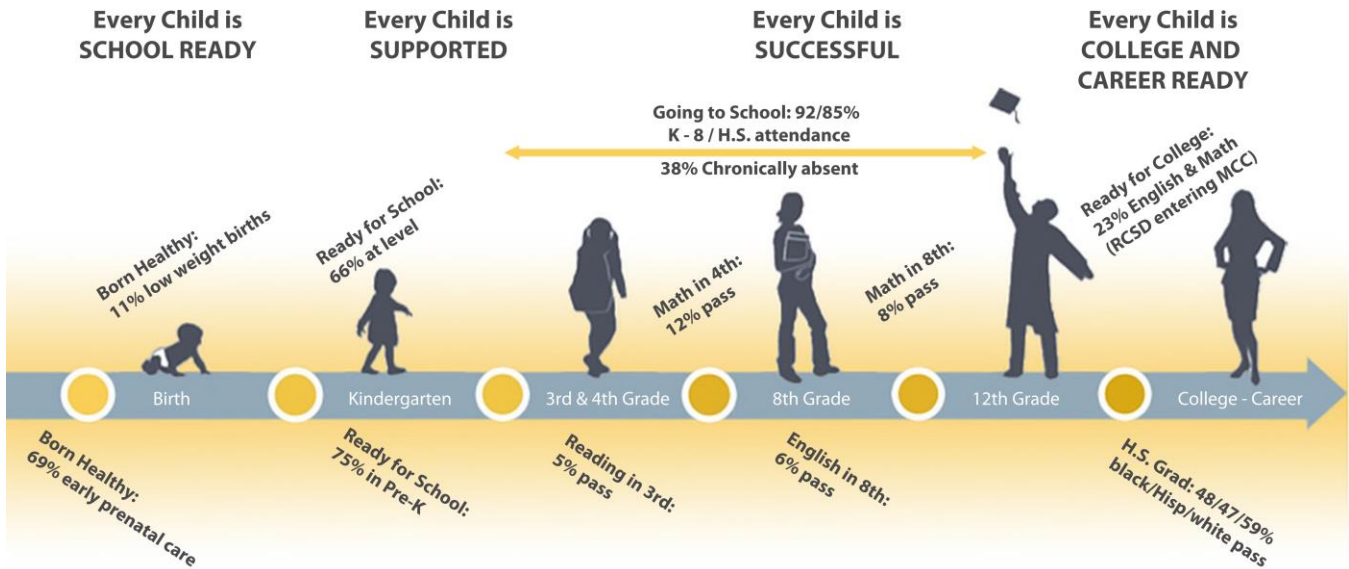




# REPORT CARD 2014



2014 has been good for the U.S. economy. GDP grew at a rate of near 5% in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter. Rochester added over 4,000 jobs since August 2013. But youth who leave school this year without a sound education will find few opportunities to join the mainstream economy. Competition from global labor and technology has kept wages stagnant. Jobs that pay a living wage demand fundamental literacy and numeracy. Options are few for those who lack the basics.

**ROC the Future** has continued to mature in the past year. Its subgroups, known as “collaborative action networks” (CANs), have taken shape and are taking action. While the CANs are establishing and achieving process outcomes, the 2014 Report Card reminds us how much we must do and how difficult the task remains.

Both this report card and **ROC the Future** focus on the City of Rochester and its more than 30,000 students because the needs are greatest there. Half of Rochester’s children are growing up in poverty, the second highest rate in the nation. Growing up poor doesn’t make learning impossible, but it does make it more difficult. Children must overcome obstacles in their families and neighborhoods ranging from crime to homelessness to poor nutrition to inadequate health care. To make a difference for these children, we must align our community’s efforts, assuring that they add up to more than any one program or initiative can provide.

Although the **ROC the Future** collaborative is tracking more than forty measures, the 2014 Report Card grades progress on selected milestones on the cradle to college/career pathway. The indicators were selected by the **ROC the Future** collaborative action network members, networks made up of volunteer professionals and community members with expertise and experience in areas like school readiness, extended learning, and college preparation. Like all of **ROC the Future**, the 2014 Report Card supports collective action aimed at improving outcomes for Rochester’s children.

**ROC the Future is focusing particular attention on a few key milestones.**

## **EVERY CHILD IS SCHOOL READY**

### **BORN HEALTHY**

Children's success begins before they are born with mothers who take care of themselves and their developing babies, starting with regular doctor visits. In Rochester, 69% of mothers began prenatal care early in their pregnancies, compared to 79% in Monroe County as a whole. Children born small are at greater risk of learning problems in future years. About 11% of Rochester babies had low weights at birth (under 5.5 pounds), compared to almost 9% in the county. (Data from 2012)

**Grade: NEEDS IMPROVEMENT**

### **READY FOR SCHOOL**

Schools need to be ready for kids, with good teachers, adequate supports and supplies, and engaging instruction. But children also need to be ready for school. Too many children lack necessary skills when entering school: Only 2/3 of city children who attended pre-K were at expected levels in language development, math and other areas on a screening assessment done in the fall of their pre-K year (Data from 2014).

**Grade: NEEDS IMPROVEMENT**

## **EVERY CHILD IS SUPPORTED**

### **GOING TO SCHOOL**

Is it true that "80% of success is showing up?" Too many Rochester students don't show up for school. Average daily attendance levels are 92% in elementary schools (K-6) and much lower – 85% -- in secondary schools (7-12), compared to 95% and 93% in Monroe County (data from 2013). Average daily attendance masks the severity of the problem for individual students. The Rochester City School District has devoted significant effort to addressing chronic absence, defined as missing more than 10% of school. Last school year about 38% of RCSD children had missed more than 10% of class days, putting them at critical risk of falling behind. At the elementary level a third of students were chronically absent—the problem is worse in high school with 46% of students missing more than 10% of school.

**Grade: NEEDS IMPROVEMENT**

### **SUPPORTED OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL**

Learning shouldn't stop at 3 p.m. or in June. When children and youth participate in quality after-school and summer learning opportunities, they are more likely to do better in school. Parents are a child's first teachers, and their success depends on parents reading with them and supporting their school work. Children also form relationships that keep them safe and engaged in positive activities outside of classrooms. As a community, we don't have an accurate count of the total number of students attending high-quality after-school and summer programs, but we do know that average daily attendance for afterschool programs funded by the United Way was about 1,200 in 2013. In addition, the Rochester School District is expanding afterschool opportunities through its extended day initiative.

**Grade: NEEDS IMPROVEMENT**

## **EVERY CHILD IS SUCCESSFUL**

### **READING BY 3<sup>RD</sup> GRADE**

Research shows that students who are reading on grade level by 3<sup>rd</sup> grade have a much better chance of successfully finishing high school. Rochester's children have far to go – in 2014, just 5% passed the state's new, tougher reading test, compared to 32% in Monroe County. Rochester students in charter schools pass at the same rate as the county average. Test scores in RCSD schools were lower than the aggregate among African-American and Hispanic children in 2013—2 and 3 percentage points below, respectively.

**Grade: FAIL**

## **MATH IN 4<sup>TH</sup> GRADE**

Early numeracy (basic arithmetic) is as essential as literacy. Students with a strong foundation in math also have more college and career opportunities related to valuable Science, Technology, Engineering and Math pathways—the so-called STEM fields. Rochester’s 4<sup>th</sup> graders scores improved in 2014 to 12% from 6% in 2013, compared to 43% in Monroe County and 48% among Rochester students in charter schools.

**Grade: FAIL**

## **MIDDLE SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT**

The years leading up to high school are pivotal – good attendance and decent grades in 8<sup>th</sup> grade improve the odds that a young person will successfully transfer to the high school environment. Far too many Rochester 8<sup>th</sup> graders are failing – just 6% passed the state’s English exam, compared to 36% in Monroe County and 12% among Rochester students in charter schools. About 8% of RCSD students in 8<sup>th</sup> grade passed either the 8<sup>th</sup> grade Math test or the Regents Algebra I test. This compares to 17% passing the 8<sup>th</sup> grade Math test in all of Monroe County and 16% passing 8<sup>th</sup> grade Math among Rochester students in charter schools. An unknown number of county and charter school students also took the Algebra I test, so the figures are not strictly comparable. (Data from 2014)

**Grade: FAIL**

## **HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION**

A productive, self-sustaining adult life begins with graduation from high school. Overall, just under half of Rochester’s students successfully complete high school in 4 years: 48% among African-American students, 47% among Hispanic and Asian students, and 59% among white students. For Monroe County as a whole, 80% graduated on time. (Data for Class of 2013)

**Grade: NEEDS IMPROVEMENT**

## **EVERY CHILD IS COLLEGE/CAREER READY**

### **READY FOR COLLEGE**

High school graduation rates tell only a small part of the story on college readiness. Nationally and locally, not all high school graduates are prepared to succeed in college. Far too many students cross the stage at high school graduation and walk directly into remedial courses in college. A large share of the Rochester City School District students who go on to college attend Monroe Community College (MCC), which assesses each student upon entry. In 2013 at MCC, 50% of RCSD graduates were deemed college ready in English, and 34% were ready in math. Only 23% were college ready in both subjects, down from 42% in 2008.

Of Rochester students graduating or earning a GED in 2012, 53% had enrolled in a 2-year college and 16% had enrolled in a 4-year college. Although 2-year college enrollment has stayed the same, the 4-year college enrollment rate was 7 percentage points below that of the Class of 2008. Persistence in college also fell: Only 41% of Class of 2012 students enrolling in college in 2013 returned for a second year, down from 56% for the Class of 2008. The federal Department of Education reports that 49% Class of 2013 applied for federal financial aid, down from 56% for the Class of 2012.

**Grade: NEEDS IMPROVEMENT**

**ACT Rochester hosts ROC the Future indicators. Review all of the indicators at  
[WWW.ACTROCHESTER.ORG/ROC-THE-FUTURE/](http://WWW.ACTROCHESTER.ORG/ROC-THE-FUTURE/)**