



INSPIRING ACTION MAKING AN IMPACT

ANNUAL REPORT 2017





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WHO WE ARE

Higher Expectations for Racine County was founded on a simple idea: Those who care about our community's future - from parents and educators to civic leaders and local employers - can accomplish more by working together.

We work from early childhood through post-secondary education and employment to help ensure that every student - regardless of race, zip code, age, or family income - can succeed.

With the right information and tools, our community is able to achieve better outcomes for every student.

No single program, no matter how effective, can solve all of our community's challenges. That's why we bring a broad range of partners together to identify what works and align time, talent, and resources behind the strategies that will provide our students with the opportunity to succeed.

OUR VISION

A Racine County workforce that is fully **capable** and **employed**.

OUR MISSION

Higher Expectations **engages** community partners, **aligns** efforts, and **maximizes** resources to promote **excellence** and **equity** in education and employment outcomes in Racine County.

OUR PRINCIPLES

SHARED VISION



We must know where we're going before we can design a path to get there. Together with our partners, we identify our challenges and agree on the goals we want to achieve.

EVIDENCE BASED DECISION MAKING



We use data as a flashlight to discover what's working and develop strategies that will improve outcomes.

COLLABORATIVE ACTION



We align community organizations and initiatives so that partners can use the resources and best practices they need to advance their work.

EXCELLENCE & EQUITY



We support and hold partners accountable for holding a high bar for all students, which includes successfully identifying and addressing disparities.

SUCCESS ROADMAP

every student, career to cradle

Higher Expectations begins its work with the end in mind: **A fully capable and employed Racine County workforce.** To achieve this vision, we work from career to cradle to ensure that every student can succeed.

Higher Expectations is part of **StriveTogether**, a national, non-profit network of community organizations that reaches more than 8.3 million students across the country. Nearly 70 StriveTogether communities are using collective impact to improve graduation rates, increase kindergarten readiness, and close opportunity gaps in education.



- ▶ **employment**
- ▶ **post-secondary attainment**
- ▶ **post-secondary enrollment**
- ▶ **high school graduation**
- ▶ **middle grade math proficiency**
- ▶ **elementary reading proficiency**
- ▶ **kindergarten readiness**



USING DATA AS A FLASHLIGHT



Higher Expectations believes that data is a tool to be used as a flashlight, not a hammer. Data helps our partners identify the high-impact strategies that will strengthen our community. With the right information, our community is able to achieve better outcomes for every student, including students of color and economically disadvantaged students.

Higher Expectations uses key measures to track progress toward our partnership's goals. We share this data publicly on our Data Dashboards and work internally with partners to better understand their program data. Using disaggregated data - which makes clear the increased challenges that students of color and economically disadvantaged students face - to shine a light on what's working is central to the work Higher Expectations does.

Partners use this data as evidence to make decisions in real time; to improve and expand practices; to lift up and address disparities; and to target resources to support what is working for kids in Racine County. Data gives community partners the insight and information to make the best decisions about programs that impact the success of students.



See in depth data on our Data Dashboards at higherexpectationsracinecounty.org

"As we work to continually improve our programs and develop an educated workforce, our partnership with Higher Expectations has been invaluable."

Their assistance analyzing data has increased our capacity to evaluate and demonstrate the impact of our Schools of Hope (volunteer tutor) program."

- Jessica Safransky Schacht, Education Initiatives Director, United Way of Racine County



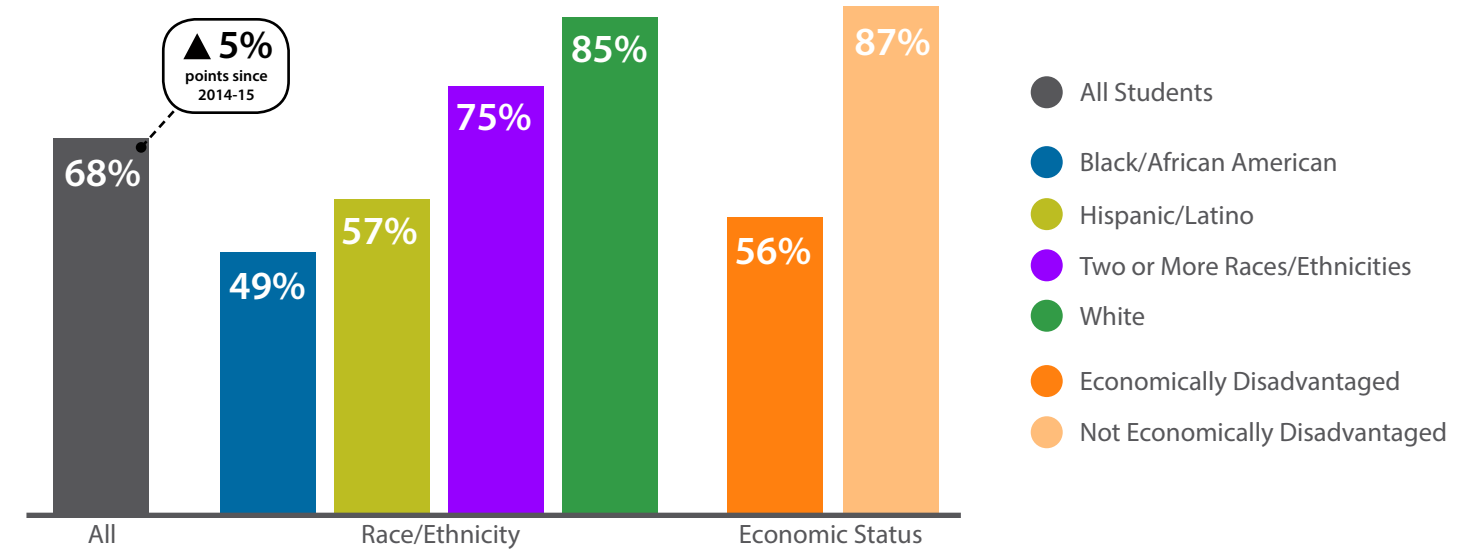
Racine Unified students learning in an early childhood classroom

KINDERGARTEN READINESS

every child enters school ready to learn

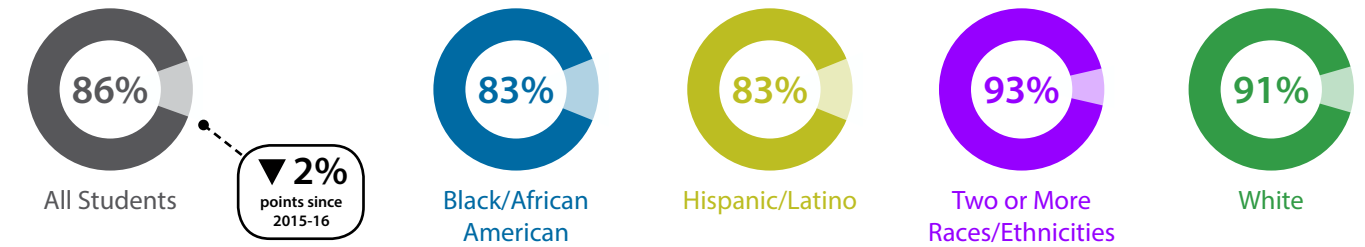
2016-17 RUSD 4-Year-Old Kindergarten Students Achieving/Exceeding Spring Literacy Developmental Range

Source: RUSD, 2016-17 PALS (Phonological Awareness Literacy Screener)



2016-17 RUSD 4-Year-Old Kindergarten Students Meeting 5K Social/Emotional Readiness Benchmarks (Spring)

Source: RUSD, 2016-17 TSG (Teaching Strategies Gold)



Kindergarten Readiness indicators have stayed relatively steady in recent years. Literacy scores for all Racine Unified 4-year-old kindergarten students have improved by 5% points since 2014-15, while social and emotional readiness dropped by 2% points in the last year. Disparities persist for students of color and economically disadvantaged students. Our partners are focused on key strategies that accelerate results and eliminate gaps.

Notes: All percentages rounded to the nearest whole number. For exact number of students, see online data dashboards. Data for other races/ethnicities are not reported due to small student population sizes. Students are considered "economically disadvantaged" if they qualify for free and reduced lunch.



See in depth data on our Data Dashboards at higherexpectationsracinecounty.org

READINESS BOOK

creating resources

The Higher Expectations Kindergarten Readiness Network is creating a Racine-specific book that will tell the story of young children in Racine who are getting ready to begin 5-year-old kindergarten. The book also highlights and emphasizes the skills kids need to enter school ready to learn. The Network is working with an award-winning teacher and author, Alexander McNeece and community volunteers to create a book that will highlight Racine’s landmarks, represent Racine’s families, and get kids excited to start kindergarten. The Network received support from the Racine Community Foundation to complete this book and to distribute it at no cost to families.



Racine Unified kindergarten student

EARLY CHILDHOOD LITERACY

aligning early reading programs

Many organizations in Racine County are doing the critical work of reaching children before they begin kindergarten to ensure that they have access to the resources that will prepare them for school. Two evidence-based childhood literacy programs that have shown great success across the country are providing free, age-appropriate books and literacy coaching to families with children aged 0-5 in Racine County:

- > *Ascension All-Saints’ “Reach out and Read” program: Pediatricians provide families with a book and discuss the importance of literacy for a child’s health during each 6-month well child visit.*
- > *United Way of Racine County’s “Imagination Library” program: Any child in Racine (aged 0-5) can sign up to receive a book with accompanying literacy exercises in the mail each month, (learn more at unitedwayracine.org)*

Higher Expectations is collaborating with Ascension All-Saints and United Way of Racine County (UWRC) to align and measure these early childhood literacy programs. For the first time, pediatricians provide sign up information for Imagination Library during the Reach Out and Read portion of their well child visits. Because of this coordination, Racine County’s kids have more access to free, age-appropriate books than ever before.

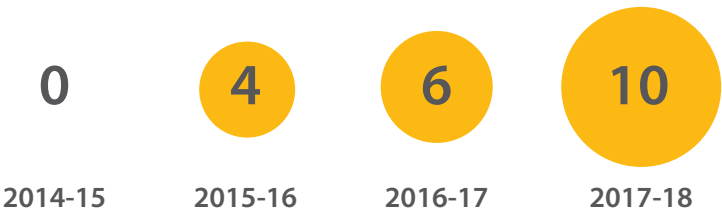
4-YEAR-OLD KINDERGARTEN

scaling evidence-based programs

The evidence from national research is compelling: When children have access to high-quality, full-day 4-year-old kindergarten (4K) with well-trained teachers, they are academically, socially, and emotionally much better prepared for 5-year-old kindergarten. Access to these opportunities is even more meaningful for children from economically disadvantaged families.

Higher Expectations is working with local leaders and community members to expand access to full-day 4k in Racine County. The Racine Unified School District (RUSD) has begun to implement full-day 4K classrooms, but providing this program is not fully funded through state aid. Recently, Higher Expectations partnered with Racine County to propose a pilot program that would provide state funding through the Department of Children and Families to close this funding gap. This would enable RUSD and its partners to expand full-day 4K classrooms throughout the community, targeted specifically at schools that are teaching students from economically disadvantaged families. Higher Expectations will continue to study the impact of our local 4K programs and use this data to support improvement and expansion.

RUSD Funded Full-Day 4K Classrooms



WPRI REPORT

measuring impact

Higher Expectations supported Wisconsin Policy Research Institute’s (WPRI) report on the effectiveness of Wisconsin’s YoungStar Rating System and on the availability of high-quality child care in the state. Higher Expectations conducted two case studies of high-quality Racine area child care providers to highlight the financial implications of maintaining 4- and 5-star YoungStar ratings. According to the research, these child care centers have higher expenses due to the wages required to sustain high-quality teachers.

The report shows that statewide, there is limited access to high-quality childcare, particularly in high-poverty communities. Further, providers often struggle financially to maintain high-quality centers. The findings maintain that YoungStar’s financial incentives may need to be adjusted to increase access to high-quality child care for families who need it most.

Higher Expectations also built an interactive map of childcare access in Wisconsin which you can view at wpri.org/daycare-data.htm.



Racine Unified elementary students sharing projects in their classroom

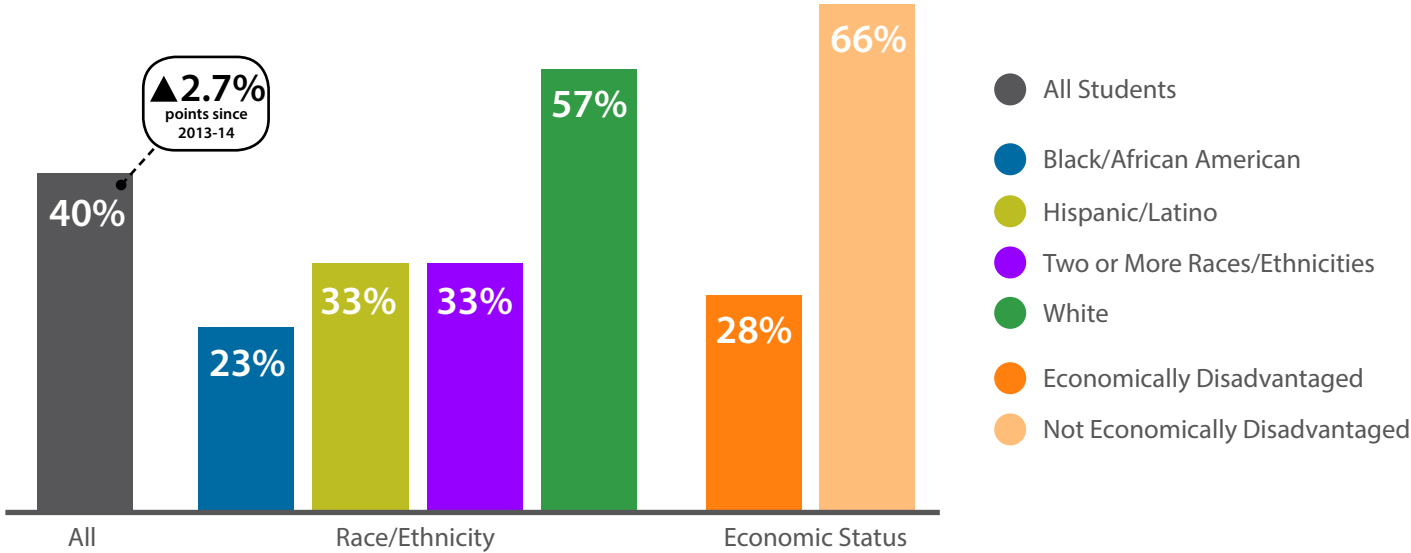


ELEMENTARY READING

every student can succeed

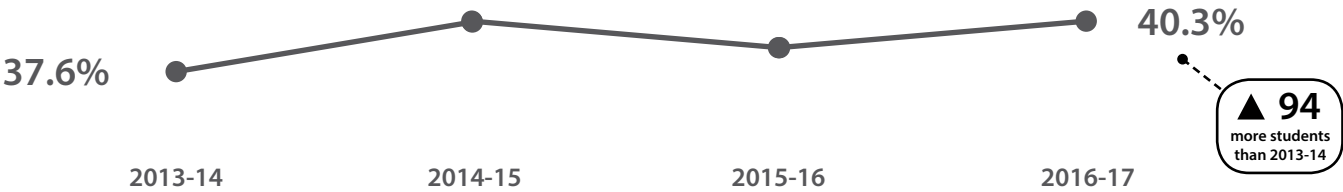
2016-17 RUSD Third Grade Students Achieving/Exceeding Spring Reading National Average

Source: RUSD, 2016-17 Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)



RUSD Third Grade Students Achieving/Exceeding Spring Reading National Average Over Time

Source: RUSD, 2013-2017 Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)



Third grade reading indicators have stayed relatively steady in recent years. Among all RUSD third grade students, the percent of students reading at or above the national average has increased by nearly 3% points in four years. Disparities persist for students of color and economically disadvantaged students. Efforts focused on reaching students at Title 1 (high-poverty) elementary schools have been launched to close the gaps for economically disadvantaged students.

Notes: Some percentages rounded to the nearest whole number. For exact number of students, see online data dashboards. Data for other races/ethnicities are not reported due to small student population sizes. Students are considered "economically disadvantaged" if they qualify for free and reduced lunch.



See in depth data on our Data Dashboards at higherexpectationsracinecounty.org

"We receive many trainings & professional development... but attending the REI training [with Higher Expectations] is by far the most meaningful training we have ever had."

- RUSD Racine Early Intervention Participants

Students who received specialized intervention for a full semester:

5 of 6

had higher reading growth than their class median (MAP)

6 of 6

had higher reading level growth than their class median

Classrooms with teachers participating in REI professional development:

4 of 5

had higher reading growth than the median high poverty 1st grade classes district-wide (MAP)

3 of 5

were in the top 6 of all high poverty 1st grade classes in number of students who met projected reading growth scores (MAP)

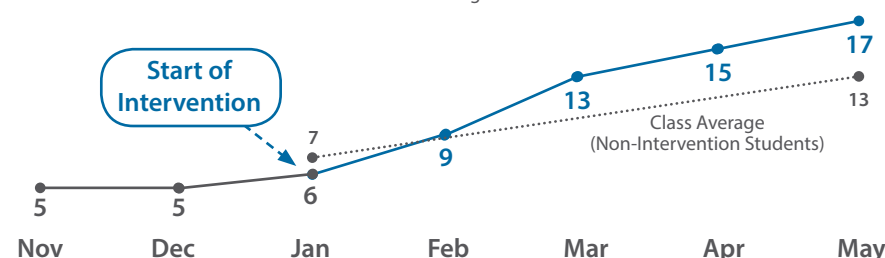
RACINE EARLY INTERVENTION

helping first grade teachers teach literacy skills

National research suggests that teacher quality is one of the most important factors – if not the most important factor – in student success. That's why Higher Expectations is committed to helping RUSD provide evidence-based training for their teachers. In the 2016-17 school year, we supported a professional development opportunity through our StriveTogether Accelerator Fund for seven RUSD first grade teachers. Through this Racine Early Intervention Program (REI), participating teachers took an intensive credit-bearing literacy course and received one-on-one classroom coaching. Teachers applied lessons learned in their classroom and, in partnership with Higher Expectations, used student-level data to regularly measure each student's reading progress. Teachers used that data to understand each student's needs and create student-specific supports to improve their literacy growth. On the whole, participating teachers showed evidence of improvement in key instructional skills. In its second year, the program will grow from seven to 34 participants.

Racine Early Intervention, One Student's Reading Growth:

Source: RUSD Reading Levels 2016-17



***From the teacher:** "This student was not cross-checking, monitoring or re-reading. She had to be taught these reading behaviors in order to succeed. As we moved on with the intervention, her rate of self-corrections increased. Over the course of the year, her confidence level rose and her fluency became much better. Towards the end of the intervention, she hugged me and told me thank you. She loves reading now and promised to continue to read every day."*

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

using data to increase impact

Higher Expectations and its partner organizations are committed to building a culture of continuous improvement within our schools and programs and across the community. The concept of "continuous improvement," using data to identify challenges, make a plan, and monitor progress, is relatively new to the education and social sectors both in Racine and throughout the country. Since 2015, Higher Expectations has partnered with RUSD to introduce dozens of teachers and staff to continuous improvement.

Higher Expectations also partners with United Way of Racine County to support Schools of Hope, an initiative that provides reading tutors to first through third grade RUSD students, by co-implementing a continuous improvement plan. Through this program, students receive multiple tutoring sessions each week during the school year to increase reading achievement. Volunteer tutors spend time working with students on: Reading developmentally appropriate books, identifying sight words, and writing sentences that answer reading comprehension questions. Guided by continuous improvement strategies, students participating in the 2016-17 school year received an average of 24 hours of tutoring; an 82% increase over the prior year. Further, United Way was able to identify bright spots in student growth and track student and tutor performance in order to regularly update and improve the program. In some schools and grades, Schools of Hope students significantly outgrew their peers. Higher Expectations is committed to supporting United Way and RUSD in expanding these successes and broadening the program's impact.

CLASSROOM DATA

guiding instruction

Continuous improvement enables students to use their own data to understand what's helping them learn. When teachers work with students to regularly track data, kids take ownership of their learning and goals. In continuous improvement oriented classrooms, feedback is a two-way street: **Teachers help students master class material, and students help teachers identify what instruction is most effective.**

Higher Expectations hosted a Professional Learning Community event for RUSD teachers who use continuous improvement with their students. 17 teachers discussed how they use data, and how they can learn from one another as they apply continuous improvement to drive student achievement.



Teachers discuss continuous improvement



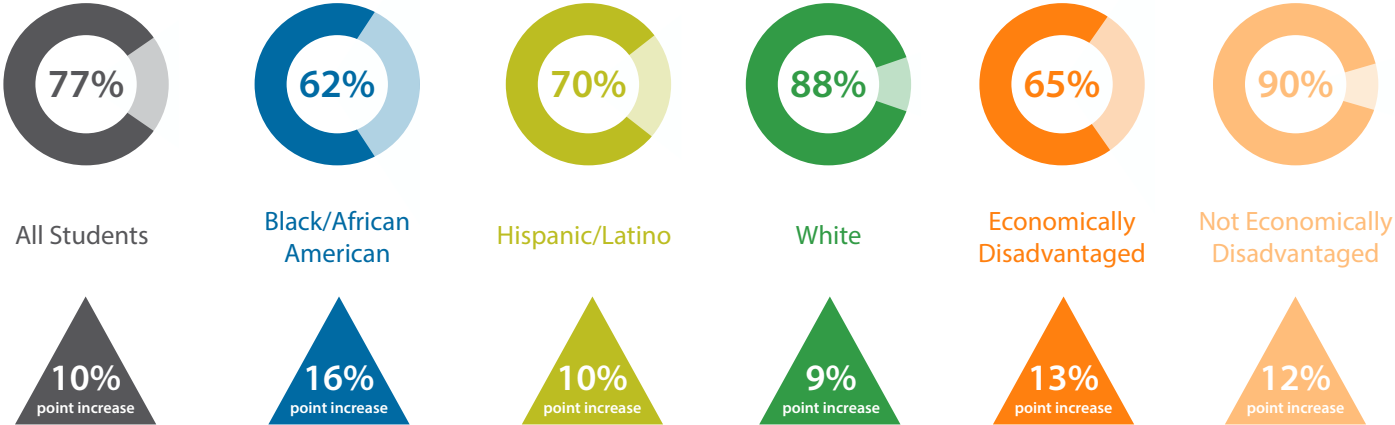
Racine Unified high school students in a science class

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

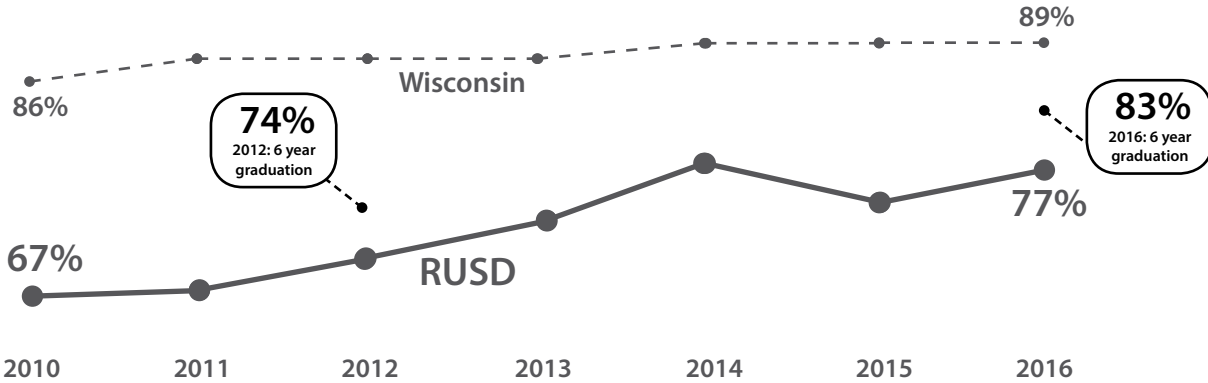
every student graduates

RUSD 4-Year Graduation Rates (2016 Graduate Cohort) and Difference Over Time (2010-2016)

Source: RUSD, All Completion Credentials



RUSD 4-Year Graduation Rates Over Time for All Students Compared to Statewide Rates (2010-2016)



Four year graduation rates increased district-wide for all RUSD high school students in 2015-16. Rates also increased within each demographic group over the last seven years, especially among African American students (16% point increase). Since 2010, RUSD has narrowed the gap between district and statewide graduation rates by 7% points. Alignment and partnerships within the RUSD Academies of Racine will build on this growth.

Notes: All percentages rounded to the nearest whole number. For exact number of students, see online data dashboards. Data for other races/ethnicities are not reported due to small student population sizes. Students are considered "economically disadvantaged" if they qualify for free and reduced lunch.



See in depth data on our Data Dashboards at [higherexpectationsracinecounty.org](https://www.higherexpectationsracinecounty.org)

RUSD ACADEMIES

developing career pathways

RUSD has completed its first Academies of Racine school year.

The Academies are learning communities that provide high school students with work-based experiences and classes that prepare them for future careers.



Health Sciences & Education
Business & Culinary Arts
Leadership, Automotive &
Technical Services



Business & Culinary Arts
Education & Technical Services
Health Sciences & Aviation



Health Sciences & Education
Business & Culinary Arts
IT & Technical Services



RUSD, Higher Expectations Academy team

OPPORTUNITIES TO ENGAGE

supporting students for the 21st century

Higher Expectations is leading business and civic engagement for students for the RUSD Academies of Racine and works closely with RUSD's Office of Secondary Transformation to expand partnership opportunities between employers, educators, and students. These opportunities are part of the career pathways within each career-focused Academy, which were developed based on local employment data and include: Army JROTC, Automotive, Aviation, Biomedical Sciences, Business, Construction, Culinary Arts, Early Childhood & Education, Engineering, Finance, Health Services, Information Technology, Manufacturing, and Marketing. Currently, employers can support students at the Academies of Racine through the following Opportunities to Engage:

- > *Providing company tours to classes*
- > *Offering job shadowing to students*
- > *Speaking to students in their classrooms*
- > *Highlighting career opportunities at the SEE Your Future Expo*
- > *Guiding students as Pathway Mentors*
- > *Guiding career programs as a part of the Advisory Council*
- > *Offering externships to teachers*
- > *Providing student internships and/or youth apprenticeships*

In the 2016-17 school year, Higher Expectations engaged **91 employers** in the Academies of Racine. In the fall, **50 Racine County companies** represented career pathways at the SEE Your Future Expo, giving **1,500 freshmen** the opportunity to learn about future careers in the community.

" The trip to UW-Madison and my Freshman Seminar class have really opened my eyes and mind to the many different opportunities for college, and how college can really help you out in the future."

- Erick, RUSD Freshman Academy Student

GROW HERE CAMPAIGN

collaborating regionally for work-based learning

Higher Expectations is committed to ensuring that students in Racine County graduate prepared to succeed in post-secondary education and ultimately in their careers. With the support of Higher Expectations, Racine County has joined six other counties in Southeastern Wisconsin in a regional effort, the Grow Here Campaign, to connect students to work-based learning opportunities.

As part of the Grow Here Campaign, Racine County is working toward an exciting goal; **through 2020, companies in Southeastern Wisconsin's key driver industries will develop their talent pipelines by providing 200,000 work-based learning experiences.** In order to connect all of this work, the Grow Here Campaign uses a web-based platform called Inspire, where employers can promote their work, job openings, and opportunities to engage in work-based learning. Participating students can engage with employers to explore how their career interests align with businesses and organizations in the community.

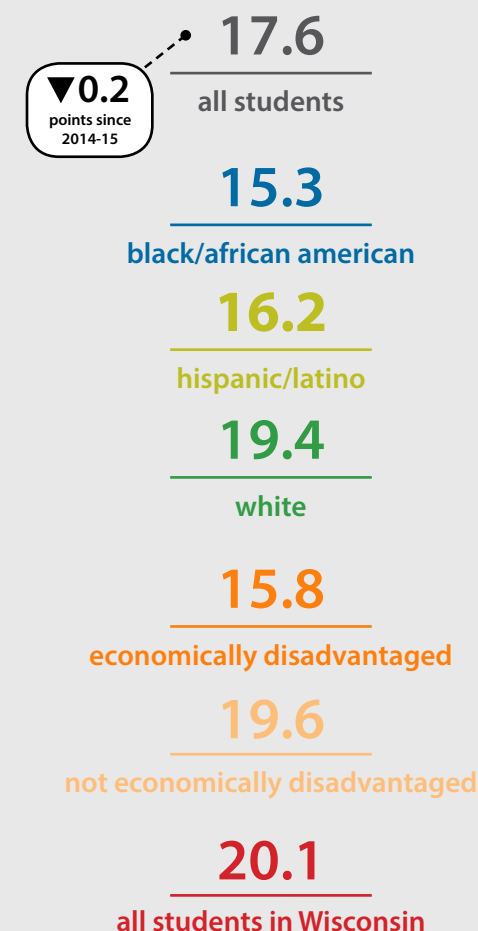
Higher Expectations is working to ensure the Grow Here Campaign reaches all Racine County students. Higher Expectations continues to invest deeply in the RUSD Academies of Racine and has begun efforts to introduce school districts like the Burlington Area School District to the Grow Here Campaign.

*Notes: For exact number of students, see online data dashboards. Data for other races/ethnicities are not reported due to small student population sizes. Students are considered "economically disadvantaged" if they qualify for free and reduced lunch.

RUSD ACT SCORES

composite scores 2015-16

Source: Racine Unified School District*



11th grade ACT scores at RUSD have been steady over time; the average for all students decreased slightly last year.



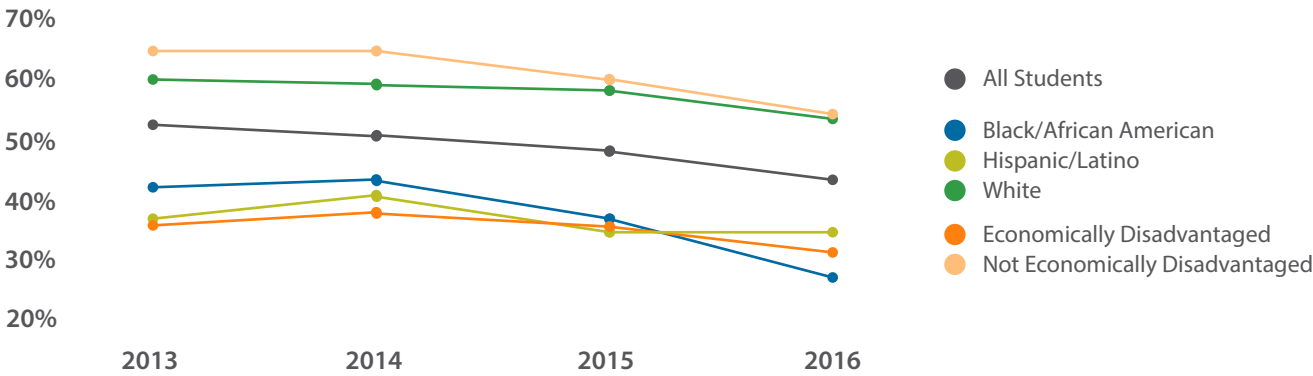
UW-Parkside outstanding graduate honorees at Spring 2017 Commencement

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION & TRAINING

every student succeeds in a career

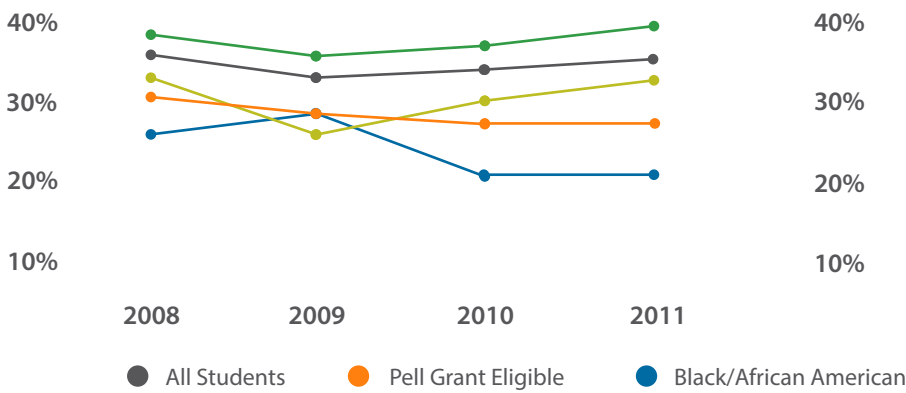
RUSD Graduates Enrolling in Post-Secondary Programs in First Fall of Graduating (2013-2016 Graduate Cohort)

Source: Dept. of Public Instruction, WISEDash Public 7/31/17



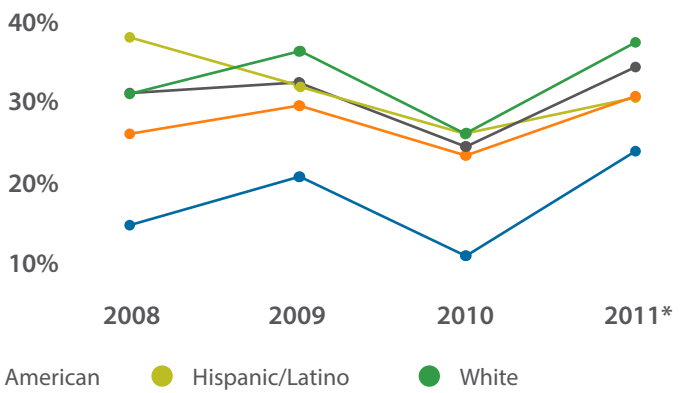
6-Year Graduation Rates of All Degree Seekers at Gateway Technical College By Starting Fall (2008-2011)

Source: Gateway Institutional Effectiveness Department



6-Year Graduation Rates of First-Time Full-Time UW-Parkside Students By Starting Fall (2008-2011)

Source: UW-Parkside Institutional Research Department



The percentage of RUSD graduates enrolling in post-secondary programs directly after high school has declined 8% points in the last four years. At Gateway Technical College, six-year graduation rates for all students have increased in each of the last two years. At UW-Parkside, graduation rates for all first-time, full-time students increased in the last year by 10% points. Both institutions are working on key, system-wide strategies to increase graduation rates and eliminate disparities.

*Latest UW-Parkside data point is preliminary. Notes: For exact number of students, see online data dashboards. Data for other races/ethnicities are not reported due to small student population sizes. The Federal Pell Grant Program provides need-based grants to low-income undergraduate students. Gateway's data represents a larger subset of the student population because it includes transfer and part-time students whereas UW-Parkside data only includes first-time, full-time students.



See in depth data on our Data Dashboards at higherexpectationsracinecounty.org

POST-SECONDARY ENROLLMENT

learning from students

The Post-Secondary Education & Training Network hosted conversations with RUSD high school students to learn about their motivations and barriers to post-secondary enrollment. Over fifty students from all backgrounds and grades participated in these focus groups. Here's what the Network heard:

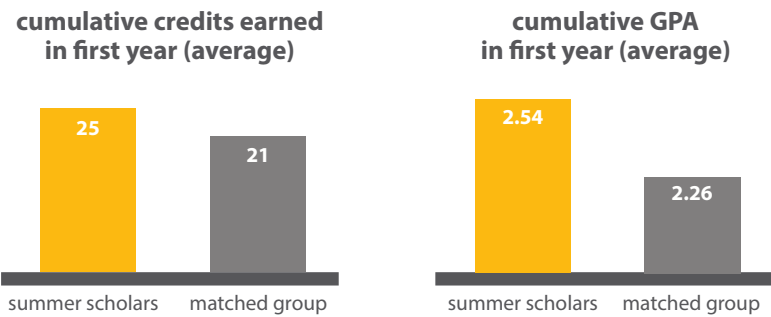
- > *College is only important as a step in becoming career-ready.*
- > *Students aren't familiar with the application and financial aid processes or deadlines.*
- > *Concern over debt and college affordability is a huge barrier to post-secondary enrollment.*

Student feedback is informing the development of a post-secondary preparation App that the Network is creating. This cell phone App will give students the tools and resources to prepare for post-secondary enrollment throughout high school, such as alerts about FAFSA and enrollment deadlines and information about scholarships.

SUMMER SCHOLARS

helping institutions promote equity

Through a national Lumina Foundation grant, Higher Expectations was able to fund a pilot program, Summer Scholars, at UW-Parkside to support twenty-one incoming college freshmen. Summer Scholars is a four-week program designed to help incoming freshman transition to university life, including more rigorous academics. The program works to increase the retention of underrepresented populations at UW-Parkside by introducing them to college culture and resources before the academic year begins.



Source: UW-Parkside Institutional Research Department.
Number of Students in Both Groups = 21.

Data from the summer 2016 cohort of students shows that the program is having an impact. Participating students earned more cumulative credits and had a higher average GPA in their first year than a statistically matched comparison group. Because of its success, UW-Parkside has committed to funding the next two years of Summer Scholars while continuing to measure impact.

"Summer Scholars made the transition to college a lot easier because I knew people, networked with staff, and had support from my counselors."

- Alivia, UW-Parkside Summer Scholar

COMPLETE COLLEGE AMERICA

increasing the number of post-secondary graduates

Complete College America (CCA) is a national organization working with post-secondary Institutions to increase completion rates. This year, the Higher Expectations Post-Secondary Education & Training Network (through Lumina Foundation funding) brought representatives from UW-Parkside and Gateway Technical College to visit institutions across the country that are successfully implementing completion strategies. The Network used these visits to learn about CCA's "Game Changers" (evidence based strategies that lead to increased retention and completion rates). UW-Parkside and Gateway Technical College are now working to integrate these strategies:

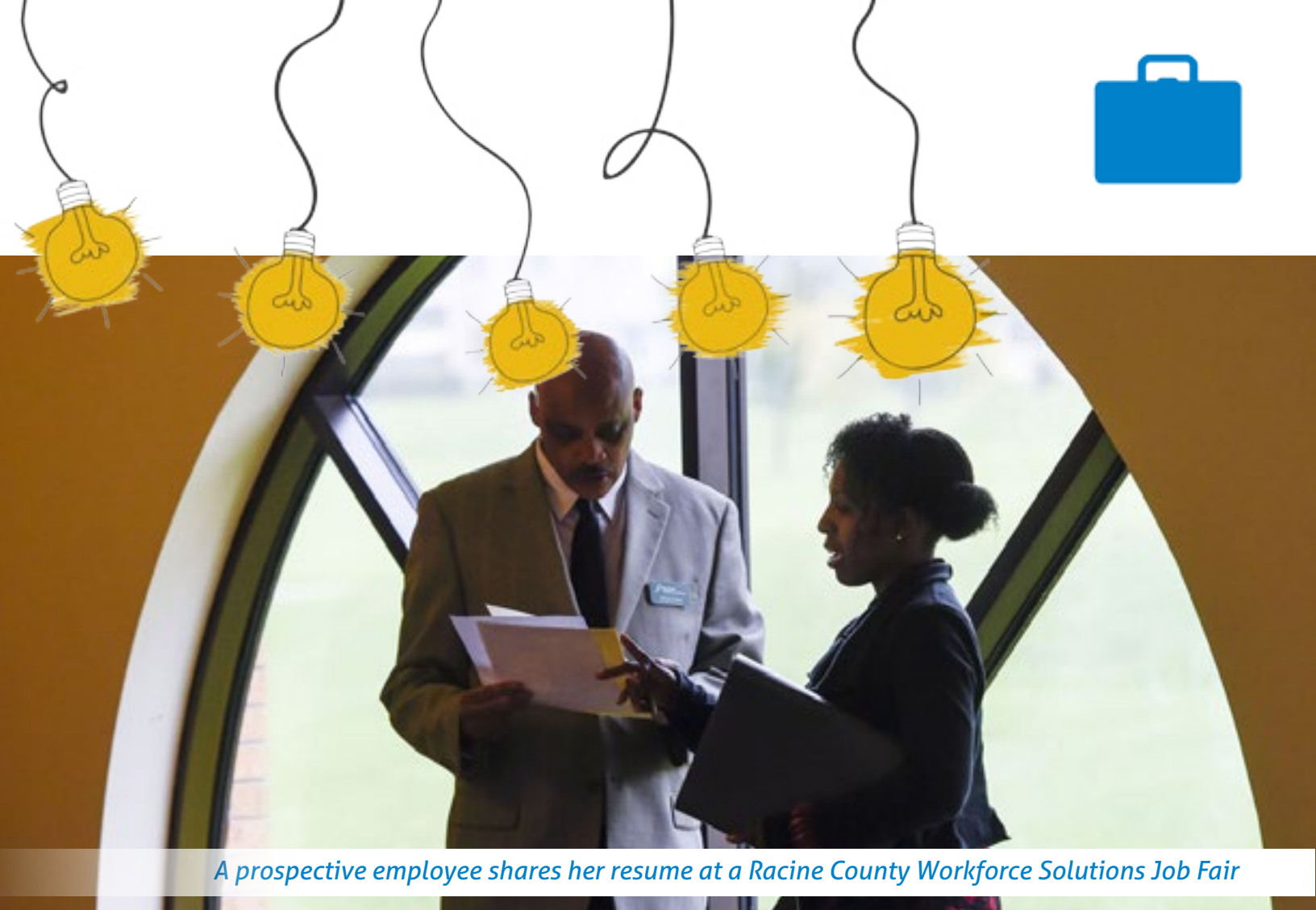
- > *Math Pathways*
Restructuring math pathways to ensure credit completion
- > *15 to Finish*
Incentivizing students to complete 15 credits each semester
- > *Guided Pathways*
Intentionally guiding students into degree programs rather than individual courses
- > *Structured Schedules*
Improving scheduling to ensure conflict-free full time schedules
- > *Co-Requisite Remediation*
Adjusting remedial courses to integrate student supports

Higher Expectations is working with state leaders to ensure that Wisconsin is an active member of the CCA Alliance of States. Wisconsin's CCA team, led by UW-Parkside Provost Dr. Robert Ducoffe, has developed a robust working partnership with CCA, giving university systems throughout the state the opportunity to access CCA's technical assistance.

"UW-Parkside takes its mission to serve our community very seriously, and we do that by engaging. One of our deepest and most important relationships is with the team at Higher Expectations, which plugs us into a network of people that are working within our community from cradle to career."

- Dr. Robert Ducoffe
Provost, UW-Parkside





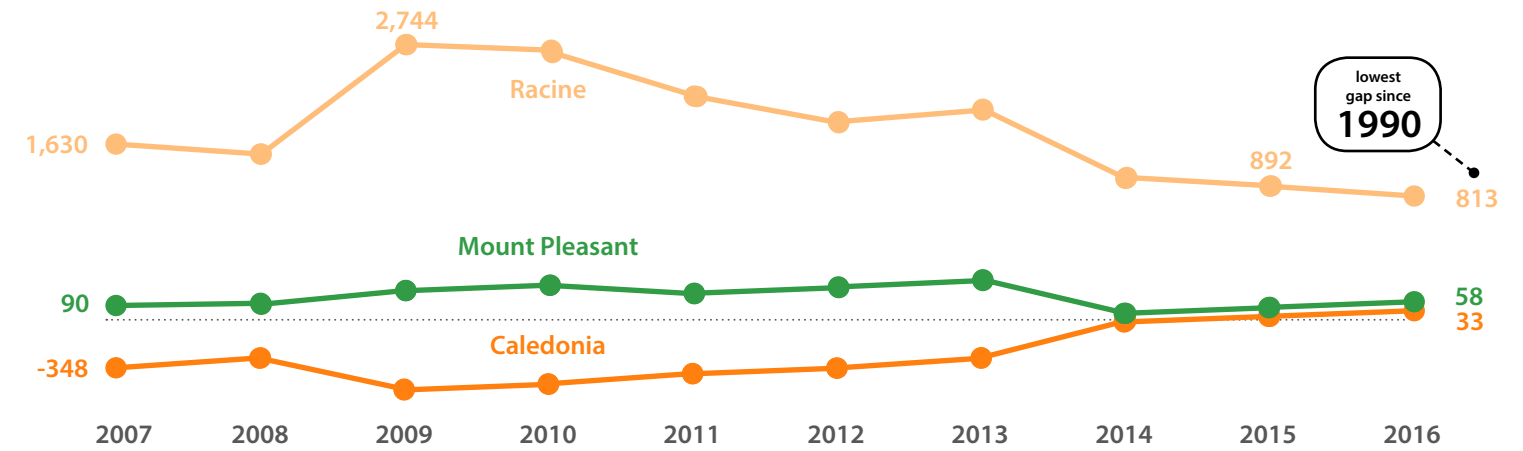
A prospective employee shares her resume at a Racine County Workforce Solutions Job Fair

EMPLOYMENT

a fully capable and employed workforce

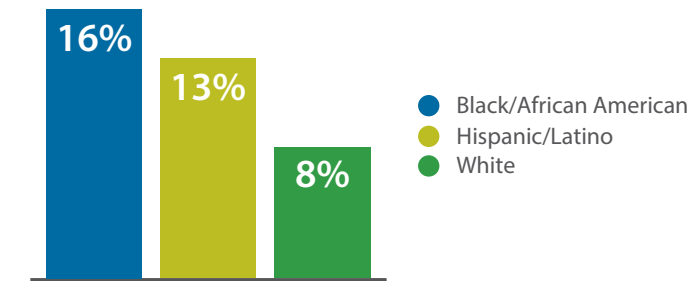
Number of People Who Would Need to be Employed for Racine Area Unemployment to Match State's Rate

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics and Local Area Unemployment Statistics (Annual Rates)



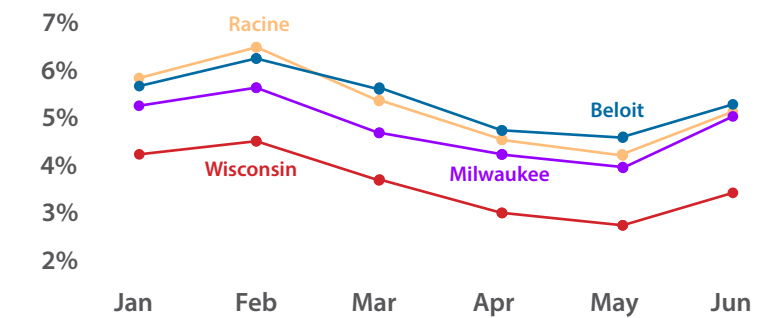
Unemployment Rates by Race/Ethnicity for the City of Racine (2015)

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS), 1-Year Estimates



Monthly Unemployment Rates (January - June 2017) Not Seasonally Adjusted

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics and Local Area Unemployment Statistics (WI WORKnet)



While Racine has had the highest annual unemployment rate in the state for the majority of the last three decades, the gap between the city and state rate is now at its lowest point since 1990. Community partners have come together to close that gap and reduce existing racial and ethnic disparities in unemployment rates.

Notes: All percentages rounded to the nearest whole number. "Hispanic/Latino" and "Two or more races" as reported by ACS are not mutually exclusive of each other or other racial/ethnic categories, unlike other data in this report.



See in depth data on our Data Dashboards at higherexpectationsracinecounty.org

2016 LABOR STUDY

sharing data with partners

In December, Higher Expectations brought together community leaders, school district and post-secondary representatives, and business leaders for a **Labor Force Symposium** that highlighted data from the 2016 Racine County Labor Force Survey.

- > *88% of respondents reported difficulty filling positions.*
- > *72% of hard-to-fill jobs (in the next two years) will require prior work experience.*

A panel of students, teachers, and employers who have participated in work-based learning highlighted their positive impact. During the Symposium, two dozen employers and organizations committed to engaging in this important work.

Higher Expectations and event participants agreed to work together to build a work-based learning toolkit that will provide employers with the information they need to create internships and youth apprenticeship positions within their organizations.

A BIG, HAIRY, AUDACIOUS GOAL

bringing partners together around employment

In 2016, Higher Expectations announced a Big, Hairy, Audacious Goal (BHAG*): **That each municipality in Racine County will achieve and maintain an unemployment rate at or below the State of Wisconsin's unemployment rate.** By focusing on the programs that work and aligning partners and community members, Racine County can move the needle on unemployment rates. Already, an improved economy has reduced the number of out-of-work adults in Racine County. In fact, based on unemployment data for the first six months of 2017, it would take employing less than 800 additional individuals to reduce each Racine County municipality's unemployment rate to that of the State of Wisconsin. To achieve the objective of a fully capable and employed workforce in Racine County, workforce development partners must work together to implement intentional strategies that will accelerate this progress.

It is critical to both help unemployed individuals find jobs and to help meet the needs of area employers who require capable employees. That way, employers and employees can thrive here in Racine County. Higher Expectations is working with Racine County Workforce Solutions, United Way of Racine County, RAMAC, and the Racine County Workforce Development Board to align programs and achieve this BHAG.

**From Jim Collins' Good to Great, 2001*



On the workroom floor at Racine Metal Fab

CAEL CAREER LADDERS

making data accessible to students and partners

Higher Expectations partnered with CAEL (the Center for Adult and Experiential Learning), to analyze data from the Racine County Labor Force Study and visualize career opportunities for Racine County residents. CAEL used this data to develop career ladder maps in business, education, health sciences, information technology (IT), and manufacturing. This work was informed by RUSD school counselors, UW-Parkside, Gateway Technical College, and the Racine County Workforce Development Board.

Higher Expectations is sharing these career ladders with employers, school districts, and post-secondary institutions to inform career-based action teams such as the IT Network and to create shared accountability for Racine County's career pipeline.



START IT

focusing on equity

This year, Higher Expectations brought key partners together around the need for skilled Information Technology (IT) employees within Racine County. The IT Network has developed an initiative, **Start IT**, that will teach the hard and soft skills that an IT career requires to a cohort of currently out-of-work young adults.

Start IT will launch in 2017 at the Bray Community Center. As high unemployment in Racine County disproportionately affects young men of color in the City of Racine, Start IT will invite and receive applications from African American men (aged 18-25) who live within specific census tracts in Racine. Partners in this program include Twin Disc, Badger Meter, LeewardBA, CCB Technology, the YMCA, Modine Manufacturing, Racine County Workforce Solutions, and retired IT professionals in the community.

This program will build skills for Racine residents while also offering area organizations and companies fee-based IT services, enabling program participants act as consultants to meet their IT needs.



A Racine Unified student learns about new technology

MAKING AN IMPACT

RACE, EQUITY & INCLUSION

addressing disparities and promoting equity

Higher Expectations is committed to promoting equity in education and employment and is helping community leaders and programs identify disparities that exist for Racine County families of color and those who are economically disadvantaged. Higher Expectations advocates for equity and opportunity and helps partners create targeted strategies that reach the students and families who most need support. To achieve a fully capable and employed Racine County workforce, the community must address the complex equity issues that affect the families that call Racine County home.

Through “Race, Equity, and Inclusion: A Leadership Program to Accelerate Results,” Higher Expectations worked with RUSD, United Way of Racine County, the Racine Police Department, Racine County, the Johnson Foundation at Wingspread, higher education institutions, non-profits, and others to identify and address racial inequities in Racine County. Through this results-based program, community leaders joined action teams that focused on kindergarten readiness, elementary reading, employment, and student safety. These teams developed outcome-specific action plans and discussed the impact of race, bias, and equity in institutions and in the community. Facilitators from StriveTogether, Higher Expectations’ national partner, led participants through the discussion and planning process. Program participants are now working with Higher Expectations to advance their action plans and address equity issues in their outcome areas.

“Our community is facing challenges like high unemployment and high levels of poverty; one in two children in the county are eligible for free or reduced lunch in our schools, one in three black and Hispanic residents are living below the federal poverty level, and black residents are two times more likely to be unemployed than their white counterparts.

Since it was launched, Higher Expectations has been bringing us all together to truly face those challenges head on - and, by using our own data to guide us, to help make an impact for the Racine County families who most need our support.”

- Rodney Prunty, President & CEO, United Way of Racine County

GET INVOLVED

- > Join a collaborative action network to help improve a community outcome that you are passionate about.
- > Volunteer with one of our partner organizations and be a part of evidence-based programs that are moving the needle for our students.
- > Introduce Higher Expectations to your organization, company, or non-profit to help grow the partnership and amplify our impact.
- > Stay informed by signing up for our newsletter, following us on social media, and interacting with employment & education data on our website.

CONTACT US

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COLLABORATIVE ACTION NETWORKS

volunteering together to improve outcomes

Higher Expectations brings together community members and organizations committed to improving outcomes through its collaborative action networks. These volunteer teams organize around a community-level outcome, develop and implement action plans to achieve the outcome, and use continuous improvement processes to measure their impact and improve their strategies over time.

Kindergarten Readiness Network

Using research to guide its efforts, the Kindergarten Readiness Network focuses on strategies for 4-year-old kindergarten (4K) enrollment and for engaging families who have young children that will ultimately enroll in Early Childhood Programs in Racine County.

Elementary Reading Network

The Elementary Reading Network continuously uses data to understand how the community’s literacy programs are working in order to improve programs that already exist and implement new programs that will help more students become successful readers.

High School Transformation Network

The High School Transformation Network is committed to engaging with business, community and civic partners to support the RUSD Academies of Racine. The Network is building relationships with partners throughout Racine County to ensure students graduate prepared to succeed in a 21st century workforce.

Post-Secondary Education & Training Network

The Post-Secondary Education & Training (PSET) Network brings together volunteers from education, government, business, and non-profits in order to increase the amount of Racine County students who enroll in and complete post-secondary education - from certificates and vocational training to college degree programs.

ACCOUNTABILITY STRUCTURE

community partners are our backbone



COLLABORATIVE ACTION NETWORKS are made up of volunteers and practitioners who focus on improving community-driven outcomes through an agreed-upon network Charter and Action Plan.

ANCHOR INSTITUTIONS include Racine County, Racine Area Manufacturers and Commerce, and United Way of Racine County and support Higher Expectations’ staff.

THE DATA MANAGEMENT TEAM supports and guides the development of indicator metrics, and data collection, sharing, and analysis.

THE COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION COUNCIL includes local leaders who are invested in our collective impact efforts.

THE LEADERSHIP TABLE provides strategic guidance, social and financial capital, and a strong voice to champion our goals.

StriveTogether

accelerator fund partnership

In 2015, Higher Expectations was named an Accelerator Fund Partnership, part of a cohort of just six StriveTogether communities nationwide to receive a financial investment intended to accelerate our progress and help us reach our community-driven goals. Now in our third year, Higher Expectations has used this funding to scale evidence based strategies and advanced on our path to becoming a proof point community.



talent hub designation

In 2017, Higher Expectations received a three-year grant to scale our post-secondary work with UW-Parkside and Gateway Technical College. Racine County and Kenosha County have together been officially designated a **Lumina Foundation Talent Hub**, one of just 18 communities across the nation recognized for pursuing bold strategies that reduce post-secondary attainment gaps.

LOCAL & NATIONAL SUPPORT

leveraging investments for the greatest impact

Local partners and national grantmakers have invested in Racine County students by providing the support and funding needed to move the needle on the community's key indicators.

Funding from partners enables Higher Expectations to:

- > *Allocate resources to invest in high-impact, evidence-based programs and strategies.*
- > *Identify the community's greatest needs and align initiatives and resources to meet them, particularly for students of color and those who are economically disadvantaged.*
- > *Align philanthropic funding and other support for education to ensure every dollar counts.*
- > *Build the capacity of partners to increase the effectiveness of their initiatives and strategies.*

Higher Expectations is deeply grateful to the local partners that invest financial and in-kind support to sustain our efforts.

HIGHER EXPECTATIONS LEADERSHIP TABLE

Dr. Bryan Albrecht	President, Gateway Technical College
John Batten	Chairman & Chief Executive Officer, Twin Disc
Tom Burke	President & Chief Executive Officer, Modine Manufacturing Company
Jonathan Delagrave	County Executive, Racine County
Dr. Deborah Ford	Chancellor, University of Wisconsin - Parkside
Jackie Hallberg	President & Chief Executive Officer, Goodwill Industries of Southeastern WI
Dr. Lolli Haws	Superintendent, Racine Unified School District
Art Howell	Chief of Police, City of Racine Police Department
Jim Ladwig	Director, Global Community Affairs, S.C. Johnson
Ann Lee	Sr. Vice President of Strategic Performance, Johnson Financial
Matt Montemurro	President, Racine Area Manufacturers and Commerce
Rodney Prunty	President & Chief Executive Officer, United Way of Racine County
Dr. Daniel Ross	Vice President of Medical Affairs, Ascension - All Saints
Chris Ruud	President, Ruud Family Foundation
Kelly Semrau	Sr. Vice President, Global Public Affairs, Communication & Sustainability, SC Johnson
Chad Severson	President, InSinkErator
Dr. John Swallow	President, Carthage College
Jim Walker	Vice President, CNH Industries



OUR TEAM

Jeff Neubauer
Executive Director

Carolynn Friesch
Employer Engagement Manager

DeAnn Possehl
Post-Secondary Education and
Training Network Facilitator

Chelsea Powell
Stakeholder Engagement and
Communications Manager

Matt Snyder
Data Manager

Kirstin Yeado
Community Impact Manager

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

We know what needs to be done!

Since launching Higher Expectations in 2014 our community has truly aligned to our vision of a Racine County workforce that is fully capable and employed. At our 2016 Annual Report release, we proposed a Big Hairy Audacious Goal (BHAG) to have every municipality in Racine County at or below the state's unemployment rate.

Collective Impact Networks supporting our vision and BHAG are operating in six outcomes areas; Kindergarten Readiness, Elementary Reading, High School Graduation, Post-Secondary Enrollment, Post-Secondary Completion, and Employment.

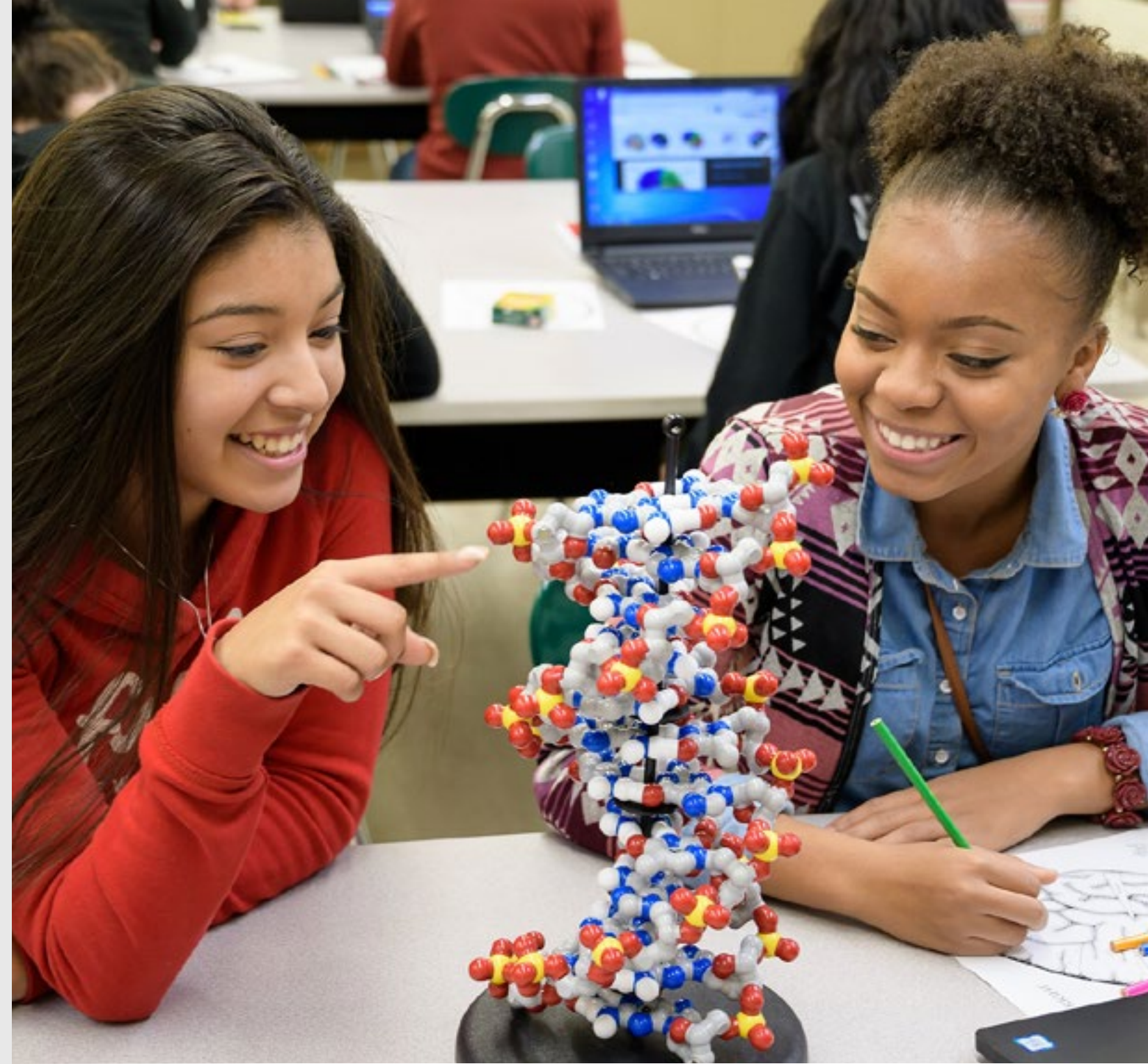
In this work we identify local bright spots, effective initiatives from other communities around the country, and also national research – which, when taken together create a compelling case that we now know how to accomplish our objectives. The next logical step is to share this knowledge with the broader community and engage many more people and organizations in this work.

Then we must implement robust local plans which will create verifiable evidence that our work is yielding tangible results for all children and families in Racine County. As soon as we have solid evidence, then we will present that to regional and national funders, as well as local and state policy makers, to fund the scaling of our work to achieve community and County-wide impact.

In the terminology of StriveTogether, we can achieve System Change in Racine County and become a Proof Point: a model for other communities across the nation to follow. What we have all done together so far has not been easy, but that was not the hard part. Now the real work begins and it will be the best, hardest, and most rewarding work we have ever done!

We know what needs to be done: Let's go do it!

Jeff Neubauer
Executive Director



Racine Unified high school students work together on a science project



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