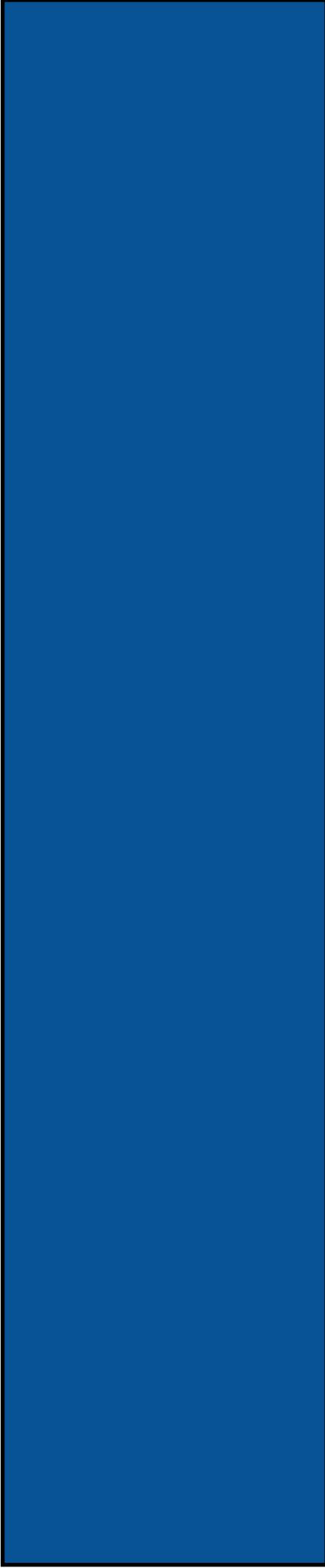




**Higher**    
**Expectations**  
for Racine County Youth

**Baseline Report  
Spring 2015**



## **Higher Expectations Baseline Report**

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## WHAT IS HIGHER EXPECTATIONS?

In 2008, the Racine County Workforce Development Board embraced the creation of a workforce development strategy with the vision of a workforce that will be fully employed by the year 2020. Educational, private, public, nonprofit, and faith-based organizations met to address some of the root causes of chronic underemployment and poverty in the county, particularly for the inner city of Racine.

After spending several years creating the foundation for collaborative work, 2014 was the official start-up year for the Higher Expectations collective impact initiative. This initiative builds on the original Higher Expectations workforce development plan and is developing a powerful, multi-year career to cradle partnership in Racine County. In addition, Higher Expectations is part of the national StriveTogether network, providing Racine County with the opportunity to build on lessons learned in communities focused on similar goals throughout the country.

## OUR VISION

A Racine County workforce that is fully capable and employed.

## OUR MISSION

Higher Expectations maximizes the potential of every child by engaging community partners and aligning local efforts to ensure Racine County children graduate prepared for training or college and success in their careers.

## OUR GOALS

Higher Expectations uses evidence-based and data-driven decision making to identify local best practices, align community efforts, and track progress on key outcomes from birth to successful employment. Using continuous improvement techniques, Higher Expectations regularly measures and reviews its progress and uses data to adjust its approach.

GOALS	MEASURES
<b>Every child enters school ready to learn</b>	<b>Kindergarten Readiness</b> <i>% of children entering Kindergarten with appropriate literacy skills</i>
<b>Every student succeeds in school</b>	<b>Elementary Reading</b> <i>% of students reading at or exceeding grade-level norms at the end of grades 1 and 3</i>
<b>Every student succeeds in a career</b>	<b>Post-Secondary Education and Training</b> <i>% of young adults obtaining degrees, diplomas, and certifications that maximize their potential and prepare them for success in a career</i>

# OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS

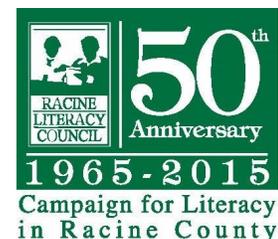
Our community partners include leaders from nonprofit, education, business, civic, and faith organizations from across Racine County. Partners work with Higher Expectations in a number of ways; many of them participate in our Collaborative Action Networks focused on Kindergarten Readiness, Elementary Reading, or Post-Secondary Education & Training.



United Way  
of Racine County



Ruud Family  
Foundation



## VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY

*The Higher Expectations model is one that engages the entire community in addressing some of our deepest challenges. As we think about the future of Racine County, Higher Expectations will ensure that we are preparing individuals with the skills, training, and resources required to meet the needs of our businesses. Though the challenge is great, Higher Expectation's commitment to using data for decision making and continuous improvement will ultimately hold us accountable to one another and the outcomes we are striving to achieve.*

**- Tom Burke, President and Chief Executive Officer, Modine Manufacturing Chair, Racine County Workforce Development Board**

*We know that successfully preparing our children for their journey to college and career is complex and critical to our community's success. Higher Expectations puts the academic and career success of students at the center of its work, fostering communication and partnerships across the community aligned to common goals. By setting high standards for success and consistently measuring and communicating progress toward those goals, Higher Expectations will have a deep and lasting impact on the future of Racine County.*

**- Dr. Lolli Haws, Superintendent, Racine Unified School District**



*Higher Expectations provides Racine County with the opportunity to equip a 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce with the skills needed to support our local businesses and economy. The commitment of the entire community – including businesses, schools, nonprofits, and others – is essential and will ensure that we are building a thriving community for our families and a local economy that will attract business growth.*

**- Jim Ladwig, President, Racine Area Manufacturers and Commerce**

*The Racine Education Association (REA) appreciates the good work being done here in Racine by the Higher Expectations team. Only when our schools are fully integrated into our communities can educators do the work we are so passionate about--helping the children of Racine become productive, thoughtful members of our democratic society.*

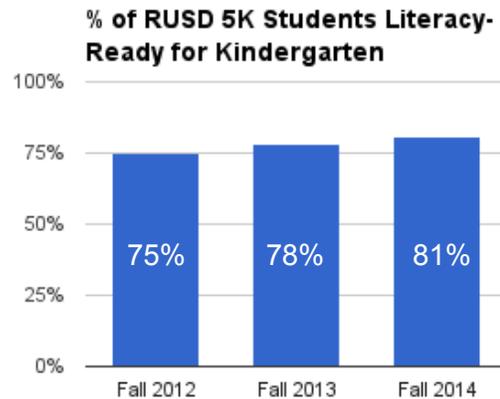
**- Jennifer Levie, President, Racine Education Association**

# BASELINE DATA: WHERE DO WE STAND?

## Kindergarten Readiness



In the fall of 2014, 19 percent of children entering kindergarten in Racine Unified School District (RUSD) were not adequately prepared to learn to read. Fortunately, the trend has been positive with the number of students prepared increasing in the past three years.

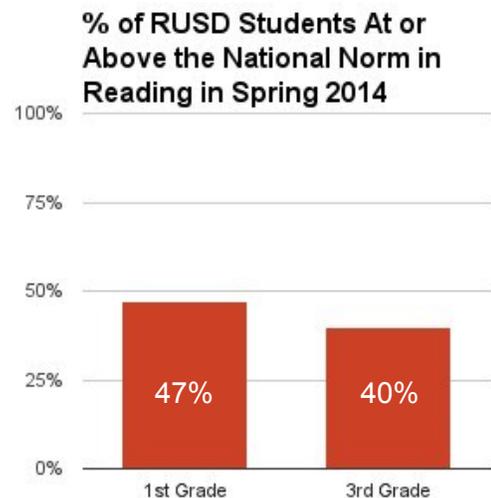


Source: Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) scores; Racine Unified School District

## Elementary Reading



Current data suggests that only 47 percent of first grade students and 40 percent of third grade students in RUSD are reading at the national norm. In addition, the number of RUSD students reading at the national norm decreases between first and third grade.



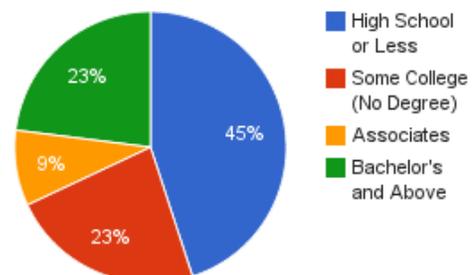
Source: Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) scores; Racine Unified School District

## Post-Secondary Education & Training



In 2013, only 32 percent of Racine County adults had obtained a post-secondary degree (Associates or Bachelors), compared to 36 percent of adults nationwide.

### Level of Education in Racine County in 2013



Source: Brookings Institution

# OUR WORK

Higher Expectations believes that access to and successful completion of high-quality education and training opportunities will lead to a fully capable and employed workforce and a thriving Racine County. Achieving this vision requires the commitment and collaborative action of the entire community. Higher Expectations is beginning to drive this work forward by bringing together key partners dedicated to our three goals:

## Kindergarten Readiness

*Every child enters school ready to learn*

Research suggests that children with higher levels of school readiness at age five are generally more successful in grade school. We want every child in Racine County to successfully enter and complete kindergarten as the first and foundational step in their academic journey. While the data suggests that the number of children entering kindergarten in RUSD adequately prepared to learn to read has been increasing over time, 19 percent of children in RUSD entered kindergarten unprepared in 2014. Higher Expectations is committed to working with schools and local partners to ensure students enter kindergarten ready to learn.

## Elementary Reading

*Every child succeeds in school*

Research tells us that a student's ability to read in third grade is a critical milestone and significantly impacts future academic success. Currently, only 40 percent of children in RUSD are meeting national reading norms by third grade. Higher Expectations is committed to increasing the number of students on track with reading by working with schools and community partners to align resources and implement strategies that can ensure children in Racine are on track to succeed in third grade and beyond.

## Post-Secondary Education & Training

*Every student succeeds in a career*

Post-secondary education attainment is directly correlated with better job prospects and increased lifetime earnings. In fact, according to the Brookings Institution, individuals in Racine County with a Bachelor's degree or higher earned nearly \$20,000 more than individuals with a high school diploma in 2013. Higher Expectations recognizes that a variety of post-secondary education opportunities—such as certificates, vocational training, and college degree programs—are critical to training adults with the skills needed to succeed in the workforce. In order to have a fully capable and employed workforce, Higher Expectations is committed to working with community partners and employers to ensure Racine County residents maximize their potential.



## Want to be involved with Higher Expectations?

You can support our efforts in a number of ways:

**Share** your feedback with the Higher Expectations team and let us know what you think about our work.

**Join** a network of community members committed to taking action and achieving our goals.

**Support** Higher Expectations by sharing your time, resources, and talents with our team and our partner organizations. Our community always needs tutors, mentors and other volunteers.

Learn more at: [higherexpectationsracinecounty.org](http://higherexpectationsracinecounty.org)



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