

Understanding History Reimagining Strategies



Annual Report 2021





Vision

A Racine County Workforce that is fully capable and employed.

Mission

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

Goals

Higher Expectations is committed to using evidence-based and data-driven decision-making to identify best practices, align community efforts, and track progress on key outcomes from birth to successful employment. We have three core goals:

1. Every child enters school ready to learn
2. Every student succeeds in school
3. Every resident succeeds in a career

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Letter from Our Staff

The past two years have shown us more clearly than ever what we already knew, across our community and our country there are deep inequities built into our systems. Our partnership has always focused on improving outcomes for all Racine County residents, but now more than ever we are focused on reducing systemic inequities. We have learned how important it is to look at the social fabric that generates different outcomes for different groups of people and work to change practices, policies, and the way decision makers think and act. In this report, you'll see how we are thinking about historic practices like redlining that impact our present day work, and how we are starting to examine ways to more comprehensively measure our impact.

Our work in 2021 was focused on challenging the status quo and disrupting systems that have historically made decisions without including those who are most impacted by them. We committed to centering children and families in our work to create equitable systems; and believe that will begin to generate the improved, equitable outcomes we all desire. We have invested in a full-time Collaborative Partnerships Director to lead our Early Childhood work, and updated two positions to have a stronger focus on community engagement: our Early Learning Associate and Engagement Director. We also invested in on our relationships with the community and created more opportunities to lift up community leaders in our work.

This report highlights some of our year's work. You'll learn how the Education Network is now moving forward as we brought together folks to build a system that will grow our own more diverse and well trained K-12 teachers. You'll see how access and enrollment opportunities after high school have started to accelerate with the first ever FAFSA week at RUSD, and a much higher level of commitment by many in our community. We share that while our 2021 work continued to focus on improving our target outcomes in the career to cradle continuum, Higher Expectations also strategically redirected efforts based on the data of significant inequities highlighted by the pandemic; shifting some of our efforts to work on internet access, housing, HSED attainment, and access to vaccines.

We are thrilled to share this work with you again this year, and we are looking forward to the systemic and community-wide changes in the coming year because of the collective work of our team and all of you.

Benjamin Taft
Benjamin Taft

Yalanda Ludtke
Yalanda Ludtke

Canarra Jackson
Canarra Jackson

Nicholas Smith
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DeAnn Possehl
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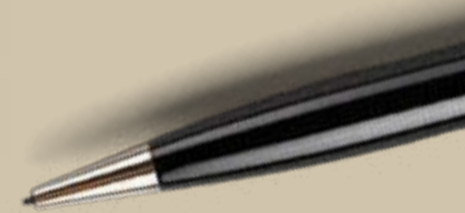
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Chelsea Powell



Who We Are

Higher Expectations 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 to improve education and employment systems in Racine County so that families in our community don't have to work the system. We know that no single program, no matter how effective, can solve all of our community's challenges.

That's why we connect a broad range of partners to identify what works and align time, talent, and resources behind strategies that will improve outcomes for students and families. We work from early childhood through employment to help ensure that every family, regardless of race, zip code, age, or family income, can succeed.

Our Principles

- Excellence & Equity**
We support and hold partners accountable for holding a high bar for all students, which includes successfully identifying and addressing disparities.
- Collaborative Action**
We align community organizations and initiatives so that partners can access the resources and best practices they need to advance their work.
- Evidence-Based Decision Making**
We use data as a flashlight to discover what's working and develop strategies that will improve outcomes.
- 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.

Our Outcome Areas



Our Network

Higher Expectations of Racine County is a member of the StriveTogether Cradle to Career Network. StriveTogether is a national movement with a clear purpose: helping every child succeed in school and life from cradle to career, regardless of race, zip code or circumstance. In partnership with nearly 70 communities across the country, StriveTogether provides resources, best practices, and processes to give every child every chance for success. The StriveTogether Cradle to Career Network reaches 13.7 million students and has partners in 30 states and Washington, D.C.



Our Values

In 2021, we took some time to look at our organizational culture and what our team's values were in this work. Individually, we wrote down what we wanted our organization to bring to the table for 2022. As a team, we have chosen the following three core values:

Transformative

We work to disrupt the status quo, so that systems will support and shift power to low-income individuals and communities of color.

Community-Led
Inclusive
Respecting all voices
Compassion

Focused
Dedicated & Hardworking
Strategic
Responsive
Motivated

Through the use of data and analysis, and in partnership with community and key stakeholders, we prioritize major goals and initiatives that lead to systems transformation.

Community

We amplify community power by sharing our access to high level spaces and developing local leaders' capacity to make collaborative decisions with community.

Disruptive
Pushing back against norms
Shifting Power
Transformative
Community-Led
Inclusive
Respecting all voices
Compassion
Focused
Dedicated & Hardworking
Strategic
Responsive
Motivated



Redlining In Racine

We believe that in order to better understand barriers for families in Racine, it's important to look back at how our systems were created. While there has been significant focus on equality, inequitable practices in the past still have lasting implications for our families and our systems. Our team participated in Phase One of the Racial Equity Institute's Groundwater training. It was here that we began to understand the long-lasting impacts of exclusionary policies like redlining. This encouraged us to take a deeper look at historical redlining practices and their impact on the City of Racine.

What is Redlining?

In the 1930s, in the wake of the great depression, the National Housing Act of 1934 increased availability of home loans for low-income individuals. The Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC) was tasked with ensuring these low-income borrowers didn't default on their home loans. To do so, they created Residential Security Maps, which is where the term "redlining" comes from. Green areas meant best areas and largely included businessmen who had a low chance of defaulting, blue meant white-collar families, yellow meant a declining area with working-class families, and red meant the area had "detrimental influences," which included foreign-born people, low-class whites, and black people. Across the United States, one of the most significant indicators of a red-lined neighborhood was the presence of black or brown people, in spite of a complete lack of significant data showing that they were more likely to default on their loans.

In Racine

Included with the HOLC map of the City of Racine in 1937, pictured left, is written documentation of why areas were marked certain colors. For example the all-green area, in the northern part of Racine, states "The prices of this vacant land being held high enough to prevent the encroachment of this foreign element." While the red areas were determined red list "detrimental elements" including: "some negroes and colored and foreign elements."

The Lasting Impact of Redlining in Racine

You may be asking, why does understanding these inequitable practices of our past matter now? The lasting impact of redlining can still be seen more than 80 years later, even after redlining became illegal in 1968. In areas that were redlined, entire communities were unable to take out loans to purchase or maintain their homes, making it impossible for those communities to invest in their neighborhoods or accumulate wealth. Without this investment, property values decreased, reducing the tax income for those neighborhoods and reducing the budget available for public goods like road repair, parks and recreation, and public schools. When we know these redlined areas were created on racial lines, it's easy to see how the lasting impacts influence systemic inequities for black families today.

The Legacy of Redlining in the City of Racine

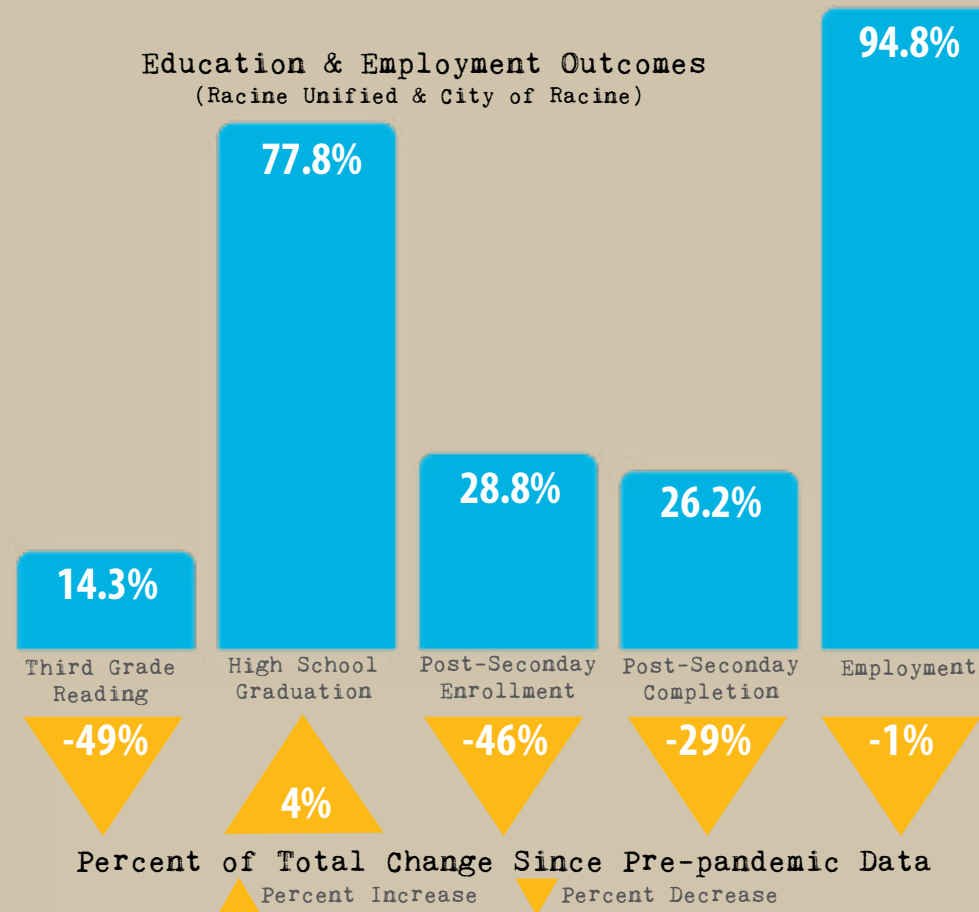
- 27% of the total population of the City of Racine lives in a previously redlined area.
- Red and yellow lined areas currently house more than 80% of the black population.
- The average value of homes in redlined areas is \$20,000 less than the City average

Investigating Our Data

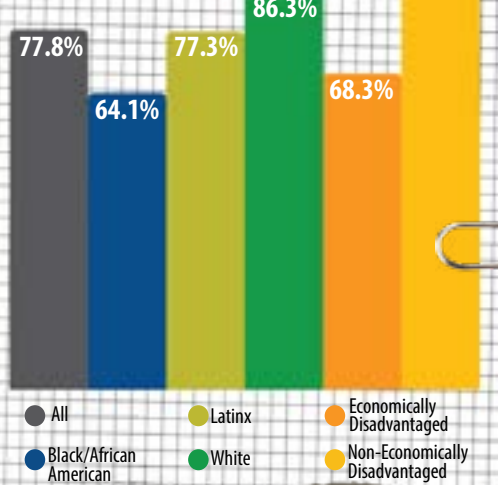
In the past, we have measured our progress by looking at outcome level data, such as how many Racine Unified students graduated from High School on time, or how many kindergarten students entered kindergarten able to recognize uppercase letters. While we will still be tracking and disaggregating our outcomes-level data, we want to dig deeper into the systems that create disparities.

These systems level data will better track how equitable our systems are. Some examples are included throughout this report, like how well our teacher and administrator population matches the population of our students, or how many students are completing their FAFSA with support from their counselors. We want to dig deeper within our partnership to investigate why systems aren't working for some residents. By looking at systems level data, we will put more pressure on our systems to change and less pressure on individuals to work the system.

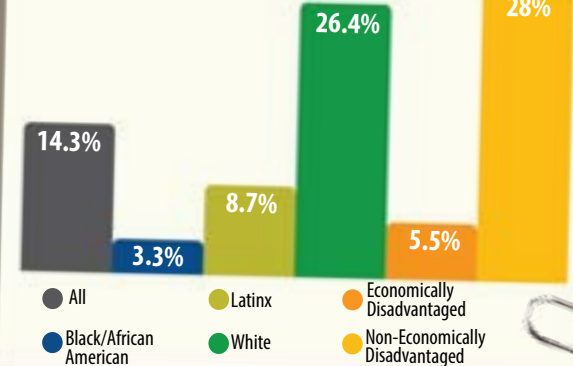
Education & Employment Outcomes (Racine Unified & City of Racine)



High School Graduation Rates (2020 Cohort)



3rd Grade Reading Proficiency (Spring 2021 FORWARD Exam)



As you see above, our outcomes data has shown that the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated challenges in education and employment. It shows us that our systems need to adapt in order to meet the needs of students and families who were systematically left behind well before the pandemic began.

*As of November 2021, there hasn't yet been PALS or TSG testing for Kindergarten students, which we have used in the past to determine Kindergarten Readiness. We are working with our partners and our community to better understand how we can measure successful outcomes before kids start school.

Bringing in Community

Community Power Consultants

In 2020, we knew we wanted to focus more effort on bringing community into our work. After participating in a co-development fellowship with our national partner, StriveTogether, we worked to get our team all thinking about community engagement in the same way. We began to measure our engagement efforts in our own work. We decided to start our own co-development with the community by putting out a request for proposals for a Community Power Consultant. This role would help us design a process for the community to have power and influence in work so that more decisions in Racine are community-driven and more solutions are community-led. In 2021, we worked with two Community Power Consultants, Amanda Roman and Auntavia Jackson.

Amanda's proposal focused on learning more about how to keep engagement consistent throughout a longer process. She noted that a big challenge she saw in engagement was there is usually a lot of conversations eliciting feedback, but often engagement stops there. She has been working with us to better understand what types of engagement work best for the community and what other challenges are currently present to engagement. Together with Amanda, we have held focus groups and created a community survey. A big key learning in Amanda's work in our project is that community members, especially parents, want to be more involved, but don't always know where to start or who to go to with their concerns or ideas. We also learned that community members feel that in order to enact change, they need to create a large coalition of people.

Auntavia's focus was improving our internal representation so that as we bring community members in, we have a Leadership Table and staff that better reflects the demographics of our community. Auntavia is in the process of interviewing our staff and Leadership Table members to better understand our current organizational culture and will be making recommendations based on what she's learned. She is also working with our staff and Leadership Table to recreate our core values, which drive the focus of our work.

To measure our team's progress in community engagement, we used a community engagement spectrum from StriveTogether. This spectrum measures engagement in six categories, explained below.

Community Engagement Spectrum

Ignore: There is no community engagement

Inform: Information is provided to the community

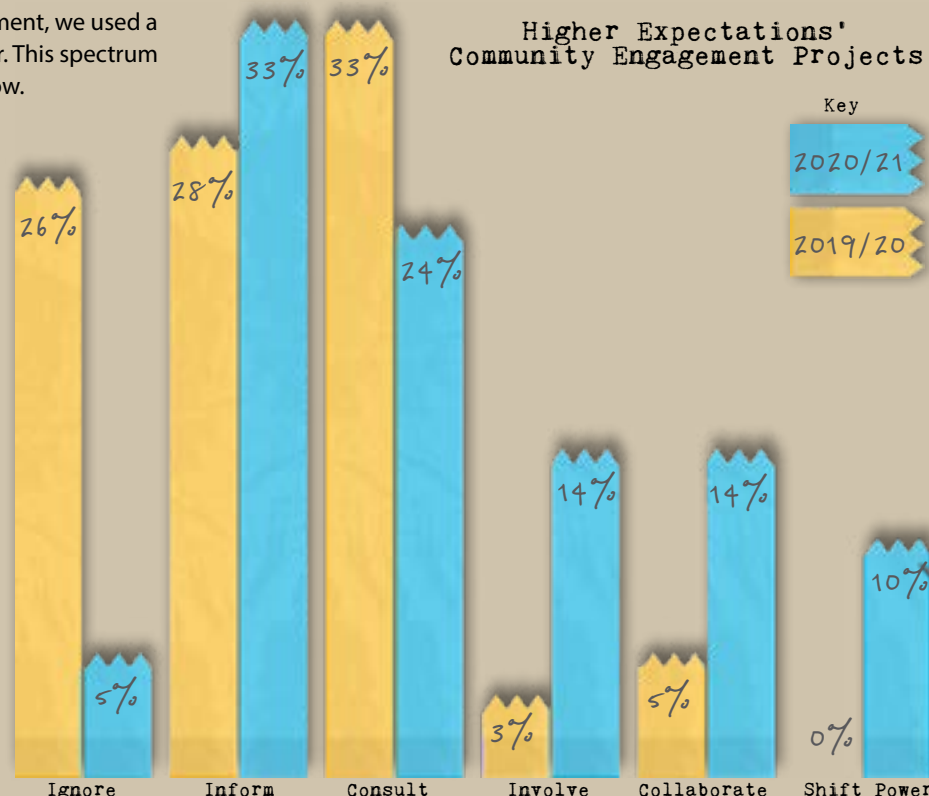
Consult: Feedback is gathered from community on analysis, issues, alternatives, and decisions through focus groups or surveys

Involve: Concerns and aspirations from community are considered and understood

Collaborate: Community is seen as a partner in each aspect of decision-making

Shift Power: The final decision-making power is in the hands of the community

We are proud of the progress we have made over the past year and are determined to continue to deepen and strengthen our engagement with community.



Creating Opportunities for Community To Engage



Parents Advocating for Childcare Fellowship

The Parents Advocating for Child Care (PACC) Fellowship is an 8-month parent advocacy training developed by the Wisconsin Partnership, which is led by a coalition of the four StriveTogether member communities in Wisconsin. Parents in five communities across Wisconsin were trained to identify the changes they wanted to see in child care and to advocate for those changes. This year, 19 parents completed the program, including two from the Racine community. PACC parents learned more about who their elected officials are and how to share their story to influence decisions at the policy level. They also had the opportunity to learn from public officials and experts in advocacy. When parents graduated, they felt more knowledgeable about their power as parents, how the government works, and what child care information was available.



Knapp Parent & Community Leaders

The Knapp Elementary Community School, an initiative led by the United Way of Racine County, is focused on increasing the amount of support and enrichment available at the school for children and their families. One of the many key areas of focus is to increase the opportunities for parents to engage, which is where our Knapp Parent Leadership group fits in. In partnership with Racine Unified and United Way of Racine County, we've helped form the group utilizing the Community Organizing and Family Issues (COFI) model. This model focuses on lifting up parents and helping them reach goals they set for themselves, their families, and their school communities. In the 2020-2021 school year, this group coordinated a giving tree for families during the holidays and organized a mental health awareness week for students. We are expanding the Knapp Parent Leadership group throughout Racine, with a focus on community school parents, and have renamed the group Racine Parent Leaders. This group will meet monthly and focus on increasing parents' access to opportunities to make changes they want to see in their community.

Housing and Education Community Advisory Committee

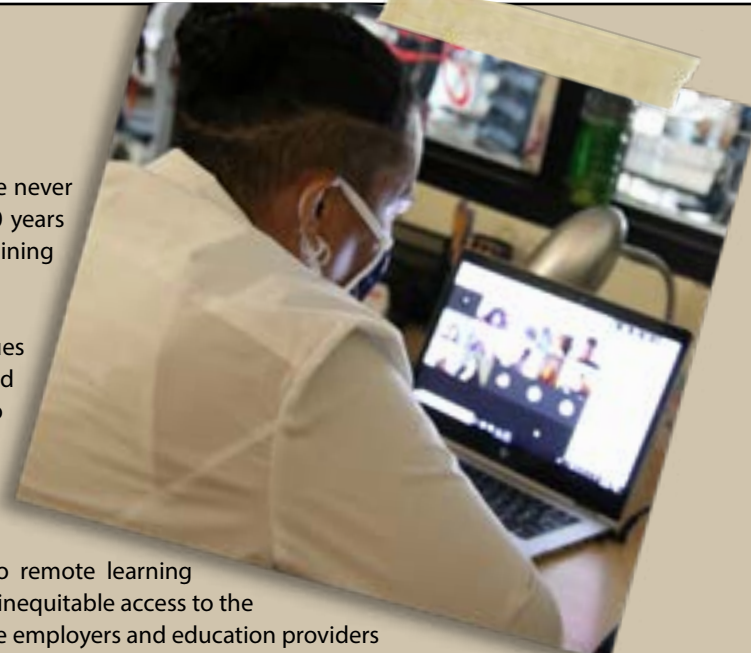
The Housing and Education Community Advisory Committee (CAC) was created as an extension of our work with Enterprise Community Partners, a national housing non-profit. In the first phase of that work, we created a landscape analysis of the housing situation in the City of Racine and its connection to educational outcomes and attendance at school. The CAC, which started in October of 2021, brings together parents and community members who are interested in learning more about their rights as tenants and increasing the understanding of the connection between stable housing and improved educational outcomes in their neighborhoods. This group will work with the City of Racine to inform the implementation of the Rent Safe Initiative and the roll out of proactive rental inspections. Proactive rental inspections through Rent Safe are part of the City's larger RENTS Initiative, which aims to address unsafe and unhealthy housing conditions throughout the City and increase protections for tenants.



COVID-19 Response

Increasing Internet Access

The COVID-19 pandemic put a spotlight on the extreme inequities in our systems like never before. The shift to virtual learning showed us how redlining policies from nearly 80 years ago, which have been illegal for more than 60 years, still have an impact today. Redlining policies made it possible for banks to deny loans and refinancing on properties in a neighborhood. So whether people living in redlined areas tried to buy, renovate, or repair their homes - they weren't able to obtain the funds to do so and property values continued to go down. With low property values often comes negligent landlords and unaddressed maintenance needs only get worse over time. Low property values also mean low tax revenue for schools or infrastructure and lack of tax revenue to maintain the neighborhood keeps property values low. Areas with low property values are often disinvested or bypassed by private internet broadband providers, which makes access to a reliable internet service inequitable.



In 2020, the shift to remote learning showed us just how inequitable access to the internet was, as more employers and education providers relied on virtual engagement than ever before. It was estimated that 20% of Racine Unified families did not have a way to get online, and over 30% did not have a device to access online learning at the start of the pandemic. And while Racine Unified students had access to devices for learning at school, the district was not yet equipped to go one-to-one so that all students could learn remotely.

Racine Unified Device Ratios



Along with our partners, Higher Expectations convened our local IT leaders, requested that internet service providers partner with us, and brought in national technical assistance from the EducationSuperHighway to ensure that the 2020-2021 school year could begin virtually to keep families safe. By the first day of school, the City of Racine had rolled out free WiFi throughout much of the community, Racine County, Racine Unified, UW-Parkside, and Gateway Technical College had all invested in extending hotspots for free internet access, and RUSD had distributed over 500 broadband hotspots to students.

Critically, policy changes were put in place that enabled RUSD to cover the cost of broadband in the homes of over 400 students who hadn't had internet access previously. This school year, the FCC has taken over the program, dramatically subsidizing the cost of broadband for families across the country. In addition, Higher Expectations supported Racine County's efforts to create new hotspot access points and the City of Racine's work to establish a number of free internet access points in the community.

Vaccine Champions

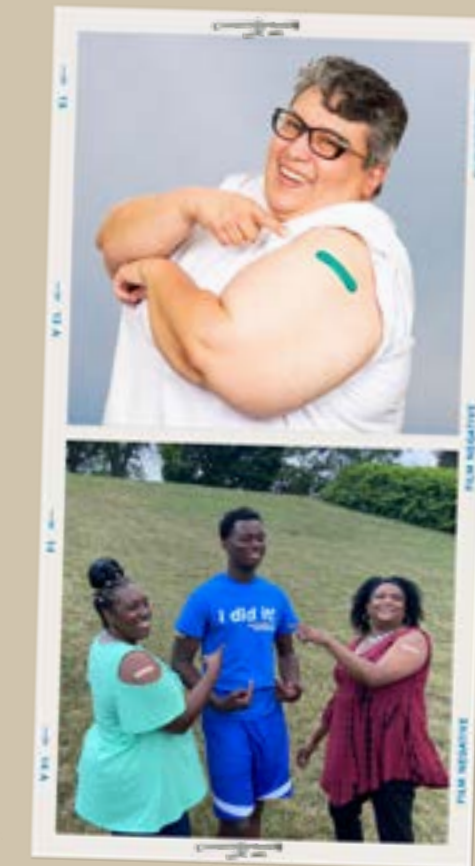
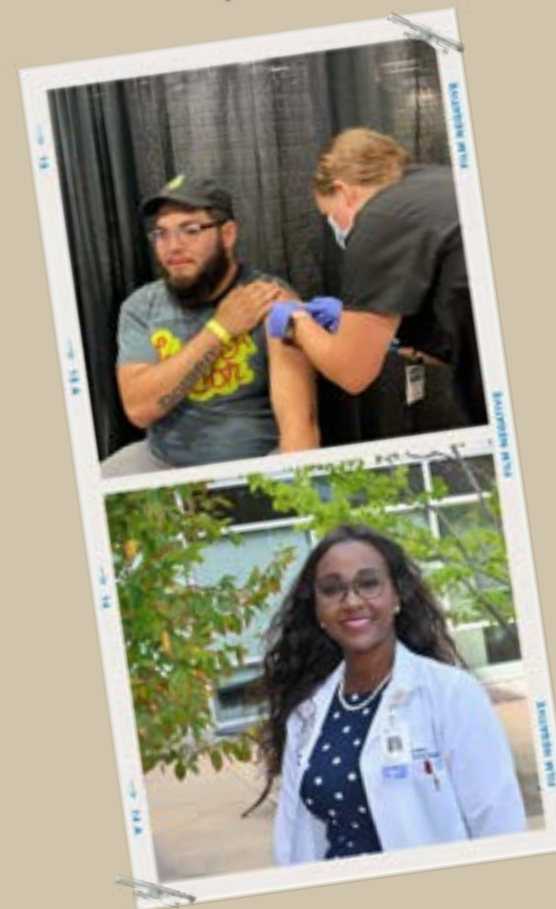
Higher Expectations worked with the City of Racine to promote the COVID-19 vaccination among high-risk and underserved populations throughout the City of Racine and surrounding communities by proposing and implementing a Vaccine Champions campaign and assisting in applying for the Department of Health Services Vaccination Community Outreach Grant. A key component of this campaign was hiring trusted messengers in the community to work with organizational partners to get accurate information on vaccines out to the Racine community and encourage vaccination. Higher Expectations led the recruitment and interview process for the Vaccine Champions, and ultimately twelve community members became a part of the Vaccinate Racine! team.

These twelve Vaccine Champions were tasked with engaging with people in their community and encouraging them to get vaccinated. As a part of this work, they were trained by the Racine/Kenosha Black Nurses Association (RKBNA) to be knowledgeable about the vaccine and to distribute educational and informational materials. The Vaccine Champions were also asked to use their connections and network to create opportunities for the RKBNA to come speak to residents about vaccination and promote Vaccinate Racine! events.

Vaccine Champions were also featured in social media and other local vaccine promotional materials, sharing their own vaccine experience in both those materials and their own social networks. At one Vaccinate Racine! event, a community member even recognized a champion and said:



"We came to get vaccinated because we saw you!"



Strengthening Educators

Developing Education Pathways

In 2016, a Racine County Labor Force survey highlighted the need for our partnership to focus on strategies that improve our teacher workforce. Like much of the nation, Racine County struggles to keep teachers in classrooms, and to hire enough qualified teachers to fill vacant positions in schools. We also know that exposure to at least one black teacher increases education attainment for black male students, especially among those from lower-income households.

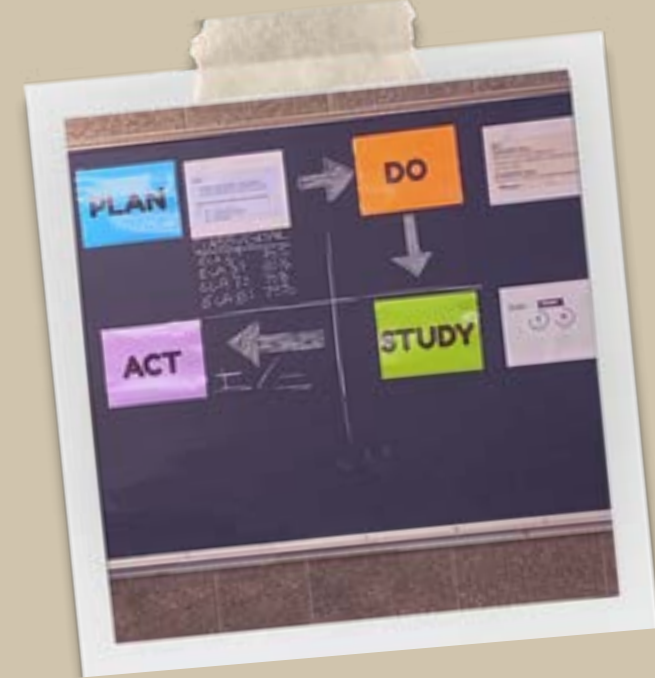
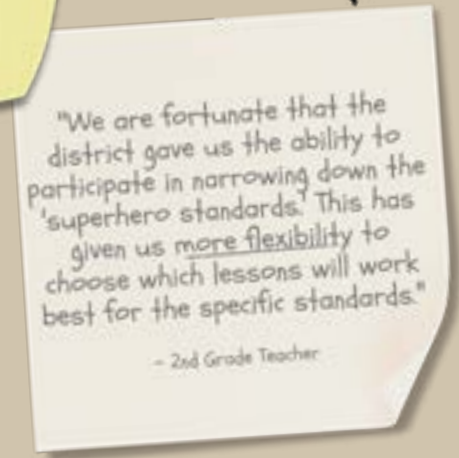
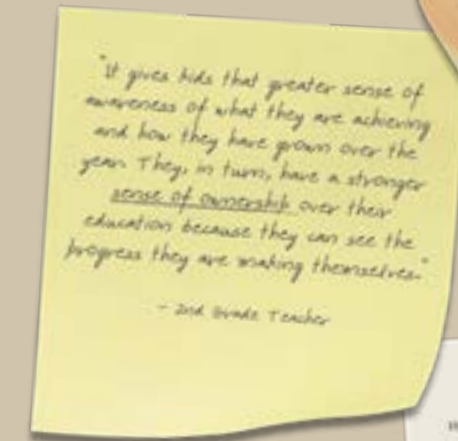
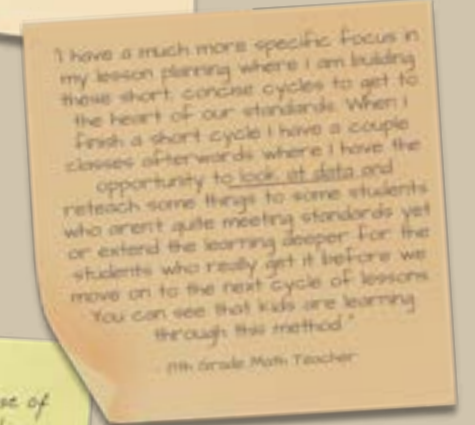
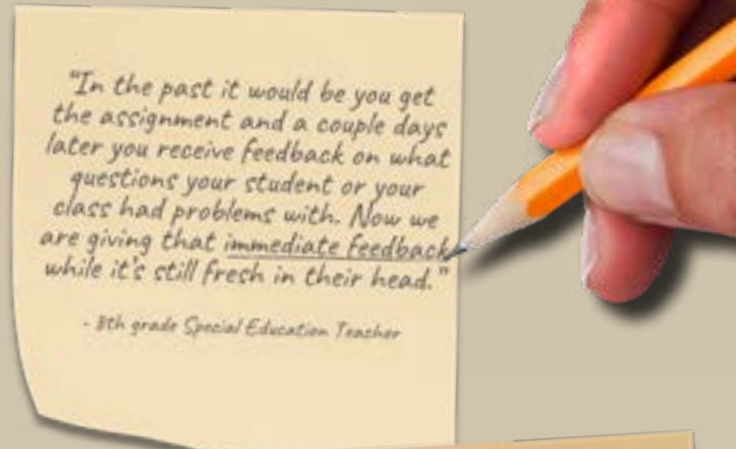
Our partners have spent the past five years working to address issues of equity in our teacher, administrator, and school support workforce. They have implemented programs like Racine Unified and UW-Parkside's School-Based Teacher Academies of Racine (STAR), the UW System Institute for Urban Education, Carthage College's Urban Teacher Preparation Program, and UW-Parkside's Parkside Access to College Credits (PACC). These programs have all focused on preparing educators to teach in an urban setting, as well as to reduce barriers to completing a teaching degree. While these current efforts are strong, our partnership is working to create even larger transformations within the teacher pipeline. We want our students to become our teachers - and to be prepared for a long, successful career in education.

That's why in 2021, we kicked off an Education Network focused on strengthening pathways to teaching. The Education Network is working to identify and eliminate barriers in the teacher pipeline that impact post-secondary enrollment and completion rates for students of color, and utilize new and existing resources to better support teachers' needs. This group, created with support from the Racine Community Foundation and Educators Credit Union, is made up of Racine Unified students and alumni, community members, Racine Unified administrators and teachers, staff from UW-Parkside, Carthage, and UW-Milwaukee's Institute for Urban Education.

Expanding Continuous Improvement

When Higher Expectations first introduced Continuous Improvement training to Racine Unified teachers in 2016, the idea was that teachers could work together to utilize data to share what was working best in their classrooms with each other. Teachers at three Racine Unified elementary schools utilized the continuous improvement cycle to teach a series of lessons, look at student progress, and prepare the next series of lessons based on the students' learning. As Racine Unified saw the improved outcomes for students and their teachers, they worked with Higher Expectations to expand the Continuous Improvement training to more schools. As of the 2021-2022 school year, Continuous Improvement is being utilized district-wide to improve teaching and learning.

In the last school year, with increased use of technology in the classroom, it has become even easier to use data with students to understand their progress. Teachers are being trained to identify to see what specific areas in the lesson their classroom struggled with most, which students are having difficulty learning the materials, and what students are excelling at. They are then able to improve their instruction, personalize the lessons in between cycles for their classroom. They can re-teach the whole class if there is a concept that didn't quite stick, give specific students additional help with an area in which they are struggling, or give students excelling in the material the opportunity to dig deeper into their learning.



Racine Unified Demographics

- White
- Black/African American
- Latinx
- Two or More Races

Teachers



School Leadership



Students



Students also have become more involved in their learning progress. In some classrooms, students have data folders which allow them to set goals and track their own progress along with their teacher. Teachers have noticed how this sense of ownership has been crucial in the transitions between remote, virtual, in-person, and hybrid learning. Some students have become more comfortable with asking questions, because they are more aware of which concepts they are having a hard time learning, as well as where they are excelling and can participate more deeply in classroom discussions.

Increasing Opportunities

Expanding HSED

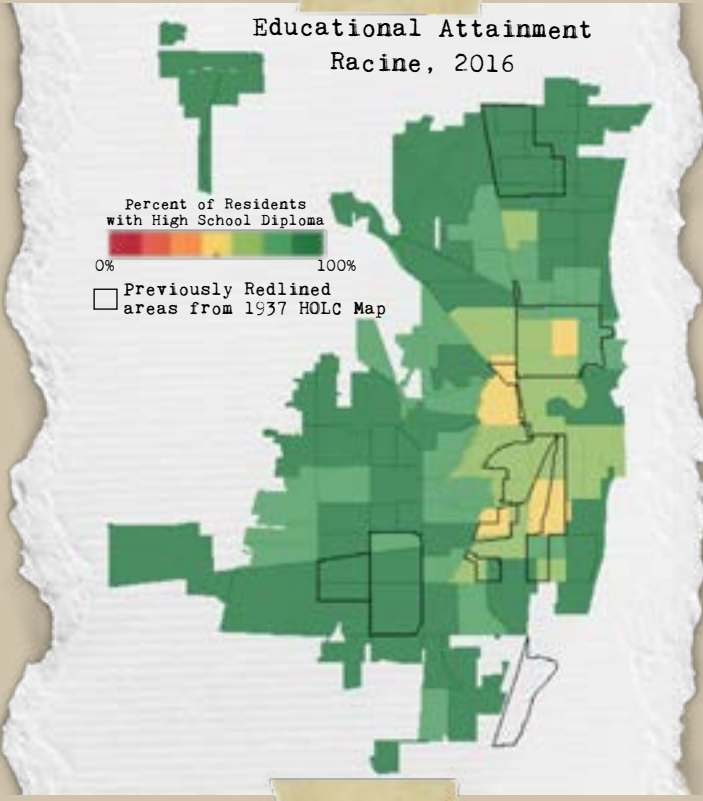


In 2019, Higher Expectations worked with the City of Racine to apply to the What Works Cities Economic Mobility initiative. After being chosen as one of nine cities to participate, the City of Racine chose to focus on increasing the number of residents with a high school diploma by scaling up YWCA Southeast Wisconsin's highly effective, competency-based high school equivalency program - the 5.09 HSED program. We've seen some incredibly promising programmatic and policy changes that have made this high school equivalency diploma program one of the largest in the state.

As of 2019, 9,583 Racine adults lacked a high school diploma or its equivalent and 14 percent of the fourth-year Racine Unified seniors didn't graduate high school in 2019. That's an additional 160+ people each year without a high school degree. We know from our time investigating the legacy of redlining, that there's a clear connection between redlined areas and a deficit of educational attainment. To improve our community's high school education outcomes, we need transformational policy changes.

The HSED program has grown over time, from 60 enrollees and 50 graduates during the 2017-18 academic year to 179 enrollees and 153 graduates in 2020-21. The initial goal was to scale the program to reach as many adults as possible in partnership with the Racine Unified School District and others. In our early stages, we learned that program flexibility matters in terms of timing and location of the program and that it is critical for the school district and other partners to remove as many participation barriers as possible.

Since 2017, 431 Racine residents have completed the HSED program and received their High School Equivalency diploma.



Since 2019, we've seen transformative changes in our community's institutional vision of high school attainment. Adult students, age 18-20, are now able to re-enroll at Racine Unified through YWCA SEW's HSED program and earn their high school diploma. Students, age 16-18, who are credit deficient or are struggling in their classes now have the option to utilize the the same HSED curriculum to graduate with their peers, and within RUSD, the competency-based credit recovery program is now available at both the alternative education building and the three comprehensive high schools because RUSD has allocated \$1.5 million in Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Funds to scale the program. The next phase of this work is to add a pre-program lab component to increase the number of students eligible for the program by individualizing support to improve their reading and math levels.

Rise Up

In 2018, Higher Expectations wanted to answer the question: What happens for families when the systems they participate in more fully support their growth? After exploring two-generation programs that focus on supporting working mothers with young children, we worked with our partners at Ascension All Saints and Goodwill Industries of Southeastern Wisconsin to pilot a cohort training program. This program, named Rise Up, brings together women who are mothers already working at Ascension All-Saints facilities to learn more about different career pathways available to them, and help them onto a pathway to a family sustaining career.

The Rise Up Program was designed to engage participants in group sessions and one-on-one sessions focused on topics related to self, career, and family. Curriculum topics were designed based on other evidence-based programs and focus groups with Ascension All Saints employees who are parents. The curriculum includes job exposure, goal setting, career path development, building a resume, and interview practice.

The first fully virtual cohort of the program, which graduated 8 participants, ended in May of 2021. All participants maintained employment during the course of the program. Two participants enrolled in new training programs since starting Rise Up, and three participants obtained new positions during the course of the program, including two within Ascension All Saints on their identified career path.



"Because of the program, I obtained knowledge and more confidence. And also, I received a scholarship from the program. Now, I'm attending college for their nursing assistant program."

"Having kids it's kind of hard to get your foot in to go to school it's hard to find time to do things, and the Rise Up Program is like a push for you to get involved."

Participant Employment Outcomes

- Maintained employment at Ascension All Saints
- Moved to a new position at Ascension All Saints
- Moved to a new position at another organization



Higher Expectations played a role in engaging with the Ascension All Saints Human Resources team to better understand additional systems-level barriers to transitioning Rise Up participants to positions in their career pathway.

Over the course of the program, 23 referrals were made to connect families to resources in the community. Participants who completed the program reported having less financial stress, better mental health, and greater confidence in their ability to raise their children.

The second cohort of this program, which evolved based on learnings from our first cohort, started in November of 2021.

Improving Access

My Future, My Choice

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) can be a complicated application, filled with questions about a family's financial information. However, we know that because many families never start, or never complete, the FAFSA - students are not receiving the federal funds and other financial assistance that could assist them in attaining their post-secondary education. That's why in 2021, we worked with Racine Unified counselors, staff, and administrators to focus on FAFSA completion.



Along with partners from College Goal Wisconsin, the City of Racine Financial Empowerment Center, and UW-Extension, we worked with Racine Unified to organize, plan, and facilitate a FAFSA completion week, focused on ensuring more students understand the options available for them post high school, and how completing the FAFSA can help them achieve their post-secondary goals.

Each comprehensive high school received the support to plan FAFSA completion sessions both during class time and after school. More than one hundred students attended either an informational or work session, and of those students, about half attended with at least one parent or guardian.

With support from counselors, volunteers from the community, and College Goal Wisconsin, 93 Racine Unified students from one of the comprehensive high school have completed their FAFSA for the 2022-2023 school year October 29, 2021, a 55% increase from the same time last year!



HORLICK
32% MORE
FAFSA applications completed by October 29, 2021 compared to October 29, 2020

CASE
21% MORE
FAFSA applications completed by October 29, 2021 compared to October 29, 2020

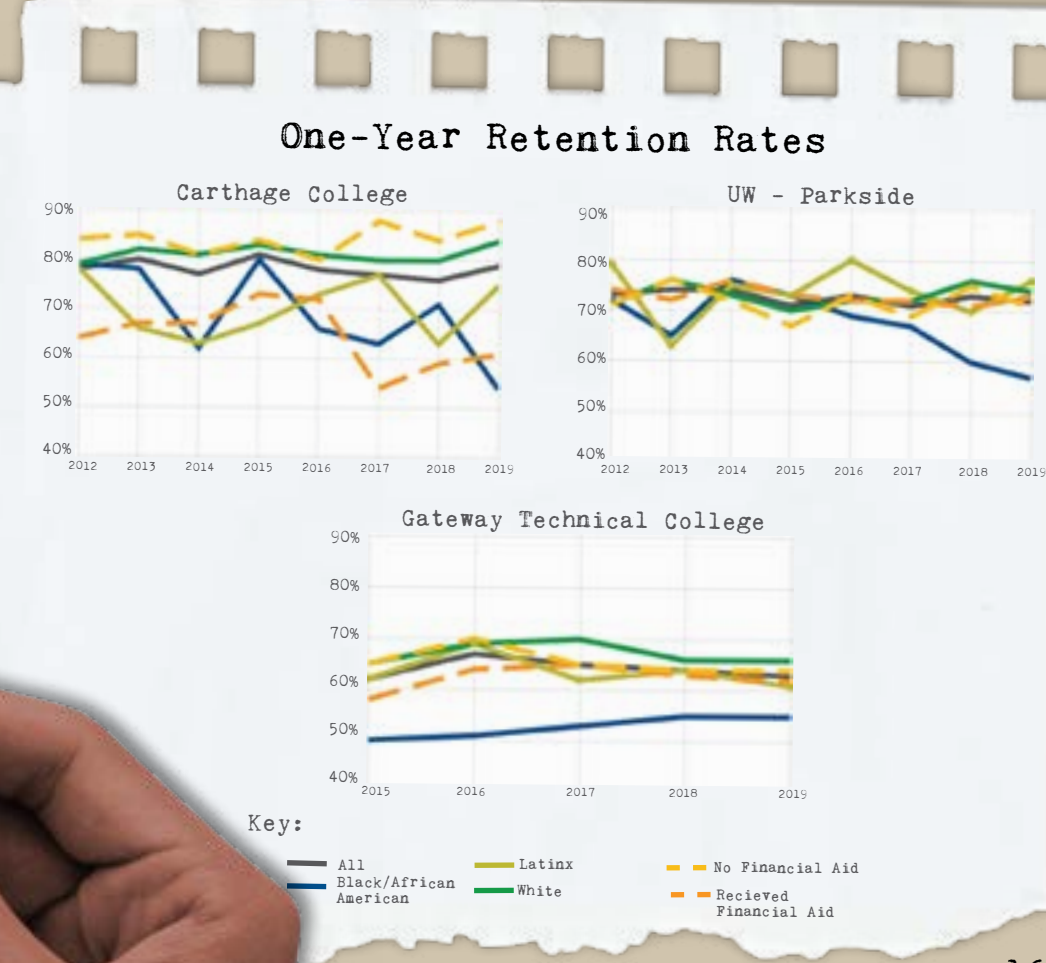
PARK
222% MORE
FAFSA applications completed by October 29, 2021 compared to October 29, 2020

Moonshot for Equity

A big part of Higher Expectation's work has always been in encouraging institutions to work together to improve outcomes for all Racine County residents. We work to create more seamless and equitable systems across the education spectrum in Racine, and foster relationships between post-secondary institutions to encourage sharing data on enrollment and student success. Two post-secondary institutions in our partnership, the University of Wisconsin - Parkside, and Carthage College, along with Milwaukee Area Technical College and the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee joined the first regional consortium of colleges and universities to commit to "Moon Shot for Equity."

Moon Shot for Equity is a new national initiative that aims to close equity gaps in higher education by 2030. The four institutions will work together and with education firm EAB to help more students of color and other historically underserved populations graduate from college. To date, the institutions have created five work teams focused on: hold reform, holistic care retention, emergency grants, and seamless transfer pathways. In addition, each institution is participating in a year-long equity focused professional development series and is in the process of administering the University of Southern California Campus Climate Survey.

This work of closing equity gaps was always important, but it is even more critical due to the impact of the pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic has only deepened equity gaps that existed previously, and many post-secondary institutions have lost forward progress in terms of closing equity gaps. The impact of the pandemic on students is clear, despite efforts from our partners to support students during the past two years.



Leadership Table

*On Executive Committee

Brian Agen

VP of Human Resources, Modine Manufacturing

Dr. Bryan Albrecht

President, Gateway Technical College

John Batten*

President & CEO, Twin Disc

Jonathan Delegrave*

Racine County Executive

Joe Dillon

President/CEO, InSinkErator

Dr. Deborah Ford*

Chancellor, UW-Parkside

Brian French

Vice President, CNH Industries

Dr. Eric Gallien*

Superintendent, Racine Unified Schools

Ali Haigh*

President & CEO, United Way

Jackie Hallberg

President & CEO, Goodwill Industries of Southeastern Wisconsin

Karen Hanson

VP/Chief Nursing Officer, Aurora Medical Center

Mario Martinez

President, Marz Insurance

Cory Mason

Mayor, City of Racine

Kristin McManmon*

CEO, Ascension All Saints

Matt Montemurro*

President, Racine Area Manufacturers and Commerce

Tom Moore

SVP - Commercial Banking Manager, Johnson Financial Group

Maurice Robinson

Chief of Police, City of Racine

Chris Ruud

President & CEO, Delta Hawk

Dr. John Swallow

President, Carthage College

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Photos provided by: City of Racine, Racine Unified, UW-Parkside, YWCA SEW





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