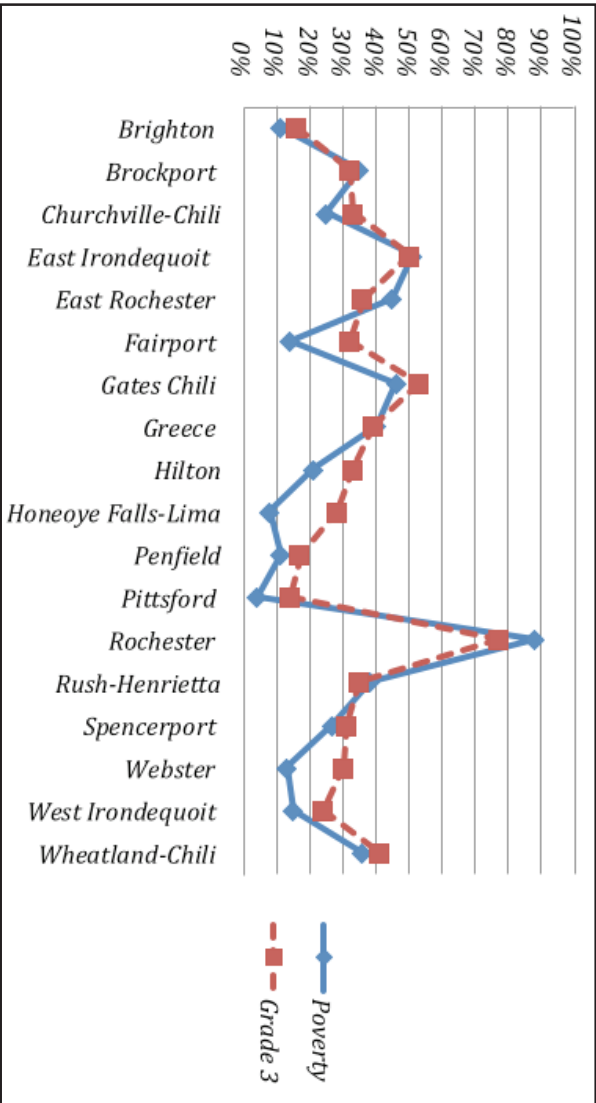


The red line tracks the failure rate on Grade 3 English language tests for Monroe County school districts. The failure rate closely mirrors the percent of poor students in poverty (blue line) in each district.

Source: Rochester Area Community Foundation



EMAIL US AT CONTACT@GS4A.ORG

- Sign up for GS4A updates.
- Volunteer for a GS4A work group.
- Inquire about contributing to GS4A work.
- Request a GS4A speaker for your group.

VISIT US AT GS4A.ORG

- View a description of all GS4A activities.
- Access articles, reports and videos documenting the importance of socio-economic integration as essential to improving educational outcomes for the poorest children in our country.
- Read more about upcoming GS4A events.

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

- Learn about upcoming GS4A events.
- Follow GS4A related news.



GS4A

GREAT SCHOOLS FOR ALL

Equal opportunity requires that every child have equal access to a great school.

WHO WE ARE

We are both grass roots and grass tops. We are city and suburban residents, neighbors, parents, grandparents, business people, faith leaders, educators, researchers, lawyers, students, and community activists all dedicated to reversing the failure of high poverty schools through a variety of voluntary integration strategies.

OUR GOAL

A community in which every family, no matter their zip code or income, is guaranteed access to an excellent public school.



Michael Fisher Photography

“Today, we have two education systems, if we want to tell the truth: one for the rich, and one for the poor. And if you happen to be born in the wrong zip code and go to a failing school, you will get left behind and never catch up. Public education that was the great equalizer in the society has become in some communities the great discriminator.”

—Gov. Andrew Cuomo, Jan. 1, 2015

WHAT MAKES GS4A DIFFERENT

- Our aim is to build consensus around action steps to reduce the concentration of poverty in the Rochester city schools by focusing on socioeconomic diversity in classrooms across Monroe County.
- We are action-oriented.
- We ask people to commit to specific tasks designed for completion in a short period of time.
- We do not ask people for an open-ended commitment to meetings.
- We are looking for partners in progress.

OVERVIEW

While it has become cliché to say “poverty is no excuse” for the failure to learn, poverty is a huge impediment to learning — not because poor children cannot learn, but because poor children in Rochester arrive at the school doors with so many disadvantages and in such numbers that they overwhelm even the finest teaching staffs.

Abundant research suggests that when the low-income student population of a school exceeds 40%, the failure rate accelerates. However, the experience of many communities around the country suggest multiple possibilities to deconcentrate poverty in city schools.

WHAT WE CAN DO

- Expand the Urban-Suburban program and make it a two-way experience.
- Develop a network of countywide magnet schools, both elementary and secondary, open to city and suburban students, with a cap on the percentage of very low-income children. These schools could focus on engineering and science, language immersion, the arts, or other themes with broad appeal.
- Create partnerships between city and suburban school districts to share resources and staff.
- Establish contractual arrangements to pair a city school with a suburban school aiming to achieve socio-economic integration of both programs.
- Create joint city/suburban preK programs.
- Grow socio-economically integrated comprehensive summer learning programs.