



FLINT & GENESEE
Literacy Network

Flint & Genesee State of Literacy REPORT

2023



Literacy *for* **Life.**

Our Vision

Flint & Genesee Literacy Network envisions a Flint and Genesee County where children enter kindergarten ready to learn, children are successful in school, are prepared for post-secondary education, and adults earn a liveable wage because low literacy rates are no longer a barrier.



Our Mission

The mission of the Flint & Genesee Literacy Network is to seek out, convene, align and build capacity in partners who improve the lives of individuals, children, and families of Flint and Genesee County by radically raising literacy levels.



Acknowledgements

Lead Author & Project Consultant

Vincent Slocum

Project Support

Antoinette Braddock

Flint & Genesee Literacy Network Staff

Angela Hood
Executive Director

Jessica Kitchner
Operations Manager

FGLN AmeriCorps Service Members

Ella Gill
Ummy Siddiqui
Brenniss Carnes-Ferguson
Mervat Esaak
Katherine Landon

MCC Work Study Member

Holly Morang

FGLN Steering Committee

Kristina Johnston, *Chair*
Kerry Downs, *Vice Chair*
Asa Ascencio-Zuccaro
Mary Behm
Jim Carney
Kathi Horton
Ja'Nel Jamerson
Mary Lorah-Hammond
Tarnesa Martin
Robert Matthews
Isaiah Oliver
Kay Schwartz
Todd Slisher
LaDelvin Walker

Message from Steering Committee Chair and Executive Director

The Flint & Genesee Literacy Network serves as the champion of a shared community literacy agenda, and we rally great neighbors and practitioners to ensure we are stronger. It has been seven years since the network's inception (can you believe it?), and we at FGLN are excited to share this State of Literacy Report with our partners and the community.

Amidst the water crisis and the Covid-19 pandemic, we contend that our focus on literacy is now more critical and relevant than ever. The educational results featured in this report serve as baseline knowledge of the current state of affairs from early childhood through adulthood to inform future investments and strategies. These indicators will cause you to question, "What do we need to do?" The answer is, first, awareness, and second, engagement. Each section will share what you can do and tips on becoming involved. Furthermore, the data is supplemented with spotlights on local partners and allies doing fantastic work to support literacy outcomes in our community on a daily basis.

As parents, educators, and community members, we recognize the importance of literacy and its effects on our students' futures. Literacy is the foundation of future success and can open many doors for our students. We are confident that the report will provide valuable insight and guidance as we continue to build a literate community throughout Flint and Genesee County.

Also, we would like to express gratitude for the support of our funders and partners over the years. Partnerships like these ensure our students have the best literacy skills possible.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our team, and we will be happy to connect with you for any additional information you may need.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kristina Johnston & Angela Hood



Imagine a world

where reading opens doors to new opportunity

Introduction

Why This Report?

Since its founding in 2015, the Flint & Genesee Literacy Network (FGLN) has engaged numerous partners across multiple action groups in advancing our vision of a Flint and Genesee County where children enter kindergarten ready to learn, children are successful in school, students are prepared for post-secondary education, and adults earn a livable wage because low literacy rates are no longer a barrier.

From the Flint Water Crisis to the COVID-19 pandemic, the intervening years have brought significant change to our community. Yet throughout this change, literacy partners across Flint and Genesee County have shown resilience and creativity in adapting to a rapidly changing educational landscape. As we look back over the past 8 years, the [Flint & Genesee State of Literacy Report](#) is an invitation for us to pause and celebrate our successes while employing the best available data to assess where the greatest needs still exist within our community.



Priorities

We, as a network, share an expansive vision of community literacy and the outcomes and data included in this report are intended to reflect this expansive vision. We believe that literacy means more than one's ability to read and write. It means opportunity. It means comprehension and understanding. We believe that when individuals and communities are empowered through literacy, their economic, social, and political well-being is improved as well. Simply put, we believe that when you radically raise literacy levels within a community, you radically raise the quality of life within that community. We are committed to standards of evaluation, reporting, and shared accountability that embrace the full range of outcomes connected with improved community literacy.



The Flint & Genesee Literacy Network is committed to advancing the cause of social justice and racial equity within our communities. As a vehicle for economic opportunity and educational achievement, we believe that literacy is among our most powerful tools in advancing this cause. As such, the Flint & Genesee Literacy Network commits to supporting our partners and community in achieving equitable outcomes for learners across all geographies and demographics. First and foremost, the data contained in this report is intended to support them in this work.



How to use this report



Using This Report

This report has been developed to align with FGLN’s Roadmap of Cradle-to-Career Literacy Solutions (see Figure 1 below). The four stages of this roadmap are:

1. School Readiness
2. School Success
3. Post-Secondary Success
4. Gainful Employment

This report begins with a bird’s eye view of countywide trends in each of these four areas. These trends are discussed in far greater detail in the following four sections, including success stories and key takeaways. Finally, as part of our ongoing commitment to advancing racial equity, this report closes by exploring racial disparities that emerge from the data.

Contents

Countywide Trends.....	4
School Readiness.....	6
School Success.....	10
Post-Secondary Success....	14
Gainful Employment.....	18
Racial Equity Data Spotlight.....	22

This is Just the Beginning

With the [Flint & Genesee State of Literacy Report](#), FGLN seeks to begin a dialogue. In it, we invite you as the reader, whether you are a literacy professional, a parent, or a committed community member, to *Imagine a World* where literacy is no longer a barrier to achieving economic, educational, and social empowerment in Flint and Genesee County. Where have we experienced our greatest successes? Where have we, as a community, fallen short of this vision? Where do we see our greatest future opportunities? This report is intended as a stepping-off point for answering these and other questions. By it, we seek to rededicate ourselves to building a Flint and Genesee County where [literacy means opportunity for all](#).

Note on Data: Unless another geography is noted, all data contained in this report represents countywide data for Genesee County.

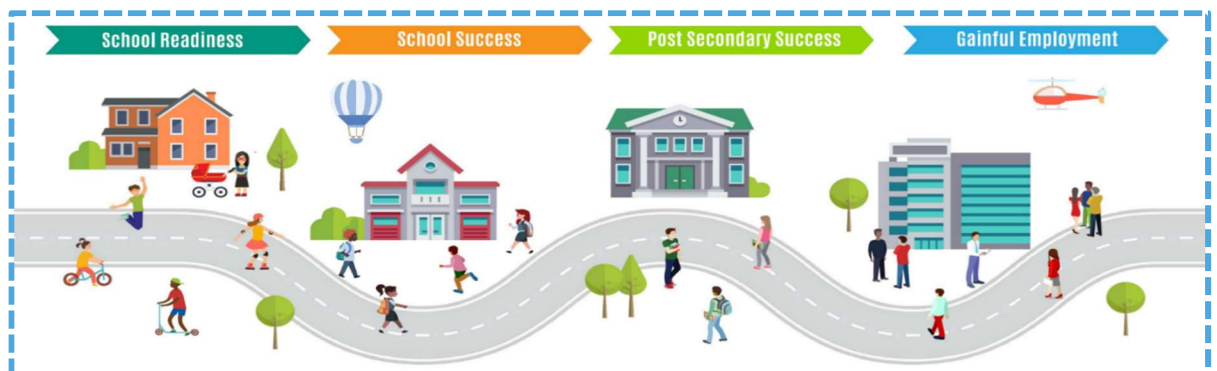


Figure 1 – Flint & Genesee Literacy Network’s Roadmap of Cradle-to-Career Literacy Solutions



Genesee County

Countywide Data Trends

Countywide Trends Across the Cradle-to-Career Spectrum

Figure 2 - Sources: U.S. Census Department, MI School Data & Kids Count Data Center (<https://datacenter.kidscount.org/data#MI/2/0/char/0>)

	Countywide Trends	Base Year (2015)		Most Recent Data (2020)		
		#	%	#	%	Change
School Readiness	Early Childhood Education*					
	Children age 3 and 4 enrolled in preschool	4,505	41.62%	5,539	52.67%	26.55%
	Children receiving subsidized early childhood education (age 0-5)	3,998	15.68%	6,661	27.80%	77.30%
	Children in Pre-K receiving early childhood special education	2,230	49.50%	2,326	41.99%	-15.17%
	Children entering kindergarten without preschool education^ (2015 & 2021)	2,574	50.10%	2,369	45.60%	-8.98%
	Household Stability					
	Families with children under 5 living below poverty	9,852	39.30%	8,162	34.50%	-12.21%
	Children age 0-5 in homes investigated for abuse/neglect	9,319		6,646	26.06%	
	Children age 0-5 out of home due to abuse/neglect	210	0.82%	248	1.04%	26.83%
	Children age 0-5 confirmed as victims of abuse/neglect	1,105	4.33%	725	3.03%	-29.79%

* Early Childhood Education is any educational support (public or private) impacting birth to Pre-Kindergarten

^ Preschool is defined as educational support for children aged 3-5

Figure 3 - Sources: U.S. Census Department & MI School Data

	Countywide Trends	Base Year (2015)		Most Recent Data (2021)		
		#	%	#	%	Change
School Success	Students enrolled in primary education	67,150		60,492		-6,658
	Children receiving special education services	9,470	14.10%	9,018	14.91%	-4.77%
	3rd graders proficient in English Language Arts - MSTEP*	2,253	46.11%	1,161	36.87%	-20.04%
	7th graders proficient in Math - MSTEP*	1,430	29.65%	690	21.72%	-26.75%
	Children meeting college readiness benchmarks - SAT^	2,575	56.80%	1,681	50.70%	-10.74%
	Children chronically absent from school	22,826	33.30%	20,372	32.60%	-2.10%
	Students graduating on time	4,123	77.61%	3,749	79.14%	1.97%
	Students receiving free and reduced lunch	29,040	51.33%	29,430	57.40%	-11.83%

* MSTEP is the Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress

^ SAT is the Scholastic Aptitude Test



Figure 4 - Sources: U.S. Census Department & MI School Data

Post-Secondary Success	Countywide Trends	Base Year (2015)		Most Recent Data (2020)		
		#	%	#	%	Change
		HS graduates attending college within 6 months after graduation	2,840	64.4%	2,111	52.4%
	after 12 months	3,025	68.6%	2,218	55.1%	-19.68%
	after 24 months	3,207	72.8%			
	after 48 months	3,345	75.9%			
	Education level for population 25 and older					
	Less than HS diploma	29,935	10.7%	25,467	9.1%	-14.93%
	HS diploma	91,477	32.8%	89,294	31.9%	-2.39%
	Some college	75,648	27.1%	74,898	26.7%	-0.99%
	Associates degree	27,977	10.0%	30,208	10.8%	7.97%
	Bachelor's degree	33,856	12.1%	38,016	13.6%	12.29%
	Graduate degree	20,044	7.2%	22,148	7.9%	10.50%

Figure 5 - Sources: U.S. Census Department & United for ALICE (<https://www.unitedforalice.org/county-profiles/michigan>)

Gainful Employment	Countywide Trends	Base Year (2015)		Most Recent Data (2020)		
		#	%	#	%	Change
		Household Income				
	Mean	\$56,528		\$69,011		22.08%
	Median	\$42,327		\$50,269		18.76%
	Unemployment	24,597	13.20%	16,719	8.9%	-32.58%
	Poverty					
	Families living below poverty	17,597	16.5%	13,987	12.9%	-21.82%
	Households living below ALICE* threshold (2014 & 2019)	37,952	22.71%	42,312	25.0%	10.07%
	Households receiving SNAP^ benefits	37,464	22.7%	33,382	19.6%	-13.66%
	Individuals without health insurance	34,958	8.5%	22,650	5.6%	-34.12%

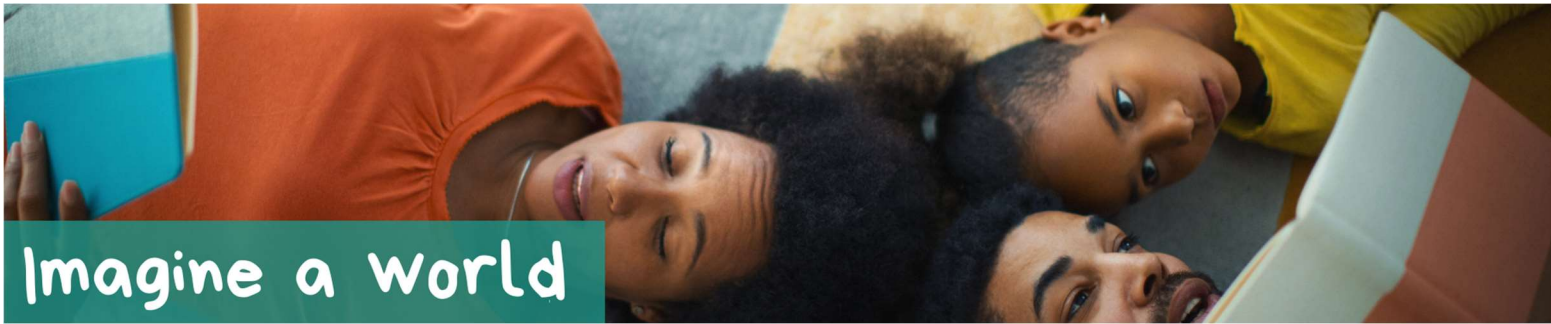
* ALICE is the Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed guideline

^ SNAP is the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program

Genesee County at a Glance

Population	2015	2020	Change	Population by Race (2020)	
Total Population	410,451	402,024	-2.1%	<u>Total</u>	<u>%</u>
Youth Population (age 0-24)	136,937	126,739	-7.4%	White	291,698 72.6%
Young children (under 5)	25,499	23,961	-6.0%	African American/Black	80,729 20.1%
Adolescents (age 5-14)	55,616	51,419	-7.5%	Hispanic	14,566 3.6%
Mid-Late Teens (age 15-19)	28,689	25,891	-9.8%	Two or More Races	14,543 3.6%
Young Adults (age 20-24)	27,133	25,468	-6.1%	Asian/Pacific Islander	3,964 1.0%

Figure 6 - Source: U.S. Census Department



Imagine a world

where families learn together

School Readiness

Preschool Enrollment

At the time of FGLN's founding in 2015, preschool enrollment for Genesee County children aged 3 and 4 (42%) trailed that of the State of Michigan (47%) by more than 12%. Since that time, however, 2020 preschool enrollment for Genesee County children aged 3 and 4 (53%) has increased by more than 26%. In the City of Flint alone (51%), it has increased by nearly 32% (Figure 7).

Thanks to these increases, preschool enrollment for Genesee County children aged 3 and 4 (53%) exceeds preschool enrollment for the same age group statewide (47%) by nearly 13% as of 2020. (Figure 7).

% of Children aged 3-4 enrolled in school by geography

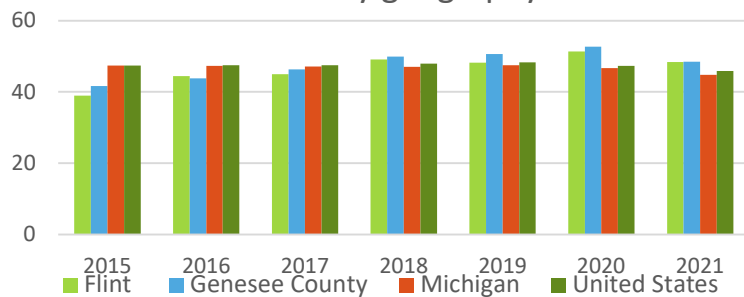


Figure 7 - Source: U.S. Census Department ACS table S1401 (5-year estimates)

% of kids receiving subsidized early childhood education

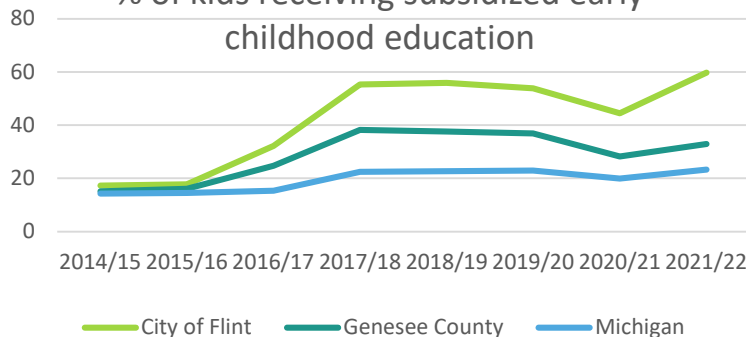


Figure 8 - Source: MI School Data

Access to Quality Early Childhood Education: Flint & Genesee County (2022)

of providers rated 4-stars or higher by Great Start to Quality



Outside Flint

21

Inside Flint

46



Capacity of 4-star or higher programs

4,003

61.9% of Genesee County kids aged 3-4 don't have access to quality preschool programs (rated 4-stars or higher)

Total Population

10,516



Figure 9 - Source: MI Early Childhood Investment Corporation at (www.greatstarttoquality.org)




School Readiness


Family Poverty


From 2015-2020, the number of Genesee County families with children under 5 living in poverty declined by more than 12%. Despite this decline, significant racial and geographic disparities persist. In 2020, poverty among Black/African American (51%) families with children under 5 exceeded that of white families (23%) by 125%, while poverty among Hispanic families (39%) exceeded that of white families by 71% (Figure 11).


In addition to racial disparities, poverty among Genesee County (35%) families with children under 5 exceeds that of families statewide (22%) by nearly 58%. This disparity is even greater among Flint families (62%), who are 187% more likely to live in poverty than families with children under 5 statewide (22%) (Figure 10).


Genesee County Kids Aged 0-5
Quick Facts: 2021


28,791 Kids aged 0-5



10,566 Live in poverty


2,369 entered kindergarten w/o any Pre-K education


47 Homeless


235 out of home due to abuse/neglect


774 confirmed victims of abuse/neglect


458 babies born at low birth weight (less than 5 lbs. 8 oz.)


Race, geography, and ethnicity contribute to disparate outcomes for children aged 0-5 in Flint and Genesee County

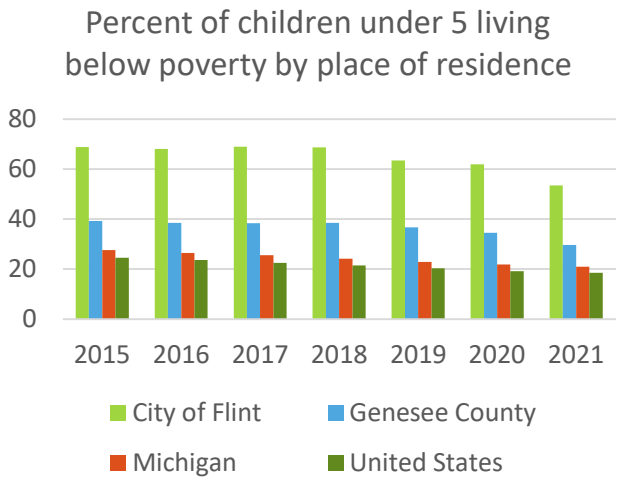


Figure 10 – Source: U.S. Census Department ACS table S1701 (5-year estimates)

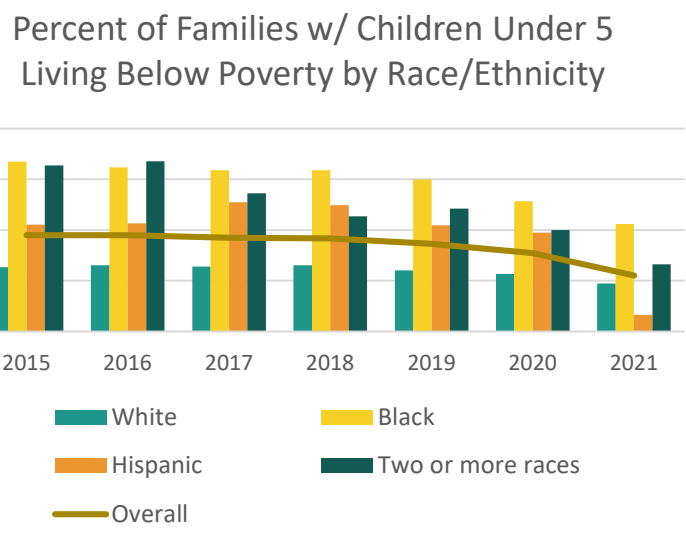


Figure 11 – Source: U.S. Census Department ACS tables B17010B, H & I (5-year estimates)

From Imagination to Action: School Readiness



What the Data Tells Us

Preschool enrollment for Genesee County children aged 3-4 has risen by **27%** and the number of kids aged 0-5 receiving subsidized early childhood education has risen by **77%** since 2015.

Despite these gains, the number of kids entering kindergarten without preschool education rose **41%** during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Although kids in Genesee County are **58%** more likely to be in poverty, Flint kids are **156%** as likely to live in poverty than kids under 5 statewide.

Black families with kids under 5 are **124%** more likely to live in poverty than white families.

Why It Matters

Quality preschool education leads to improved school readiness and academic performance for students as they progress through elementary school (Meloy, Gardner and Darling-Hammond 2019).

Preschool enrollment also generates cost savings to local school systems for services such as special education and behavioral services (Meloy, Gardner and Darling-Hammond 2019).

Family and household poverty produces lower cognitive, health, and behavioral outcomes for children in the earliest stages of their development (Halle, et al. 2009).



What YOU Can Do

1 Spend 15 minutes reading with a child in your family or 15 minutes a week with a child in your neighborhood

2 Contact your state representative and tell them to fund expanded early childhood education. Learn more at: <https://tinyurl.com/yc6av54t>

3 Make a donation to support local literacy efforts by sponsoring a child or a little library at <https://www.mcc.edu/donate/index.shtml> C/O Flint & Genesee Literacy or 1401 E. Court Street RTC1121, Flint Mi, 48503



Celebrating Success: School Readiness

The Joy of Reading for Every Child

In response to the Flint Water Crisis, local literacy advocates, led by FGLN with the Flint Public Library serving as the local champion, came together to respond to the learning needs of Flint’s youngest and most vulnerable children. Together, the group leveraged a partnership with Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library to bring the love of reading to Flint’s kids!

Locally, the program provides participating kids age 0-5 with free, quality children’s books by mail, every month. The program is guided by the belief that parents and caregivers are their children’s first and most influential teachers and that reading at home requires books.

Since launching in 2016, Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library has provided over 200,000 free books, including classics like *The Little Engine That Could*, *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, and *Corduroy*, to more than 6,000 kids locally!

Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library is generously funded by the Flint Kids Read and Flint Child Health and Development Funds at Community Foundation of Greater Flint. Visit <https://www.fpl.info/services/dolly-parton-imagination-library> for more information or to sign up! We are excited to announce that due to recent congressional appropriations sponsored by Congressman Dan Kildee, FGLN will expand this program throughout Genesee County in 2024, mailing books to 20,000 kids!



Since 2016, Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library has provided free books to more than 6,000 Flint kids.

Funding Partner



community foundationSM

Greater Flint

For **good.** For **ever.**SM

Program Partners



United Way
of Genesee County
Serving Genesee & Shiawassee Counties



FLINT
COMMUNITY
SCHOOLS

COMMUNITY EDUCATION IN ACTION



HURLEY
CHILDREN'S
HOSPITAL



GENESEE INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT
LEADERSHIP • SERVICE • INNOVATION
Partnering for success!



FLINT & GENESEE
Literacy Network



Imagine a world

where learners of all ages thrive

State Testing & Academic Success

During the 2021/22 academic year, the percentage of Genesee County 3rd graders testing proficient or higher on the English Language Arts (ELA) M-STEP (35%) was 16% lower than students statewide (42%). During the same period, ELA proficiency among Flint 3rd graders (7%) was 83% lower than students statewide (42%). Overall, the number of Genesee County 3rd graders testing proficient or higher in the ELA M-STEP has declined by 24% since the 2014/15 academic year. This trend has been greatly accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic (Figure 14).

Race and ethnicity also play significant roles in driving this trend. As evidenced by Figure 14, Black (14%) and Hispanic (33%) students are disproportionately less likely to test proficient or higher on the ELA M-STEP than white students (45%) in Genesee County (Figure 13).

School Success

Average annual school attendance days by race (pre & post COVID-19)

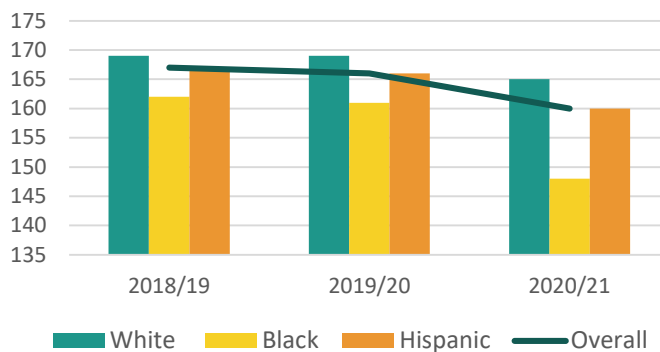


Figure 12 - Source: MI School Data

The **COVID-19** pandemic produced unequal outcomes across **Race** and **School District**

% of 3rd graders testing proficient or higher in ELA M-STEP by race/ethnicity*

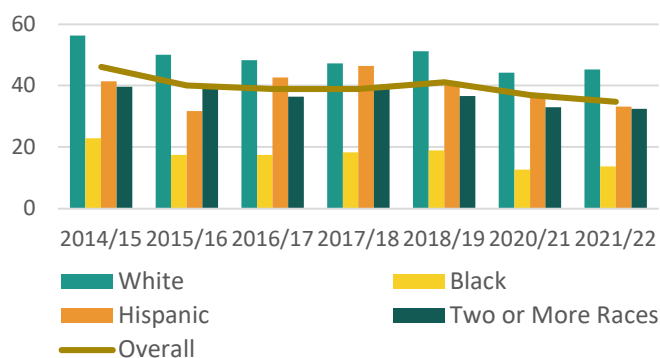


Figure 13 - Source: MI School Data

*M-STEP test not administered during the 2019/20 academic year

% of students testing proficient or higher in 3rd grade ELA by geography*

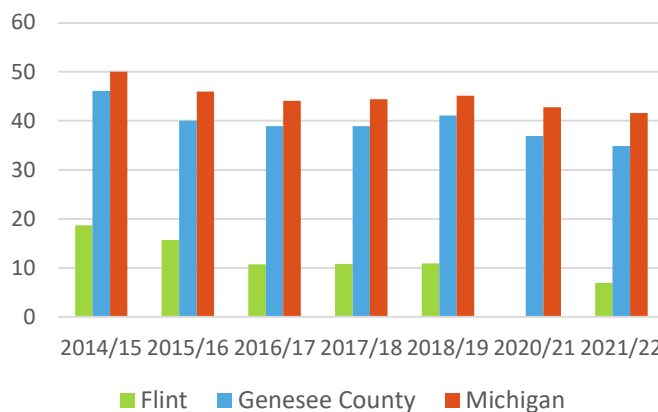


Figure 14 - Source: MI School Data

*M-STEP test not administered during the 2019/2020 academic year
*2020/21 M-STEP data unavailable for Flint Community Schools



School success

High School Dropout Rates by Public School District (%)

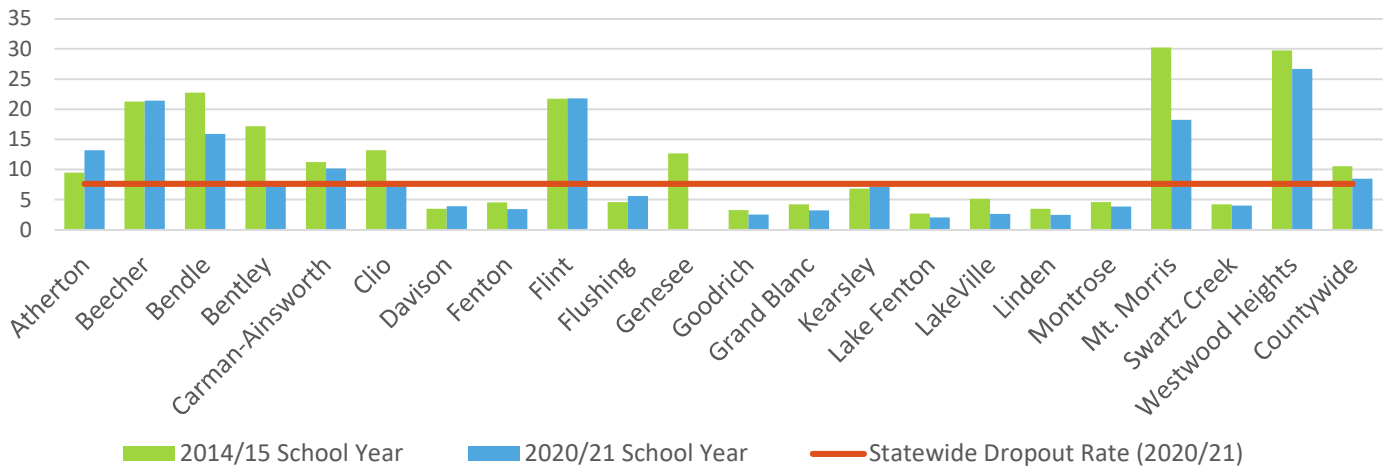
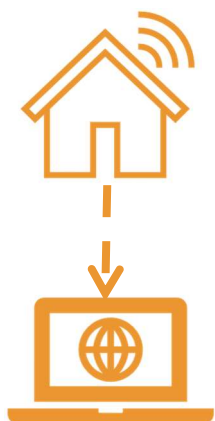


Figure 15 - Source: MI School Data

Graduation & Attendance

The percentage of Genesee County students dropping out of high school in the 2020/21 academic year (8%) fell by more than 25% as compared with 2014/15 (10%). Thanks to this decline, dropout rates among Genesee County students have reached parity with those of students statewide (8%), despite having previously outpaced statewide dropout rates in 2014/15 (9%) by nearly 13% (Figure 15).

On average, Genesee County students lost 7 days of school-based learning (as measured by average annual school attendance days) following the COVID-19 pandemic. This learning loss disproportionately impacted students of color, with Black and Hispanic students reporting significantly higher rates of learning loss (14 and 7 days, respectively) than White students (4 days) (Figure 12).



Percent of Pre-k to 12th Grade Students w/o Home Internet Access

Michigan	Genesee County	City of Flint
7.02%	10.76%	26.79%

3,093

students outside of Flint lack home internet access

Flint students make up **24.8%** of the total student population in Genesee County

4,976

Flint students lack home internet access

But account for **61.7%** of students w/o home internet access in Genesee County

Figure 16 - Source: U.S. Census Department ACS table B28012 (5-year estimates)

From Imagination to Action: School Success



What the Data Tells Us

High school dropout rates for Genesee County students have fallen **20%** since 2015.

Genesee County students lost an average **7 days** of school due to the COVID-19 pandemic. On average, Black students lost **2x** this amount.

English language proficiency M-STEP scores fell by **10%** following the COVID-19 pandemic. Learning loss among Black students was over **30%** higher.

11% of Genesee County students lack access to home internet. **62%** of those students live in Flint.

Why It Matters

Chronic absenteeism increases achievement gaps at the elementary, middle, and high school levels and contributes to increased high school dropout rates (Balfanz and Byrnes 2012).

Low literacy levels among students produce higher social costs for schools and communities. It also contributes to diminished economic outcomes for students over the long-term (Gross, Hudson and Price 2009).

Racial disparities in K-12 education significantly reduce post-secondary opportunities for students of color (Taylor, et al. 2020).



What YOU Can Do

- 1** Volunteer to be a Success Mentor with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Genesee County: <https://www.bbbsflint.org/>
- 2** Attend a local school board meeting and advocate for equitable strategies aimed at improving learning outcomes for all students.
- 3** Make a donation to Flint & Genesee Literacy Network's Impact Fund: (see page 8 for more information)

Did You Know?

Every dollar invested in literacy yields as much \$4-\$9 dollars in benefits. (Center for High Impact Philanthropy 2015)



Mentoring for Success

After nearly a decade working in Flint schools, the team at Flint Community Education Initiative (Flint CEI) has found mentorship to be one of their most powerful tools for improving local students' educational outcomes. The Flint CEI is led by the Crim Fitness Foundation which serves as a leading partner in Flint & Genesee Literacy Network's 2-Generation and Family-Centered Coaching working groups. Through Flint CEI's Success Mentoring program, volunteers and AmeriCorps members build one-on-one relationships with students at 13 local schools, including all Flint Community Schools, Flint Cultural Center Academy, and International Academy of Flint.

Despite complications resulting from remote learning and the COVID-19 pandemic, the impact of Crim's Success Mentoring Program has been tremendous! On average, participating students experienced a 40% increase in attendance rates for the 2021/22 school year. Post survey results, mentees exhibited a 15% increase in their growth mindset and 22% decrease in disruptions to their classroom learning. These improved outcomes are exemplified by one of Flint CEI's most impactful mentors, Joshua Wentz. Joshua spent an amazing 68,343 total minutes mentoring more than 30 students at International Academy of Flint. Among other outcomes, mentees have reported being better able to overcome challenges, set and accomplish goals, manage difficult emotions, and solve problems.



Flint Community School Corps member and Success Mentor Joshua Wentz invested an impressive 1,139 hours of mentoring with 31 different students at International Academy of Flint!

Partners





Imagine a world

where students leave high school equipped to flourish

Post-Secondary Success

College Matriculation

The past seven years have been marked by a significant decline in college matriculation for Genesee County students. Since the 2014/15 academic year, the percentage of students enrolling in college within twelve months of graduating from high school has declined by nearly 20% (69% [2015]; 55% [2020]). On average, Genesee County students are nearly 10% less likely than students statewide to attend college within one year of graduating from high school, a gap which has widened by more than 600% since 2015, and is twice as wide for students for Flint students (Figures 17 & 18).

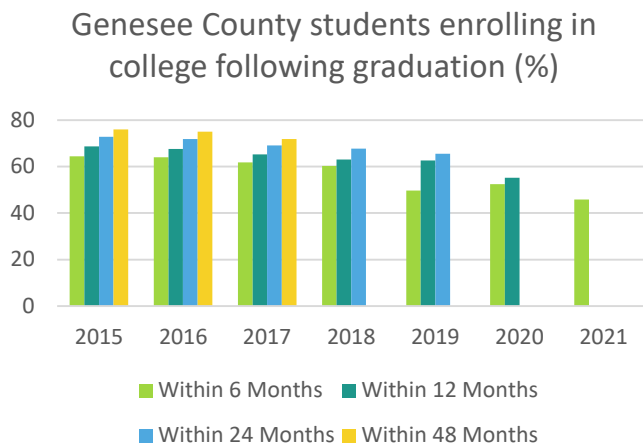


Figure 17 - Source: MI School Data

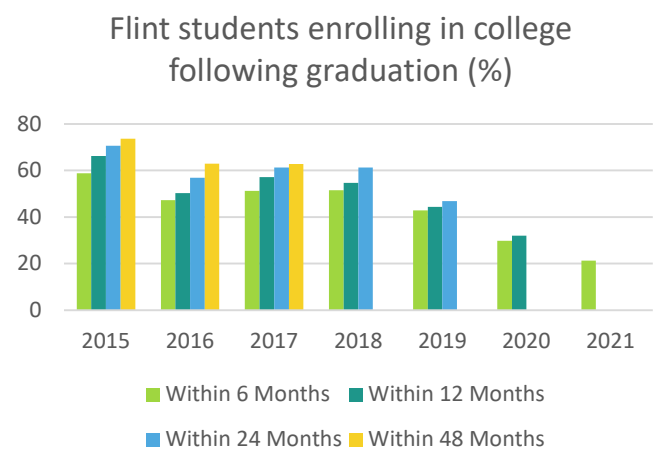


Figure 18 - Source: MI School Data

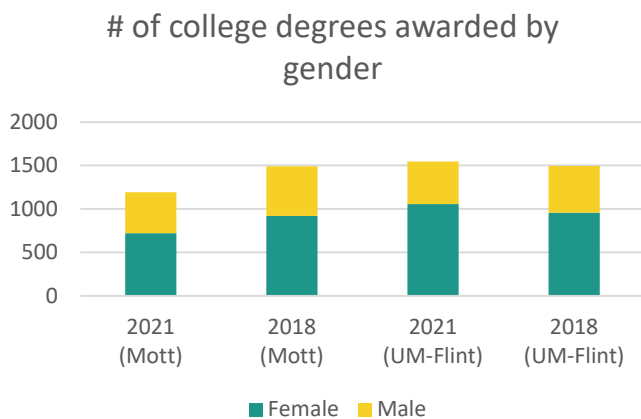


Figure 19 - Source: MI School Data

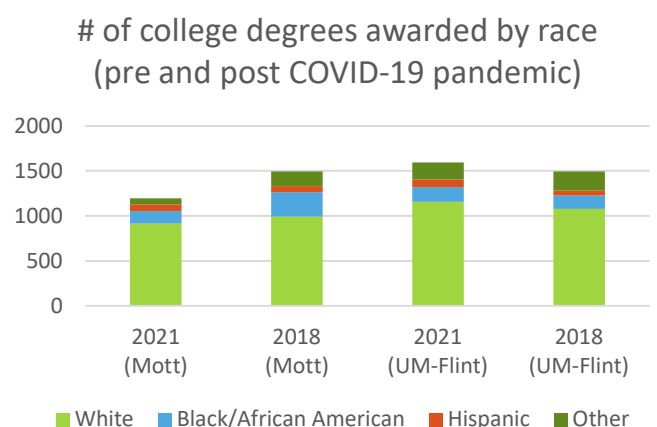


Figure 20 - Source: MI School Data



Post-Secondary Success

% of Genesee County adults 25 and older receiving a bachelor's degree or higher by race/ethnicity*

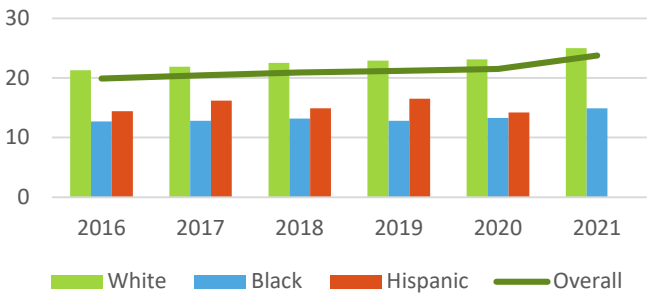


Figure 22 - Source: U.S. Census Department ACS table S1501 (2021 = 1-year estimates; 2016-20 = 5-year estimates)

*Margin of error for Hispanic population in 2021 exceeded acceptable parameters.

Educational attainment by race/ethnicity (2020)

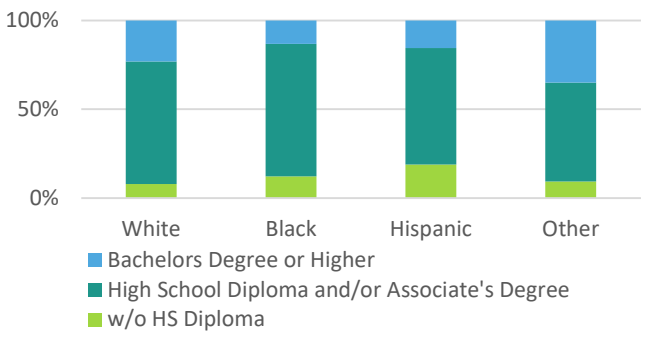


Figure 21 - Source: U.S. Census Department ACS table S1501 (5-year estimates)

Educational Attainment

Despite recent setbacks in college matriculation, overall educational attainment for adults 25 and older has markedly improved since 2016. On average, the percentage of adults aged 25 and older attaining bachelor's degree or higher has risen by more than 16% (20% [2016]; 24% [2021]). By contrast, since 2015 the number of adults aged 25 and older with less than a high school diploma fell by nearly 15% (11% [2015]; 9% [2021]). Despite these gains, significant disparities persist across race, ethnicity & geography (Figures 21-23).

Genesee County learners experience the benefits of improved educational attainment unequally depending on their **Race** and **Address**

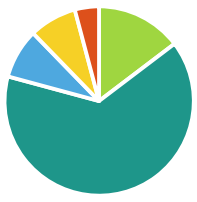
Highest level of educational attainment by residency

Genesee County



- No Diploma (9%)
- Associate's Degree (11%)
- Graduate Degree (8%)
- HS Diploma (57%)
- Bachelor's Degree (14%)

City of Flint



- No Diploma (15%)
- Associate's Degree (8%)
- Graduate Degree (4%)
- HS Diploma (65%)
- Bachelor's Degree (8%)

Figure 23 - Source: U.S. Census Department ACS table S1501 (5-year estimates)

From Imagination to Action: Post-Secondary Success



What the Data Tells Us

The number of Genesee County residents aged 25 and older receiving a bachelor's degree or higher has risen by **8%** since 2016.

Despite these gains, the number of Genesee County students matriculating to college within 1 year or graduating high school has fallen **27%** as compared with pre-COVID-19 pandemic levels.

College matriculation for Flint students fell by **61%** over the same period.

On average, Hispanics in Genesee County are **59%** less likely than Black residents and **2.4x** less likely than white residents to possess a high school diploma.



Why It Matters

Median lifetime earnings for individuals with bachelor's degrees are twice that of those with high school diplomas alone (Schanzenbach, Bauer and Breitwieser 2017).

Post-secondary achievement is a significant contributor to racial and ethnic achievement gaps (Taylor, et al. 2020).



What YOU Can Do

1 Contact your state and federal representatives and tell them to invest in affordable post-secondary education.

2 Donate to the Community Foundation of Greater Flint's Scholarship Fund: www.cfgef.org

3 Support the expansion of scholarship programs such as Pell Grant or Michigan Re-Connect.

Did You Know?

On average, Black students incur more student loan debt than any other demographic group (Taylor, et al. 2020).



Fulfilling the Promise of College

Seeking to make the promise of a college education possible for all Flint graduates, a team of local community champions, including the Flint & Genesee Group, Community Foundation of Greater Flint, Mott Community College, the University of Michigan-Flint, and Kettering University, came together to launch the Flint Promise Zone in 2018. More than a promise, the Flint Promise Scholarship Program offers Flint graduates a guided pathway to post-secondary education. Through the Flint Promise, graduates from any of 11 high schools located in the City of Flint, or Flint GED recipients, receive scholarship support to attend participating local colleges.



Since launching in 2018, the Flint Promise has made the dream of a college education possible for 269 Flint graduates!

The Flint Promise partners with Mott Community College, Kettering University, and the University of Michigan-Flint to ensure students have access to the degree, certificate, or other college credential they wish to pursue. Success coaches guide the academic pathway through mentoring and access to community resources. Life issues like childcare, transportation, and access to food and housing are common barriers to a successful outcome. Through the Promise program, students and their coaches work through these concerns. Books are expensive, and the Promise covers those expenses. The unique wraparound services offered through the Flint Promise support Flint students on a path toward a well-paying career and promising future.

Since its founding, the Flint Promise has made the dream of a college education possible for 269 Flint graduates! Visit www.theflintpromise.org for more information.

Partners





Imagine a world

where learning opens doors to opportunity

Gainful Employment

Unemployment & Income

Despite previous gains, the COVID-19 pandemic caused significant disruptions to employment in Michigan and Genesee County. Despite previous gains, unemployment rates in Genesee County have been on the rise for the past three years. In 2021, countywide unemployment reached more than 10%, its highest annual level since 2017 and nearly 50% percent higher than statewide unemployment levels (7%) (Figure 25).

Minority jobseekers are disproportionately likely to be impacted by these high unemployment levels. Despite recent gains, as of 2021, unemployment rates among Black jobseekers in Genesee County (18%) are 104% higher than those of white jobseekers (9%).

Income Inequality

Despite the recent rise in unemployment, countywide median income has risen by \$8,000 since 2015, an increase of more than 18%. As with unemployment levels, significant disparities exist across geography and race, with Flint households earning \$14,923 less than households countywide and Black households earning \$22,608 less than white households (Figures 27 & 28).

Quarterly Unemployment by Geography: Pre & Post COVID

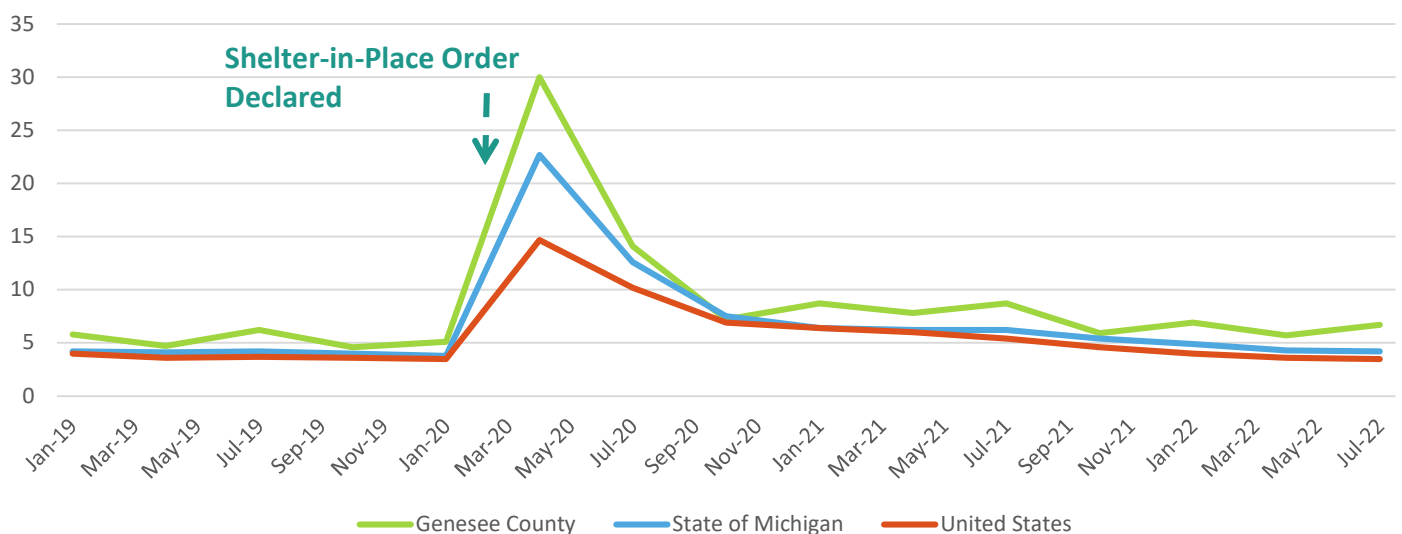


Figure 24 - Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics



Unemployment by geography

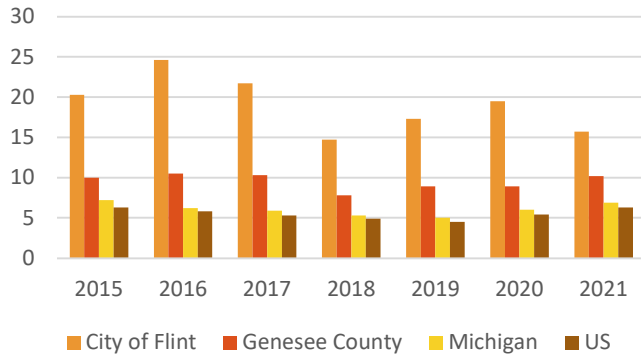


Figure 25 - Source: U.S. Census Department ACS table DP03 (2021 = 1-year estimates; 2015-20 = 5-year estimates)

Unemployment by race/ethnicity

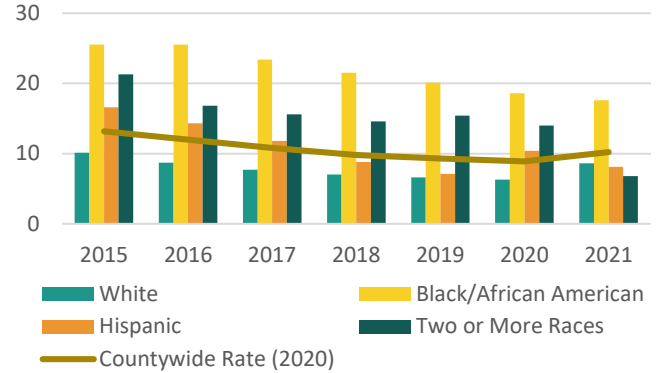


Figure 26 - Source: U.S. Census Department ACS table S2301 (5-year estimates)

Median household income by geography

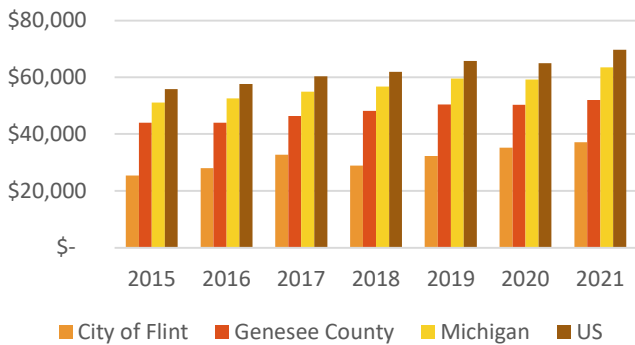


Figure 27 - Source: U.S. Census Department ACS table DP03 (2021 = 1-year estimates; 2015-20 = 5-year estimates)

Median household income by race/ethnicity

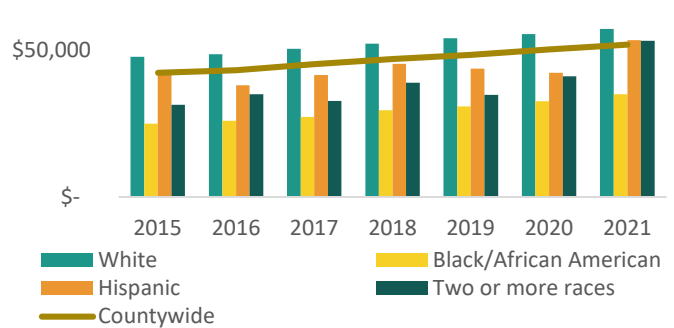
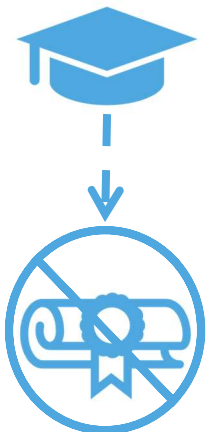


Figure 28 - Source: U.S. Census Department ACS table B19013 (2021 = 1-year estimates; 2015-20 = 5-year estimates)



Percent of Adults Aged 25 and Older w/o High School Diploma

Michigan: 8.7% Genesee County: 9.1% City of Flint: 14.7%

There are **25,467** adults aged 25 and older w/o a high school diploma in Genesee County
9,164 of them live in the City of Flint

Flint residents make up **22.3%** of the total population aged 25 and older in Genesee County
But account for **36.0%** of the population aged 25 and older w/o a high school diploma

Figure 29 - Source: U.S. Census Department ACS table S1501 (5-year estimates)

From Imagination to Action: Gainful Employment



What the Data Tells Us

Countywide unemployment has declined **33%** since 2015, yet remains **48%** higher than unemployment statewide.

Median income countywide has risen **\$7,942** since 2015, yet remains **\$8,965** lower than the statewide median income.

Despite countywide gains, the unemployment rate for Flint residents remains **2x** higher than that of Genesee County.

The unemployment rate for Black residents in Genesee County is nearly **3x** than that of white residents.



Why It Matters

Household poverty and unemployment places children at greater risk of experiencing learning loss, truancy, and behavioral distress (Kalil, Mayer and Shah 2020).

Concentrated poverty and economic distress within communities can increase crime and produce diminished health and educational outcomes for members of that community (Ludwig, et al. 2012).

When economic distress is concentrated along racial lines, it can produce long-term disparities in health, behavior, educational achievement, and economic opportunity (Rothstein 2014).

What YOU Can Do

1 Volunteer to be a learning coach at a local Adult Learning Center. Learn more at: <https://tinyurl.com/2rcsy6dr>

2 Donate to the Community Foundation of Greater Flint's Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation Fund: www.cfgf.org

3 Contact your state and federal representative and tell them to invest in economically distressed communities.

Did You Know?

79% of Genesee County's Black population lives within economically distressed zip codes. (Economic Innovation Group 2020)



Leaving No Adult Learners Behind

In April 2020, health and safety concerns resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic forced the closure of Adult Learning Centers across Genesee County. This disruption created major barriers for adult learners, many of whom lack access to computers and other digital learning technology. Recognizing the significant burden this lack of access placed on Genesee County’s most vulnerable adult learners, the Genesee County Literacy Coalition (GCLC), led by retired educator and local literacy champion, Melinda Anderson, sprang into action.

With financial support from the Community Foundation of Greater Flint and the A.G. Bishop Charitable Trust, and with technical/software support from the Flint & Genesee Literacy Network, GCLC provided approximately 70 technology bundles to adult learners in need. Each bundle includes a 14” HP Chromebook, wireless mouse, headphones, power strip, mousepad, and access to the nationally accredited Aztec literacy education platform. The participating Adult Learning Centers included GCLC, C.O.F.Y. New Beginnings Literacy Program, GST Michigan Works! Talent Development Center, St. Luke N.E.W. Life Center, Flint Development Center, and the Boaz Center. In 90 days alone, GCLC’s technology bundles have helped to facilitate nearly 1,000 hours of adult literacy education!



Since December 2020, Genesee County Literacy Coalition has distributed approximately seventy technology bundles to adult learners in need.

Funding Partners



Program Partners





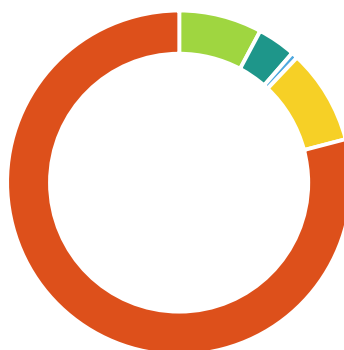
Data Spotlight: Racial Equity

Race, Community Distress, & Economic Inequality

Across all four stages of FGLN's Cradle-to-Career literacy model, racial identity continues to produce unequal outcomes for learners of all ages in Genesee County.

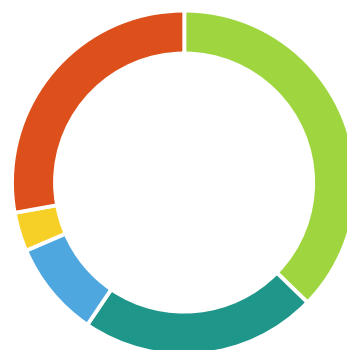
As the following tables demonstrate, Black families earn significantly less on average and are far more likely to live within economically distressed neighborhoods than their white neighbors (see especially Figures 30 & 31). As they grow older, Black children are far less likely to test proficient or higher in the 3rd Grade ELA M-STEP and are more likely to experience chronic absenteeism.

Black Population by Community Distress Index in Genesee County Zip Codes



Prosperous Comfortable
Mid Tier At Risk
Distressed

White Population by Community Distress Index in Genesee County Zip Codes



Prosperous Comfortable
Mid Tier At Risk
Distressed

Figure 30 - Source: Economic Innovation Group: National Distressed Communities Index (<https://eiq.org/distressed-communities/>)

Racial Inequality in Genesee County by the Numbers

Median Income (2021)

\$35,019	\$57,267
Black Households	White Households

Unemployment (2020)

17.6%	8.6%
Black jobseekers	White jobseekers

Learning Days Lost Due to COVID-19 (2020/21 School Year)

14 days	4 days
Black students	White students

Only **1 out of 10** Black 3rd graders in Genesee County tested proficient or higher in the 2021/22 English Language Arts M-STEP



While **5 out of 10** white 3rd graders in Genesee County tested proficient or higher in the 2021/22 English Language Arts M-STEP

68% of

Black children aged 0-4 live in poverty in Genesee County

29% of

White children aged 0-4 live in poverty in Genesee County

53% of

Black children aged 5-17 live in poverty in Genesee County

20% of

White children aged 5-17 live in poverty in Genesee County

88% of Black residents in Genesee County live within economically distressed or at-risk zip codes as compared with only **32%** of white residents (See figures 30 and 31 for more details).

Figure 31 - EIG Distressed Communities Status & Index by Zip Code and White & Black Population, 2020

Zip Code	Community	Distressed Communities Index (DCI)	Total Population	White Population	Black Population
<u>Prosperous</u>					
48430	Fenton	6.7	36,369	34,501	343
48433	Flushing	19.1	24,975	22,621	900
48436	Gaines	4.7	3,892	3,799	26
48439	Grand Blanc	5.9	49,023	39,580	4,757
48451	Linden	1.6	14,547	13,888	230
<u>Comfortable</u>					
48509	Burton	34.8	9,380	8,027	560
48519	Burton	34.5	7,027	5,875	782
48423	Davison	25.6	31,766	29,488	730
48463	Otisville	22.9	4,560	4,389	43
48473	Swartz Creek	27.1	22,111	20,464	769
<u>Mid-Tier</u>					
48420	Clio	49.9	20,698	19,610	310
48457	Montrose	55	8,574	8,063	171
<u>At Risk</u>					
48532	Flint Township	77.5	20,704	11,205	7,117
<u>Distressed</u>					
48529	Burton	90.1	8,812	7,807	674
48458	Beecher	96.7	18,712	13,303	4,169
48503	City of Flint	94.2	26,542	11,100	13,969
48504	City of Flint	98	26,020	7,481	17,216
48505	City of Flint	99.8	19,722	2,434	15,670
48506	City of Flint	96	28,308	22,236	3,339
48507	City of Flint	92	30,884	20,956	8,235

Source: Distressed Communities Index data obtained from the Economic Innovation Group (<https://eig.org/distressed-communities/>); Population data obtained from U.S. Census Department ACS table DP05 (5-year estimates)

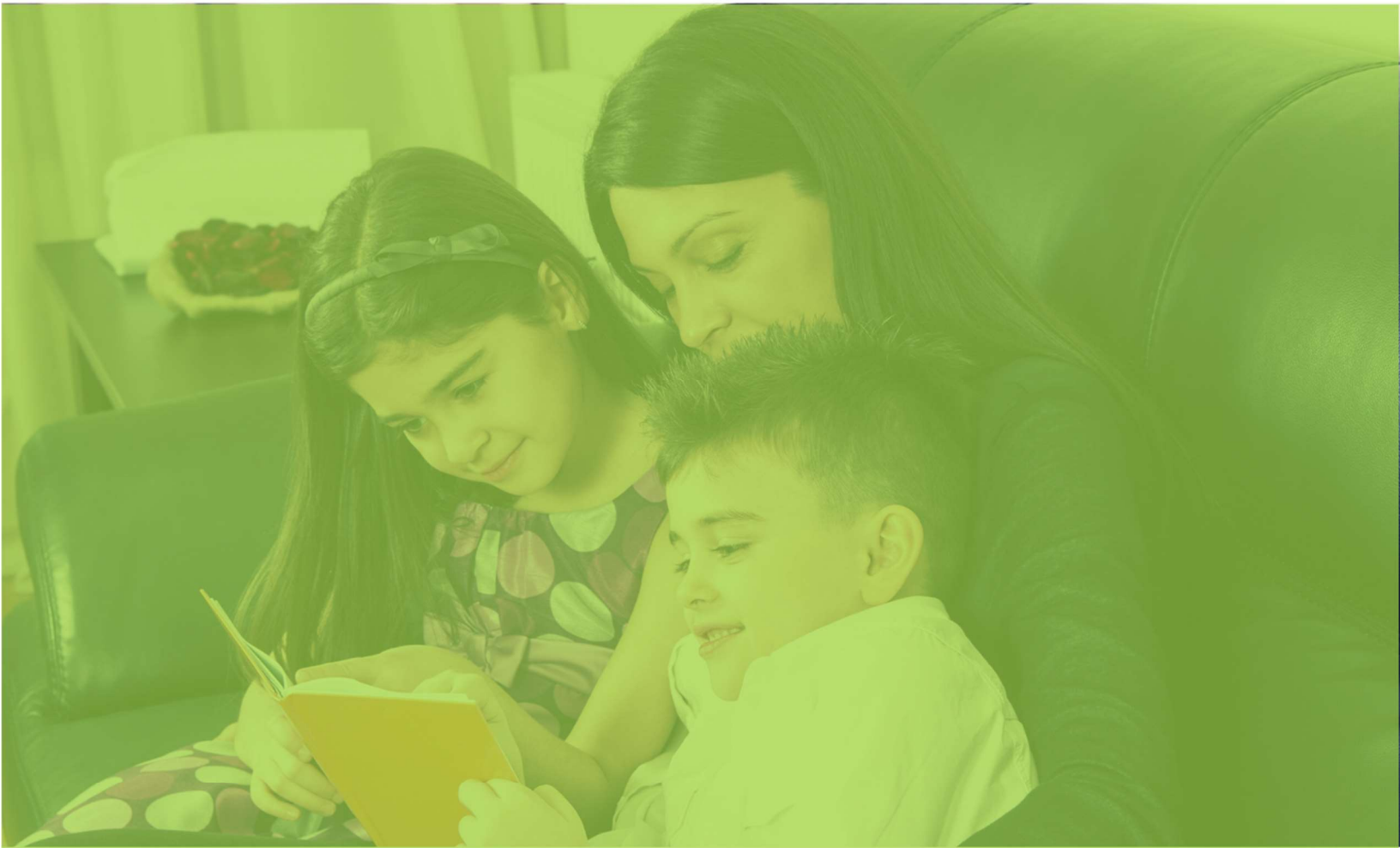
References

- Amplify Education, Inc. 2022. *Amid Academic Recovery in Classrooms Nationwide, Risks Remain for Youngest Students with Least Instructional Time During Critical Years*. Research Brief, Eugene, OR: University of Oregon.
- Annie E. Casey Foundation. 2019. *Data Snapshot on Children Living in High-Poverty, Low-Opportunity Neighborhoods*. Brief, Baltimore, MD: Annie E. Casey Foundation.
- Balfanz, Robert, and Vaughan Byrnes. 2012. *Chronic Absenteeism: Summarizing What We Know From Nationally Available Data*. Policy, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Center for Social Organization of Schools.
- Center for High Impact Philanthropy. 2015. *High Return on Investment*. Brief, Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania.
- Economic Innovation Group. 2020. *The Spaces Between Us: The Evolution of American Communities in the New Century*. Washington, D.C.: Economic Innovation Group.
- Evidence Matters. 2011. *Understanding Neighborhood Effects on Concentrated Poverty*. Brief, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.
- Gross, Jean, Colin Hudson, and Daniel Price. 2009. *The Long Term Costs of Literacy Difficulties (2nd Edition)*. London, UK: Every Child a Chance Trust.
- Halle, T., E. Hair, K. Perper, L. Wandner, Wessel I., and J. Vick. 2009. *Disparities in Early Childhood Learning and Development: Lessons from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Studies-Birth Cohort (ECLS-B)*. Research, Washington, DC: Child Trends.
- Kalil, Ariel, Susan Mayer, and Rohen Shah. 2020. *Impact of the COVID-19 Crisis on Family Dynamics in Economically Vulnerable Communities*. Research, Chicago: Becker Friedman Institute for Economics at the University of Chicago.
- Ludwig, Jens, Greg J. Duncan, Lisa A. Gennetian, Lawrence F. Katz, Ronald C. Kessler, Jeffrey R. Kling, and Sanbonmatsu. 2012. "Neighborhood Effects on the Long-Term Well-Being of Low-Income Adults." *Science* 1505-1510.
- Meloy, Beth, Madelyn Gardner, and Linda Darling-Hammond. 2019. *Untangling the Evidence on Preschool Effectiveness: Insights for Policymakers*. Policy, Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute.
- Niederdeppe, J. Winett, L.B., Xu, Y., and Gollust, S.E. 2021. "Evidence-Based Message Strategies to Increase Public Support for State Investment in Early Childhood Education." *The Milbank Quarterly* 1088-1131.
- Rothstein, Richard. 2014. "The Racial Achievement Gap, Segregated Schools, and Segregated Neighborhoods - A Constitutional Insult." *Race and Social Problems*.
- Sard, Barbara, and Douglass Rice. 2014. *Creating Opportunity for Children: How Housing Location Can Make a Difference*. Washington, D.C.: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.
- Schanzenbach, Diane Whitmore, Lauren Bauer, and Audrey Breitwieser. 2017. *Eight Economic Facts on Higher Education*. Brief, Washington, DC: Brookings Institute: Hamilton Project.
- Taylor, Morgan, Jonathan M. Turk, Hollie M. Chessman, Lorelle L. Espinosa. 2020. *Race and Ethnicity in Higher Education: 2020 Supplement*. Public, Washington, DC: American Council on Education.
- Taylor, Morgan, Jonathan M. Turk, Morgan Taylor, and Lorelle L. Espinosa. 2020. *Race and Ethnicity in Higher Education: 2020 Supplement*. Research, Washington, DC: American Council on Education.
- United for ALICE. 2021. *The Pandemic Divide: An ALICE Analysis of National COVID Surveys*. Public, New Jersey: United Way of Northern New Jersey.

The Flint & Genesee Literacy Network is a unique umbrella organization of many partners. We work as a passionate ally for our partners and community to identify gaps in service delivery, support program assessments and bring together the best literacy resources in the county. We develop and mobilize the strengths of our partners.



Visit flintliteracynetwork.org to find out how you can be part of our work. We welcome the opportunity to provide technical assistance and professional development contractually. Complimentary consultations are available.



In our seven year history, the collective impact of the Flint & Genesee Literacy Network has been funded by the following partners:



Literacy *for* Life.

This printed report is sponsored in partnership with
Mott Community College
Workforce and Economic Development Division



Specializing in Youth, Adult, and Corporate Talent Services Solutions
Contact them at (810)232-2555



Flint & Genesee Literacy Network
1401 E. Court Street Flint MI 48503
810.232.2526 | flintliteracynetwork.org



SCAN ME