed methods to examine the following research questions:

1. How was the 2013 elementary school rezoning linked to racial composition and segregation in Richmond Public Schools (RPS) attendance zones and schools?
2. What political considerations animated the 2013 school closure and rezoning process in RPS?

### **Data and Methods**

We employed an explanatory sequential mixed methods research design, first using quantitative and spatial methods to examine research question #1, followed by qualitative methods to explore research question #2 (Creswell & Clark, 2011). The mixed methods

approach helped clarify and enhance findings from our two different questions and methodologies (Green, Caracelli and Graham, 1989).

**Quantitative.** We relied upon data from the school district and the U.S. Census to answer research question #1. RPS provided electronic Geographic Information Systems (GIS) files outlining several different elementary school boundary options, which we overlaid upon census block group data from the American Community Survey's (ACS) 2006-2010 five-year summary files. To account for areas where the district's attendance zones overlapped with a portion of more than one census block group, we used GIS software to locate a centroid in each block group. We spatially joined those centroids to the elementary boundary line shape files. This method produced a good but imperfect estimate of the school age population by race in grades 1-8 (the closest census category overlapping with elementary school age students) residing within the attendance boundaries (Saporito et al., 2007).

We then analyzed the number and percentage of students by race living within the former, proposed and final RPS attendance boundaries. Census figures were supplemented with an analysis of actual enrollment numbers from the Virginia Department of Education for the year prior to the rezoning (2011-12) and the year after it was implemented (2013-14). These numbers differed in important ways from the zone calculations due to the various school choice options in the city (Author, 2014).

In addition to exploring the counts and percentages of students by race living within the various boundary scenarios and attending elementary schools before and after the rezoning, we calculated segregation patterns using the Index of Dissimilarity (*D*). The Dissimilarity Index is a popular measure of segregation (Massey & Denton, 1988; 1993) that helped illustrate how evenly students are spread across zones and schools in RPS. Values between 0 and .30 tend to

indicate relatively low segregation, values between .31 and .60 represent moderate levels of segregation, and values between .61 and 1.00 indicate high levels of segregation (Massey & Denton 1993, p. 20).

We emphasized the racial impacts of the rezoning process as they related to white students. Though white students account for a small minority of RPS students, we found that the most politically contested boundaries (e.g., where proposed changes generated strong participation and activism) encircled neighborhoods with high proportions of white school age students. The rezoning thus had an outsized impact on the distribution of white students across attendance zones. We did include tables and maps displaying the racial impacts of rezoning for black and Latino students in the appendix. Segregation calculations also explored patterns between white and black students, white and Latino students, and black and Latino students.

**Qualitative.** To answer research question #2 regarding the politics influencing the closure and rezoning process, we reviewed school board policies, minutes, media accounts and social media, along with documents collected in conjunction with the litigation. We then analyzed these various sources for thematic content. This portion of the analysis helped illuminate the political motivations behind the closure and rezoning process, adding to our understanding of its segregative impacts.

We want to acknowledge that two of us were involved in the brief public comment period and dialogue surrounding the 2013 closure and rezoning process. One of us attended both public hearings related to the closure and rezoning and submitted a comment highlighting the segregative impact of the rezoning. Another one of us is the former chairwoman of the Richmond school board, though she was not a member during the 2013 process. After the process came to a close, we attended several follow up meetings organized by concerned groups

of citizens. Those meetings eventually culminated in the creation of the grassroots advocacy group that filed the lawsuit. While our involvement offered additional understanding of the complex series of events associated with the process, we recognized it as a potential drawback for the qualitative portion of our analysis. We therefore sought objective distance through the addition of a third research team member uninvolved in the 2013 process.

### **The Context: Race, School Closures/Consolidation and Boundary Lines in RPS**

The history of RPS and Virginia in the post-*Brown v. Board of Education* era is littered with examples of efforts to not only thwart school integration but to contain and control any type of school desegregation (Buni, 1967; Lassiter and Lewis, 1998; Pratt, 1992; Ryan, 2010; Wilkinson, 1978). Often the strategies used to resist desegregation hinged on school closure and boundary lines. In the aftermath of *Brown*, the white establishment fought to stop black political mobilization and the integration of schools, uniting under the mantra of Massive Resistance to keep blacks from desegregating schools in Richmond and throughout Virginia (Pratt, 1992; Ryan, 2010) In fact, several jurisdictions across the state, such as the cities of Norfolk and Charlottesville, as well as Warren and Prince Edward Counties, closed schools rather than integrate. In 1959, the Virginia Supreme Court declared Massive Resistance dead by stating that school closings and funding cut-offs were unconstitutional (Ryan, 2010).

After the demise of Massive Resistance, Richmond and other jurisdictions adopted more covert school policies and techniques to prevent the integration of schools. Freedom-of-choice plans became an important and widespread means for delaying the implementation of *Brown* by holding out the promise to black students of attending well-resourced white settings, but not taking systematic steps to ensure that black students could actually do so. Noted NAACP lawyer Oliver Hill observed that the only reason for the state's Pupil Placement Board, an entity in

charge of implementing freedom-of-choice existence, was to, “clearly and unequivocally...maintain segregation...Not a single Negro child has been placed in a white school.” (Pratt, 1992, p. 23). In one case, the Pupil Placement Board and RPS went so far as to get down on their hands and knees to measure the distance from a black child’s home to the desired white school. The child’s parent incredulously stated, “I would never have believed that city and state officials would go to such lengths to keep blacks out of white schools” (Pratt, 1992, p. 27).

In 1961, eleven black parents brought a class-action suit against the Richmond School Board. The suit, known as *Bradley v. Richmond*, was an effort to rid the city of the varied mechanisms and techniques that preserved segregated public schools. Many of these tactics involved school attendance boundaries; in fact, the main thrust of the case in the beginning was the elimination of “dual attendance zones,” which assigned black students to black schools even if they lived closer to white schools (Pratt, 1992, p. 31). Feeder systems were also heavily employed to ensure that white elementary schools would feed to white middle schools and eventually to white high schools.

The long-running *Bradley* litigation took a new twist when the issue of city-suburban school district consolidation came onto the table. In 1973, a district court judge, recognizing trends and policies that had rendered Richmond’s central city black and poor and her surrounding suburbs overwhelmingly white and wealthy, ordered a city-suburban merger for the purpose of school desegregation (Ryan, 2010). His ruling was overturned on appeal, however, a reversal that a tied Supreme Court eventually let stand. As a result, school desegregation was limited to the already segregated school system in the City of Richmond.

Just a few short years into the school desegregation plan, Richmond's first black superintendent, Dr. Richard Hunter, faced pressure to close and combine schools due to declining enrollment across all racial populations and the city's rapidly diminishing white and/or middle class tax base (Duke, 1995). What came to be known as Plan G was adopted by the Board in 1978 and implemented in 1979 (Pratt, 1992). Plan G merged the city's high schools, reducing the number from seven to three. These merged high schools were known as complexes and were "justified in public as a way to achieve efficiency while preserving quality" (Duke, 1995, p. 133). The plan was centered on the consolidation of services and centralization, particularly related to access for higher level and honor courses (Duke, 1995, p. 133).

Plan G was controversial from the start with all sides—parents, teachers, students, and administrators—questioning the rationale for it. There is no public record of the Board deliberations of Plan G, yet "considerable speculation by insiders supports the view that Tee-Jay was grouped with Huguenot and Wythe because these schools contained most of the white students" (Duke, 1995, p. 134). In other words, one of the three large high school complexes disproportionately grouped white students on the western side of the city together. When Plan G was shut down by the Board in 1986, all the complexes were broken up and six of the schools were returned to full-functioning high schools. Maggie Walker, a noted and historically black high school, was the only high school not reopened.

For the next thirty years after Plan G, historically African American schools in RPS have continued to experience the threat of school closures and consolidations. In 2004, for instance, John F. Kennedy High School and Armstrong High School merged. Armstrong High had a strong tradition in the black community and was one of the first African-American high schools in the nation (Advanced Ed, 2015; Williams, 2016). The merged school retained the name

Armstrong, along with many of its traditions, history, and heritage, but there were strong feelings of loss about the merger (Williams, 2016). As recently as March 2016, there has been discussion among the school board and superintendent to close six more schools due to budgetary concerns (AP, 2016).

Today, Richmond Public Schools (RPS) serves close to 24,000 students. Though census data indicate that relatively affluent, white Millennials have increasingly chosen to stay with their young children in a city that is roughly 40% white and 50% black (Frey, 2013; Geiger, 2013; Jones, 2011), black students remain the overwhelming majority in the public school system at nearly 80% (NCES, 2013). White students account for about 10% of the enrollment, and Latino students make up about 9% of the student population (NCES, 2013).

Families enrolling in the public school system choose among their zoned schools, specialty schools, one charter school and an open enrollment policy which allows families to apply via lottery to attend out-of-zone schools provided space is available (Ryan, 2010). Prior research has indicated that these choice options contribute to the presence of a handful of disproportionately white schools in an overwhelmingly nonwhite district (Author, 2014).

RPS is governed by a school board of nine members, each elected within his or her own geographic councilmanic district (RPS, n.d.). All board members are elected the same year and serve four-year terms. In the fall of 2012, seven of the nine school board seats changed hands (Slayton, 2012). The current board is made up of seven African American and two white representatives, a racial composition that did not shift from the makeup of the previous board. As we show below, a rapid, politically charged and resegregative school closure and elementary school rezoning process unfolded at the start of the new Board's tenure in the spring of 2013.

The June 2013 closure and elementary school rezoning (modified slightly in August of 2013) nullified a 2012 elementary school rezoning process conducted by the prior board.

### **Findings**

This analysis is divided into two parts. In the first section, we examine the stark racial impacts of the closure and elementary school rezoning. In the second half we show how and why the board's actions led to the increase in segregation through a thematic analysis of the political process related to the recent closure and rezoning.

#### **Racial Impacts of Rezoning**

Under the boundary shifts instituted by the new school board, noteworthy changes in the racial makeup of students living within some elementary school zones occurred (Figure 1). Under a purely proximity-based rationale, the closure of majority-black Clark Springs in the central part of the city likely required an expansion of at least one of the surrounding Cary, Fox, Carver or Bellevue zones. However, instead of enlarging the zone for majority-white Fox to incorporate the heavily non-white neighborhoods formerly assigned to Clark Springs, the board expanded Fox's zone in the other direction to include parts of the city with a supermajority of white school age children. The Fox zone remained more than 75% white under the final boundaries. Meanwhile, Cary's zone expanded to include the former Clark Springs' neighborhoods and became less than 25% white. Importantly, the most significant boundary changes dealt with areas characterized by higher shares of white school age children. In addition to the reworking of boundaries near Fox, Cary and Clark Springs, the new school board broadened the zone for Westover Hills to include more white neighborhoods, creating a majority-white zone.

*[Insert Figure 1 about here]*

The shares of white students in grades 1-8 residing in the various boundary line configurations varied widely in some cases (Table 1). The zone surrounding Blackwell on the south side went from about 25% white under the former and 2012 board-approved elementary zones to 0% under the two zone configurations approved by the new board in 2013. The percentage of white students residing in the zone for neighboring Westover Hills increased from roughly 14% white under the former boundary lines to about 25% under the 2012 board's lines--rising to about 55% white under the final 2013 lines drawn by the new board. In the center of the city, near sought-after Fox and now-closed Clark Springs, the share of white students living in the Cary zone shrank from over 60% to about 16%. These numbers illuminate the racial implications of the board's rezoning decisions and point to the attempted creation of a new enclave school on the south side of the city (Henig et al., 1999).

*[Insert Table 1 about here]*

Elementary zones created by the new school board in 2013 were linked to higher levels of segregation than either the former zones or the ones approved in 2012 by the previous board (Table 2). While white-black segregation between elementary school zones was already severe at .65, it increased to .70 under the final zones. Stated differently, in the former elementary zones 65% of black students in grades 1-8 would have needed to change attendance areas to achieve perfect integration with white students, compared to 70% of black students in the final August 2013 zones. A spike of such magnitude is noteworthy. In the South as a whole, for instance, black-white dissimilarity increased from .55 to .57 over a two decade period (Author et al., 2012). These figures again showcase the negative racial impact associated with the closure and rezoning, highlighting the need for strong leadership willing to advocate for a more equitable process.

On the other hand, segregation between whites and Latinos declined somewhat—though remained extremely high--under the August 2013 zones approved by the new board. Segregation levels generally were lower between blacks and Latinos, but increased slightly with the final zoning scenario.

*[Insert Table 2 about here]*

While the student population living within elementary school attendance boundaries is indicative of what enrollment might look like if all students attended their zoned school, choice policies play an important role in sorting students among schools (Sohoni & Saporito, 2009). In RPS, families choose among private schools, charter school, specialty schools and open enrollment schools when making decisions about where to send their students. In order to better understand how the old and new elementary zones were linked to actual enrollment patterns, we examined the share of students enrolled in RPS elementary schools in the years before and after the rezoning took place.

The share of white students enrolled in some RPS elementary schools shifted before and after the rezoning, and also differed in important ways from the share of white students living in the different elementary attendance zone options (Table 3). Recall, for instance, that the share of white students *living* in the Blackwell zone shrank from about 25% to 0% under the old and new board-approved lines. The percentage of white students *enrolling* in Blackwell before and after the rezoning was different: 2% in 2011 and less than 1% in 2013. This pattern suggests that white students living in the former Blackwell zone were not attending the school, a trend that may be influenced by the presence of a nearby charter school (Author, 2013). At Westover Hills Elementary, the share of white students enrolled in the school shifted very little before and after rezoning, remaining under 5%. White students in grades 1 to 8 now account for about 55%

of the population in the zone, so whether or not these students will begin to attend their zoned school remains to be seen.

A similar trend emerged for the Cary zone and actual enrollment. White students accounted for about 60% of the population in the zone surrounding Cary before the rezoning, but made up roughly 13% of the school's population. Some of these students may have applied for entry into Fox under the district's open enrollment policy. After the rezoning, white students made up less than 10% of Cary's enrollment, compared to about 16% of the population living in the zone.

*[Insert Table 3 about here]*

In terms of actual enrollment, the 2013 rezoning was linked to increases in patterns of elementary school segregation between black and white students and white and Latino students (Table 4). Black-white dissimilarity rose from a very high level of .69 in 2011 to .72 in 2013—again, a notable increase over just two years. Similarly, white-Latino segregation increased from .75 in 2011 to .76 in 2013.

*[Insert Table 4 about here]*

With an understanding of the quantitative and spatial impacts of the rezoning, we turn next to an exploration of the political process that significantly exacerbated segregation in an already highly segregated system. We explore how and why leadership made such segregative decisions in order to better illuminate the politics of closure and rezoning.

### **Political Process of School Closure and Rezoning in RPS**

As we discussed, the historical context for school closures and drawing attendance boundaries in Richmond has been overtly discriminatory. However, the recent closure and

rezoning process in RPS that is described below is more covert and complex – where traditional arrangements of leadership and power, racial alignment and policy implications are splintered.

**Fiscal pressure to close schools.** From the start of its four-year term beginning in January of 2013, the newly sworn-in Richmond Public School Board (“Board”) faced a multi-million dollar budget gap between costs and anticipated revenues (Reid, 2013a). As a new Board wading through its first budget process, the group knew this gap meant a choice between requesting additional local revenue or cutting the school system’s operating budget (Reid, 2013b). In service of the latter task, members deliberated for months about whether or not to close schools as a cost-savings measure. After seriously considering the idea, in late April the Board determined that it would close no schools to generate budget savings for the upcoming fiscal year (Reid, 2013b). Three weeks later, after the city council refused to fully fund the school budget in part because of the lack of commitment to school closures (School board minutes, 8 April 2013), the Board rescinded its previous motion. As with the Plan G deliberations of 1978, intergovernmental tension over funding prompted actions questioned by the public (Finnigan & Lavner, 2012; Valencia, 1984). The School Board approved a new motion considering the closure of three schools and a newly-crafted, never-before-vetted rezoning plan, deemed “Option C,” for 14 elementary schools (Reid, 2013c). Within a month of the reversal, the Board had voted 5 to 4 to close three schools and had altered the identified elementary school zones for the rapidly approaching new school year despite overwhelming opposition raised in the two public hearings on the issue (Reid, 2013d; Reid, 2013e). These attendance zones were adjusted again through subsequent Board action just a few weeks prior to the opening of the 2013-2014 school year. From the time of the reversal to the ultimate closure

and rezoning, the board's process and decision received heavy criticism, generated a lawsuit, and produced a plan associated with the serious resegregation of school attendance zones.

In Virginia, public education is based upon local control for public school systems, which do not have fiscal autonomy (Salmon, 2010). To supplement state funding, city or county municipal leaders determine the annual funding level for school divisions, with school boards hoping that local dollars will fill or come close to filling their requests. In addition to ongoing challenges associated with the lack of funding authority, Virginia school systems struggled as the recession brought decreases in both state and local revenues. As one recent statewide report noted, "Even as student challenges increase, many local school systems have faced declining resources as a result of the recession. Since 2008, K-12 public education staffing has been reduced by 5,000 positions, while student enrollment has increased by 2.5 percent statewide" (Virginia Board of Education, 2014). In urban centers like Richmond, these fiscal pressures exacerbated ongoing budget struggles and added to a history of gaps between school board funding requests and city appropriations to the schools (Reid, 2015).

**Lack of transparency and public involvement.** When introduced in May 2013, the closure and rezoning item was not on the public meeting agenda and the proposal had not been developed with input of administration, the full board, the school rezoning committee or the public (School Board minutes, 2013a). Instead, the plan was assembled by the school system's consultant on rezoning "over the weekend at the request of two school board members" (Williamson, 2013). Once news spread of the board's pending action, community concern quickly mounted.

Throughout the rapid 2013 elementary school rezoning process, many stakeholders expressed disapproval about the decision's lack of transparency and public involvement—which stood in contrast to a recent elementary school rezoning process conducted by the previous

board. That process, completed in August 2012, had been undertaken to ready the school division for changes coming from the mayor's "Build a Better Richmond" program, a major school construction and renovation effort to build two state-of-the-art elementary schools to replace four outdated ones (Depompa, 2011). The 2012 rezoning decision flowed from a lengthy process incorporating citizen involvement through ongoing meetings of representatives who used school system and census data to inform zoning recommendations (School Board Public Hearing minutes, 2013). The Build a Better Richmond program also called for the renovation and construction of a middle (completed in 2014) and high school (completed in 2015), but the 2013 rezoning plan did not address the need for a corresponding middle and high school rezoning effort to prepare for the two new secondary schools. Instead, Option C rezoned elementary schools a second time.

In addition to the concerns expressed about the altered plan and condensed process, lack of transparency and limited public input, stakeholders relayed confusion about the selection of Clark Elementary for closure, noting that it was an elementary school with low maintenance costs and a stronger record of academic performance than other schools remaining open. "The plan raises serious questions," wrote one father in a weekly paper opinion piece. "No compelling reason has been offered as to why...one of the better-performing elementary schools in the city...needs to be closed outright. Among (the school's) fifth-graders, 93 percent passed the tougher math Standards of Learning test last year, compared with the statewide average of 67 percent. Fourteen city schools failed to reach full accreditation from the state last year—wouldn't it make more sense to close one of those schools?" (Williamson, 2013). Community members sought to understand the rationale for the closure as well. During one of the public hearings, a

stakeholder “asked the Board to provide the citizens a specific budget or source of savings” and that “a relocation budget be published” (School Board minutes, 2013b).

While the lack of transparency made it difficult to fully understand the Board’s rationale for adopting Option C, public comments and online activity indicated that, behind the scenes, a small group of highly resourced citizens had mobilized in favor of the rezoning.

**Smaller group, larger influence.** Three of the 52 citizens who spoke at the May 28 public hearing did favor Option C, specifically as it related to changes to the Westover Hills attendance lines. These proponents favored redrawing the 2012 attendance zone in a way that would, in their view, spur neighborhood investment in the local public school. One of these Option C supporters relayed that “the leadership of the two neighborhood associations had met and officially supported any rezoning efforts that brought these neighborhoods together in one school” (School Board minutes, 2013b). On a community blog, he further explained that the plan “pulls together the neighborhoods of Westover Hills, Forest Hill, Forest View, Woodland Heights, and Springhill (or, what we call, the REAL Dream Team of RVA neighborhoods). These neighborhoods represent a unified community that had previously been divided among three schools” (byrdpark.net, 2013). Under this rationale for rezoning, the lower-income, majority black neighborhoods slated for removal from the school zone were not part of the “unified community,” even if closer in distance to the school than some of the new, predominately white areas being added to the zone. In general, statements by community members who expressed interest in Option C during the public comment centered on its impact on Westover Hills. Reflecting the hyper-local interests on display in multiple cities, according to our theoretical framework (Henig et al., 199), these parents of current or potential Westover

Hills' students expressed the desire for improvement for a specific school without addressing the corresponding reduction in diversity and/or resources in neighboring school zones.

Additionally, the new zones offered up as part of Option C would place an overwhelmingly white neighborhood, the Museum District, into Fox, a highly sought after majority-white elementary school in the city. In fact, the school board members who requested the development of Option C represented the Museum District and Fox neighborhoods. Though community members from the Museum District did not speak at the public hearings, a local news station reported on a petition (which had garnered more than 200 signatures at the time) asking the board to rezone the neighborhood out of a majority-minority elementary school and into either of the two predominately white elementary schools in relatively close proximity (Burns, 2013). The petition, which had gathered 319 signatures by the time it closed, stated that the goals were “to help alleviate overcrowding, foster a more neighborhood school system, and improve operational efficiencies” (Scott, 2013). While the racial makeup of the neighborhoods was not mentioned in the petition, the use of the term “neighborhood school,” given ongoing patterns of residential segregation, has traditionally been employed as a euphemism for a return to segregated systems of education (Orfield, 1978).

Our framework points to a potential loss of resources and mistrust among racial groups when parents employ a hyperlocal focus on certain schools rather than the system as a whole, and these factors played out in the public hearings as well. One speaker who spoke in favor of the closure plan expressed “shock” that race had become part of the issue, added “I can’t believe anyone believes the School Board is trying to close this (school) for race reasons” (School Board minutes, 2013b). The newspaper account noted that he was booed, “the only person of the night to elicit such a response” (Reid, 2013d).

Although the school board's composition was majority black, five members approved the rezoning plan, selecting for closure a majority black school outside of their election districts. Three of the members voting for Option C represented the districts with the expanding or establishing enclave zones, including the only two white members of the board. They were joined in support by the mayor's son and former aide, suggesting an alignment of votes based upon satisfying a variety of political constituencies (School Board minutes, 2013b). Option C went into effect just two months later, in September of 2013, stemming from a combustible mixture of leadership changeover, racial mistrust, intergovernmental entanglement, and enclave school advocacy efforts.

**Support for diversity and formation of grassroots coalition in aftermath of process.**

Out of an extremely controversial and divisive process grew a few promising developments to counter Richmond's long history of racial conflict. First, public comment demonstrated a strong commitment to school diversity and equity from many citizens. As several community members noted, rezoning presented an opportunity to increase diversity in the schools system. One parent and former teacher stated that "she hoped the board could take this opportunity to increase the number of schools that had racial and economic diversity rather than decrease it" (School Board minutes, 2013b). A number of commenters at the public hearings also cited the plan's potential for increasing segregation. One parent and former teacher noted "that the plan presented furthered the racial and economic divide in the city" (School Board minutes, 2013b). A local minister and school volunteer shared that the rezoning was a missed opportunity for Richmond to provide these [diverse] experiences," adding that "the school system was taking a giant step backwards" (School Board minutes, 2013b). Yet another parent tied the varied concerns together, sharing "that the plan had not been sufficiently deliberated by

the Board or the community and the most basic information about the plan had not been made available...the rezoning plan presented would likely decrease the enrollment of African-American students attending Fox and it would boost the poverty rate at John B. Cary” (School Board minutes, 2013b).

The Board itself was divided on the issue, as one board member and co-pastor of a church with a commitment to integration wrote in an opinion column on the rezoning plan. He noted that “Through rezoning, we have an opportunity to foster the reinvestment of new Richmond families who come from a generation that seeks and values diversity and community” (Coleman, 2013). And even some proponents of Option C expressed support for diversity. As one explained, part of the rationale for consolidating the white neighborhoods surrounding Westover Hills into a single zone was to ensure that his daughter could “go to school with people who are different from her so she can learn from those experiences and they can learn from her, and we can build what I would call a ‘diverse school’” (Lyle, 2014). “Diversity” can certainly mean different things to different people, making it possible to reconcile the push for a school zone with far more white children in grades K-8 than the citywide average with a desire and commitment to diverse schools.

Second, as seen throughout historical efforts to maintain local school segregation, a dissatisfied group of stakeholders once again turned to the courts for assistance. Dismayed over the school board’s choices, omissions, changes in process, timing and impact patterns of segregation during the short rezoning and closure timeframe, a group of citizens who had participated in public hearings formed an education coalition called the Richmond Coalition for Quality Education (RCTQE). The group met independently after the completion of the rezoning and closure process and ultimately helped file a lawsuit in Richmond Circuit Court. The suit

alleges that the Richmond School Board “has run afoul of public body meeting strictures,” and also argues “...that certain conduct by some members of the Board contravenes certain public policies in order to effect unlawful purposes, and that this behavior is arbitrary and capricious” (Jones v. School Board of the City of Richmond, 2013). Judge Richard Taylor allowed the case to move forward for civil trial which was delayed in October 2014 with a subsequent trial date or potential mediation still pending as of the writing of this article.

### **Discussion**

Our case study exploring the politics and consequences of a contemporary urban school closure and rezoning process yielded four key findings. First, budget pressures, intergovernmental politics and leadership turnover prompted Richmond’s newly reconfigured school board leaders to look for short-term savings (Henig et al., 1999) in the form of school closures. Longstanding tension between the mayor’s office, city council and the school board over fully funding the budget was diffused as new board members eagerly sought to demonstrate fiscal restraint and savvy by committing to closing a school.

Second, a swift, chaotic and nontransparent political process to close and rezone elementary schools was conducted in opposition to board protocols, policies and possibly state law. That process intersected with the hyperlocal interests of white families pushing for the rights to attend or create nearby enclave schools which, in Richmond and elsewhere, exacerbate segregation across larger systems (Henig et al., 1999). As other studies have noted, these families wielded outsized influence over the rezoning process (Holme et al., 2013; Henig et al., 1999; Shircliffe et al., 2012). They used a variety of formal and informal political strategies, including public comments, meetings and online petitions, to sway the new board (Finnegan & Lavner, 2011). The racialized focus on redefining the communities included in certain school

zones inevitably meant that other communities were excluded. South of the river, the attendance zone for Westover Hills shifted east to incorporate heavily white neighborhoods along the river. As a result, the new zone for Westover Hills became more than 50% white, while the neighboring zone for Blackwell became less than 5% white. In many ways, the recent process represented a continuation of Richmond's long history of using school closures and rezoning to avoid *Brown's* mandate (Duke, 1995; Pratt, 1992).

Third, the politically contentious closure and rezoning process in Richmond was related to clear and consistent increases in school segregation. Levels of black-white school segregation across attendance zones, high to begin with, rose from .65 to .70 in just one year. Actual enrollment in elementary schools was not as heavily impacted as the makeup of the attendance zones, but overall levels of school segregation also increased. Instead of building on new and growing racial and socioeconomic diversity in the city, then, the 2013 closure and rezoning of elementary schools significantly exacerbated existing patterns of segregation in a short period of time.

Fourth, amid the negative impacts of the rezoning, possibility and hope remain. Numerous stakeholders went on record in support of fostering diversity in a long-segregated school system. Moreover, a new grassroots coalition, formed in response to the closure and rezoning process, may represent the emergence of increased civic capacity around the twin goals of equity and diversity in city schools. Reminiscent of earlier case studies highlighting the role of the courts in helping navigate racial mistrust and remedy potential violations of equal protection under the law (Fraga, Erlichson & Lee, 1998; Stone, 1998), the coalition was responsible for filing the lawsuit, dismissed in January 2016 but possibly pending appeal, over the closure and rezoning process.

Our key findings reinforced what we know about the difficult political calculations and pressures that come into play when the subject of school closures and rezoning are broached (Weatherly et al., 1983; Finnegan and Lavner, 2011) and indicated that changing demographics in our urban communities may not immediately herald increased diversity in our schools. Though most public commentary—even those in favor of rezoning to create more enclave schools—offered support for the concept of racially diverse schools, enrollment data indicated that most urban white parents prefer to send their children to predominately white schools. In a city still reeling from the markedly depleted tax base associated with white and middle class flight decades earlier, pressure from a new generation of politically active, largely white and well-resourced parents helped spur school district leaders to create additional enclave schools during the rezoning process.

Of course, given the nature of a case study, findings from Richmond do not necessarily extend across all communities. More research is needed to understand whether or not events and impacts in Richmond are emblematic of other places. It will also be important to explore how the impacts of rezoning in Richmond shift over time—for instance, will the redrawn Westover Hills zone become an enclave school as the children of newly invested families begin kindergarten?

### **Directions for Leadership and Policy**

Based on the experience of Richmond, we offer the following policy recommendations for consideration. Vast improvements to the political processes surrounding closure and rezoning should include meaningful engagement of diverse communities, carefully compiled data, internal and external expertise, ethical leadership, shared goals and transparency. In particular, school leaders should ensure that processes garner participation from, and give equal

weight to, all voices in the community. Given the intergovernmental tension surrounding the funding of city schools, leadership should employ a long-range and inclusive process evaluating and planning for school system budget needs. Staggered school board elections could help staunch the loss of institutional memory surrounding appropriate processes and procedures—in addition to blunting dramatic swings in board politics.

Relatedly, because a vast body of social science evidence points to the harms of school segregation and the benefits that flow from integration (see, e.g. Linn & Welner, 2007), leaders should commit to conducting rezoning efforts with a goal of fostering racial and economic diversity to the utmost extent possible. It should go without saying that closure and rezoning processes must adhere to stated laws, procedures and guidelines. When they do not, however, the judicial system—and to some extent, the executive branch—have roles to play. Traditional lawsuits or civil rights complaints to the U.S. Department of Education offer an important path for enforcing the rights of minority groups in a still racially polarized society.

In the event that diverse urban communities come together to nurture civic capacity, as was in evidence with the formation of Richmond’s grassroots coalition, they should consider advocacy efforts supporting controlled choice policies instead of traditional school zones. As prior literature points out, school boundary lines help drive housing patterns (Weiher, 1992; Pearce, 1980). If school leaders draw zones in a way that concentrates racial groups and/or poverty, it can be very difficult to integrate the surrounding neighborhoods in a stable way. It stands to reason that attendance zones encircling a racially and socioeconomically diverse group of neighborhoods could help foster stable and diverse schools and neighborhoods. Controlled choice plans go even farther, though, by opening up the entire urban housing market because

families understand that they can move anywhere in the city and still access a high quality, diverse school.

The case of Richmond indicates that race is still a vitally important factor in politics, governance and policy decision making, particularly when it comes to schools. New approaches that leverage urban demographic changes with a focus on equity and that ensure transparent government and participatory school oversight are sorely needed. Further, as cities change demographically, closure and rezoning decisions that seek to leverage these shifts to increase school diversity to the extent possible must consider the residential composition of school zones, not just current enrollments of schools.

As this case study also shows, the nature of urban racial politics is changing, presenting both new challenges and new opportunities for leaders interested in promoting school integration. Like other demographically shifting city school systems across the country (Frey, 2013), more young people who embrace diversity and city life are choosing to stay in Richmond and send their children to public schools. By helping those newcomers understand the conditions that fostered systematically segregated urban schools in the past—to include the dangers and tensions embedded in the creation of enclave schools—and by following a thoughtful plan with the goal of consolidating multiple schools into fewer but better facilities, Richmond's school leaders, and others, could position themselves to attract even more families to diverse schools and to improve conditions for those already in the school system. At the end of the day, given the ongoing relationship between school segregation and educational inequality, leaders involved in closure and rezoning processes should prioritize the creation of as many inclusive, equitable and diverse schools as possible and avoid exacerbating already high levels of segregation.

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Table 1: Percent White Students in Grades 1-8 Residing in Former, Prior Board Approved and Final Elementary School Boundaries, Richmond City, 2006-2010

	% White			
	Former Elementary Zones	Board Approved Summer 2012 Elementary Zones	Board Approved June 2013 Elementary Zones	Board Approved August 2013 Elementary Zones
Bellevue	8.1	6.8	6.8	6.8
Blackwell	28.5	25.3	0.0	0.0
Broad Rock	2.9	3.6	3.2	2.9
Carver	10.6	10.8	10.4	10.4
Cary	61.3	61.3	16.4	16.4
Chimborazo	12.4	16.5	16.5	16.5
Clark Springs	9.4	11.6	n/a	n/a
Fairfield Court	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Fisher	40.4	34.3	39.9	39.9
Fox	76.5	76.5	77.4	77.4
Francis	9.7	5.3	4.1	5.3
Ginter Park	7.6	10.0	10.0	10.0
Greene	1.3	1.3	0.0	0.0
Holton	35.1	35.1	35.1	35.1
Mason	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4
Miles Jones	3.3	1.9	1.9	1.9
Munford	96.1	96.1	96.1	96.1
Oak Grove	1.3	3.1	4.2	4.2
Overby Sheppard	3.5	2.6	2.6	2.6
Redd	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Reid	1.7	6.0	6.0	6.0
Southampton	41.3	56.6	35.9	35.9
Stuart	1.9	2.9	2.9	2.9
Summer Hill	5.1	n/a	n/a	n/a
Swansboro	3.0	1.7	1.7	1.7
Westover Hills	13.5	25.2	55.9	55.9
Woodville	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9
<b>AVERAGE ALL ZONES</b>	<b>17.8</b>	<b>19.3</b>	<b>17.3</b>	<b>17.4</b>

Source: American Community Survey, 2006-2010, 5 year estimates. Tables C14007B-1.

Note: Missing data for block groups in the William Fox zone, particularly around VCU.

Several other missing block groups also reported. Includes students enrolled in public and private schools.



*Table 2: White-black, white-Latino and black-Latino index of dissimilarity by former, prior and final elementary school boundaries, Richmond City, 2006-2010*

	<b>Former Elementar y Zones</b>	<b>Board Approved Summer 2012 Elementary Zones</b>	<b>Board Approved June 2013 Elementary Zones</b>	<b>Board Approved August 2013 Elementary Zones</b>
White-black dissimilarity	0.65	0.66	0.70	0.70
White-Latino dissimilarity	0.75	0.75	0.73	0.73
Black-Latino dissimilarity	0.52	0.54	0.57	0.55

*Source: American Community Survey, 2006-2010, 5 year estimates. Tables C14007B-1.*

*Note: Missing data for block groups in the William Fox zone, particularly around VCU.*

*Several other missing block groups also reported. Includes students enrolled in public and private schools.*

Table 3. Percent white students enrolling in elementary schools, Richmond Public Schools, 2011 and 2013

	% White	
	2011	2013
Bellevue Elementary	2.4	3.2
Blackwell Elementary	2.0	0.6
Broad Rock Elementary	3.6	4.8
Chimborazo Elementary	1.6	3.4
Clark Springs Elementary	1.6	n/a
E.S.H. Greene Elementary	3.1	0.4
Elizabeth D. Redd Elementary	4.5	2.9
Fairfield Court Elementary	0.4	0.2
G.H. Reid Elementary	2.8	n/a
George Mason Elementary	0.2	0.4
George W. Carver Elementary	0.2	1.2
Ginter Park Elementary	0.4	0.7
J.B. Fisher Elementary	20.1	13.0
J.E.B. Stuart Elementary	0.3	2.0
J.L. Francis Elementary	4.0	3.2
John B. Cary Elementary	12.6	9.2
Linwood Holton Elementary	30.4	33.4
Mary Munford Elementary	78.6	77.3
Miles Jones Elementary	3.7	2.9
Oak Grove/Bellemeade Elementary	2.8	1.4
Overby-Sheppard Elementary	1.0	1.6
Southampton Elementary	8.7	6.7
Summer Hill/Ruffin Road Elementary	3.6	n/a
Swansboro Elementary	2.4	1.5
Westover Hills Elementary	4.6	4.3
William Fox Elementary	62.9	63.3
Woodville Elementary	0.2	0.6
<b>AVERAGE ALL SCHOOLS</b>	<b>9.6</b>	<b>9.9</b>

Source: VDOE Fall Membership Reports, 2011 and 2013.

*Table 4. White-black, white-Latino and black-Latino index of dissimilarity for elementary schools, Richmond City, 2011 and 2013*

	<b>2011</b>	<b>2013</b>
White-black dissimilarity	0.69	0.72
White-Latino dissimilarity	0.75	0.76
Black-Latino dissimilarity	0.57	0.57

*Source: VDOE Fall Membership Reports, 2011 and 2013.*

## Appendix

*Table 1A: Percent Black Students in Grades 1-8 Residing in Former, Prior Board Approved and Final Elementary School Boundaries, Richmond City, 2006-2010*

	<b>% Black</b>			
	<b>Former Elementary Zones</b>	<b>Board Approved Summer 2012 Elementary Zones</b>	<b>Board Approved June 2013 Elementary Zones</b>	<b>Board Approved August 2013 Elementary Zones</b>
Bellevue	91.9	91.2	91.2	91.2
Blackwell	65.7	69.6	92.4	92.4
Broad Rock	56.6	67.7	69.7	72.5
Carver	83.3	84.0	84.4	84.4
Cary	24.6	24.6	77.8	77.8
Chimborazo	86.5	83.5	83.5	83.5
Clark Springs	85.8	80.6	n/a	n/a
Fairfield Court	84.1	84.1	84.1	84.1
Fisher	32.1	35.5	43.6	43.6
Fox	19.9	19.9	10.5	10.5
Francis	81.0	86.2	89.2	86.2
Ginter Park	91.2	90.0	90.0	90.0
Greene	90.7	90.7	87.1	87.1
Holton	47.9	47.9	47.9	47.9
Mason	93.9	93.9	93.9	93.9
Miles Jones	62.8	73.2	73.2	73.2
Munford	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Oak Grove	75.6	68.4	67.1	67.1
Overby Sheppard	88.6	91.5	91.5	91.5
Redd	93.0	87.8	98.9	98.9
Reid	64.3	54.5	54.5	54.5
Southampton	42.3	34.3	40.8	40.8
Stuart	95.5	94.3	94.3	94.3
Summer Hill	70.8	n/a	n/a	n/a
Swansboro	66.1	73.1	73.1	73.1
Westover Hills	64.0	52.3	26.5	26.5
Woodville	94.7	94.7	94.7	94.7
<b>AVERAGE ALL ZONES</b>	68.6	68.2	70.4	70.4

*Source: American Community Survey, 2006-2010, 5 year estimates. Tables C14007B-I.*

*Note: Missing data for block groups in the William Fox zone, particularly around VCU.*

*Several other missing block groups also reported. Includes students enrolled in public and private schools.*

Table 2A: Percent Black Students in Grades 1-8 Residing in Former, Prior Board Approved and Final Elementary School Boundaries, Richmond City, 2006-2010

	% Latino			
	Former Elementary Zones	Board Approved Summer 2012 Elementary Zones	Board Approved June 2013 Elementary Zones	Board Approved August 2013 Elementary Zones
Bellevue	0.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Blackwell	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Broad Rock	26.2	14.9	16.6	15.1
Carver	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Cary	9.2	9.2	0.0	0.0
Chimborazo	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Clark Springs	0.0	0.0	n/a	n/a
Fairfield Court	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Fisher	13.7	15.1	8.2	8.2
Fox	3.6	3.6	8.6	8.6
Francis	4.6	2.7	2.1	2.7
Ginter Park	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Greene	7.9	7.9	12.9	12.9
Holton	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2
Mason	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Miles Jones	7.3	4.8	4.8	4.8
Munford	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Oak Grove	5.7	14.2	9.8	9.8
Overby Sheppard	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Redd	1.4	1.8	0.0	0.0
Reid	22.9	28.5	28.5	28.5
Southampton	3.3	1.6	4.0	4.0
Stuart	2.6	1.4	1.4	1.4
Summer Hill	12.7	n/a	n/a	n/a
Swansboro	4.8	2.7	2.7	2.7
Westover Hills	3.8	8.0	6.3	6.3
Woodville	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4
<b>AVERAGE ALL ZONES</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>4.5</b>

Source: American Community Survey, 2006-2010, 5 year estimates. Tables C14007B-I.

Note: Missing data for block groups in the William Fox zone, particularly around VCU.

Several other missing block groups also reported. Includes students enrolled in public and private schools.

*Table 3A: Percent Black Students Enrolling in Elementary Schools, Richmond Public Schools, 2011 and 2013*

	<b>% Black</b>	
	<b>2011</b>	<b>2013</b>
Bellevue Elementary	95.6	95.5
Blackwell Elementary	92.0	87.0
Broad Rock Elementary	69.6	60.3
Chimborazo Elementary	97.3	95.1
Clark Springs Elementary	98.4	n/a
E.S.H. Greene Elementary	40.8	19.7
Elizabeth D. Redd Elementary	78.8	72.1
Fairfield Court Elementary	99.6	98.6
G.H. Reid Elementary	68.5	n/a
George Mason Elementary	98.8	96.7
George W. Carver Elementary	96.2	94.8
Ginter Park Elementary	99.4	95.1
J.B. Fisher Elementary	68.3	64.9
J.E.B. Stuart Elementary	93.1	92.5
J.L. Francis Elementary	82.2	69.3
John B. Cary Elementary	78.9	86.1
Linwood Holton Elementary	63.2	60.9
Mary Munford Elementary	12.8	12.1
Miles Jones Elementary	69.0	72.9
Oak Grove/Bellemeade Elementary	93.1	86.9
Overby-Sheppard Elementary	93.8	97.7
Southampton Elementary	76.0	81.6
Summer Hill/Ruffin Road Elementary	60.2	n/a
Swansboro Elementary	94.2	94.5
Westover Hills Elementary	88.6	88.5
William Fox Elementary	29.1	20.6
Woodville Elementary	98.9	95.2
<b>AVERAGE ALL SCHOOLS</b>	<b>79.1</b>	<b>76.6</b>

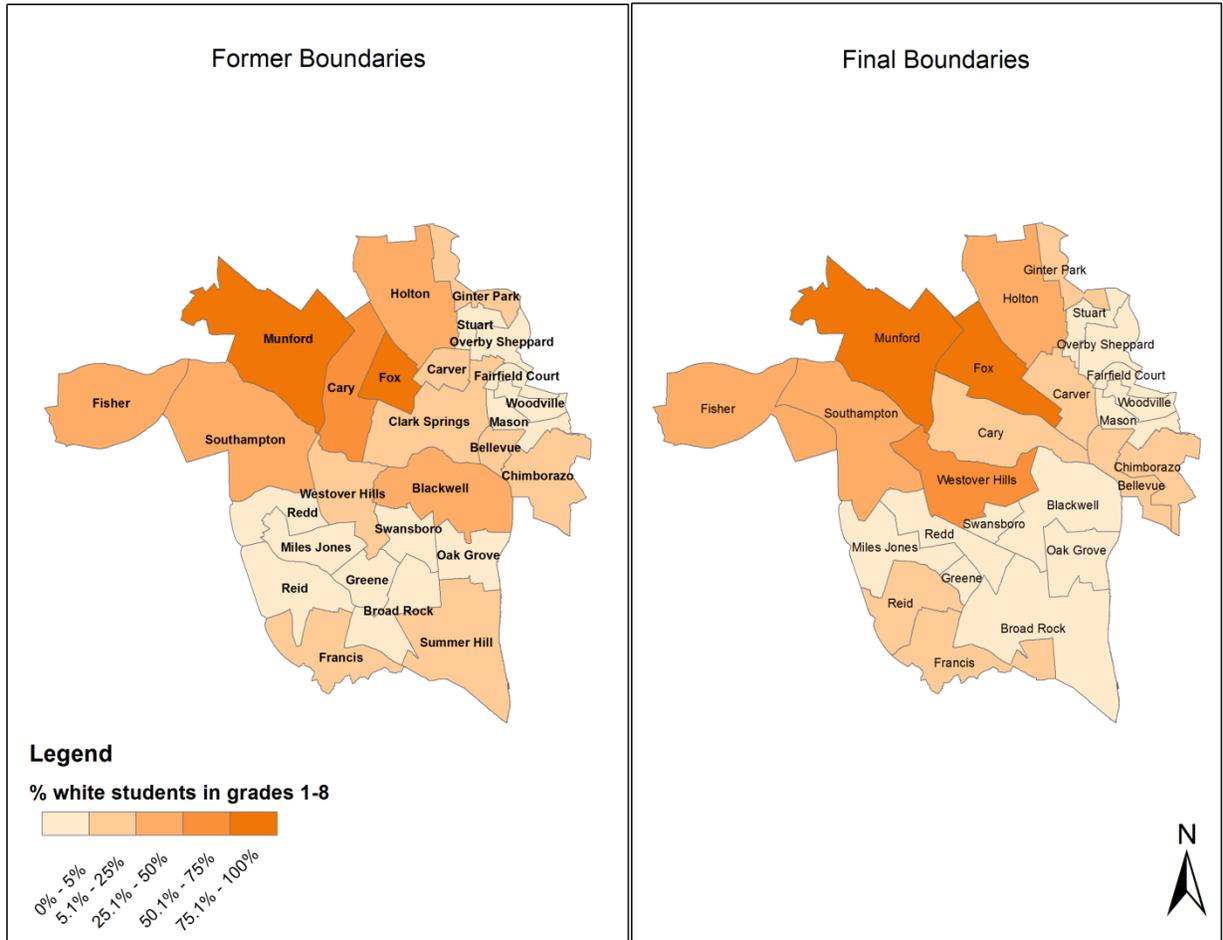
*Source: VDOE Fall Membership Reports, 2011 and 2013.*

*Table 4A: Percent Black Students Enrolling in Elementary Schools, Richmond Public Schools, 2011 and 2013*

	<b>% Latino</b>	
	<b>2011</b>	<b>2013</b>
Bellevue Elementary	0.7	0.3
Blackwell Elementary	5.1	10.4
Broad Rock Elementary	24.6	33.0
Chimborazo Elementary	0.7	0.6
Clark Springs Elementary	0.0	n/a
E.S.H. Greene Elementary	55.6	79.5
Elizabeth D. Redd Elementary	13.9	22.0
Fairfield Court Elementary	0.4	0.4
G.H. Reid Elementary	27.3	n/a
George Mason Elementary	1.0	1.8
George W. Carver Elementary	1.5	1.9
Ginter Park Elementary	0.2	1.2
J.B. Fisher Elementary	6.6	14.3
J.E.B. Stuart Elementary	2.8	1.4
J.L. Francis Elementary	12.1	25.8
John B. Cary Elementary	6.0	1.3
Linwood Holton Elementary	1.8	1.7
Mary Munford Elementary	4.2	3.2
Miles Jones Elementary	25.4	21.9
Oak Grove/Bellemeade Elementary	3.6	10.5
Overby-Sheppard Elementary	1.0	0.7
Southampton Elementary	13.1	8.8
Summer Hill/Ruffin Road Elementary	35.2	n/a
Swansboro Elementary	0.9	1.8
Westover Hills Elementary	5.4	5.9
William Fox Elementary	3.5	7.0
Woodville Elementary	0.6	1.4
<b>AVERAGE ALL SCHOOLS</b>	<b>9.4</b>	<b>10.7</b>

*Source: VDOE Fall Membership Reports, 2011 and 2013.*

Figure 1. Percent White Students in Grades 1-8 Residing in Former and Final Elementary School Boundaries, Richmond City, 2006-2010



Source: American Community Survey, 2006-2010, 5 year estimates. Tables C14007B-I.  
 Note: Missing data for block groups in the William Fox zone, particularly around VCU.  
 Several other missing block groups also reported. Includes students enrolled in public and private schools.