

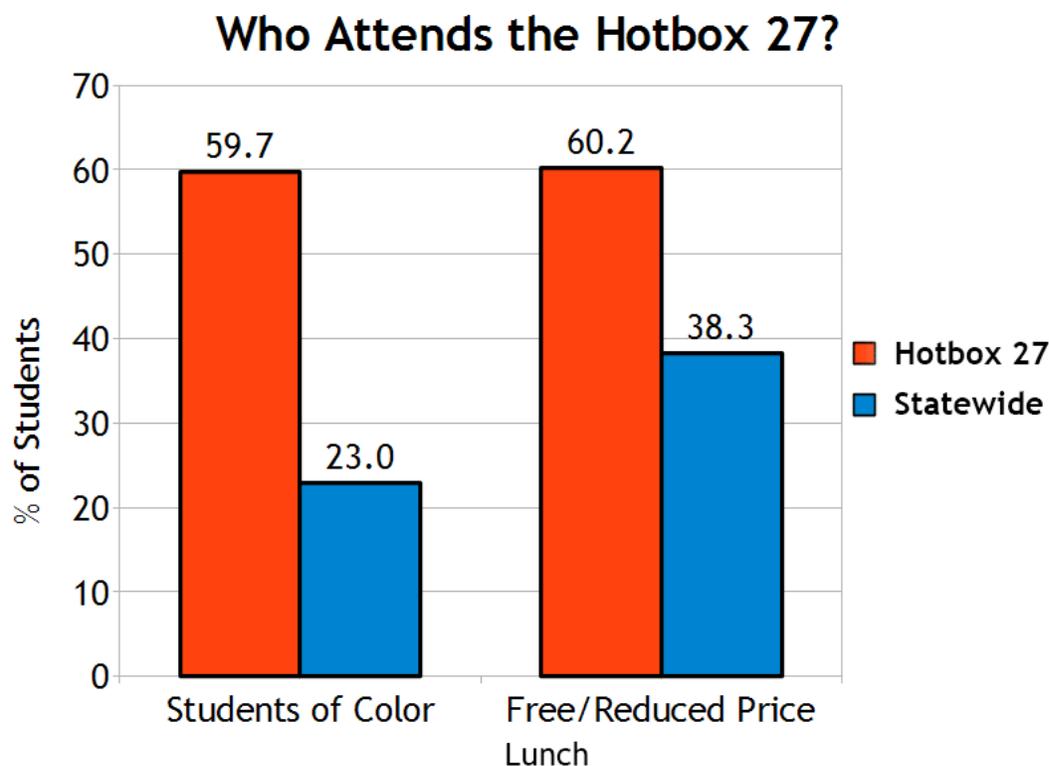
## Who attends the Minneapolis Hotbox 27?

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As you may have noticed, it's been hot recently. This has caused a host of problems, including some pretty big ones in Minneapolis. 27 schools have been closed for the remainder of the week because of nonexistent or inadequate air conditioning. It's obviously difficult for students to learn in a hotbox, and excessive heat can aggravate many health conditions.

We also need to consider the equity issues at play here. Minnesota 2020 has taken data from the Minnesota Department of Education to put together a profile of the students in those 27 schools. We've also included the average information for the state as a whole, just to provide some additional context.

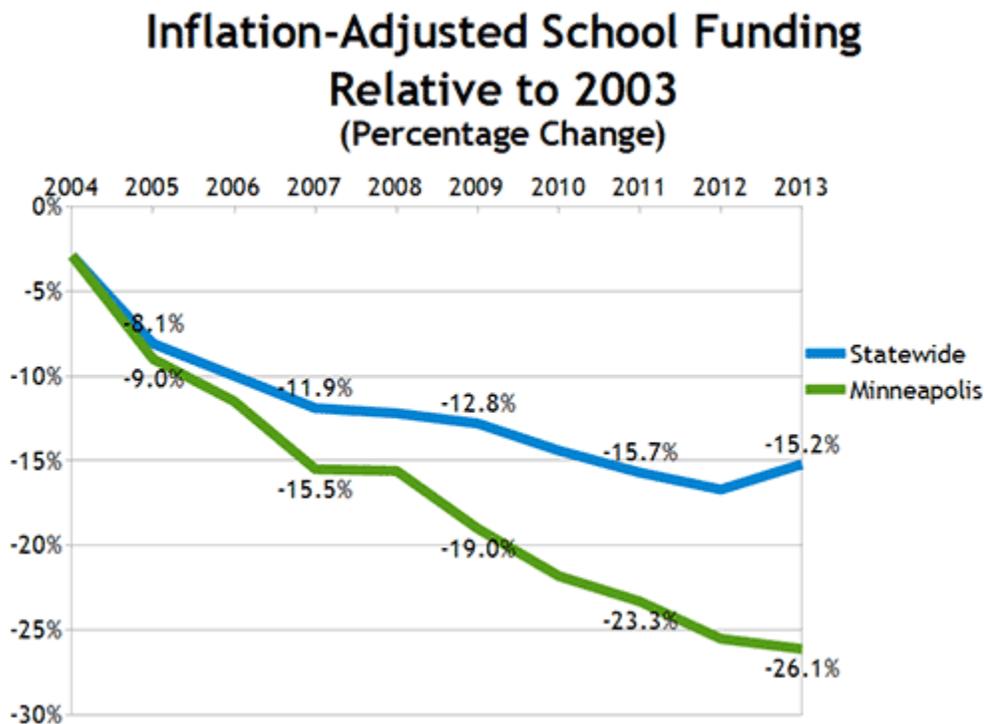


(Data from MDE)

As we can see, the majority of affected students are students of color and students receiving free or reduced price lunch. At a time when we're paying more attention to equity gaps in education, it's important to recognize school conditions as an important part of the equity picture.

Closing the schools, too, is an equity issue. Families with more resources are better able to accommodate these unplanned days out of school. Many families that depend on shift work for their incomes have a harder time making adjustments, and the unexpected child care expenses can be significant. The proper time and way to act on this problem was before it became a problem by making sure the schools had the right infrastructure in the first place. So why didn't that happen?

When we as a state don't fund schools adequately, we abandon each community to make up the difference. Some communities have more resources than others, and as a result we end up leaving behind too many students of color and students from under-resourced families. In Minneapolis, that looks something like this.



(Data from MDE)

*\*\* This chart has been updated for clarity; it now displays the Y axis labels as percent instead of decimal.*

Minneapolis Public Schools were hit harder than the state average during the long drought of the Pawlenty years. We still have a lot of work to do to climb out of that hole. Until we do, we can expect similar equity issues to spring up.

There are other concerns here, too. For example, as our environment continues to change, under-resourced communities are more likely to be hurt by inadequate infrastructure. Also, it's worth noting that, according to the *Star-Tribune*, the decision to add the extra days in August was to give students more days in school before the MCAs. Extended learning is worthwhile, but it should be for more than a test score and should be supported with the appropriate resources.