

Susan Pendergrass (00:01.528)

Thank you so much for joining us on the podcast. Tim DeRoche of the available to all.

Your nonpartisan watchdog defending equal access to public schools, meaning that public schools are like public libraries. They should be available to anyone who wants to go to them in your opinion. Cool.

Tim DeRoche (00:25.401)

Exactly, exactly. We try to expose kind of the injustices and the corruption around student assignment policies, right? So when the districts or the state decides how to assign kids to schools, often those policies are benefiting certain political stakeholders and we're trying to expose how they don't necessarily serve the public at large.

Susan Pendergrass (00:50.21)

And you have a new report out called Show Me the Way Out that addresses Missouri specifically, and I wanna talk about that, but that's so interesting to me because oftentimes when I talk to people about opening up district lines or open enrollment in Missouri, they would say that that is the unfair approach because that's not fair to people who bought a house and pay property taxes in a school district if you let kids come from outside the district. What's your response to that?

Tim DeRoche (01:14.504)

Right.

Tim DeRoche (01:18.895)

Well, my response to that is, that's sort of making a, an argument based on the, the, the school finance policy that we have in place. Right. And my argument is, well, school finance policies should serve the families of wherever we are. So the school finance policies in Missouri should serve the families of Missouri. And if, those school finance policies are locking children, especially middle income kids,

low-income kids into struggling or failing schools, then the school finance policy is a problem, right, for people getting an equal opportunity at a high-quality education. But because a high-quality education determines, you know, the quality of education you get determines how your life turns out off in the economic opportunities that you get over the course of your lifetime.

If we're, you know, if we're determining that based on where you live, for example, and we're boxing out middle income kids and low income kids out of the best public schools, then that is, is it's really problematic for our social contract. It's problematic for our society. it's problematic for this American ideal that everyone has access to the American dream. So, you know, I understand those objections, but there are lots of places, lots of states where they've designed the school finance policies to.

better serve the families and so we would argue you got to do that first and we You know to us finance school finance is a secondary question it's a policy question after the fact of the civil rights question of our Kids allowed to attend public schools, right? if these are public schools, they're meant to be available to the public and if if you know, we're if we're sorting kids into winners and losers

in life when they're five, when they're assigned to kindergarten, right? They're either being assigned to a very, very high performing school or a low performing school or even a failing school. And sometimes those are kids on either side of one side of a street. Yeah, exactly. That's what we found with our report. I'm sure we're going to get to talk about that a little bit more. then, then that is a major, major problem. and so we just argue for

Susan Pendergrass (03:27.63)

Certainly in Missouri.

Tim DeRoche (03:40.563)

not having such strict student assignment policies. And certainly I understand, you know, that the I'm a father of four kids and finding a school close to our home is really important to us. So many people get scared that, you know, if we're not going to have strict residential assignment, then am I going to still have access to the school near my home? Well, we all shop at local grocery stores. We send our kids to local daycare centers without passing laws to box out our neighbors, right? To keep them out.

So we really believe that the public schools are supposed to be available to all and that policies should reflect.

Susan Pendergrass (04:16.866)

Yeah, so I think Missouri is like the poster child for this. have 520 school districts in a state with only 850,000 public school students, but in a county like St. Louis County, we have dozens of school districts and some of them are very small. And certainly the block I lived on in the city of St. Louis, if I crossed the street at the end of my street, I would be in the much better school district, not the city of St. Louis, but Clayton, just the street I could see.

Tim DeRoche (04:29.736)

Yep.

Tim DeRoche (04:45.618)

Yep.

Susan Pendergrass (04:45.688)

First of all, my house would double in value and my kids would get to go to the school. when, and we have all these little tiny school districts in one county. And when I talk about

the idea of just opening up St. Louis County, people clutch their pearls. get very nervous. They're very nervous about this idea because it's foreign in Missouri. And we have a reputation. We have a hard red line. As you mentioned your report, Delmar divide people North of Delmar and

versus people south of Delmar and they don't really want to cross either direction. And it's so entrenched, it goes back a hundred years in our state that people can't envision what it would be like if just in one county kids could travel to the school of their choice. I mean, have you met that kind of resistance in other places?

Tim DeRoche (05:35.067)

Yeah, it's common. mean, there are places where this is working fairly well, right? No place where it's working perfectly. But if you look at states like Arizona and Wisconsin, for example, large numbers of kids are crossing school district boundaries. And what I would say is, you know, one of the key findings of our report is that really, Missouri is an outlier, right? Missouri has one of the strictest systems of residential assignment for the public schools in the country.

Susan Pendergrass (05:55.374)

Yeah.

Tim DeRoche (06:02.835)

And we estimated, you know, we used NCES data and some local Missouri data to estimate that, you know, 95 % of kids in Missouri are going to the school that was assigned to them by their district. Right. So that means only 5 % are going to some other school, some other public school that that

is a very, very low number nationally. And so it kind of reflects the fact that a lot of these kids end up trapped in poor performing schools. And you mentioned the district lines. know, it's important to note here, some of the districts are bigger than others. In the bigger districts, especially the attendance zone lines can also be very important. So the district lines are jurisdictional lines, usually set via the political process.

the line between the Clayton School District and the St. Louis Public Schools, right? In Missouri, not everywhere, but in Missouri, that corresponds to who's paying for those schools, how they're being paid for via the local property taxes. But...

Susan Pendergrass (07:07.788)

talk about Columbia a little bit because Columbia is a good example of what you're alluding to. Within a single district, big, big changes.

Tim DeRoche (07:14.129)

Yep, exactly. Yeah, there can be very big differences. So the attendance zone lines are within

a district and those are drawn by the district. They're usually, you know, it's drawn outside the political process. There's not a lot of transparency in how these maps get drawn. Typically, you know, when the line, when they move the lines around, I mean, sometimes the lines calcify over time because people are like, you know,

especially the people in the really coveted schools, right? They're like, don't touch my lines. And the districts learn, if we don't want to anger these people who feel like, I moved into this zone, I overpaid for my house to live in this zone. And so, you know, we don't want to mess with them because they're going to be very, very angry if we, you know, kind of tweak the zones a little bit. So sometimes they calcify, but when they do change, it's kind of behind closed doors and you never really know what's going on.

So those attendance zone lines can be very, very important. And as you know, we've documented several places in Missouri and then lots of other places around the country where these lines kind of replicate the patterns of the racist redlining maps from the thirties. Yeah. So you've got, you know, I'm not sure how familiar your listeners are with redlining, but this was a

Susan Pendergrass (08:28.524)

Yup, definitely.

Tim DeRoche (08:37.883)

system in the 1930s when there was the New Deal era, there was all this housing assistance program, all these housing assistance programs from the federal government. They had an agency, a federal government agency that went around drawing maps, shading certain areas, red or yellow that were, quote unquote, hazardous or declining. And if you lived in that area, these were areas with high concentrations of people of color or immigrants. If you lived in that area, no matter who you were, right, whether you were white or black or

Hispanic, whether you're an immigrant or not, you had a much harder time getting housing assistance, right? And so in many ways, these strict attendance zone boundaries, these strict district boundaries, they're often doing the same work that the redlining map did. And they're saying, okay, we're boxing these people out. We have limited resource, you know, we have limited numbers of schools that are good and we're to box out all the lower income and middle income people. And we're going to make sure that these extremely coveted schools are really reserved for.

the people who can afford to pay, you know, a significant premium for their homes. And as you pointed out, they really distort the real estate prices, right? And so, I mean, these lines contribute to our affordable housing crisis. And I think anyone who's looked for a home, even people who don't have kids, right? You look for a home and maybe you're boxed out of a certain neighborhood because, you know, somebody swoops in and says, I'm going to pay \$300,000 extra for that home because it comes with this school and I want my kids to go to

that school. And so you're...

You may not even have any kids and you're impacted by this because it affects housing prices and drives up housing prices.

Susan Pendergrass (10:13.196)

And what you're saying is it's just patently unfair to children. That's right. I mean, because people are like, and so what? And who cares? I like it. It works for me. I pick the neighborhood where I want my kids to go to school. And this is the way it works in this country. And too bad. when I've heard people give me that argument, I'm like, we have to break the connection between where you go to school and residential prices and property taxes, because that is what really, really

Tim DeRoche (10:16.231)

Yeah.

Yeah, yeah, exactly.

Tim DeRoche (10:25.554)

Yeah.

Susan Pendergrass (10:42.67)

ruins the prospects for so many children.

Tim DeRoche (10:46.257)

Yeah, I mean, to me, me, Susan is really just un-American, right? Because we are supposed to be the land of equal opportunity, right? The land of meritocracy. And, you you've got these publicly funded institutions that are being reserved for wealthy people, right? And it's very problematic just for our social contract and for

You know, all these, all these lower income folks, they know there are high quality public schools and they may not know the logistics of, you know, the attendance zone boundaries or whatever. Sometimes the districts don't even want to publish these maps, right? But, but these people know that there are high quality public schools and they know that my kids aren't really welcome there, right? I, I know, I know the word on the street is I can't get my kids in there. They may not know, you know, the exact laws that are excluding them, but they know they can't get their kids in there. That is extremely damaging.

to this ideal, this core ideal of America, which is that everybody has an equal opportunity and, the public schools are supposed to be the engine for that equal opportunity, right? The, the, the great equalizer, this idea that, you know, we're going to have a meritocracy, but everybody's going to get an equal shot and we're going to give everybody an education. Well, if you're sorting kids into winners and losers when they're five based on the wealth of

their family, you know, it's no wonder that so many

people are losing faith in our government and in our system.

Susan Pendergrass (12:19.534)

Yeah, and we flipped that on its head in the last year or two when bills have been filed and considered to allow parents to choose a public school open enrollment. And it's been on a voluntary basis where we wouldn't compel a district to accept kids who want to transfer. And what the legislature considered last year didn't make it into law was they got pushed back. They wanted to carve out the lowest performing districts and say, those kids aren't allowed to leave because if they leave,

Tim DeRoche (12:45.518)

jeez.

Susan Pendergrass (12:47.714)

The district's gonna be more hurting and then they're gonna take money with them and then the district's gonna fall apart. So they literally pulled out some of the lowest performing districts in the state and they locked the door and they said, you are not allowed to leave this district. Yes, 3 % of the eighth graders are proficient in math, but you are not allowed to leave. And to me, that is just absolutely flipping it on its head. That's the point. And like you said, Wisconsin and other states that have had this for a long time, you find that families

want to choose a higher performing school. They know that their kids are in low performing schools. It's not a secret to them. They want to choose a higher performing school. Not necessarily, I think there's a worry in Missouri that they'll just go from low income to high income, but low income tends to be low performing and high income. So they're sort of conflating the two. And the fact is parents that are stuck in these schools just want to get their kids into the better school period, right?

Tim DeRoche (13:46.503)

Yeah, and if those schools are failing, right? If there's gonna be an exit from those schools, that should be telling us something, right? That should be telling us something about the quality of those schools. It's not that the kids exist for the school district, right? The kids do not exist for the school district, for the finances of the school district. If those families see better options for their kids,

at public schools, at quote unquote public schools, you can't keep them locked into, you know, that's a Soviet style system, right? Like we're gonna lock people into this, you know, where we assign them in order to preserve the status quo. I don't know, I just think it's fundamentally un-American and we gotta move away from it.

Susan Pendergrass (14:36.046)

And you know, in Missouri, as a parent, you can go to jail if you try to game the system. If you try to, there's a criminal and a civil penalty. We're the only state in union that has that. And, and I often want to ask people who support the system, who don't want to change the system, what is your biggest fear? Like, what are you afraid of is going to happen? Because some states have had this since the nineties and their public school systems are alive and well. And we just don't see this huge, you know,

Tim DeRoche (14:41.49)

Yeah.

Susan Pendergrass (15:03.942)

rush out of the lowest performing and to like, I've talked to a colleague in Arizona who said that in the top district like Scottsdale, they just come in and they go out. Some number comes in, some number goes out. You really don't see this clear pattern, but it gives families an option. know, we spoke to a family where we either have a video out or coming out soon with a couple who had two kids from the foster care system and one of them is being bullied in their public school. They just want to go to a different public school.

Tim DeRoche (15:12.776)

Yeah.

Susan Pendergrass (15:34.594)

just to get away from the situation and they can't, they could pay tuition. Missouri allows parents to pay tuition. But other than that, I don't understand the logic behind that. So I do want to dig in a little bit on the specifics of your report. You looked at several different communities in Missouri and you basically overlaid the redlining maps.

Tim DeRoche (15:36.52)

Yep.

Tim DeRoche (15:54.407)

Yeah, we found three examples. we always make the case. In fact, I saw I a book about this a few years ago and I remember I was writing this chapter. was saying, you know, I was called a fine line how most American kids are kept out of the best public schools and available to all really grew out of the work that I did on that book, the research. And so I was writing a chapter kind of comparing these strict educational boundaries to the redlining era, right?

Susan Pendergrass (16:02.488)

Give us the title. It's a fine line,

Tim DeRoche (16:24.049)

where we use geographic maps to kind of box people out of valuable government services.

And so was making that case and I thought, wait a second, these are maps, right? I can line them up on each other, even though one is like a, I can line up a modern day attendance zone or a school district boundary over the old redlining map of the same neighborhood. And so these redlining maps were generally drawn in the late thirties. And so I started doing that with some schools here in Los Angeles where,

I live in, fact, my old neighborhood and found right away the first two schools I looked at, there was this direct comparison, right? And so we've been doing that. There was this basically the red lining map, the current modern day attendance zone or district boundary kind of mimics the pattern and boxes out the red and yellow areas where there back then there were significant numbers of people of color and lower income working class people.

And then same thing today, those neighborhoods often still have that demographic makeup and they're still being boxed out. But so we've been doing that across the country and for the Missouri report, we did that and we found three examples. So one example, the Clayton school district, your neighborhood, right? Versus St. Louis public schools. And then another one in Kansas City.

Susan Pendergrass (17:41.326)  
next.

Tim DeRoche (17:49.307)  
I believe that's Field Elementary and then the third is St. Joseph, Hale Cook Elementary. think I might have reversed the, I reversed Fields and St. Joseph, yeah, but Hale Cook is in Kansas City. So anyway.

Susan Pendergrass (17:58.998)  
Yeah, I think you did. Field was in St. Joseph and Hale Cooke's in, you know. And you did one in Columbia as well. I know you looked at Interstate 63. I think it is in Columbia and the high school is on either side of

Tim DeRoche (18:10.363)  
Yep, yep, exactly. So anyway, so what we're showing here is, regardless of whether the map is the same from the 30s, these policies are very analogous. The strict residential assignment system based on maps is very analogous to the redlining era. And we all know that redlining is wrong, right? The courts have ruled that you can't redline. The Congress has passed laws against redlining, but to this day, there's nothing that prevents school districts from doing the same.

Susan Pendergrass (18:28.758)  
yeah.

Tim DeRoche (18:37.881)



And so, so anyway, these examples of these maps where they really do mimic the old redlining maps just kind of reinforces this idea of, this is, this is very, very similar. And so, you know, we, we think that educational redlining should be illegal just as, traditional redlining is, has been made illegal.

Susan Pendergrass (18:59.054)

I always say like if you flew a drone over Missouri, you wouldn't see these district lines. They are not sacred. They were created in many cases to keep kids out, right? They aren't to keep kids in. So a couple of the pushbacks that I hear are we won't be able to figure out how to transport kids because they're going to be going here, there and everywhere. can't. Transportation is what drives this. And when I've seen redoing attendance zones within a district, when I've witnessed it, first of all, parents go nuts.

Tim DeRoche (19:03.857)

Yeah, exactly. They're imaginary. Yeah. Yeah.

Susan Pendergrass (19:28.044)

Right. They hate it. They hate redistricting periods and they show up to the board meetings and all that. They really don't like it. But I've seen them, you know, I've seen like, but if the bus makes a U-turn, there's a lot of it's about the bus and it does, it does ultimately set kids on a path. And so if we don't want the bus to make a U-turn, we are saying that's worth it to put these kids on these paths. Right. So how do you, what would you say to the folks who say we can't open up district lines because of transportation?

Tim DeRoche (19:28.305)

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Tim DeRoche (19:56.637)

Yeah, well, I'll say something first about the fights about the attendance zone boundary. know, parents get so angry, and they get angry, it points out the perversion of these lines, right? Like, I'm assigned to this one school, now they're gonna assign me to a different school. know, mean, somebody was being excluded from the original line that they're changing, now they might feel like they're being excluded, it's being changed. This whole idea that the district would assign you to a school.

Susan Pendergrass (20:06.242)

Yeah. Yeah.

Tim DeRoche (20:21.319)

Right, very problematic, right? Every time the district, every time the government, like a school district assigns you to a public school, it's also taking on the role of excluding you from other public schools, which is very, very problematic role for the government or a school district to play. So secondly, transportation. Again, transportation to me is a policy

question downstream of the civil rights question of access to public schools. Now that said, obviously transportation's important. you, if, if, if,

if Missouri could provide some sort of transportation, limited transportation, right? You can't provide unlimited transportation. You go to any school in the state or any school in the county, that's usually not feasible. districts and states have found ways to fund these things. You can have a transportation allocation for the families. And in many cases, though, I want to point out like...

The families will figure out a way, many families, even the poorest of families can find a way to get their kids to a better school, right? Maybe their aunt lives close by and they can drop them off. Maybe they work close by, right? And they're just driving to work every day and they're gonna drop them off. Maybe the parents are divorced and maybe one of the non-custodial parent lives nearby. And then also some of these lines just go right down the middle of the community. So you might live within half a mile of a school

that you're told you can't go to and you're being zoned to a school that's a mile away or two miles away. So, you know, it's going to be easier for you to get your kid to that other school, right? That better school. And so we especially don't want to like shut down. We don't want to assume that people can't get their kids to the schools. We also, think, want to think about, can we subsidize education a little or subsidize transportation a little bit?

Can we provide some policy, hey, you have the right to be transported to a school within a five mile radius of your home or something. But if you can get your kid to a school that's further away, then you have a right to get that kid into that school. So I think transportation is a policy question that's just downstream of this fundamental civil rights question of who's allowed to attend a public school.

Susan Pendergrass (22:30.926)

So what are the states that are really getting it right?

Tim DeRoche (22:34.395)

I think Arizona and Wisconsin, we mentioned before, Florida has pretty good open enrollment laws. Now, none of these are perfect, right? None of them are perfect. think both Arizona and Wisconsin, we'd like to see them have better protections for kids with disabilities, right? In both cases, we've seen, you know, districts saying, you know, kind of the law has a loophole in it, right? Where the district could just say, your kid has an IEP. Then we're...

We don't have to accept them in our open enrollment program. we don't like laws like that. We like to see procedural protections for families that have children with disabilities, appeals processes. You gotta have a meeting. can't just categorically deny the kid. But anyway, Wisconsin and Arizona have laws where the school finance and the admissions

processes both work to give families more options and you see large numbers of families crossing lines.

And then you've also got crossing the district lines. And then if you talk about within district open enrollment, so open enrollment across the attendance zone boundaries within a district, you can look at nearby states like Oklahoma and Ohio. They have pretty strong laws to protect that. we, they do, that's a pretty good law. Yeah, that's a pretty good law as well. Yeah, exactly. It's early. I always like to wait and see how the courts and how the

Susan Pendergrass (23:52.578)

Kansas has got a new law. think Kansas is pretty strong, but it's year one on theirs.

Tim DeRoche (24:03.453)

the how the department regulates it to see, you know, does it does it really generate a lot of change and more options for families, more public options for families or, or is it kind of interpreted in a very constrained way? Yeah.

Susan Pendergrass (24:17.55)

Yeah, yeah, we'll see. One more pushback that I hear a lot that people ask me about, that this isn't a policy that makes at least a bit of difference to rural families. They won't be able to benefit from it. So why should they care? Why should rural legislators want to put it in place? Because rural families, number one, every one of them loves their local school. From what I've heard, 100%, 100 out of 100 love their local school.

Tim DeRoche (24:41.073)

Right. Right. Yeah. Yeah, exactly.

Susan Pendergrass (24:45.866)

And number two, the schools are all too far away. So rural families won't use this program.

Tim DeRoche (24:50.683)

Yeah, that's not what we've seen. know, Wisconsin sees some pretty significant open enrollment across the rural district lines. And especially with, you know, you've got these, you know, this blurring of lines between the urban area, the suburban area, and then the rural. And sometimes, you know, the rural areas on the edge, right, we'll see significant influxes of students, right? Sometimes this can be very good for the rural districts. Yeah, I think, yeah, what we've seen is it works, you know, now, now,

some good portion of rural folks are just gonna continue to choose their closest school. If indeed it's true that they're all 100 % happy, then maybe you're not gonna see as much transferring. But if you're wrong, there may be some movement and the districts will adjust to that, right? The districts will, what we've seen in these cases that like in Arizona, Wisconsin, the districts start to say, okay, this can help us and we can specialize in X, we're a

little bit better at this than the other.

districts and we're going to start to specialize in that. We're going to pull in kids who are particularly interested in this type of education and that, you know, that specialization I think can be good, right? One size does not always fit all.

Susan Pendergrass (26:03.342)

Yeah, and then finally, like as far as the downstream policy, was it downstream or upstream, how you fund the schools? Well, we're in Missouri, we're in the early stages of considering rethinking how we fund our schools. And I have suggested that we create a funding system that is more mobile so that it can follow kids and that each child has some funding associated with that child based on their unique set of needs. But how would you design

Tim DeRoche (26:08.851)

Yeah, I think it was downstream, but yeah, yeah.

Tim DeRoche (26:18.993)

Yeah.

Tim DeRoche (26:24.882)

Yeah.

Susan Pendergrass (26:32.95)

a funding system where the public schools are truly free and open to all.

Tim DeRoche (26:38.311)

Yeah, I think I think you're right. The maximum amount possible should be funding the student and should follow the student. You know, we don't, we shouldn't be funding school systems, right? Again, that's kind of a Soviet model, like let's fund the factory, and then we're going to assign people to work in the factory, and we're going to send money to the people who run the factory. And then, you know, we're gonna tell, you know, we're gonna have all these people move there, because we're telling them to go there. And we're, you know, we're deciding who works at that factory.

You know, in America, tend to have what's worked well for us and why we have done better than Soviet style systems is in most areas of our economy, we have more freedom of choice and movement and flexibility. And, and we trust the individual decisions of families, not that every, every family makes the right decision. Of course they don't, but they're more likely to make the right decision than some.

You know bureaucrats sitting in the basement of a building deciding who goes where to which school and so You know them we should be think of thinking of these at least, know We should think be thinking of education finance as the financing of individual students

education's right and so You know in places like Wisconsin Wisconsin still has a system that is pretty reliant on local property taxes But they've come up with a system at the state level that allows some good

portion to follow the kid across lines. And so that just opens up a lot of possibilities and I think sets up the right incentives for the district to try and build programs that will appeal both to their own students so that they don't leave, but then also potentially to nearby students who might not be within their bounds. And so I agree with you, funding.

should follow the kid, funding should be student-based and should be family-based and should serve the families of Missouri rather than serving the systems, right? The institutions that are running the system.

Susan Pendergrass (28:45.966)

What do do about the local property tax piece?

Tim DeRoche (28:49.237)

so I'm not a school finance expert. think you have to.

Susan Pendergrass (28:51.8)

Well, California's got something, right? Doesn't California send property taxes to the state and it gets redistributed? Texas does something like this.

Tim DeRoche (28:55.483)

Yeah. Well, most, really most, most of the, for a variety of reasons, the state. Yeah, exactly. Yeah. Yeah. We could go on and on about that. I mean, but the basic thing is if, yeah, in Wisconsin, what's fascinating is that, so in California, the schools are, if I understand correctly, are primarily funded out of the income tax revenue. So we have very high income taxes, but I, you I grew up in Wisconsin in my

Susan Pendergrass (29:05.677)

Let's talk about California taxes for a minute. No, I'm just kidding. California got taxes, right? Do tell.

Tim DeRoche (29:24.915)

My family still lives there. And so they pay way higher property taxes than I do on a relative basis, right? The homes out here are more expensive, but you know, my family are paying, you know, approximately the same amount in property tax as I am, despite the fact that my home might be three or four, worth three or four times as much. So the state, because of some reforms to property taxes, and then also because of some state judicial, you know, some

Susan Pendergrass (29:27.214)

High priority Texas.

Mm-hmm.

Tim DeRoche (29:54.533)

Supreme court decisions in the seventies and eighties, the state took on a bigger role, equalized the funding, right? And so usually, you know, we don't have the same reliance. The school, the school districts usually don't have the same reliance. Now there are a few exceptions. Some, some districts out here kind of, exempt themselves out of the state thing and rely more on their local property taxes. Those are usually very wealthy districts. Yeah. Yeah, exactly. Exactly.

Susan Pendergrass (30:19.118)

Yeah, that's right. There's some that are like 100 % locally funded. And that's the hard part. That's the hard part, I think. But I think the folks who I've known who want to cling to that system are the ones who benefit from it. And they're also very politically, they more political capital than the folks who are losing in the system.

Tim DeRoche (30:36.039)

Yeah, but you

Tim DeRoche (30:41.873)

More clout. Yeah, of course.

Susan Pendergrass (30:45.176)

So it's unfortunate because you have bunch of people saying, no, no, no, no, I bought this house in this district and paid my taxes and,

Tim DeRoche (30:51.815)

But this has been done many times before, California has done it. I wouldn't necessarily hold up California as an example, but Wisconsin's a good example of a property tax reliant state, local property tax reliant state that still found a way to have the state step in and provide some funding that would follow the student across district lines and has really facilitated much more public school choice and better options for kids. So I think there are ways to solve this. Missouri can solve this.

Susan Pendergrass (31:22.56)

Lord, I hope so. You know, we're the show me state. We want to do everything last so that everyone has shown us what to do. what I think is really one of the most interesting takeaways from your report is that Missouri is an outlier, that we are the strict residential assignment state of the 50 states. Would you say?

Tim DeRoche (31:30.428)

Yeah.

Tim DeRoche (31:43.059)

We haven't looked in detail at every one of the 50, but certainly, Missouri is one of the outlier states that is most reliant on these very, very strict residential assignment systems, and it's clearly hurting Missouri families.

Susan Pendergrass (31:59.15)

Well, thank you so much. Where can we find your report? Available to all dot org.

Tim DeRoche (32:04.379)

Yep. If you go to available to all.org, spelled out completely each word spelled out. it's, it's right there on the front page. The first link at the top. you can, you can find it there and you can click through.

Susan Pendergrass (32:15.15)

Well, maybe the Missouri legislature will surprise us and pass an open enrollment bill and we can maybe come back and talk about it after it goes into effect. That would be great.

Tim DeRoche (32:23.707)

We'd be thrilled to revise our report and provide more optimistic and favorable reporting.

Susan Pendergrass (32:31.17)

Thanks so much, I really appreciate it.

Tim DeRoche (32:33.223)

Thanks, Susan. Thanks for having me.