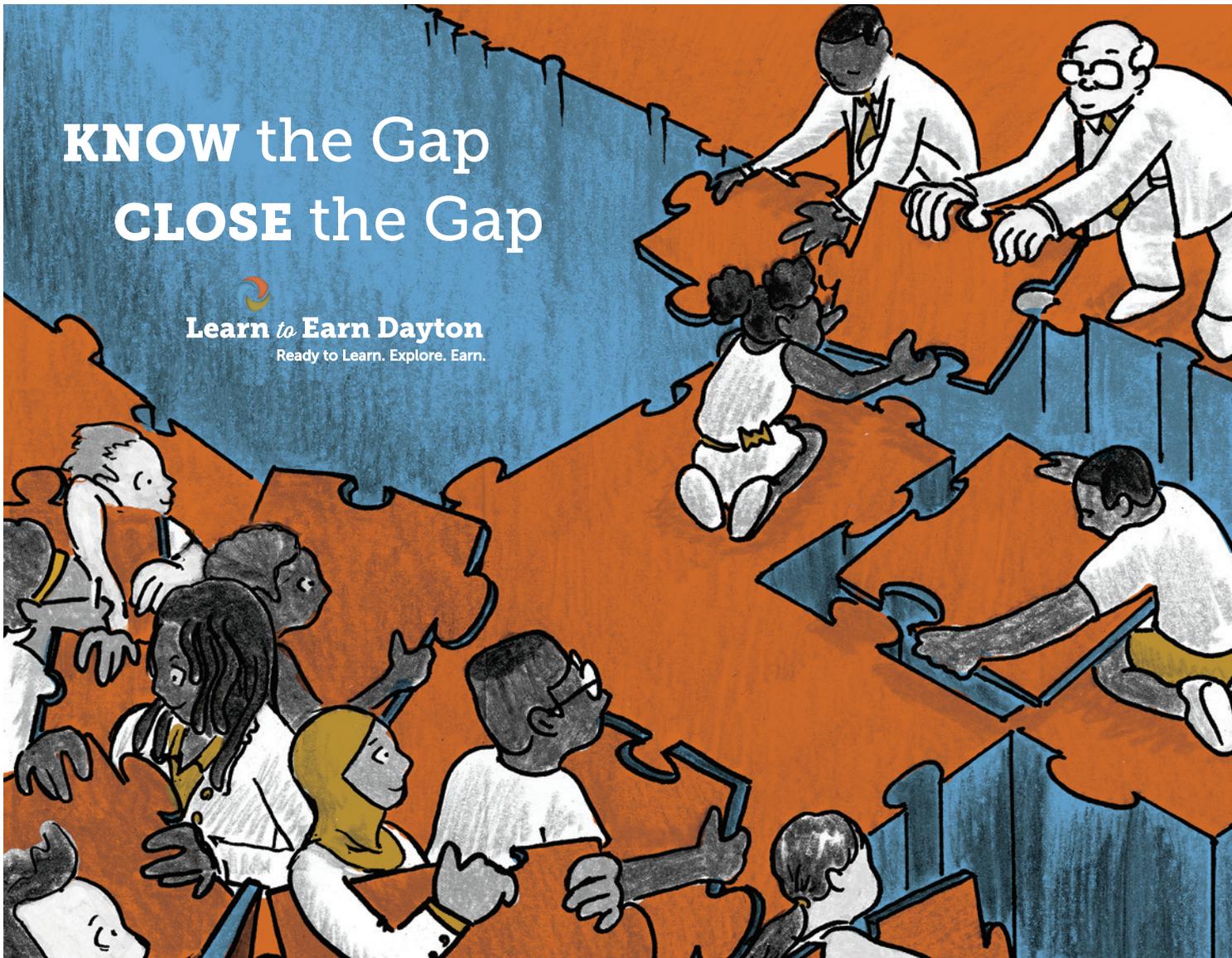


KNOW the Gap CLOSE the Gap


Learn to Earn Dayton
Ready to Learn. Explore. Earn.



The charts in this important report

They tell a powerful story about "Our Kids," to borrow from the title of Robert Putnam's stirring book on the country's unacceptable achievement gap. Though the numbers closely track national trends, we purposefully chose to present only Montgomery County data. Frankly, it doesn't matter if other communities are doing better or worse — we have wrenching issues around opportunity, equity and achievement here that we must confront.

There are many other statistics that could be included that offer deeper context. We, for instance, could look at the birth weight differences between the races, or the juvenile incarceration rates of males versus females, or myriad other telling facts.

But this presentation is by design simple — to show only how boys and girls, white and African-American youngsters, are faring at critical moments in their school career. Next to the charts, there are points worth noting. Of course, there are other compelling observations that could and should be made. The purpose is to start, not end, the conversation.

Our initial readers also posed questions that they think we need to wrestle with if we're to do better by children. Again, their thought-provoking points are just some of the things we should confront. You'll undoubtedly have ideas to add.

Please make sure you continue reading to pages 25-28. There you'll find 3rd-grade reading proficiency scores and high-school graduation rates broken out by race, as well as by race and income level. Children who grow up in poverty lack opportunities and advantages that can dramatically impact their achievement. *But look closely at the charts and you'll see that many African-American children who are not from disadvantaged homes are succeeding at lower levels than their white peers. We have to ask why that's so.*

are heart-breaking and sobering.

In the future, we'll have additional reports that dig even deeper into the data. Knowing the gap is the first step in driving all children's success. We, as a community, will never realize the increases in achievement we all want if we don't target sub-populations of children.

Because this report only looks at educational achievement, casual readers may be tempted to focus on, even blame, schools and teachers. That is absolutely the wrong response.

Children spend far more time out of school than they do in the classroom. Moreover, many of the forces that depress achievement — homelessness, mobility, hunger, violence, stress at home, peer pressure, lack of role models — are beyond the control of educators. But if we believe giving children an exceptional education is the best hope and the most lasting way to lift them up, then we have to know these numbers and start with what we can impact.

Acknowledging which students are behind at the start, or when a gap is widening, or where a gap has been closed are all things we need to understand if we want to give every child an equal chance at success.



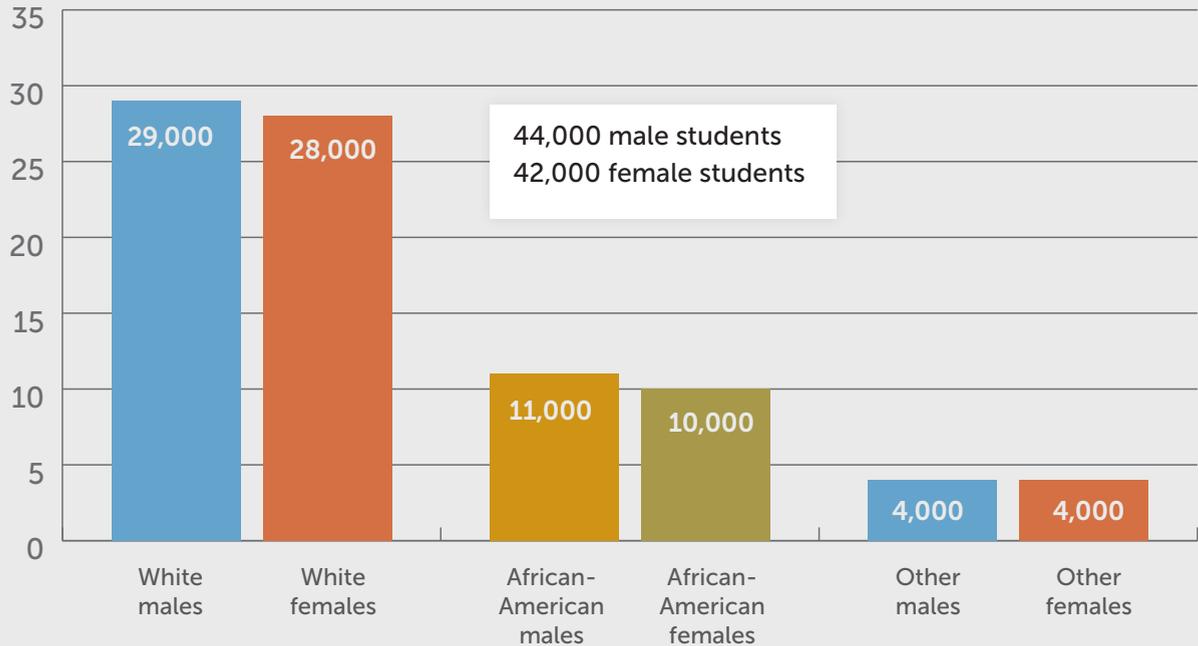
Thomas J. Lasley II
Chief Executive Officer



Robyn Lightcap
Executive Director

A look at Montgomery

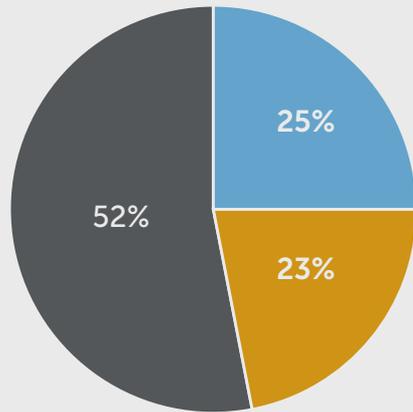
86,000 Montgomery County K-12 Students*



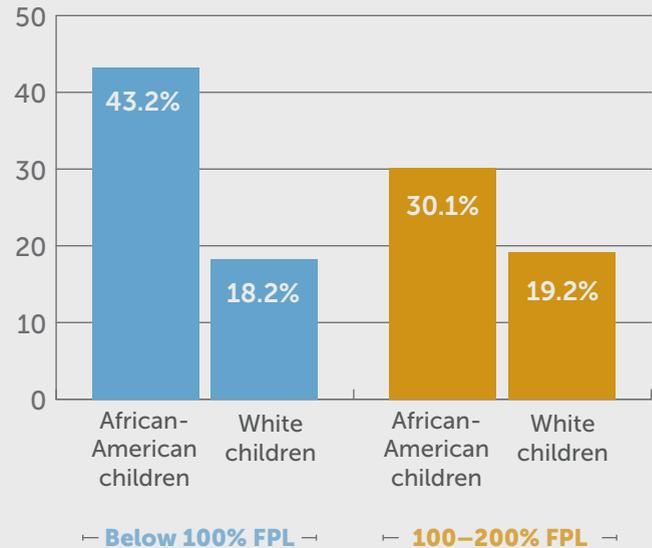
*All numbers are rounded to the nearest 1,000.

County's children

Almost 1 in 2 children live in dire poverty or a financially stressed family*****



- Children living in dire poverty
- Children living in financially stressed families
- Children living in families making above 200% of the FPL



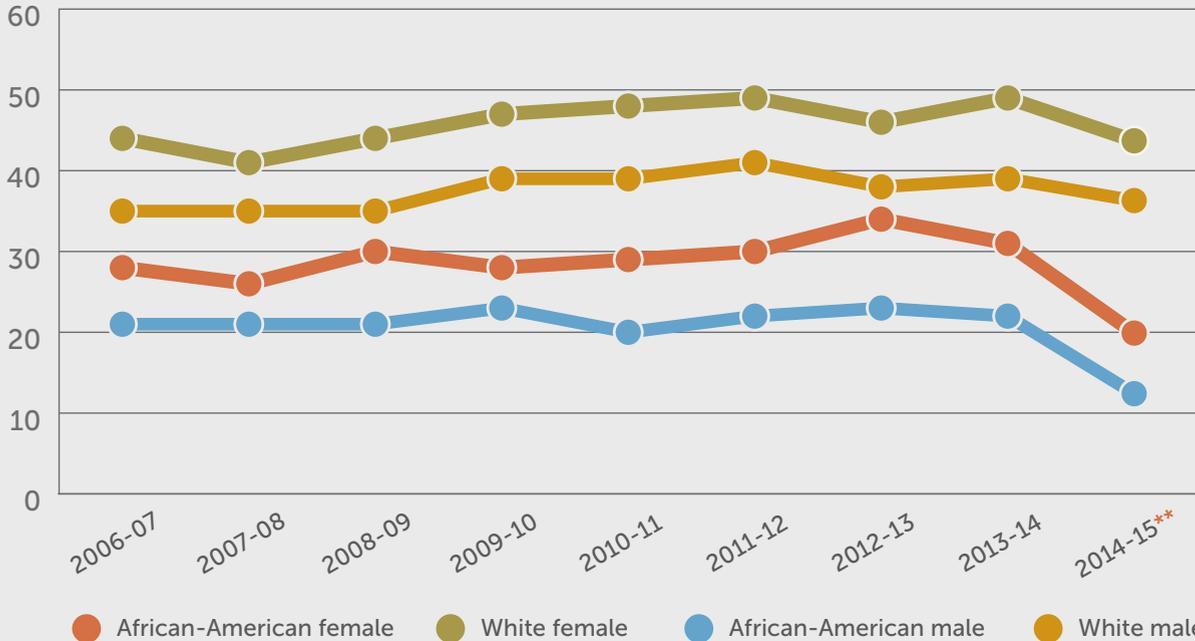
**Dire poverty = At or below 100% of the Federal Poverty level (\$24,250 for a family of 4)

***Financially stressed = Between 100% to 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (\$24,250–\$48,500 for a family of 4)

Source: American Community Survey estimates with extrapolation by the University of Dayton Business Research Group

Only slightly more than 1 in 10 African-American boys starts kindergarten ready to learn

% of Montgomery County kindergartners who begin school 'ready to learn'



** In 2014-15, Ohio adopted a new more demanding readiness assessment for incoming kindergartners. As a result, the readiness rates dropped precipitously across the state, not just in Montgomery County.

**Ready to learn" is defined as scoring in the highest of 3 "bands" on Ohio's Kindergarten Readiness Assessment, given to all children at the start of their kindergarten year. Preschool teachers report that moving children from Band 2 to Band 3 takes more intensive work than moving a child from Band 1 to Band 2.

White males saw their scores drop the least after the state's new readiness test was adopted

Until the new readiness test was introduced, there had been some modest progress among all groups except African-American boys

Questions to ask:

- What is the most effective way to help all children get ready for kindergarten?
- How do we help African-American boys get ready for kindergarten?
- Are there specific skills that African-American boys struggle with?
- How can we share the information on the adjacent page with families?
- What are the implications of the information on the adjacent page for school districts and teachers?

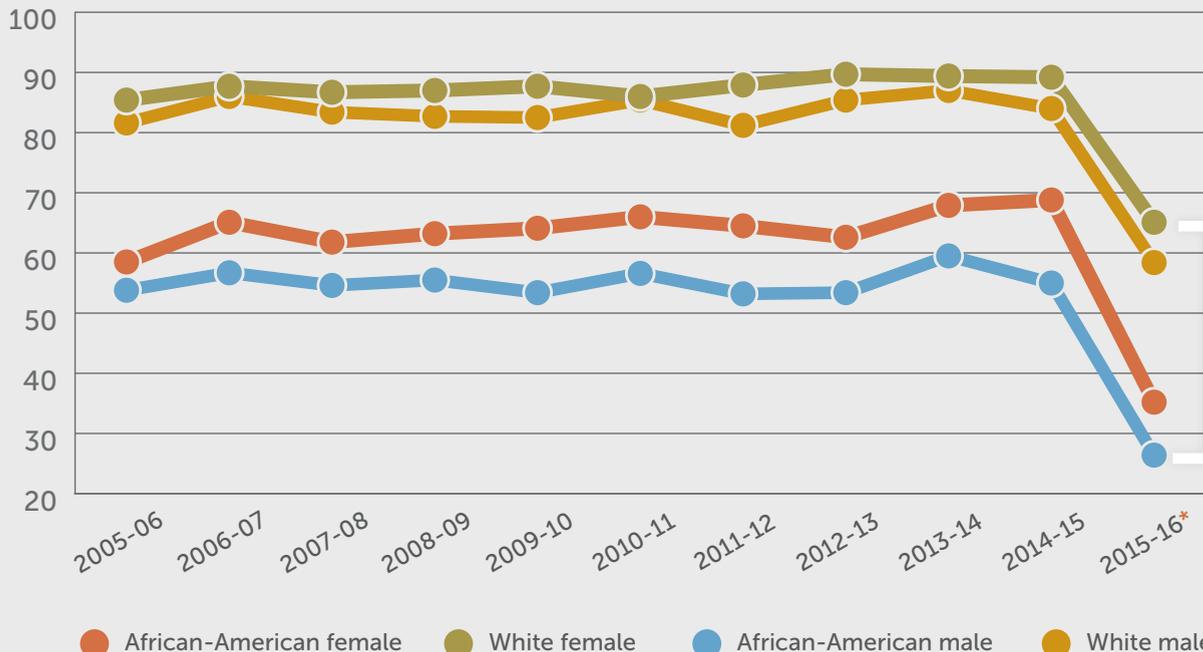
The most stubborn trend line is for African-American boys

1 in 2 white girls wasn't ready for kindergarten even in the best-performing year

Achievement ranked by race and gender was identical to that for kindergarten readiness

Black females' scores dropped the most with the introduction of Ohio's new test, even though they had been making the greatest gains

% of Montgomery County 3rd-graders who are proficient in reading



* A new, more rigorous reading proficiency test was introduced in 2015-16. As a result, scores across the state plummeted, including in high-income and high-performing districts.

Under Ohio's new test, the achievement gap widened, with the gap between white girls and African-American boys becoming more pronounced

African-American girls' achievement growth (until Ohio changed its test) shows that big gains are possible

Questions to ask:

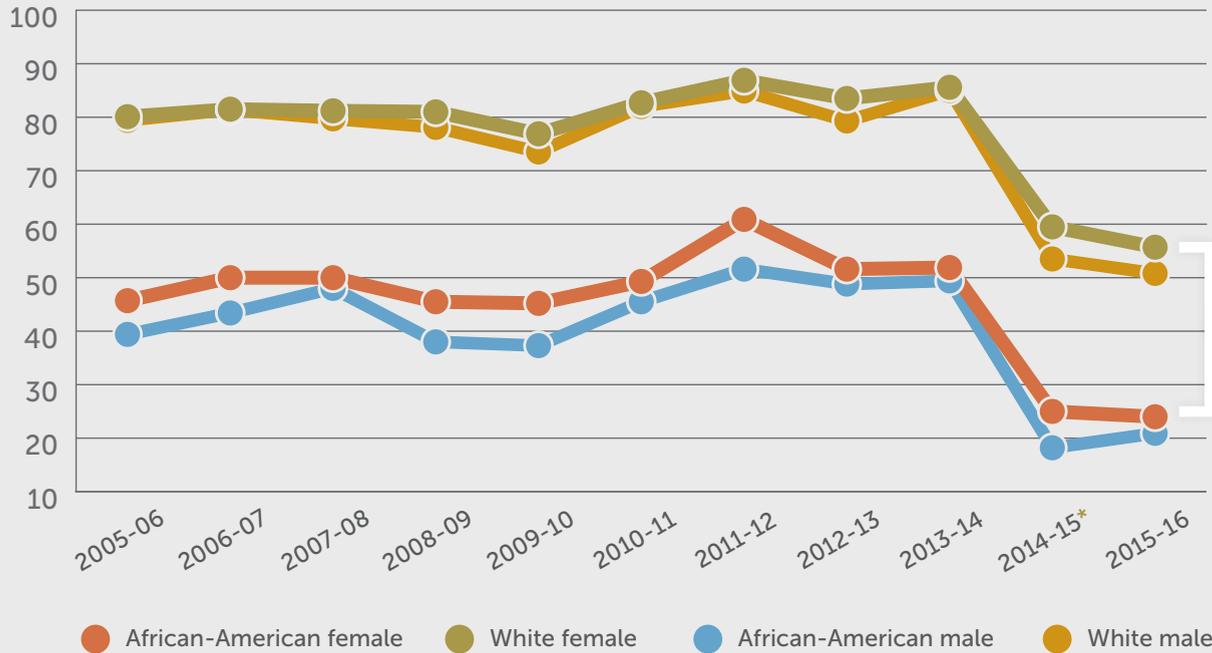
- What was occurring between kindergarten and 3rd grade to drive up African-American girls' achievement? Why then did they slip the most?
- What was occurring with white boys that was helping them to almost catch up with white girls?
- Does the gap between African-American boys and girls — never mind as compared to whites — suggest boys are getting off track early in their elementary careers?
- What is the community's responsibility to African-American boys, beginning in elementary school?

Because reading well in 3rd grade is critical for later academic success and fewer than a third to half of African-American boys are proficient readers, how should we be helping them?

White and African-American females are defying the stereotype that boys are better at math

The achievement gap between white females and African-American boys continues to be more than 30 percentage points

% of Montgomery County 8th-graders who are proficient in math



* A new, more rigorous math proficiency test was introduced in 2014-15. As a result, scores across the state plummeted, including in high-income and high-performing districts.

All demographic groups performed the strongest in 2011-12

Just 1 in 5 African-American boys
is proficient in math

Questions to ask:

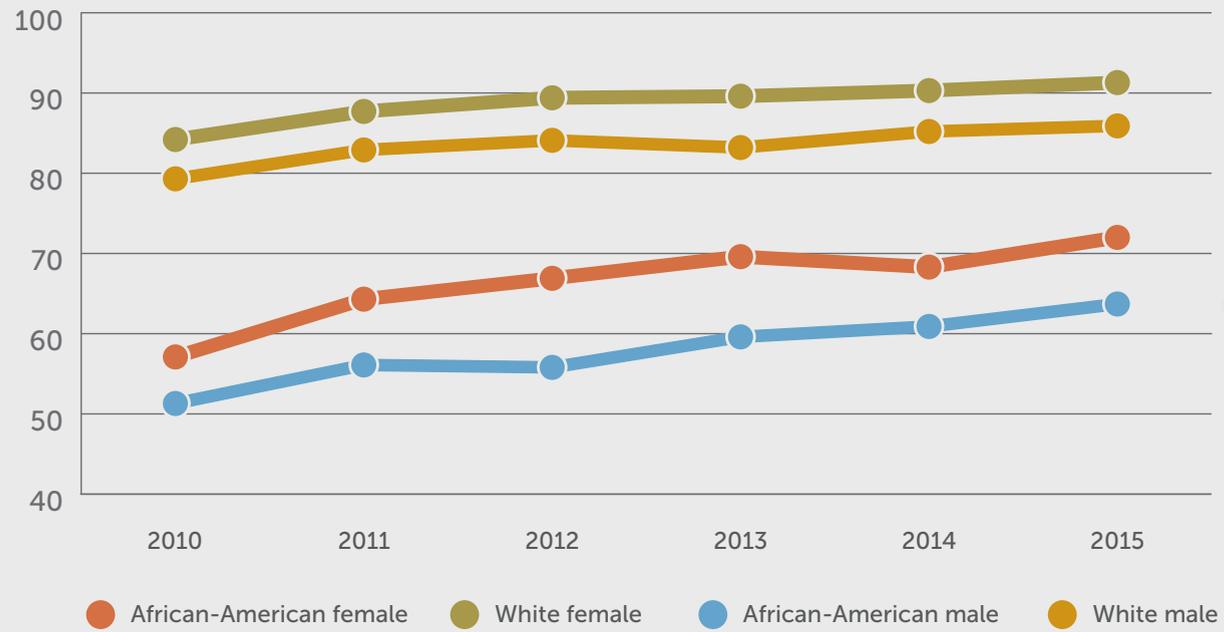
- How can we drive up math proficiency among African-American students of both sexes?
- While the new more rigorous proficiency test was bound to lead to lower scores, what concepts are students not mastering?
- What can the community do to support teachers in their work to raise math scores?
- African-American girls' and boys' scores were climbing between 2009 and 2012 — significantly. What led to that?
- What are the implications of these statistics for college and career readiness?

The achievement gap between African-American females and African-American males has closed significantly as compared to 3rd grade reading, but proficiency levels are exceedingly poor for both sexes

Graduation rates for white students are higher than for African-American students, but recently they have been flat

Graduation rates are increasing, and the gap between white females and African-American males is less than in 2010

% of Montgomery County students who graduate from high school



Nearly 3 in 10 African-American females are not graduating from high school

More than 1 in 3 African-American males are not graduating from high school

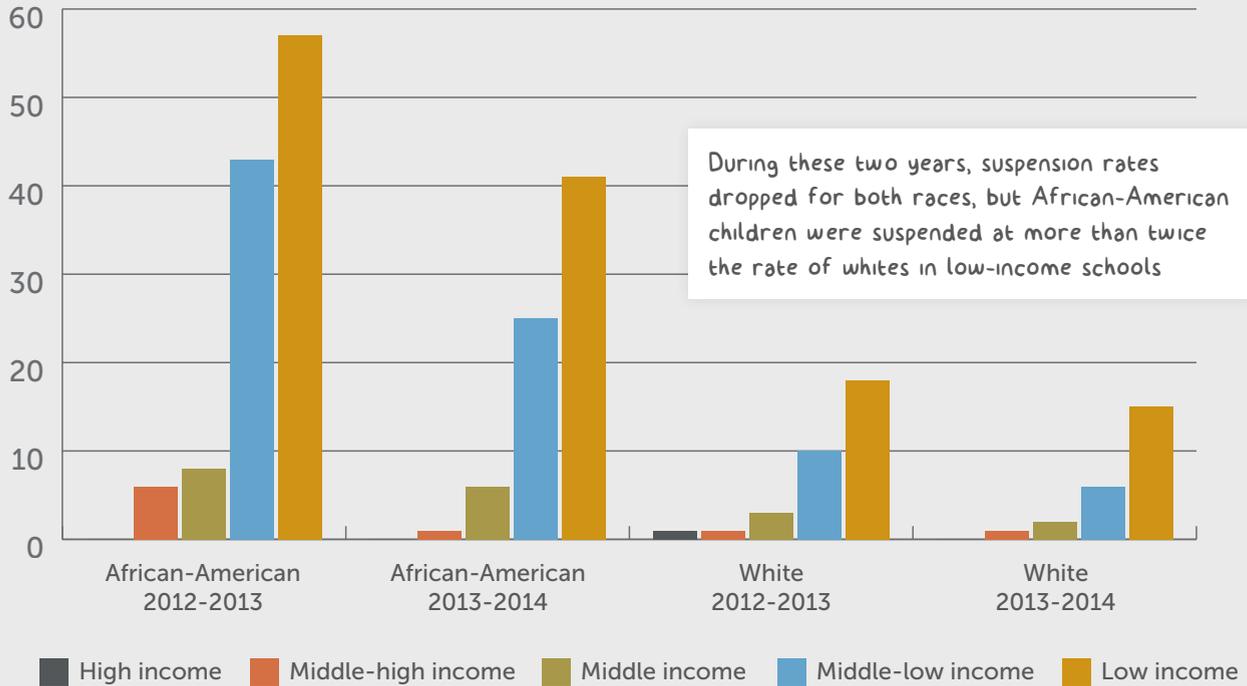
Questions to ask:

- How can we create a culture that emphasizes graduating from high school and going on to attend college or earning a credential?
- Ohio is imposing dramatically more difficult graduation standards beginning in 2018 (affecting the 2016-17 junior class). How can we help those who don't meet the bar?
- What about school allows girls to perform better than boys of the same race at every age?
- How can we help African-American males who are clearly not finding success in school?
- Who needs to know these graduation statistics, and what should we ask them to do in response to the information?

The graduation gap between African-American male and African-American female students is worse than the gap between white female and white male students

As early as elementary school, large numbers of both African-American and white low-income students are being suspended

Elementary out-of-school suspensions per 100 Montgomery County students* by race and school income



*These bars reflect the number of suspensions per every 100 students. Some students may be suspended multiple times.

The lowest income students were suspended the most frequently for both races

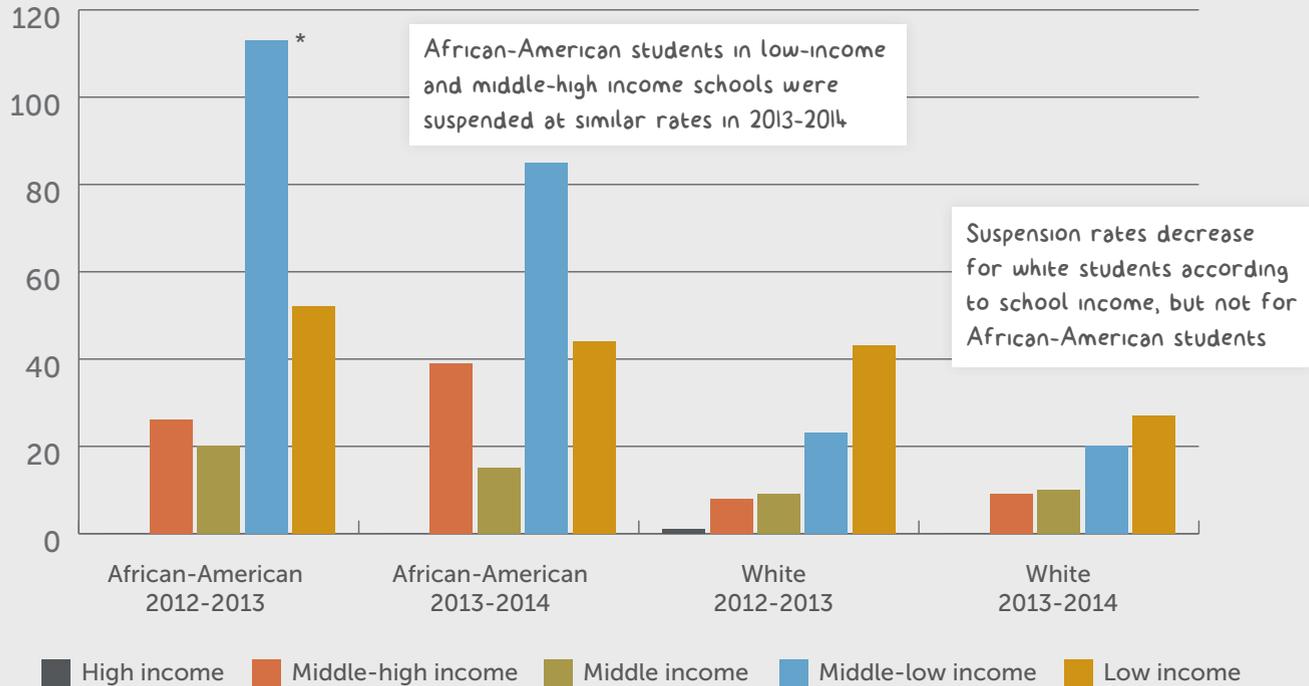
Questions to ask:

- How can we decrease suspension rates, while still holding students accountable for unacceptable behavior?
- Why are suspensions — which negatively impact student success — highest at schools with large concentrations of low-income children?
- What changed between these two years that accounted for the drop?
- What are the dangers of suspending children early in their school careers?
- What are practical and effective alternatives to out-of-school suspension?
- How can communities support those alternatives?

African-American students were suspended at disproportionately higher rates across all but the very highest income

Suspensions for low-income white students dropped significantly; much less so for low-income African-American students

High-school out-of-school suspensions per 100 Montgomery County students by race and school income



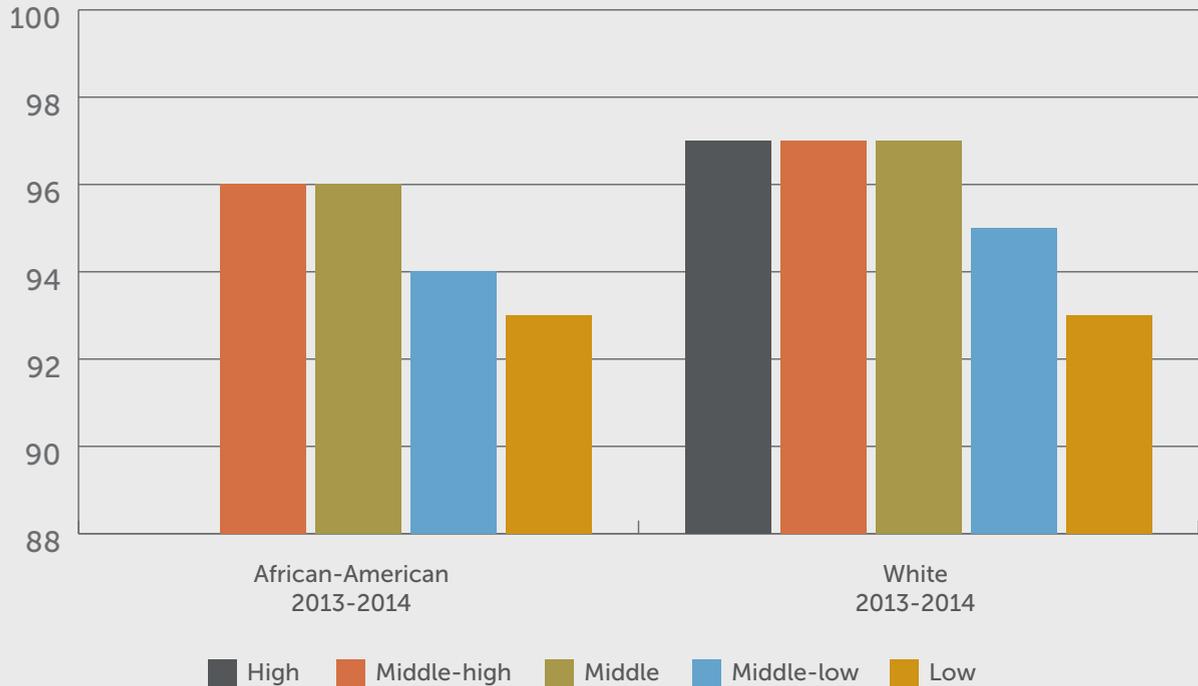
Questions to ask:

- What are practical and effective policies and alternatives to out-of-school-suspensions that support academic success and create a positive school environment?
- How can we decrease suspension rates, while holding students accountable?
- What role do suspensions play in dropout rates?
- How can we especially support African-American students who have been suspended or who are at risk of being suspended?
- How can we ensure that African-American students are being treated fairly in school disciplinary matters?
- What are the unintended biases — around gender, race, culture or economic status — that can lead to suspensions?

African-American students were suspended at disproportionately higher rates across all but the very highest income

Attendance is worst among the lowest income students for both races

Montgomery County school attendance rates by race and school income



Attendance is the same for the lowest income African-American students and white students

What might seem a small difference
in attendance can dramatically affect
academic achievement

Questions to ask:

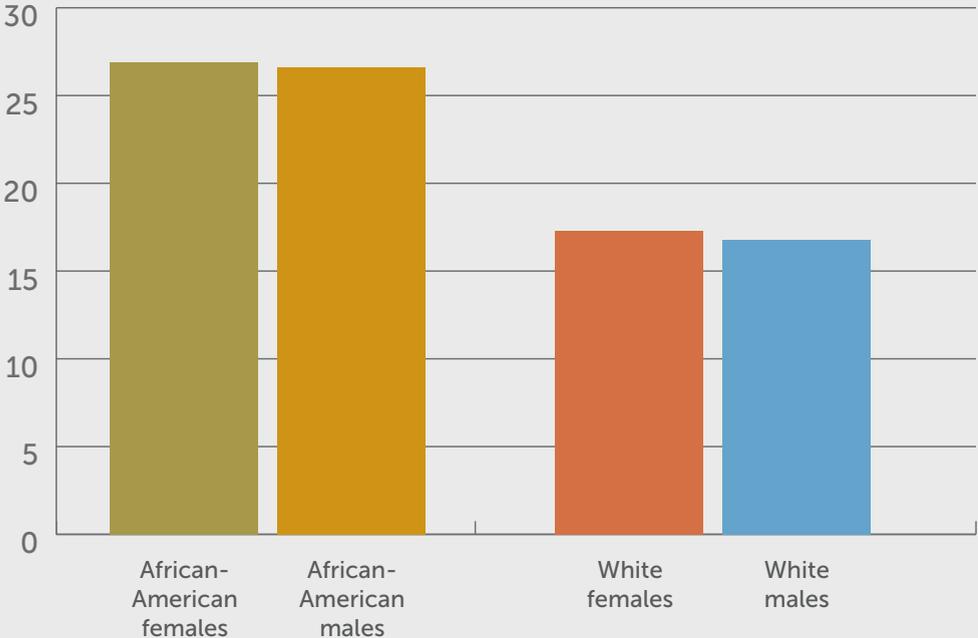
- How can we create a culture of attendance among students, starting in elementary school?
- What are the barriers that keep children from coming to school?
- What is the community's role in promoting strong student attendance?
- How can we identify and intervene early when a child begins missing too much school?
- What practices in families discourage student attendance, and how do we change them?

Seemingly acceptable average attendance
rates can mask the fact that a few students
are chronically absent

More than 1 in 4 African-American students of both sexes were chronically absent

Females of both races were ever so slightly more often chronically absent than their male counterparts

Montgomery County chronic absenteeism rates, 2013-14*



*"Chronically absent" is defined as missing 15 or more days of school.

African-American females were the most likely to be chronically absent

The chronic absenteeism rate differed much more by race than by sex

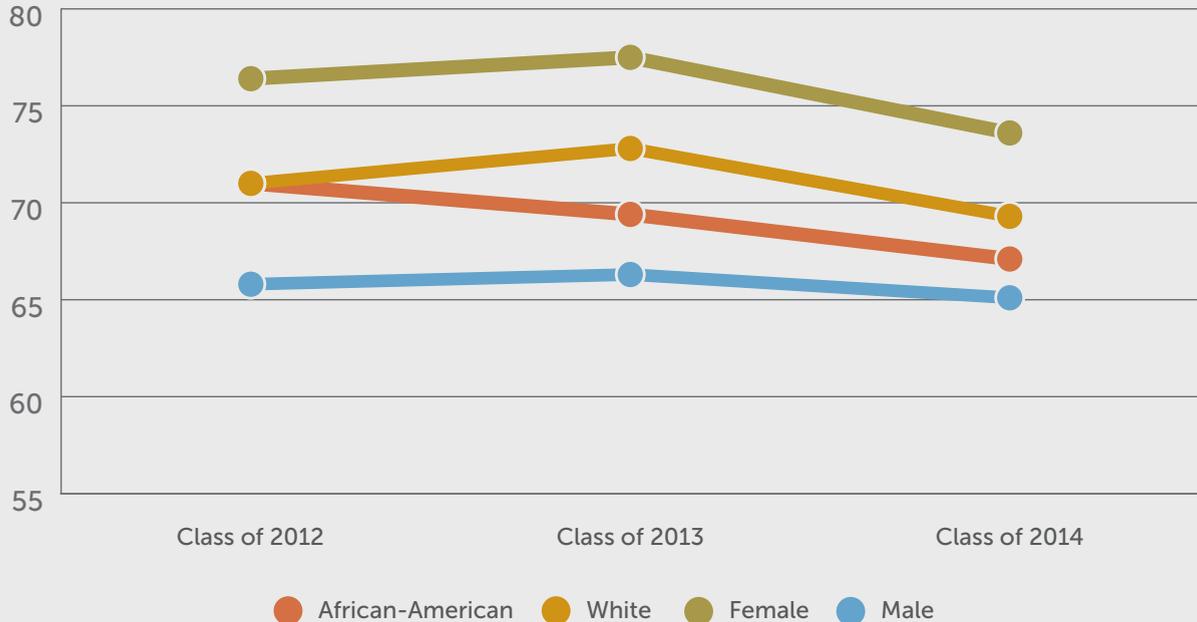
Questions to ask:

- Why is the chronic absenteeism rate so different by race?
- Does it surprise you that girls are as likely as boys to be chronically absent?
- If a school has a good *average* attendance rate, but a significant number of students are chronically absent, how can we flag those children and intervene?
- How should schools, families, courts and others respond when a student is missing too much school?
- How can we, as a community, incentivize strong attendance?

An acceptable *average* attendance rate can mask that a significant number of children are chronically absent

Most likely because the economy has picked up, the percentage of students enrolling in college, regardless of gender or race, has fallen

% of Montgomery County high-school grads enrolling in college the 1st year after graduation



There was a steep enrollment drop-off among African-Americans in the two most recent years

Source: National Student Clearinghouse (data points are not disaggregated by race and sex together)

The biggest recent enrollment drop-off has been among females

Questions to ask:

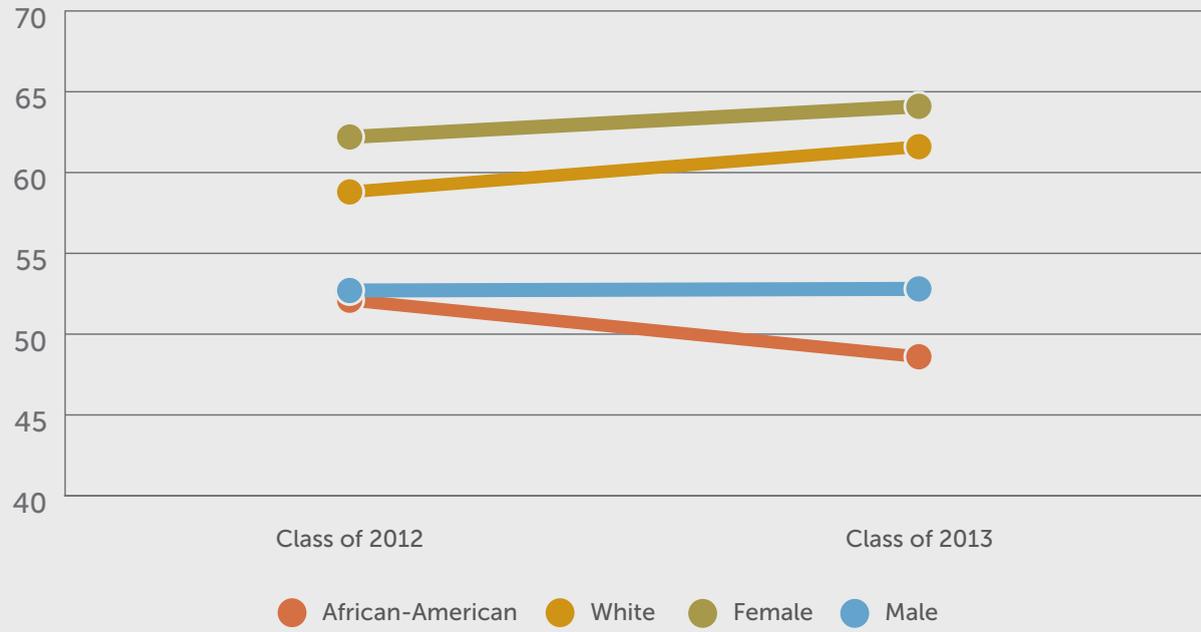
- While college enrollment drops when the economy picks up, how can we impress on students that a high-school diploma is not enough to get a secure and good job?
- Why are boys and African-Americans choosing not to enroll in college?
- How do we ensure that students know that college is affordable?
- How do we educate students about earning a marketable credential if they choose not to go to college?

The recent enrollment drop-off was the least among males, but they were already the least likely to enroll

While historical data points are lacking, African-American students were the only group to see a drop between 2012-13

Males are the least likely to enroll in college, but African-American students are the least likely to return for a 2nd year

% of Montgomery County high-schools grads returning to college a 2nd year



Source: National Student Clearinghouse (data points are not disaggregated by race and sex together)

More than half of African-Americans are not returning to college after their first year

The persistence rate for males was flat in these two years

Questions to ask:

- How can we help students who enroll in college to choose the right college, so they'll want to return?
- How can we support students from afar at college?
- How big a factor is college affordability in students' decision not to return?
- What special ways can we support males and African-Americans at college?
- Why are African-American students less likely to come back to college for a second year?

When compared to the 1/3 who are enrolling in college, too many kids aren't returning

What about poverty?

It doesn't totally explain the achievement gap

The explanation for the tragic racial achievement gap in Montgomery County (and across the country) is assuredly not that children of color are less able or that they are at fault.

Neither is poverty the full explanation — as evidenced by these next charts that show achievement by race, gender *and* economic status.

Yes, growing up in a financially overwhelmed family or in a high-poverty neighborhood can have tremendous negative consequences in and outside the classroom. These children — regardless of color or ethnicity — experience more trauma, violence and hunger. They have fewer role models.

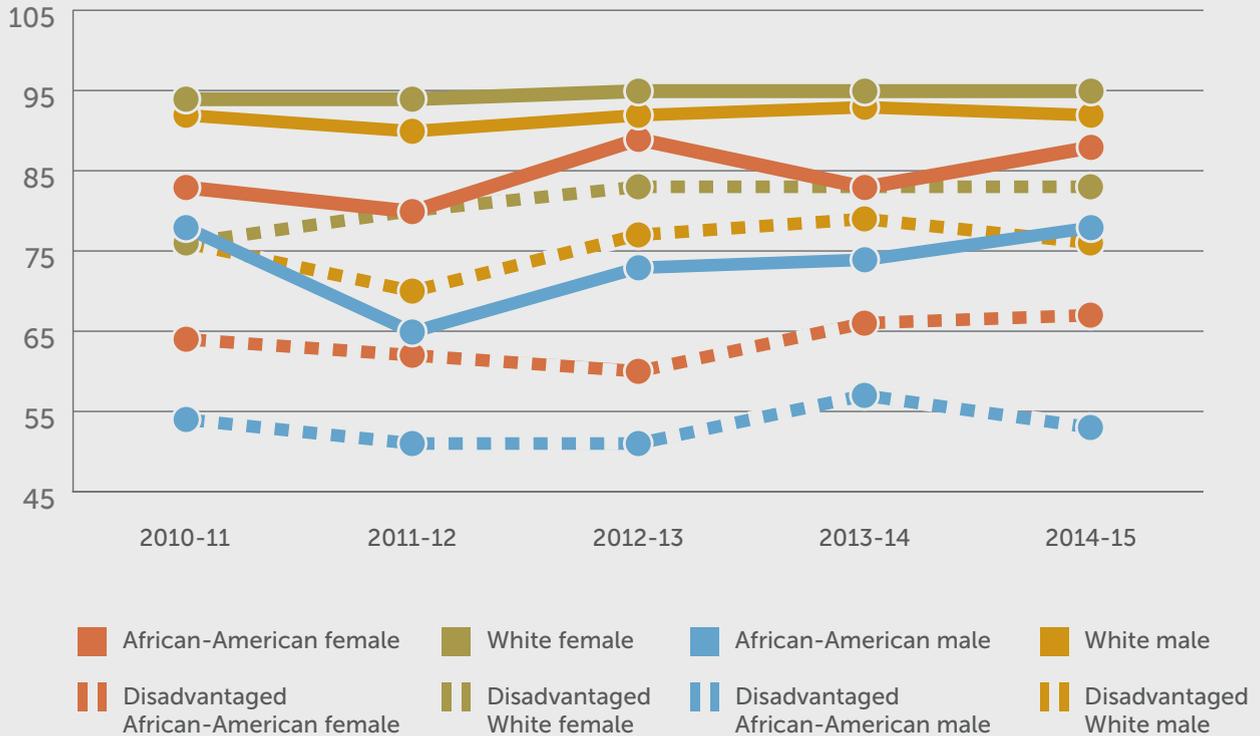
As important, when children live in racially and economically segregated neighborhoods— which is largely the norm in Montgomery County — their “normal” is, in fact, abnormal.

But the data on these next pages also show that even African-American elementary and high-school children who are not poor are too often not achieving at the rates of their white peers. And these are just two charts taking into account children's economic status. Far too many achievement trend lines look like these when data are disaggregated by race, sex and income.

The unmistakable conclusion is that forces, practices and policies — in our cultures, neighborhoods, institutions, schools and homes — are keeping children of color from learning and succeeding at the highest levels. That's a painful and uncomfortable truth to confront. But acknowledging explicit and implicit biases, subtle and unsubtle prejudices, is the only way to give all children the chance to excel.

All students who are not economically disadvantaged perform highest, *except for African-American males who are not disadvantaged*

% of Montgomery County 3rd-graders who are proficient in reading by race, gender and economic status



Economically disadvantaged African-American males and females perform *significantly lower* than economically disadvantaged white males and females

Questions to ask:

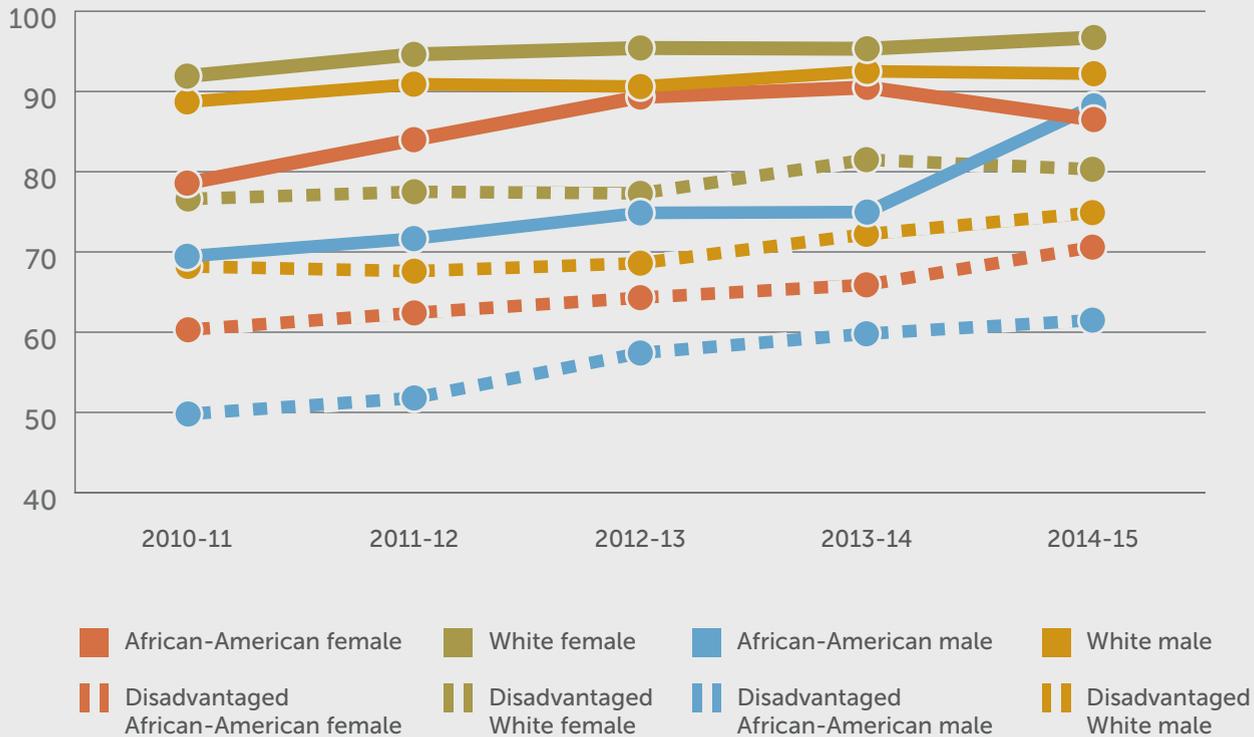
- Does this information surprise you? Will it surprise others?
- Given that these statistics demonstrate poverty alone does not explain lower reading achievement by African-American students, what are other explanations?
- What do we need to do differently to change these trends?
- Who and what institutions need to know this information?
- How should it be shared?

African-American males who are *not* economically disadvantaged are outperforming only disadvantaged African-American males and females

White males and females who are not disadvantaged are performing similarly, but significantly higher than their non-disadvantaged African-American peers, especially boys

The gap between white females who are not disadvantaged and African-American males who are disadvantaged is a stunning 35%.

Montgomery County high-school graduation rate by race, gender and economic status



There has been a significant uptick in the number of African-American males who are not disadvantaged graduating

The sudden graduation drop-off for African-American females who are not disadvantaged needs examination

Questions to ask:

- Knowing that many students, especially disadvantaged as well as African-American students, drop out, are these statistics understating the problem?
- What can we learn from the percentage increase in African-American males who are not disadvantaged graduating?
- Does our community have sufficient alternatives to traditional high schools and sufficient career pathways, starting in our high schools?
- What is depressing the achievement of African-American boys, regardless of income, in almost all years?

The increase in graduation rates for disadvantaged African-American males has been steady, but not as great as for non-disadvantaged African-American males

Closing the gap requires knowing the gap

As haunting as the local statistics in this report are, the findings also point toward solutions — action that makes intuitive sense and that can make a difference.

- We can't make significant demographic-level gains unless we target sub-groups of children and intentionally support them
- Driving up attendance rates for chronically absent students is critical
- Lowering suspension rates is an imperative
- Examining district-level data is essential, so we know where things are going well and where they're not

Our efforts have to be relentless and ongoing.

Though there is little to celebrate in these statistics, there are some findings that shouldn't be overlooked.

- **Until the recent drop in scores, African-American girls' achievement in 3rd-grade reading shows that important gains can be made**
- **There's a significant uptick in high-school graduation rates**
- **Suspension rates have fallen**

But we have much work to do if all of our children are going to have the opportunity to realize their potential.

How can you use this information to help our young people?

Who else needs to see the information?

How should our community act on the findings?

For more information about this report or to host a facilitated conversation about it, contact Ritika Kurup, Director of Early Learning at Ritika.Kurup@LearnToEarnDayton.org.

To learn more:

7 Steps to Advance and Embed Race Equity and Inclusion Within Your Organization,
The Annie E. Casey Foundation

2016 State of the Science: Implicit Bias Review, Kirwan Institute, The Ohio State University

Do Early Educators' Implicit Biases Regarding Sex and Race Relate to Behavior Expectations and Recommendations of Preschool Expulsions and Suspensions?, Yale University Child Study Center, Walter S. Gilliam, Angela N. Maupin, Chin R. Reyes, Maria Accavitti, Frederick Shic

The New Voices — Nuevas Voces Guide to Cultural and Linguistic Diversity in Early Childhood,
Dina C. Castro, Betsy Ayankoya & Christina Kasprzak

What If All the Kids are White? Anti-Bias Multicultural Education with Young Children and Families, Louise Derman-Sparks & Patricia G. Ramsey

On YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F05HaArLV44>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZDRB91izZ8w>

On the web:

casel.org

kidslikeus.org

racialequitytools.org

Sources for data in this report:

U.S. Census Bureau

U.S. Department of Education, Civil Rights Data Collection

Ohio Department of Education

National Student Clearinghouse

Thank you to the Lumina Foundation for its generous support of Learn to Earn Dayton and this report.



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