Recommendations for Improving K-12 Education in Milwaukee

Developing Citizens as Skilled, Innovative and Productive Life-Long Learners

Updated March 2017
MMAC serves its membership and the community by supporting a globally competitive regional economy capable of providing high-value, high wage jobs, which sustain a vibrant quality of life for all. To execute on this vision, the Association continuously updates its strategic planning document, the *Blueprint for Economic Prosperity*. The Blueprint is organized around three key objectives:

1. **TALENTED WORKFORCE**
   Developing citizens as skilled, innovative and productive lifelong learners

2. **Thriving Economy**
   Fostering a competitive business climate attractive to capital investment and job growth

3. **Distinct Place**
   Building a vibrant quality of life utilizing the unique assets of the region

Education is a cornerstone to building successful citizens. We believe employers have a responsibility to engage in improving the outcomes for K-12 students – especially economically disadvantaged students which have the largest achievement gaps when compared to their peers. Our goal is to pursue the recommendations presented here, with ongoing input from other community partners, to achieve a more prosperous region.
Milwaukee’s economy is global. Employment and capital investment decisions compete every day with the trends that both shape and shake our future. Change is swift, automation is king, and proximity to market is critical. Labor expense is up, technology is getting cheaper. Each market inflection point spells disruption or opportunity. Investment will flow to regions that provide a stable platform from which employers can best innovate, produce and serve their customers.

For the first time since 1950, the working age population of the world’s advanced economies are declining, and will continue to do so through 2050. As examples, Japan (-28%), Germany and Italy (-23%) will see a shrinking labor pool. Lower birth rates (dropping in half) and an aging population of non-working dependents will strain many economies.

Major emerging markets will not be spared by the trend of slowing growth in their working age populations.

Through 2050, China and Russia will decline by 21% while Brazil will grow by only 3%. There are a few notable exceptions. India’s workforce will grow by 33% and it will have more high school honor students than the U.S. has total high school students. By the turn of the century, 40% of the world’s population will be African. Nigeria will pass the U.S. in total population. All of these demographic changes will impact where work is done, how work is done, and who does the work.

These shifting global demographics also cast U.S. workforce population growth in a dramatically different light. From 1950 to 2000, the U.S. workforce population grew by 127% to 141 million. In the 50 years following 2000, the U.S. workforce population is projected to grow by only 36%, and the trend from 2017-2050 shows a growth rate of just 10%. This means even the faster-growing geographic areas of the U.S. will see their workforce population grow more slowly, and regions like the Midwest, including Wisconsin and Metro Milwaukee, will have their workforce challenged by stagnating population.

**U.S. Workforce Population Growth**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Growth Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1950-2000</td>
<td>127%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Projected 2000-2050 | 36%  

**Working age population trends through 2050**

- United States: +10%
- Brazil: +3%
- Germany: -23%
- Italy: -23%
- Russia: -21%
- China: -21%
- Japan: -28%
- India: +33%
Employers in the Milwaukee Region are feeling the ebb in the flow of this workforce tide. The metro area is projected to see the gap between available jobs and available workforce grow to 100,000 by 2023. These unfilled job openings are the projected result of modest economic growth, an aging workforce and a working age population (15-69) that will number 6,000 fewer than today.

Immigration also impacts our demographic shortfall. Over the past five years, the region has lost about 13,000 people due to the net impact of out vs. in-migration. Without a net positive migration to Milwaukee by non-U.S. residents, our population decline would have doubled. This places a premium on the dual goal of both growing and attracting talent.

The pace of improving educational attainment must accelerate to meet our needs as a region. It has taken 25 years to add 14 percentage points to our pool of talent with an associate’s degree or better (See graph to right.) Fewer bodies mean employers face a tightening margin in their search for talent. This search is further challenged by the large number of people over the age of 25 with only a high school degree or less (37%). In addition, a significant portion of our fastest-growing population (Hispanic and African American) are under-educated and unskilled.

Metro Milwaukee residents with an ASSOCIATE’S DEGREE OR HIGHER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Current</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>1990</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Local Population Stats

- Raleigh: 6.43%
- Orlando: 6.37%
- San Antonio: 5.36%
- Charlotte: 4.80%
- Nashville: 4.77%
- Portland: 3.18%
- San Jose: 2.97%
- Columbus: 2.19%
- Indianapolis: 1.82%
- Minneapolis: 1.36%
- Baltimore: 1.19%
- Salt Lake City: 1.10%
- Pittsburgh: 0.72%
- Kansas City: 0.63%
- Buffalo: 0.17%
- Cincinnati: -0.18%
- St. Louis: -0.73%
- Milwaukee: -0.8%
- Cleveland: -1.08%
- Detroit: -1.05%
- Chicago: -1.37%
We cannot afford to follow a course that leaves any talent on the sidelines. In 2016, 66% of African American Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) students scored in the lowest category on the state exam in math and scored only 58% in ELA. Unless these results improve, too many of our citizens will be benched from an economy that needs productive, adaptive life-long learners. City of Milwaukee K-12 students are the major source of the region’s future talent pool. While the responsibility for nurturing the next generation begins at home, the community’s most significant opportunity to impact its future flow of talent is the quality of its K-12 school system. While the region’s student population is diverse, students of color and low incomes are concentrated in a collection of neighborhoods in the City of Milwaukee. Demographics are not destiny and zip codes should not determine outcomes. Poor quality early childhood centers, disturbing rates of attrition, and low high-school graduation rates are just part of the issues facing the Milwaukee Region. Addressing these challenges is both a social and economic imperative.

**Metro Milwaukee**

**ANNUAL OUTPUT**

- H.S. Grad 19,000
- Bachelor’s Degrees 9,000
- Post Graduate Degrees 5,000

**EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT**

**Metro Milwaukee Talent Profile**

+25 yrs. age = 1,040,000

- Graduate or Professional 116,000
- Bachelor’s Degree 221,000
- Some College or Associate’s Degree 311,000
- H.S. Graduate 285,000
- Less than H.S. Diploma 104,000
Metropolitan Milwaukee is trapped in a cycle that drains the potential of far too many of its citizens before they even reach a classroom.

What we know about giving children their best chance is not new in this community — or others. Chances for success are greatly enhanced if children are born at a normal birth-weight to a non-poor married mother with at least a high-school diploma. For a significant number of children in Milwaukee, this is NOT the case:

- 87% of all African American children in Milwaukee County are raised in families at or near POVERTY LEVEL INCOME
- 79% of Latino and other non-white children at or near POVERTY LEVEL
- 86% of all WISCONSIN BIRTHS OUT OF WEDLOCK were to African American mothers, 10% higher than the U.S. average.

The statistical outcomes for these children as they grow older starkly defines the loss of potential:

- 70+% is the cumulative risk of an African American male high school dropout has of BEING INCARCERATED BY HIS MID 30s (born 1975-1979)
- 50% of fathers under age 30 without a post-secondary degree are LIVING WITH THE MOTHER OF ALL THEIR CHILDREN
- 33% of children born to low-income, low-education parents MEET A SUCCEEDING BENCHMARK (such as graduating from high school, waiting to have a child until after teenage years or avoiding criminal behavior) by adulthood.

And the cycle for low-education, low-income children repeats in the following generations.

- 78+% of HIGH-SCHOOL DROPOUTS HAD THEIR FIRST CHILD BY AGE 25 (median age women 19, for men 22). Only 3% of young men with a bachelor’s degree or higher had a child by age 22.
- 8th METRO MILWAUKEE RANKS 8TH HIGHEST AMONG U.S. METROS FOR CONCENTRATED POVERTY.
- 22% IS THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE OF YOUNG PEOPLE (AGES 20-24) WITHOUT A HIGH SCHOOL DEGREE. For those with a bachelor’s degree, unemployment is under 5%.

Similar outcomes are passed on to the next generation when young adults have a baby without a reliable partner, do not finish high school and don’t hold a quality job. A high percentage of these children are raised in unstable, fragile families without the resources, time, or skills to parent most effectively.

As children reach school age, we turn to the K-12 education system to “fix” or “fill” the significant gap that has these children well behind their peers before they step into a classroom. Too many children will carry their challenges with them throughout their schooling and beyond.
Metro Milwaukee

K-12 Student Demographics

Four-county metro = 290,000 K-12 students (232,000 public, 58,000 private)

**Washington**

19,912 students

- 17,458 White 87%
- 1,114 Hispanic 6%
- 521 American Indian/Other 3%
- 452 Black 2%
- 367 Asian 2%

12% Students of color
23% Low-income
13% Special needs

**Ozaukee**

12,658 students

- 10,828 White 86%
- 550 Hispanic 4%
- 496 Asian 4%
- 407 Black 3%
- 377 American Indian/Other 3%

14% Students of color
14% Low-income
10% Special needs

**Waukesha**

61,754 students

- 50,061 White 81%
- 3,722 Black 6%
- 3,132 Hispanic 5%
- 2,941 Asian 5%
- 1,898 American Indian/Other 3%

14% Students of color
18% Low-income
11% Special needs

**Milwaukee**

(excluding MPCP)*

138,499 students

- 51,433 Black 37%
- 45,765 White 33%
- 29,313 Hispanic 21%
- 7,774 Asian 6%
- 4,174 American Indian/other 3%

67% Students of color
54% Low-income
17% Special needs

**City of Milwaukee**

75,749 MPS students

- 40,484 Black 53%
- 19,354 Hispanic 26%
- 9,801 White 13%
- 4,809 Asian 6%
- 1,301 American Indian/other 2%

87% Students of color
67% Low-income
20% Special needs

**8,810 Independent Charter students**

- 5,400 Black 61%
- 2,646 Hispanic 30%
- 526 White 6%
- 164 American Indian/other 2%
- 74 Asian 1%

27,651 MPCP students*

*The Milwaukee Parental Choice Program (MPCP) serves more than 27,000 students in the city. While no program demographics are collected, by definition the students must come from low-income families, and the participating schools serve high-poverty and minority neighborhoods.
K-12 Educational System: Assessing Performance to Make Progress

2016 State Forward Exam
% of students scoring proficient or better

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County/School Sector</th>
<th>Language Arts</th>
<th>Math</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ozaukee County</td>
<td>64.8%</td>
<td>58.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington County</td>
<td>56.7%</td>
<td>55.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waukesha County</td>
<td>56.1%</td>
<td>61.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MKE County (suburbs only)</td>
<td>51.3%</td>
<td>49.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of MKE</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPS</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPS (Low-income)</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPS NI Charters</td>
<td>23.0%</td>
<td>18.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPCP</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ind. Charter</td>
<td>26.0%</td>
<td>23.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of MKE</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UWM Ind. Charter</td>
<td>31.8%</td>
<td>25.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessing student performance is critical to making progress. The best metric today to assess the performance of students reading and doing math at grade level is the state's Forward Exam, new in the 2015-2016 school year. Student proficiency by grade level based on the state test is the most consistent comparison available. The state adopted this new test, which set a higher standard for grade level proficiency and was designed to be comparable to other states' exams. The 2016 Forward Exam comparison is summarized to the left.

Average ACT Score for 2016 School Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County/School Sector</th>
<th>ACT Composite Score*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ozaukee County</td>
<td>23.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waukesha County</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington County</td>
<td>21.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milwaukee County (suburbs only)</td>
<td>20.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of MKE</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPS</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPS Low-income</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPCP</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ind. Charter</td>
<td>16.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ACT Scores

In addition, an important measure of high school performance is the ACT exam, which represents a student’s preparedness for college and is used by students to apply for college.

There is a clear difference in educational attainment between the urban and suburban districts, and between socio-economic groups, as well as by race. There are also differences between the school systems in the City of Milwaukee. A number of MMAC’s recommendations focus on improving the data collection and increasing transparency to spotlight best practices and consistently under-performing schools in need of intervention.

*Average ACT score at UWM is 22, with minimum preferred of 19. Average ACT at UW-Madison is 28, with a minimum preferred of 26. Average ACT score at Georgetown is 31, with a minimum preferred at 29.
For a historical perspective on student performance, we examined results from the 2010-2016 standardized test.

### % of Students Scoring Proficient or Better on State Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>2016 ELA</th>
<th>2016 Math</th>
<th>2011-2016 % Change ELA</th>
<th>2011-2016 % Change Math</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Milwaukee (suburbs only)</td>
<td>51.3</td>
<td>49.2</td>
<td>+9.0</td>
<td>-5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ozaukee</td>
<td>64.8</td>
<td>58.7</td>
<td>+10.3</td>
<td>-4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>56.7</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>+11.5</td>
<td>-4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waukesha</td>
<td>56.1</td>
<td>61.5</td>
<td>+8.7</td>
<td>-2.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SUBURBAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS:**
Suburban schooling options generally involve a traditional public school, with family-funded access to a variety of private sectarian and non-sectarian schools. Data is reported by County for all public schools.

### MPS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Reading/ELA</th>
<th>Math</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015-16</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-15</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>16.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-14</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>20.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>20.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>20.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-11</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>20.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### MPCP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Reading/ELA</th>
<th>Math</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015-16</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-15</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-14</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>15.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-11</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Independent Charter

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Reading/ELA</th>
<th>Math</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015-16</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>23.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-15</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-14</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>33.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>35.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>34.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-11</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>31.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MILWAUKEE PUBLIC SCHOOLS (MPS):** 159 schools operated by an elected school board and a central administrative system overseen by a Superintendent. Some schools have entrance requirements, but most students are assigned by lottery in an attempt to match a student’s school preference. MPS accepts all students in the City.

**MILWAUKEE PARENTAL CHOICE PROGRAM (MPCP):** 117 private, sectarian, or non-sectarian schools. Must accept children on a random basis. No admissions testing. Each child receives prescribed funding to help cover tuition costs. Students qualify with a specified cap on family income in relation to the poverty level.

**INDEPENDENT CHARTER SCHOOLS:** There are currently 23 independent public schools; none have entrance requirements. A “charter” is granted by an authorizing body that sets the criteria for school performance and has the ability to revoke the charter if performance does not meet the standards. There are three independent authorizers: the Common Council, UW-Milwaukee and Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC) (which has not authorized a school to date). MPS also has the ability to authorize. Schools receive a prescribed level of state funding per student.
K-12 Education: History and Progress

In 1995, at the first editorial board meeting of the newly combined Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, MMAC’s chairman offered a blunt assessment from the business community that headlined the paper’s next edition: “MPS is producing an army of illiterates.”

This overly harsh criticism reflected a decade or more of frustrating student performance results. At the time there were no other options for low-income students in the city. What took shape from here was a push to pass groundbreaking legislation providing low-income parents the right to use public resources to send their children to a school of their choice – the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program - MPCP. It was followed in the ensuing years by an effort to create charter school authorizers that would sanction more parent options through the creation of independent charter schools. MMAC has been a leading and persistent advocate for more education options over the past 25 years. We helped initiate and shape the policies of a system of School Choice that now serves 36,000 low income students. Our engagement was based on the assumption that empowering parents would result in better education options for low-income students, generate greater innovation and positively impact MPS. Since 1995, the education landscape in the city of Milwaukee has changed dramatically, but student performance has not.

The MPCP grew from its 1995 pilot of 1,500 students to 20,000 by 2009. During this period, the percentage of all students in the city educated by MPS declined from 85% to 76%. Today, the continued increase in the number of parents choosing schools through the MPCP program or independent charters has reduced that number to 60%. It was never MMAC’s goal to reduce MPS enrollment. It was our goal to improve parent options and educational outcomes.

K-12 Enrollment Trends, City of Milwaukee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2008-2009</th>
<th>115,000 total students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MPS</td>
<td>91,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charter</td>
<td>19,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choice</td>
<td>2,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPS Charter</td>
<td>8,032</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2015-2016</th>
<th>112,210 total students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MPS</td>
<td>67,717</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charter</td>
<td>8,810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choice</td>
<td>27,651</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPS Charter</td>
<td>8,032</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is important to note that MMAC remained actively engaged with MPS throughout this push for parent choice. We have worked closely with each Superintendent, lobbied for a significant facilities referendum and special funding for new programs, provided more than $15M in direct scholarships for 2,000 MPS students and attracted $17M in grant funding for MPS, all in an effort to improve student success.

Has Parent Choice helped or hurt overall educational attainment? And is it helping to close the achievement gap?

The short answer to each question is yes and no. There was not a laboratory control group to set up. No neat way to assess what would have happened without the growth of parent options. No track record from an alternative course of action to compare. There have been a pile of studies, 36 in fact from the School Choice Demonstration project at University of Arkansas. They summarize that parent choice in Milwaukee has a positive impact on graduation rates, college enrollment rates, and college persistence rates. But there are also those who dismiss these findings as less conclusive.

MPS has clearly had its issues. Leadership at the principal level was too often missing. Teacher development lacked some needed rigor and low-performing teachers were passed from school to school in an infamous “dance of the lemons.” Questionable fiscal decisions contributed to long-term debt that pulled resources from the classroom. And course corrections were ever present with a revolving door of superintendents. But most critically, student performance showed few signs of progress. But Monday morning quarterbacking is only valuable if it informs us of a better game plan going forward. A central question remains:

Would kids have been better served with only MPS as an option?

We cannot and do not dismiss the enormous challenges facing schools whose students are in poverty, come from homes without two parents, live in high-crime neighborhoods, lack access to health care, and face an environment that does not always emphasize academics. It is damn hard work to make educational progress when a school is firing on all cylinders with a dedicated leader, a fully committed no-excuses teaching team, a stubborn effort to engage parents and a nurturing and loving school environment.

Interjecting parent choice alone has not had a broad impact on improving student performance measured by the total number of students proficient at grade level today. That is not to say that there have not been improvements, nor is it to dismiss the number of schools in all three sectors that have shown significant success in academic growth and performance. For the kids who have experienced better educational options, the difference has been life-changing.

Consider just five schools that would not exist today serving the 5,224 kids they do without parent choice:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of students</th>
<th>School Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1,995</td>
<td>Milwaukee College Prep (MPS Charter)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,194</td>
<td>Bruce Guadalupe (UWM Charter)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>737</td>
<td>St. Marcus (Choice)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>873</td>
<td>Carmen High School of Science &amp; Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(MPS Charter)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>425</td>
<td>Rocketship Southside Community Prep (City Charter)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These schools substantially outperform their peers serving low-income students and collectively form the 31st largest (of 450) school district in the state. Comparable in size to Oak Creek-Franklin or Oconomowoc Area school districts, these five school networks combined form the 4th largest school district (of 18) in Milwaukee County, and the 7th largest district (of 50) in the four county area. Parent choice has not been a silver bullet to improve city-wide academic performance, but without it we would be even further behind.

Is it viable to turn the clock back and significantly reduce or eliminate parent choice as part of Milwaukee’s system of education?

Returning to the pre-parent choice educational system is not an option. It would wipe out a substantial number of quality schools and their positive impact. It would require the politically charged redistribution of $225M in state school aids per year to fund most of the 36,000 students who would enroll in MPS. Rolling up parent choice would raise substantive practical issues like increased facility costs, and political issues like a potent constituency of opposed parents. Nor is status quo for the MPCP program as a viable option. Too many chronically low-performing schools continue to operate in the Choice program.

Bottom line, successful K-12 education reform strategy must both deliver higher quality options for parents and facilitate a strong Milwaukee Public Schools system. Continuous improvement, an adoption of best practices, accountability and better community engagement are all part of this journey.
MMAC K-12 Education Reform Agenda

This document will guide MMAC’s engagement with community stakeholders and advance initiatives to better serve low-income students. The recommendations are organized under four strategies:

**SUPPORTIVE POLICIES**
Advocating for policies that help high-quality schools grow

- Increase per-pupil funding for independent charter schools & MPCP
- Index general school aids to inflation
- Increase special education funding statewide by 10%
- Phase out the “funding flaw” for Milwaukee Parental Choice Program (MPCP)
- Fully fund K4 education for low-income students
- Keep a consistent state test in place
- Support a fair & balanced common report card for schools in each education sector
- Include student performance as an additional measure to determine school eligibility in the choice program

**QUALITY SCHOOLS**
Grow, expand & replicate high-quality schools serving low-income kids

- Continue to support the growth of high-performing schools & school networks
- Explore the creation of a new independent charter school authorizer
- Explore replication of the Carver collaboration (a resource intensive focus) to other schools
- The Education Committee should maintain oversight of MMAC school relationships

**EFFECTIVE EDUCATORS**
Ensure a pipeline of talented educators & school leaders

- Continue to support the development of talented educators and school leaders
- Continue to secure state funding for Teach For America (TFA)
  - a national teacher corps focused on raising student achievement & filling the teacher pipeline

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**
Mobilize stakeholders to ensure priorities are addressed

- As a partner in Milwaukee Succeeds, advocate for policies that achieve better outcomes in early childhood services
- Review the existing philanthropic/business community impact on educational results
- Expand COSBE’s “Be the Spark” career exploration program with MPS
- Launch an internship program with MPS
- Work with Milwaukee 7 Talent Partnership to grow career pathways between schools & businesses
- Benchmark best practices from other urban markets
Ensuring that parents have quality school choices is a top priority. For this education market to function in Milwaukee, parents also need good information supported by transparent results, and schools need to be held accountable for the use of public resources. Our top policy recommendations focus on funding and accountability.

**Funding**

Financing for K-12 education in Wisconsin is a combination of federal, state and local resources. It is a complex stew of formulas that account for issues like: differences in property tax wealth; poverty levels of the students served; assessments of special education needs; and transportation. Historically, funding formulas are subject to the political dynamics of the legislature and Governor, as well as local legislative bodies. The recommendation to change state per pupil funding of students in MPCP and Independent Charter schools is aimed at creating sustainable quality schools.

There are 36,000 mostly low-income students utilizing Choice and independent charter schools. State funding policy is not equitable. It is creating first, second, and third class students based on the school they choose in the city. For example, a student attending MPS will receive $5,132 in support (from state aid and property tax) than the same student attending St. Marcus, in the MPCP program, a 41% difference. That same student attending Rocketship Southside Community Prep, an independent charter school, would receive $4,383 (35%) less than an MPS student. The varying levels of student aid reflect not only on equity, but on the sustainability of quality schooling options. In the 2003 to 2016 period, independent charter and choice schools saw per pupil declines compared to inflation, while MPS posted a 5.2 percentage point increase.

**Can schools (especially high schools) provide a quality education at $8,000 or less per student?**

---

**Change in Per Pupil Funding 2003-2016**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>MPS*</th>
<th>Ind. Charter**</th>
<th>MPCP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Per pupil 2003</td>
<td>$9,191</td>
<td>$6,951</td>
<td>$5,783</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per pupil 2016</td>
<td>$12,462</td>
<td>$8,079</td>
<td>$7,330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change 2003-2016</td>
<td>$3,271</td>
<td>$1,128</td>
<td>$1,547</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Change 2003-2016</td>
<td>35.6%</td>
<td>16.2%</td>
<td>26.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% pt. +/- Inflation 2003-2016</td>
<td>+5.2%</td>
<td>-14.2%</td>
<td>-3.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*For comparative purposes, the amount of per pupil funding listed for MPS is the total derived from state aid, plus the allowable property tax levy. In addition, MPS receives federal funding.*

*Independent Charter Schools’ per pupil funding is set statutorily by the legislature. “2R” charters are also eligible for federal funding per qualifying student and state transportation aid. Independent charter schools received NO per pupil increase from 2007/08—2012/13 school year.*
At a basic level, the state commits a relatively large portion of its discretionary budget towards K-12 education. This funding comes in two pots: general school aids and categorical aid, funded by general purpose tax revenue. The general school aid formula distributes funding throughout the state to the 450 school districts. The state school aid formula has as an equalization goal to provide more aid to those districts with lower property values. State general school aids also have a separate component to drive additional aid to “high-poverty” districts like MPS. In the 2015-2017 state budget, general school aids were increased by $108M (1.2% increase) on a base of $4.5B.

The second pot of categorical aid is aimed at delivering state funding for specific educational purposes. There are currently 26 categories of aid, including special education, gifted and talented, transportation, bilingual-bicultural, etc. These categories have built up over time to address specific needs or respond to new priorities. The largest of these categories is special education at $368M. Total categorical aids increased 6.8% in the last state budget from a base of $702M.

Bottom line, the state increased K-12 spending by $206M in the last budget, and that number increases to $418M if you include the credits that lowered the cost to property taxpayers. As a state we rank 22nd in per pupil spending.

### Recommendation

Increase per-pupil funding for independent charter students and Milwaukee Parental Choice Program students to $10,000 by 2021 for grade schools, and to $12,000 for high schools.

The persistent and relatively low level of per pupil funding has challenged even the best resourced schools in the MPCP and Independent Charter Schools (ICS). It is a reality that is fueling the need for larger annual fund drives at the individual schools to support the full cost of education. Expansion is being squeezed and parent options could seriously erode over time. The recommended funding level for MPCP and ICS students would place them in a more approximate parity with MPS.

### Cost to increase charter funding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Sector</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>FY17 Per Pupil</th>
<th>Cost @ FY17 Per Pupil Level</th>
<th>Proposed Per Pupil Funding</th>
<th>Cost @ $10k and $12K</th>
<th>Additional Annual Funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ind. Charter K-8</td>
<td>7,723</td>
<td>$8,195</td>
<td>$63M</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$77M</td>
<td>$14M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ind. Charter H.S.</td>
<td>1,014</td>
<td>$8,195</td>
<td>$8M</td>
<td>$12,000</td>
<td>$12M</td>
<td>$4M</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Cost to increase MPCP funding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Sector</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>FY17 Per Pupil</th>
<th>Cost @ FY17 Per Pupil Level</th>
<th>Proposed Per Pupil Funding</th>
<th>Cost @ $10k and $12K</th>
<th>Additional Annual Funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MPCP K-8</td>
<td>21,364</td>
<td>$7,330</td>
<td>$152M</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$209M</td>
<td>$57M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPCP H.S.</td>
<td>5,938</td>
<td>$7,976</td>
<td>$44M</td>
<td>$12,000</td>
<td>$73M</td>
<td>$29M</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This recommendation recognizes the need to seek efficiencies in the cost of education, facilities, benefits, and health care, while providing attractive levels of compensation for the top talent we want in our educational system. It also acknowledges that keeping pace with inflation (at 2%) in the next state budget 2017-19 would require an estimated increase of $278M over the current base of general purpose state aid.

The state places a revenue limit on local districts, which caps the amount they can raise from school aids and local property tax. Another possibility to increase funding would be to allow local school districts to increase revenue by increasing the revenue limits with inflation. At this point, the only way to increase funding is via a local referendum. At $2.9B a year, K-12 education is the largest public expenditure in the region.

In addressing high-poverty districts like MPS, the question is how does their per pupil funding compare to surrounding districts? And how does its funding compare to other similar large urban districts with high levels of low-income students, and relatively high levels of students with special education needs? MPS spends about 18% more per student than the $12,868 average per student spent by the surrounding suburban school districts. MPS also has a unique set of student demographics in comparison to its suburban counterparts: 67% low income vs. 32%, and 20% special needs vs. 12% respectively. Most of the students entering MPS and their charter and Choice school counterparts in Milwaukee are academically and developmentally far behind their regional counterparts.

2015 K-12 School Spending in Metro Milwaukee

Spending by individual districts in metro Milwaukee ranges from approximately $11,000 to $18,000 per student.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Total District Revenue</th>
<th>Spending per Pupil</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>$233,604,000</td>
<td>$12,215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ozaukee</td>
<td>$148,128,000</td>
<td>$12,622</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waukesha</td>
<td>$746,359,000</td>
<td>$12,485</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPS</td>
<td>$1,174,297,917</td>
<td>$15,173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milwaukee Suburbs*</td>
<td>$586,459,000</td>
<td>$14,150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicolet Union High School</td>
<td>$21,000,000</td>
<td>$21,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Micolet Union High School is a high school only district spending $21,000 per student.*
For additional context comparing MPS funding, it is also relevant to measure per pupil spending against other large, high-poverty urban districts around the U.S.

### MPS Expenditure Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School District</th>
<th>2014 Population</th>
<th>2013-14 TOTAL Students</th>
<th>Classroom Teachers (FTE)</th>
<th>Total Staff (FTE)</th>
<th>2013 Total District Revenue in $B</th>
<th>Total Revenue Per Pupil $</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>2.7 million</td>
<td>396,641</td>
<td>23,319</td>
<td>45,545</td>
<td>$5.70</td>
<td>$14,294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detroit</td>
<td>680,000</td>
<td>49,043</td>
<td>3,084</td>
<td>6,957</td>
<td>$1.03</td>
<td>$15,434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dist. of Columbia</td>
<td>658,000</td>
<td>44,942</td>
<td>3,373</td>
<td>5,983</td>
<td>$1.30</td>
<td>$29,831</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston</td>
<td>655,000</td>
<td>54,300</td>
<td>4,001</td>
<td>7,128</td>
<td>$1.26</td>
<td>$22,941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baltimore</td>
<td>622,000</td>
<td>84,730</td>
<td>5,271</td>
<td>9,905</td>
<td>$1.46</td>
<td>$17,331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milwaukee</td>
<td>599,000</td>
<td>78,516</td>
<td>4,081</td>
<td>8,729</td>
<td>$1.18</td>
<td>$15,035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albuquerque</td>
<td>557,000</td>
<td>93,202</td>
<td>6,185</td>
<td>12,339</td>
<td>$.963</td>
<td>$10,218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlanta</td>
<td>456,000</td>
<td>50,131</td>
<td>3,659</td>
<td>6,574</td>
<td>$.800</td>
<td>$16,004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleveland</td>
<td>388,000</td>
<td>38,562</td>
<td>2,649</td>
<td>6,775</td>
<td>$.839</td>
<td>$19,610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average w/o CHI</strong></td>
<td><strong>577,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>62,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,038</strong></td>
<td><strong>8,048</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1.12</strong></td>
<td><strong>$16,358</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Per Pupil Average w/o DC</strong></td>
<td><strong>62,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,038</strong></td>
<td><strong>8,048</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1.12</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### MPS Academic & Demographic Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School District</th>
<th>4th Gr. Reading % Prof.</th>
<th>4th Gr. Reading % BELOW Basic</th>
<th>8th Gr. Math % Prof.</th>
<th>8th Gr. Math % Basic</th>
<th>% Students Poverty/Econ. Dis.</th>
<th>2013-14 % of Students ELL</th>
<th>2013-14 % of Students w/IEPs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
<td>13.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detroit</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>43.4%</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dist. of Columbia</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>29.0%</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>24.5%</td>
<td>27.7%</td>
<td>20.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baltimore</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milwaukee</td>
<td><strong>13%</strong></td>
<td><strong>58%</strong></td>
<td><strong>9%</strong></td>
<td><strong>56%</strong></td>
<td><strong>36.4%</strong></td>
<td><strong>9.4%</strong></td>
<td><strong>20.5%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albuquerque</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>18.9%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>15.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlanta</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>30.2%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleveland</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>40.4%</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
<td>21.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average All</strong></td>
<td><strong>14.7%</strong></td>
<td><strong>53%</strong></td>
<td><strong>12.8%</strong></td>
<td><strong>50.7%</strong></td>
<td><strong>30.6%</strong></td>
<td><strong>11.5%</strong></td>
<td><strong>16.2%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While MMAC supports adequate education funding that keeps pace with inflation, we acknowledge studies note little correlation between increases in per pupil spending and academic results.
Another critical funding issue is special education. Milwaukee has a relatively large population of students with special education needs and in general these students cost more to serve than regular per pupil funding can cover. Currently the cost of delivering special education services is reimbursed by the state at 26.8%, putting a significant burden on districts like MPS with a large population (20%) of special education students, as well as charter/Choice schools. Last year, the state spent $368M to fund the categorical aid for special education. Increasing this funding by 10% would add $114M in aid, raising the reimbursement rate to 33%. Special education aid has been held flat since 2008.

**Recommendation**

Increase special education funding in the 2017-2019 State Budget by 10% in each year of the biennium. Utilize future budgets to close the gap between the cost of special education and the reimbursement rate.

Our final recommendation on education funding addresses the long running issue of how the MPCP is funded in Milwaukee. The per-pupil cost of the recently expanded choice program statewide (except Milwaukee) is funded from state general purpose revenues (GPR), meaning the state pays for 100% of the cost of the Choice program statewide. Previously, students in the City of Milwaukee were the only ones eligible to participate in the Choice program, which had been funded partially by state revenues and partially by City of Milwaukee property taxpayers. In 2016, 74% of the MPCP cost was picked up by the state and 26% by city property taxpayers. The legislative battle over paying for the MPCP program in Milwaukee is a long running one, and predates the adoption of the statewide choice program. Historically, a majority of the state legislative delegation representing the City fought a resolution to further reduce the City’s cost to fund the MPCP. Most of the city’s delegation opposed the Choice program and did NOT want to “fix” how it was funded, for fear that making the funding more palatable to Milwaukee would make the program more attractive.

Our recommendation is to stick with the current fix to the shared state/city funding. Between 2017 and 2025 the City’s “cost” of funding the choice program will be reduced from $56M to 0, declining by about 3.2 percent per year until the “funding flaw” is fully phased out. While not ideal, this solution is the most politically expedient solution, with the legislature unlikely to endorse an expedited schedule.

**Recommendation**

Continue with the schedule for phasing out the City’s “funding flaw” for the MPCP.

Many low-income students enter school academically trailing their peers. Providing an opportunity for an early intervention by fully funding K4 for low income students would cost an estimated $25M.

**Recommendation**

Fully fund k4 education for low-income students.
Accountability

If funding is the input and student performance is the output, then accountability is the balancing mechanism. MMAC supports a transparent and uniform measure of student accountability for all publicly funded students. One idea would be for each school to be required to post their reading and math scores in highly visible locations for parents and students to view.

There is a high level of frustration with the lack of comparable and consistent data when it comes to student performance. This year (2016-17) will mark the first time in since 2013 with consecutive years using the same state test. Wisconsin arguably moved in the right direction by dropping the long run of the WKCE test for one that was nationally comparable and had higher standards to meet for grade level performance. But after a false start the past few years, the State has stuck with a quality test given consistently over time so students, parents, and the community can make informed decisions. Important requirements for this test are that it is nationally normed (can be compared to other states), has a unique student identifier, and is taken by all students utilizing public funding.

MMAC engaged with a group of stakeholders in pursuit of a cross-sector report card in 2013. This effort produced a working model and it also pointed out a number of problems with past report cards. We remain committed to supporting the continued rollout of the state report card with consecutive years of test data to build a basis for assessing progress over time by school. This report card will serve a wide range of stakeholders, including parents, school leaders, taxpayers and policy-makers.

**Recommendation**

Use a consistent state test for the next 5 years.

This recommendation is also driven by the long running debate in Milwaukee over what to do with chronically low performing schools that persist in the Parent Choice program. While there are a number solid Choice schools showing strong academic gains, there are also Choice schools that—despite interventions—continue to underperform but remain in the system. As consumers, parents have not done enough to drive quality. Accountability, performance, and funding should be interrelated. One possibility is to link increases in Choice funding above a specified base level with student performance, similar to the way some charter contracts are designed. Charter schools are held “accountable” by their authorizers and have a regular check (at least every 5 years) on their performance based on pre-established standards. Schools in MPS have a check and balance on their performance with the Superintendent and School Board, presumably with a pre-established standard. Historically it is debatable whether or not this actually serves as a check or whether effective intervention occurs.

**Recommendation**

Promote a fair and balanced state school report card that transparently measures performance to inform best practices and help improve under-performing schools.

How should we address funding MPCP schools that chronically fail to educate students?

Are there lessons that can be applied to the MPCP program from the independent charter school authorizers?

The parental choice program requires qualified financials and accreditation for schools to participate but has no student performance requirement.
Summary of MMAC's recent education policy efforts:

- Issuing a common student identifier, so student performance can be tracked as students move schools or across different school sectors.
- Providing for a “value added” measure to state report cards to assess individual student growth in a school over the course of a school year. It is important to note that high rates of student mobility in the city put a premium on measuring a schools “value added growth”. Value added growth measures the academic gains of a student over the period of time a student attends a certain school. While this assessment is helpful for all schools, it is especially helpful in the city where large numbers of students are below grade level, and measuring absolute student gains in a year provides a better indicator of school performance. This is an important assessment for school performance.
- Requiring UW System schools to report on the number of students needing remedial education and the schools they graduated from.
- Requiring Choice schools to provide the same number of required hours of instruction as public schools.
- A comprehensive screening process and requirements for new and existing Choice schools to gain entrance or remain in the Choice program.
- Administrator’s licensure requirements now account for time spent in Teach for America as a teacher.
- Creating reciprocity in Wisconsin for teaching and administrative service gained in other states.
- Vocational licensure opens the door to meeting teacher shortages in specific circular or technical skill areas for those without education degrees.
- Presumptive replication, which creates a clear path for replication of high-performing proven charter schools.
- Additional Authorizers for charter schools beyond MPS, City of Milwaukee and UW-Milwaukee.
- Open process for identifying and utilizing unused or underused school facilities through the city of Milwaukee by making them available via a competitive bidding process with other potential education providers.

It is also worth noting that MMAC has a close working relationship and that staff serves on the boards of two important advocacy organizations, School Choice Wisconsin and the Milwaukee Charter School Advocates.
QUALITY SCHOOLS: Grow and expand high-quality schools serving low income kids

MMAC, through the direct involvement of its staff and recruitment of its members, has endeavored to support the start-up and growth of school networks that expand high quality education to more Milwaukee students.

Concern over the Milwaukee Common Council’s commitment to continue as an independent charter school authorizer leads us to explore creating a new charter authorizer in the City.

Working closely with SCHOOLS THAT CAN MILWAUKEE (STCM), MMAC helped raise $2.5M to start ROCKETSHIP SOUTHSIDE COMMUNITY PREP (RSCP), which is currently serving nearly 400 low income students. MMAC staff, in helping RSCP launch, served on the national board as board chair, and today serves as a board member. This experience also led us to support two promising school leaders with their launch of new schools in 2016 MILWAUKEE EXCELLENCE, a 6-12 MPS charter school, and STELLAR COLLEGIATE, a K-5 independent charter school authorized by UWM) as part of the Building Excellent Schools program, which trains school leaders. We helped by serving as the fiscal agent, recruiting board members, and in the case of Milwaukee Excellence, lobbying MPS for its approval.

In addition, MMAC staff worked with STCM to pull together a unique collaboration of school partners to work in concert in one school. The goal was to leverage investment from the business community and turn around a chronically low-performing school — MPS-CARVER ACADEMY. This project included STCM on coaching/leadership development, clustering of teachers in the school from TEACH FOR AMERICA, CITY YEAR teaching assistants and Northwestern Mutual serving as a financial and strategy champion.

And we have engaged to help a host of schools lobby for expansion, including ST. AUGUSTINE PREP, which will have capacity to serve 2,000 students. MMAC staff also serves on the board of PARTNERS ADVANCING VALUES IN EDUCATION (PAVE), which is focused on the governance, board leadership and business operations of its member schools. MMAC staff continues to work closely with PENFIELD CHILDREN’S CENTER to support its efforts to secure a facility and its expansion by charter. MMAC engaged directly in helping CARMEN HIGH SCHOOL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY develop a path to expand by working with MPS and other constituencies. Carmen was ultimately successful in partnering with PULASKI HIGH SCHOOL to grow its model. Carmen South serves 366 students; 507 students attend Carmen Northwest. 100% of the 2015 graduates were accepted to a 4-year college or university.

Recommendations
- Continue to support the growth of high-performing schools and school networks
- Explore the creation of a new independent charter school authorizer
- Review the business plan for replicating the Carver collaboration at other schools
Getting actively involved in school partnerships provides the MMAC staff with experienced insight into school operations and the impact of policy changes. We have also worked to recruit business leaders to participate on boards of schools. Here is a summary of school performance for those schools in which a MMAC staff member serves on the board.

**ROCKETSHIP SOUTHSIDE COMMUNITY PREP (RSCP):**
Located on Milwaukee’s Southside, this fast growing school serves 425 mostly Latino children in grades K4-5. It is part of a national network of schools that provide individualized learning with the aim of closing the achievement gap. The most current 2016 state test results for grades 3-5 are impressive considering that English is a second language for most of these students.

**MILWAUKEE COLLEGE PREP:**
Serves 2,000 low income students, mostly African Americans. MCP has continually achieved at a high level relative to MPS for its K-8 grades.

**MILWAUKEE SCHOLARS:**
Serves 570 students in a K4-8 grade school, part of a national charter network run by Heritage Academies, it has been operating under a UWM charter for 5 years.

**VERITAS HIGH SCHOOL:**
253 students with an emphasis on college acceptance and STEM education, chartered by UWM under Seeds of Health.

**TENOR HIGH SCHOOL:**
Opened in 2005, chartered by UWM under Seeds of Health. Serves 248 students who can graduate in 3 years and attend MATC tuition free for their 4th year.

**2016 State Forward Exam**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Testing grade 3,4,5</th>
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**2016 Average ACT Score**

- Veritas High School: 18.8
- Tenor High School: 16.8
- Independent Charter Schools: 16.8
- MPS High Schools: 16.5

**Recommendation**
The Education Committee should maintain oversight of MMAC school relationships.
EFFECTIVE EDUCATORS: Ensure a pipeline of talented educators and school leaders

One of the biggest barriers to school quality and school expansion is a shortage of excellent school leaders and a shortage of teaching talent, especially in hard-to-fill subject areas. MMAC supports a number of organizations that are helping to address this gap.

MMAC is an original member of SCHOOLS THAT CAN MILWAUKEE, staff holds a board seat and contributes to the mission of STCM (providing coaching and leadership development for its member and partner schools). STCM impacts 16,600 kids through its support of 210 school leaders at 42 district, charter and Choice schools. STCM also helps to recruit and grow school leadership talent for Milwaukee’s K-12 education system, working with public, private and charter schools. Highlights include:

• Awarding $2M over the next two years to help member schools expand their capacity.
• STCM schools exceeded local averages in every category of the new Wisconsin School Report Card System, with results showing STCM schools move students farther and faster than a typical school anywhere in the state.
• Placement of 31 school leaders over the past two years, with retention significantly outpacing national rates for high-poverty schools.
• Exposing school leaders to cross-sector best practices in Milwaukee and across the country through high-quality school visits.

MMAC staff serves on the board of TEACH FOR AMERICA, helping to raise $4.2M annually to provide non-traditional quality teachers for the City of Milwaukee. MMAC has championed $1M in state funding each biennium. Currently, TFA has 127 corps members (first and second year teachers): 42% are people of color. During the course of their school year, students of TFA corps members saw an average academic growth of 1.3 years. The TFA impact also includes:

• 250 alumni in Milwaukee (this includes alumni living in MKE and the immediate surrounding suburbs), 450 alumni in the state of WI
• 80% of most recent alumni are still working in education and directly support 1/3 of TFA’s aggregate 15,000 students
• 300 alumni in education, 175 in classrooms, 45 school leaders, 3 running non-profits and schools

Recommendations

• Continue to support the development of talented educators and school leaders
• Continue to secure state funding for Teach For America (TFA) - a national teacher corps focused on raising student achievement and filling the teacher pipeline
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:
Mobilize stakeholders to ensure priorities are addressed

How do we best engage as a business community to support K-12 education?

There are enormous resources coming from the business community directly or indirectly through philanthropy to supplement what government is spending on K-12 education. This support provides operating revenue for schools and capital campaigns to build new, refurbish or expand existing facilities. It supplements training programs, supports more teachers and provides internships for students. This support includes after school programs, tutoring, summer school and extracurricular learning experiences. It flows to individual schools as well as to school systems. All this is helpful and needed. What more needs to be done, and what can we do more strategically?

Given this preamble, and even though it is out of the scope of our K-12 policy review, there is a convincing case to fund and improve the delivery of early childhood programming/interventions to prepare students for K-12. According to one advocate, “kids are lost before they start school, they are so far behind, can’t sit still, they can’t understand.”

Of the 781 daycare providers rated in the YoungStar program, 329 programs serving 6,361 children had a two star rating (out of 5). Another 380 programs serving 10,945 children had a 3 star rating. There are a total of 19,984 kids in these daycare programs, meaning 86% are with providers rated mediocre or worse. Our first recommendation is to promote through Milwaukee Succeeds the policies that improve outcomes in delivering early childhood services to close the pre-school gap.

**Recommendations**

As a partner in Milwaukee Succeeds, advocate for policies that achieve better outcomes in early childhood services

In addition, the following recommendations will further sharpen our engagement as a community partner:

**Recommendations**

- Review the existing philanthropic/business community impact on educational results
- Expand COSBE’s “Be the Spark” career exploration program with MPS
- Launch an internship program with MPS
- Work with Milwaukee 7 Talent Partnership to grow career pathways between schools and businesses
- Benchmark best practices from other urban markets
Milwaukee's greatest potential is its talent pipeline

Producing enlightened citizens capable of self-governance, prepared to participate in an economy as life-long learners is the community's most important responsibility. The formal educational system plays a critical role in endowing a community with these citizens. And clearly the business community benefits from this pipeline that begins with pre-school and continues beyond college.

The tie between talent and our exporting clusters is the region's most important economic bond. Companies exporting goods and services outside of the region account for 275,000 jobs in the region. Another 325,000 jobs are generated through suppliers in the region supporting this activity. Combined, these 600,000 jobs generate the remaining 400,000 jobs in the region's support infrastructure, providing transportation, education, health care, hospitality, etc.

1 Million Jobs in the Milwaukee Region

- 275,000 JOBS EXPORT
- 325,000 JOBS SUPPLY
- 400,000 JOBS SUPPORT

This paper opened with the impact of an unprecedented change in global demographics, primarily focused on the decline in the world's working age population. **THE U.S. FACES A 2000-2050 GROWTH RATE IN WORKING AGE POPULATION THAT IS 91% LESS THAN IT HAD IN THE PRECEDING 5 DECADES.** The war for talent is on, and it's one we have to win by growing our own, along with attracting more people to Milwaukee. Our greatest potential is executing on a talent strategy that serves Milwaukee's economy.

The global population will grow. But as it increases from 7B today to 10B by 2050, only 13% of the population will be in high-income countries. It is the growth of the middle class in less developed countries that presents a new market opportunity for exports. This opportunity is key to understanding why some of our best prospects lie with export growth. Our export prowess defines the growth in local employment. International exports alone account for 16% of the metro’s gross metropolitan product supporting 65,000 jobs and spreading growth across the region. To seize on this and grow our economy we have to build a depth of skill sets that retain and attract employers capable of exporting their goods and services.

Milwaukee has strong, diverse industries poised for greater export growth. We need people with the skills to support those companies, and build new ones.
To blame these results on schools, school leaders, or a school system makes the solution to a complex set of challenges overly simplistic and frankly unfair to those striving to educate. To say that we are doing our best to educate these children, despite what is happening outside of the school house, is to put our collective heads in the sand and ignore policy changes, school innovations, and the commitment needed to continuously improve. The recommendations included in this paper are offered as a way to leverage what is working, to challenge what is not, and to provoke what could be. The recommendations are not offered as a finished product, but as an open-ended dialogue. And they are offered to represent the interests of employers eager to engage as a community partner in the best interests of raising educational attainment and prosperity for all children.

Our entire regional economy relies on our capability to develop goods and services that can be sold outside of metropolitan Milwaukee. Talent is the most defining asset we have and will have in the future. We must sustain the talent advantages we have today and be nimble in growing them for tomorrow. Educated citizens are the key to holding our advantage. The only economic constant is change and education is the key to preparing our citizens for the jobs of the future.

We do not have all the answers, but we do have an obligation to be productive partners in the K-12 system.