

Education



Education Subcommittee

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Lisa Falduto	United Way of Portage County
Volker Gaul	Mid-State Technical College
Kathy Graham	Portage County Health and Human Services
Greg Hansel	Stevens Point Area Catholic Schools
Julie Kolarik	Stevens Point Area School District
Marv Noltze	University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point
Ashley Phelan	Tomorrow River School District
Jeff Rykal	Almond-Bancroft School District
Kathy Schouten	CAP Services-Head Start

*“Education is the not
the filling of a pail but
the lighting of a fire.”
William Butler Yeats*

Education

Section Summary

Strengths and Progress

- Born Learning was created in 2015, as a result of the 2012 Life Report. Born Learning aims to work on closing the academic achievement gap, with a vision of having all Portage County children safe, healthy and ready for Kindergarten.
- Our schools continue to meet or exceed expectations for student achievement. For instance, high school graduation rates in Portage County average 95%, compared to 88% statewide.
- Career planning has expanded in the school districts, and business and secondary partnerships have been developed, such as the “Heavy Metal Tours” for junior high and high school students.
- Mid-State Technical College and UW-Stevens Point continually seek ways to ensure graduates are prepared for the workforce by examining alignment with employer expectations through job market analysis and program advisory committees.
- UWSP graduation rates have increased since 2012 as a result of redesigning general degree requirements.
- Mid-State Technical College built a new campus in Stevens Point expanding space and programming, which also aided revitalization of the downtown area.

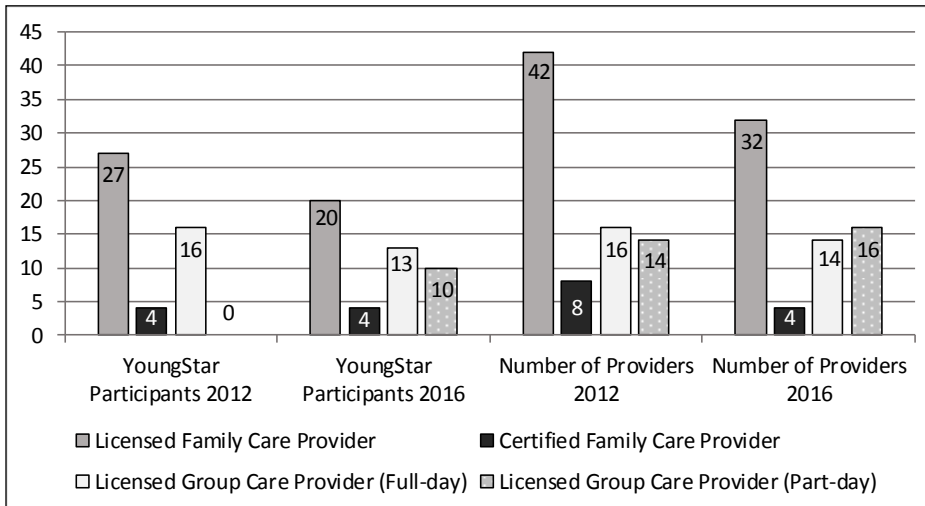
Challenges and Opportunities to Improve

- A lack of awareness exists in Portage County regarding the importance of early childhood education and how that ties to future success in education, good health, and economic and workforce development, which together create a sustainable community.
- While childcare costs are perceived to be very high, wages and benefits in the childcare industry are among the lowest.
- Some school districts in Portage County are struggling to attract and retain staff.
- There is a need to promote the many personal and public benefits of higher education in our community and to educate students and parents on the level of post-secondary education required to achieve students’ career goals.
- Declining post-secondary enrollments may impact the training of our workforce in the future.

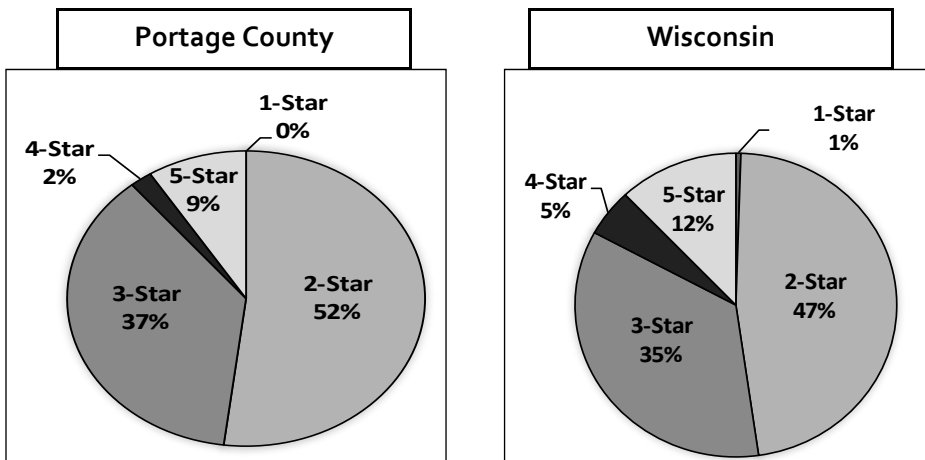
Opportunities for Action

For Individuals	Support education in Portage County through volunteerism and advocacy (early childhood through postsecondary). Work with area educational groups to reduce socio-economic achievement gaps. Model and encourage positive literacy habits by reading with children as well as sharing favorite books and magazines.
For Organizations	Strengthen channels of communication between employers and higher education to understand one another’s needs. Commit to providing valuable internships, field trips and guest speakers that support the region’s business and industry. Support employees who are in adjunct faculty or advisory committee roles with post-secondary institutions.
For the Community	Participate in parent and community education opportunities for children in their earliest years (ages 0-5) regarding cognitive, social-emotional, language and physical development. Educate others about the connections between education, health, well-being, and economics within Portage County.

Key Measure: Portage County Providers Participating in YoungStar Comparison, 2012 & 2016



Key Measure: Child Care Program YoungStar Ratings, 2016



COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Investing in our youngest children is one of the most promising and cost effective ways to ensure that they are ready to enter kindergarten and succeed in school and life. We must find innovative ways to invest in our early support services that deal with the full range of obstacles that our families face, including poverty, substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental health issues.

There are four big benefits to investing in early childhood development for disadvantaged children according to Nobel Memorial prize winner and economic researcher, James Heckman. These include: Preventing the academic achievement gap, improving health outcomes, boosting earnings and providing a high rate of economic return.

Professor Heckman further states that quality early learning and development programs for disadvantaged children can strengthen our workforce, reduce social spending, foster valuable skills, and grow our economy.

A new community initiative called Born Learning is a public/private partnership working collectively to build a county-wide system that creates and invests in opportunities for children to realize lifelong success. The vision of Born Learning is that all Portage County children will be safe, healthy and ready for kindergarten. Partners will more effectively identify families who need support and offer a host of services within our community that will strengthen families.

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- YoungStar is Wisconsin's child care quality rating and improvement system. Those providers who want to accept the MyWICChildCare subsidy must participate in YoungStar. In Portage County, 47 out of 66 regulated providers participate in YoungStar.
- The fastest rate of brain development across the human lifespan occurs from birth to age three. By age 3, roughly 85% of the brain's core structure is formed.
- High-quality preschool programs not only produce better academic outcomes for their participants such as higher academic achievement, higher rates of school graduation, and higher college enrollment, but could also yield up to \$13 for every dollar invested in high quality programming during the early years.
- In the 2017 LIFE Community Survey, 55.4% of respondents agreed that support services for families in the development of their young children were available, while only 5.0% disagreed.
- From 2010 to 2014, KIDS Count Data Center indicated 1,763 children (12.6%) were living below the poverty level in Portage County, a 1.5% increase from 2009 to 2013.

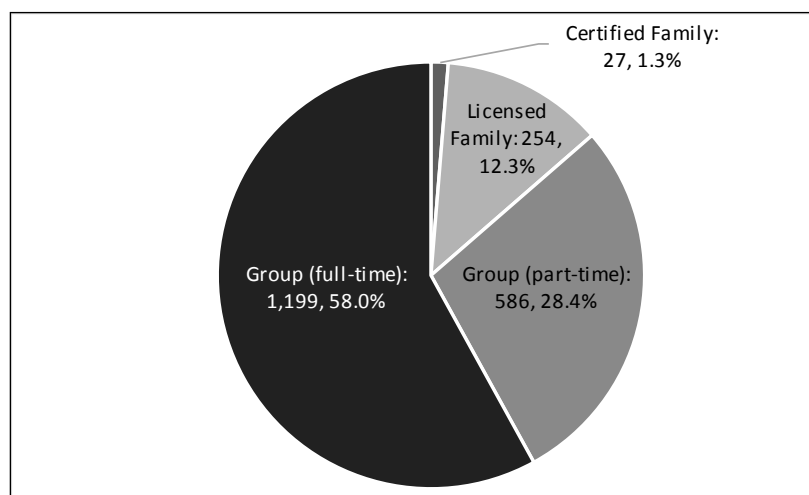
SOURCES

- **Wisconsin Department of Children and Families**
Child Care Search
childcarefinder.wisconsin.gov/Search/BasicSearch.aspx
- **Childcaring, Inc.**
<http://www.childcaring.org/>
- **Born Learning**
<http://www.unitedwaypoco.org/bornlearning>

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- Regulation in Wisconsin includes group child care licensing, family child care licensing, and family child care certification. When someone cares for four or more children under the age of seven, he or she must become licensed.
- Of all children under the age of 6 in Wisconsin in 2015, 74% had all parents in the labor force, placing Wisconsin at the 4th highest percentage in the nation. Nationally, 65% of children under 6 have all parents working. Most of Wisconsin's young children spend time in out-of-home care.
- As of January 2017, there were 36 family and 30 group-regulated child care programs with a capacity of 2,063 in Portage County. Although capacity has increased, there has been a significant drop in regulated family care since 2012, when there were 50 regulated family child care facilities.
- Care offered outside of daytime, weekday hours is limited. Only one family child care provider (8 slots) is open beyond 8:00 p.m., and one family child care provider (8 slots) is open for 24 hours (a second caregiver is then required per licensing regulations). A total of 6 family child care providers (48 slots) offer care during Saturday or Sunday.
- Data from the LIFE Community Survey indicated that 44.3% of those surveyed agreed that child care is available in Portage County.

Key Measure: Number of Regulated Child Care Slots in Portage County, February 2017



Percentage of Child Care Centers Offering Benefits

	Paid Vacation	Paid Sick Time	Paid Holidays	Health Insurance
2012	66%	52%	58%	32%
2016	88%	59%	83%	24%

Average Hourly Wage of Child Care Teacher in Portage County

	Child Care Teacher Wages
2012	\$11.35
2016	\$10.37

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Communities that are able to meet the demand for high quality, affordable child care will positively impact employer recruitment/retention, families, and young children during their most critical phase of their development. Children spend a significant amount of their day in care and it is crucial they spend that time in high quality environments since 85% of the brain core is developed by age 3.

In Wisconsin, regulated care includes Certified Care (3 or fewer children in care) in a home; Licensed Family Child Care (up to 8 children in care) in a home; and Licensed Group Child Care (9 or more children in care) usually outside a home environment. This includes both preschool and Head Start.

The Department of Children and Families oversees both certification and licensing in Wisconsin. Portage County is fortunate that 4-year-old kindergarten (4K) programming is offered in all 4 school districts, with each district using programming that fits within their specific community.

Parents continue to seek high quality care while balancing affordability and convenience. They may have to sacrifice a high quality educational experience and other factors as they secure care by neighbors, friends or family members due to convenience or cost. The quality of child care is unknown in these circumstances.

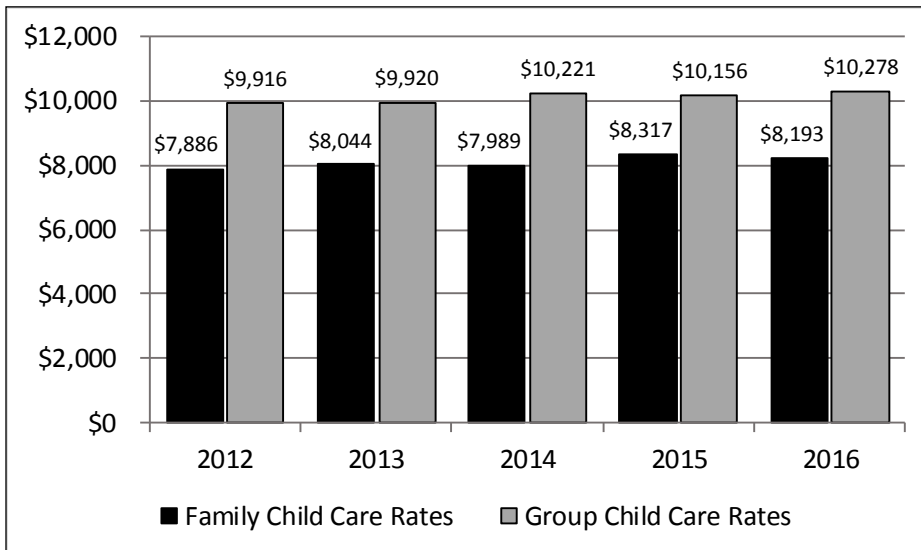
We must recruit and retain high quality child care providers in order to market our community as a well sought-after place for families to work and live. This continues to be a challenge in Portage County due to low wages and lack of benefits. High quality child care programs need resources to pay the full cost of quality care to attract, train, and retain a competent work force. In 2016, only 59% of child care staff in central Wisconsin had paid sick days and only 24% of programs surveyed offered health insurance.

Quality child care is essential for a strong and robust future because it serves as an important piece of the economic infrastructure for the strength and prosperity of Portage County.

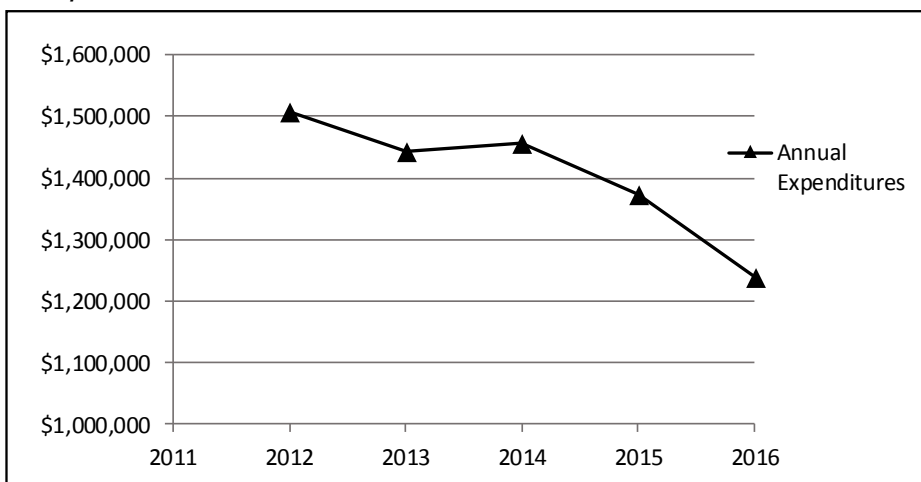
SOURCES

- Wisconsin Department of Children and Families**
<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar>
- Childcaring, Inc.**
<http://www.childcaring.org/documents/WageBenefitSurvey.pdf>

Key Measure: Portage County Family Annual Child Care Rates Compared to Group Child Care Rates for Infants, 2012-2016



Key Measure: Portage County Annual Expenditures on Subsidized Child Care, 2012-2016



COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

For a majority of families in Central Wisconsin, child care is not a luxury but a necessity. Child care can account for a larger percentage of a family's budget than their food, monthly utilities, or even car payment. Families are more likely to look for lower cost alternatives, sometimes by sacrificing quality. Child care costs vary depending on the type of setting, children's age, number of children, and other factors.

The Wisconsin Shares child care subsidy program enables low-income families to work, seek employment, or attend educational and training programs by helping to finance child care expenses. Recently, a new EBT card system was

developed for WI Shares called MyWICChildCare. This system allows low-income families to more closely mirror the private pay sector with funding loaded onto an EBT card. With YoungStar, Wisconsin's Quality Rating and Improvement System for regulated child care programs, parents have an opportunity to choose child care based on a 5 star rating system, while providers receive Wisconsin Shares reimbursement based on their star level. The higher the star rating, the higher the reimbursement amount from the state.

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- In 2017, LIFE Community Survey respondents indicated their agreement with the statement: "Child Care is affordable." The results were:

Strongly Agree	2.8%
Agree	14.4%
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	10.6%
Disagree	15.4%
Strongly Disagree	4.1%
Don't Know	52.8%

- Group child care is typically more costly than family child care. Infant/toddler care is often more expensive than care for a child over the age of two.
- Head Start (ages 3 & 4) and Early Head Start (ages 0-3) provide quality early childhood services to income-eligible families. In Portage County, Head Start serves 133 children, with 66 families on the wait list (23 income-eligible). Early Head Start serves 46 children, with 32 families on the wait list (17 income-eligible).
- The average number of families served in Portage County subsidized child care has decreased in the last 5 years. Over time, this decrease is even larger considering that in 2007, there were 545 families served:
 - 2012: 473 families
 - 2013: 423 families
 - 2014: 397 families
 - 2015: 380 families
 - 2016: 341 families

SOURCES

- Portage County Health and Human Services
- Childcaring, Inc.
 - <http://www.childcaring.org/documents/GCCAaverageRates.pdf>
 - <http://www.childcaring.org/documents/FCCAaverageRates.pdf>

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- Statewide, public school enrollment has continued to decline. Overall, Wisconsin districts have seen a 0.5% decline in enrollment from 2010-2011 to 2015-2016.
- Portage County public schools, except for the Tomorrow River School District, continued the trend in enrollment with a 3.6% decline from 2010-2011 to 2015-2016. Tomorrow River school district experienced a 13.5% rise in enrollment from 2010-2011 to 2015-2016.
- Enrollment at Pacelli Catholic schools has remained stable over the last few years. The enrollment (including 3K but not 4K) in 2013-2014 was 666 students, and in 2016-2017, 636 students were enrolled.
- At 26.9%, Almond-Bancroft is the most ethnically diverse district, followed by Stevens Point Area Public Schools at 15%, Rosholt at 4.5%, and Tomorrow River at 3.8%.
- Almond Bancroft continues to report the highest percent of economically disadvantaged students at 46%. Almond Bancroft, Rosholt and Tomorrow River School Districts all reported fewer economically disadvantaged students in 2015-16 compared to the 2010-11 school year. The Stevens Point Area School District reported a 0.5% increase in economically disadvantaged students from the 2010-2011 school year.
- All school districts reported increases in the number of minority students from 2012-2013 to 2016-2017:
Almond Bancroft: 23.4% to 25.6%
Rosholt: 3.9% to 5.4%
Stevens Point: 17.1% to 19.1%
Tomorrow River 4.6% to 5.1%

Key Measure: Portage County's School District Demographics, 2015-2016

District	Enrollment	Gender		Ethnicity						
	4K-12	F	M	American Indian	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander	White	2 or More Races
Almond-Bancroft	420	192	228	0	0	1	112	0	305	2
Rosholt	555	271	285	1	3	1	19	0	530	2
Stevens Point	7,246	3,540	3,691	29	519	99	441	5	5,908	230
Tomorrow River	1,153	519	634	4	4	10	26	0	1,098	11
County Total	9,374	4,522	4,838	34	526	111	598	5	7,841	245
Private Total	632	319	313	0	7	0	N/A	2	611	12

Note: Enrollment and ethnicity totals may not add up.

Key Measure: Portage County's School District Economic and Limited English Proficiency Parameters, 2015-2016

District	Economic Disadvantage		Limited English Proficiency	
	2012-2013	2015-2016	2012-2013	2015-2016
Almond-Bancroft	52.2%	46.4%	13.5%	19.0%
Rosholt	24.2%	22.7%	0.0%	0.7%
Stevens Point	37.7%	36.9%	5.4%	5.1%
Tomorrow River	25.1%	22.5%	0.9%	0.7%

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Portage County schools have consistently provided quality education to students across all economic and ethnic categories. Stevens Point and Almond-Bancroft School Districts are educating more and more students with limited English proficiency. It is worth noting that the parochial and private schools do not have the same reporting requirements that are imposed by the state and therefore are not included in the above statistics.

Economically disadvantaged students qualify for the free and reduced lunch program. Children in poverty are more inclined to be labeled "at-risk," and the number of children in poverty is growing. Economically disadvantaged students usually require more educational support and the number of students that need support influences a school district's distribution of limited financial and human resources.

Students who attend schools with a diverse population can develop an understanding of the perspectives of children from different backgrounds and learn to function in a

multicultural, multiethnic environment. With increasing populations of Spanish and Hmong speaking families, there is a need for specialized programs designed to individualize each student's education with a focus on language skills in all academic areas. Through these programs, as well as our dedicated teachers, these students thrive and find success in our community.

SOURCES

- Wisconsin Information System for Education**
<http://wisedash.dpi.wi.gov/Dashboard/portalHome.jsp>

Key Measure: Truancy Rates for Portage County, 2010-2011 & 2015-2016

District	2010-2011		2015-2016	
	Number of Students Habitually Truant	District Habitual Truancy Rate	Number of Students Habitually Truant	District Habitual Truancy Rate
Almond-Bancroft	27	6.4%	13	3.4%
Rosholt	15	2.6%	9	1.7%
Stevens Point	427	6.3%	328	4.9%
Tomorrow River	13	1.4%	5	0.5%

These rates are calculated from the first Friday enrollment data. Truancy rates are district data representing K-12th grade.

Key Measure: Dropout Rates for Portage County, 2010-2011 & 2014-2015

District	2010-2011		2015-2016	
	Number of Dropouts	Dropout Rate	Number of Dropouts	Dropout Rate
Almond-Bancroft	2	1.0%	3	1.7%
Rosholt	0	0.0%	2	0.7%
Stevens Point	31	0.9%	24	0.8%
Tomorrow River	4	0.9%	0	0.0%

Dropout data is from 7th-12 grade. A "dropout" is defined as a student who leaves school in grades 7-12 without expecting to earn a high school diploma.

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Students who attend school regularly are more likely to succeed in high school coursework, college, and careers. When comparing Portage County's overall drop-out rate of 0.96% to the state average drop-out rate of 1.5%, it's clear our Portage County staff and faculty continue to be successful at engaging students in their education through a multi-level system of support. The vast majority of our students are in school, stay in school, and earn their high school diplomas.

Parents are essential partners in promoting not only school attendance, but the value of education. Being in school on a daily basis is necessary if education is to effectively prepare a child for adulthood. Truancy and chronic absenteeism are often stepping stones to dropping out of school before graduation, and have consequences for children and the society in which they live.

Habitual truants fall behind in their school work, and many drop out of

school. Habitually truants usually lack adult supervision and consequently are at risk for unintended injury, drug use, early sexual activity, pregnancy, crime and poor health. Habitual truancy affects not only youth but also the adults they will become. Dropouts cost the community in lost wages, taxes, and productivity. Each student who graduates from high school and is employed with insurance saves the state in Medicaid and expenditures for uninsured care over the course of their lifetime.

Combining the loss in wages and productivity, and the necessary allocation of public monies for criminal justice involvement and incarceration, truancy prevention programs and efforts can have a great impact on the economy at the community, state and national levels.

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

In comparing habitual truancy rates across districts, several key points should be considered:

1. Each district establishes its own policy for excused absences, so what is excused in one district might be unexcused in another (e.g., family trips, deer hunting, absences without written permission).
2. Schools may define "part of a day" in the definition of habitual truant (under 118.16(1)(a)) differently. For example, one district might state that any time unexcused over 15 minutes is "part of a day," whereas another district might define "part of a day" as 3 or more hours.
3. A "habitual truant" is defined as a student who is absent from school without an acceptable excuse under s.118.16(4) and s.118.15, Wis. Stats., for part or all of 5 or more days on which school is held during a school semester.
 - Almond Bancroft School District reported the highest rate of habitual truancy at 6.1% primarily occurring in their elementary school and the highest dropout rate at 2.13%. The Stevens Point Area Public School District reported the second highest truancy rate at 5.8% occurring primarily at the high school and alternative school. It is interesting to note that the Almond Bancroft School District and the Stevens Point School District both reported higher percentages of economically disadvantaged students at 46% and 36.7%.
 - Wisconsin's attendance rate (the percentage of students attending school on a regular basis) has increased slightly to 94.9% over the last 5 years.

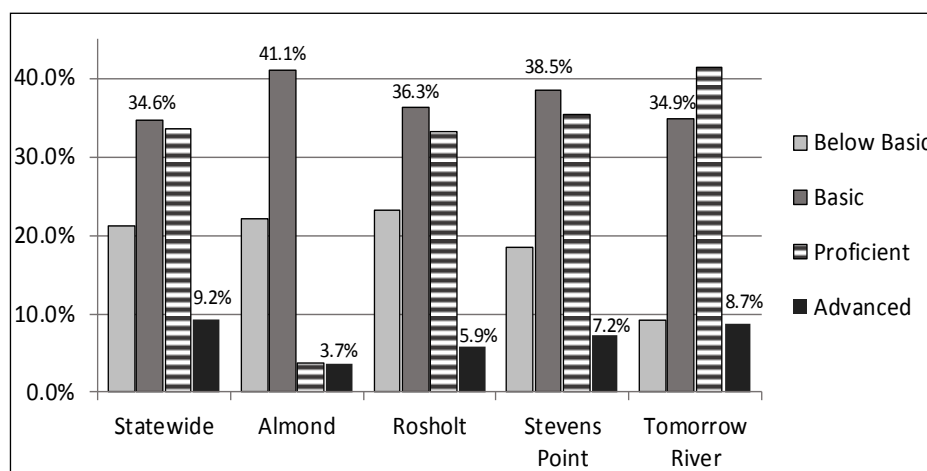
SOURCES

- **Wisconsin Information System for Education**
<http://wisedash.dpi.wi.gov/Dashboard/Page/Home/Topic%20Area/Attendance-Dropouts/>

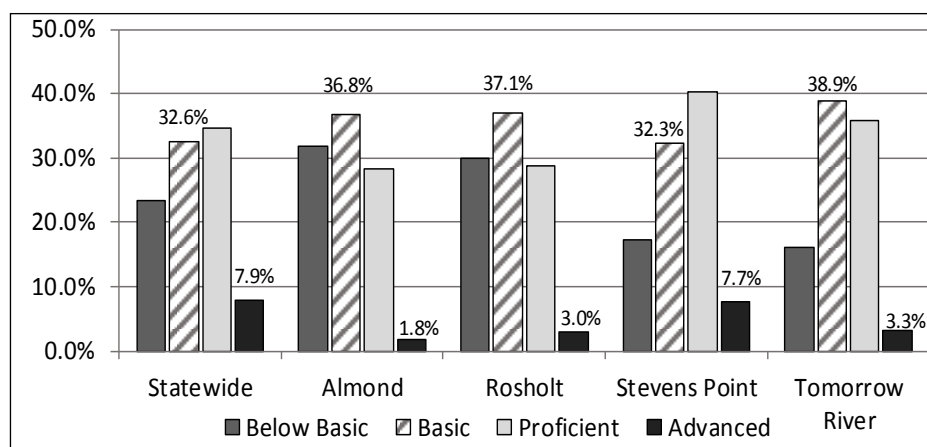
DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- From 1997 to 2014 Wisconsin students were tested using the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination (WKCE) which focused on subject area proficiency. The test then changed to the Badger Exam in 2014-2015. The Badger Exam was Wisconsin's Smarter Balanced Assessment that was formed to help establish a series of "next generation assessments" to measure students' career and college readiness. In 2015-16, it was changed to the Wisconsin Forward Exam.
- On average, 10.2% Portage County's students with disabilities scored as proficient on the Forward Exam for 2015-16. This is below the state average of 12.2% for students with disabilities throughout the state.
- Of students with low socio-economic status in Portage County 26.6% score proficient on the Forward exam. This is at the state average of 26.3%.

Key Measure: Wisconsin Forward Exam English Language Arts Score Results by School District, 2015-2016



Key Measure: Wisconsin Forward Exam Math Score Results by School District, 2015-2016



COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Wisconsin has changed its exam process over the last few years. During the 2015-16 school year, Wisconsin rolled out a new assessment called the Wisconsin Forward Exam. Since 2015-16 is the first year of the assessment, it is impossible to compare growth over the last five years.

The Forward exam is designed to gauge how well students are doing in relation to the Wisconsin Academic Standards. The standards focus on what students should know/or be able to do in order to be college and career ready. The Forward Exam is administered online in the spring of each school year at:

- Grades 3-8 in English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics
- Grades 4 and 8 in Science
- Grades 4, 8, and 10 in Social Studies

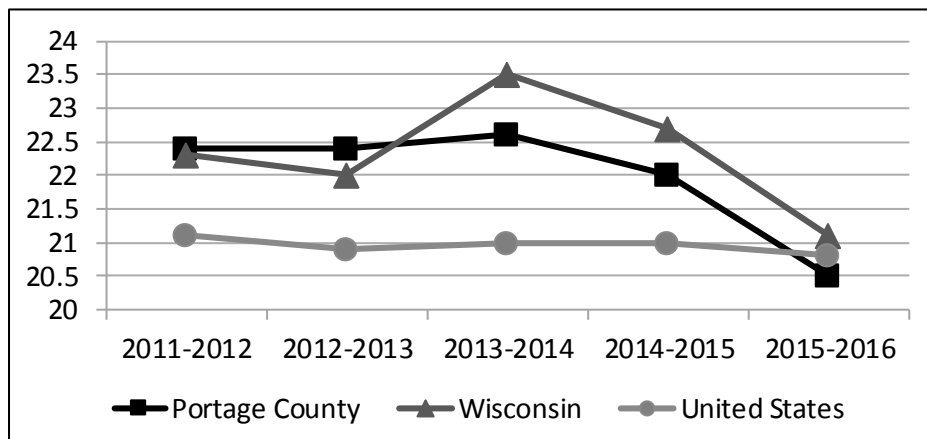
Accommodations and supports for students with disabilities and/or English language learners are built into the system so that the progress of students can be accurately measured.

The Forward Exam is a high quality, research-based, and affordable assessment that meets Wisconsin's expectations. It is a customized assessment with innovative item types and includes test items reviewed and approved by Wisconsin educators.

SOURCES

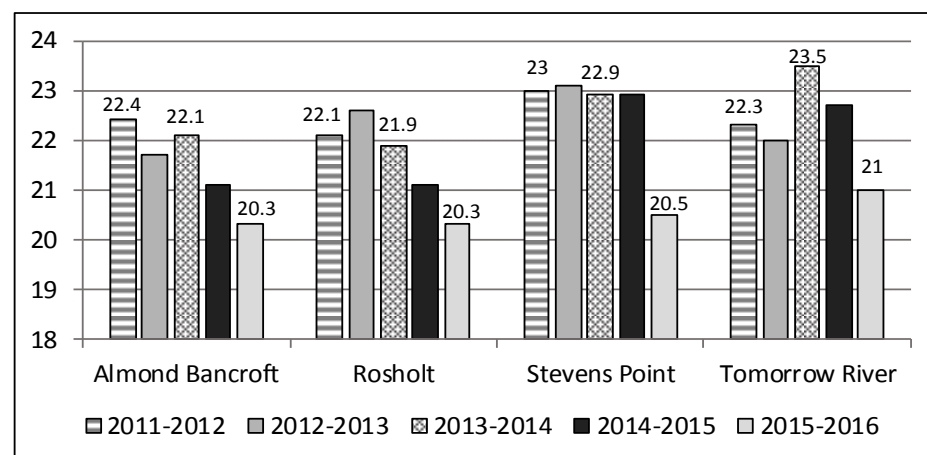
- Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction**
WISEdash Information Portal
<http://wisedash.dpi.wi.gov/Dashboard/portalHome.jsp>

Key Measure: Average ACT Scores in County, State, and United States, 2011-2016



*2015-2016 was the first year all 11th grade students were required to take the ACT. In the past, it was optional and typically only taken by four-year college-bound students.

Key Measure: Average ACT Scores in Portage County by District, 2011-2016



DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- The average ACT scores for the 2015-2016 school year for all school districts in Portage County are 20.5. This average is below both the state (21.1) and national averages (20.8).
- In 2016, 66,564 Wisconsin students took the ACT, 25% of whom met all 4 benchmark scores. This is similar to the national average of 26% of students meeting the benchmarks.
- In 2016, Wisconsin had a total of 68,441 advanced placement (AP) exams taken. AP courses are rigorous and help students prepare to succeed in college. They also offer opportunities for college credit and placement.
- Each public school in the county offers AP exams. 528 AP exams were taken by students in Portage County. Of those students, 67.4% scored a 3 or above. (A passing grade is a 3 on a 5 point scale).

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

The ACT is a curriculum and standards-based educational and career planning tool that assesses students' academic readiness for college. Test scores reflect what students have learned throughout high school and provide colleges and universities with excellent information for recruiting, advising, placement, and retention. Beginning in the 2015-2016 school year the ACT exam was required by all students in the State of Wisconsin. This exam is taken in March of students' junior year.

The ACT consists of four subject areas: English composition, math, reading, and science. Each area is scored separately and a composite ACT score is derived from the weighted average of those areas. The maximum score for

each of the key areas and the composite is 36. Benchmark scores have been established for each of the four test areas to predict the probability of success in college coursework. The current benchmarks are: English composition-18; math-22; reading-22; and science-23.

College entrance exams such as the ACT and SAT are one factor in admissions to colleges and universities. Other academic factors include rigor and quality of high school course work, rank in class, grade point average (GPA), and trend in grades. Wisconsin Technical Colleges use the Accuplacer test, although they also accept ACT or SAT scores for admission.

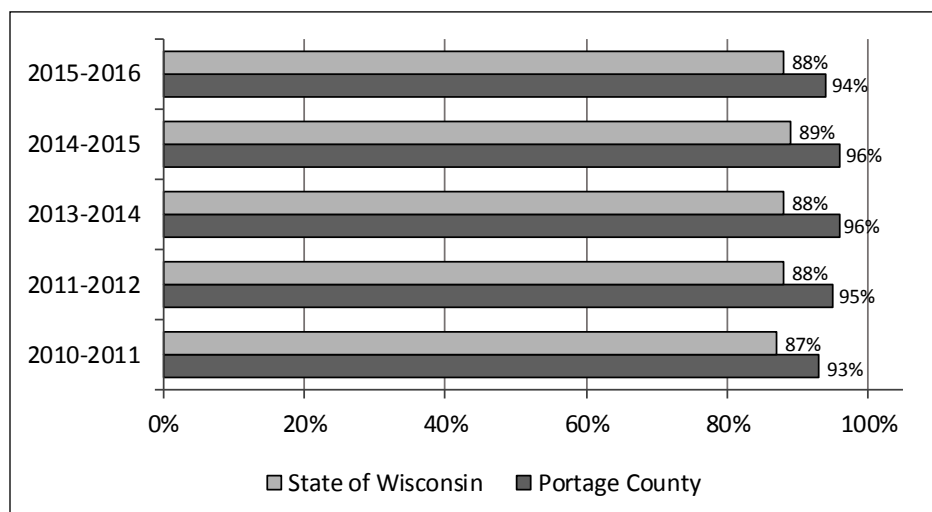
SOURCES

- Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction**
WISEdash Information Portal
<http://wisedash.dpi.wi.gov/Dashboard/portalHome.jsp>
- ACT**
Report: ACT Performance Level Cut Scores for Wisconsin
<https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/assessment/pdf/ACT%20Data%20proficiency%20Summary.pdf>

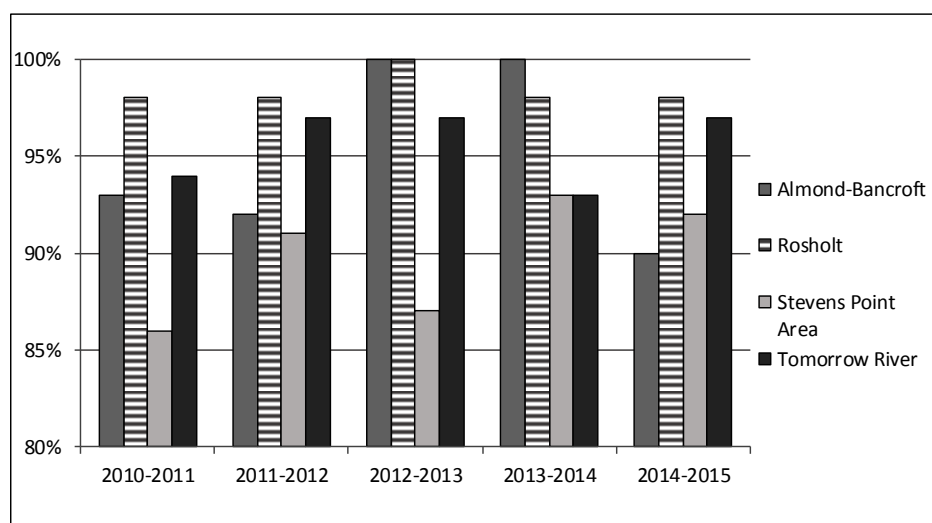
DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- The general trend for schools in Portage County is an increase in the percentage of students graduating with a regular diploma.
- When broken down by race/ethnicity, the State of Wisconsin graduation rates show gaps between sub groups:
American Indian: 78.1%
Asian: 90.7 %
Black: 64.0%
Hispanic: 77.5%
Pacific Islander: 84.5%
White: 92.9%
Two or More Races: 85.5%
- In 2014-2015, the graduation rate of students with disabilities living in Portage County beat the state average by more than 8 percentage points.
- When comparing the high school completion rates of economically disadvantaged students, Portage County (90.3%) is significantly higher than the state average (77.3%).

Key Measure: Percentage of Seniors Graduating with a Regular Diploma in Portage County and the State of Wisconsin, 2010-2015



Key Measure: Percentage of Seniors Graduating with a Regular Diploma in Portage County by School District, 2010-2015



COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

A high school diploma is essential in today's job market. It opens doors to post-secondary education options, financial benefits, and opportunities for jobs that require further education. The graduation rates of Portage County schools are significantly higher than the state average, suggesting that Portage County is a great place for families to settle and also suggests it is a solid place for businesses to take root and have access to well- educated employees.

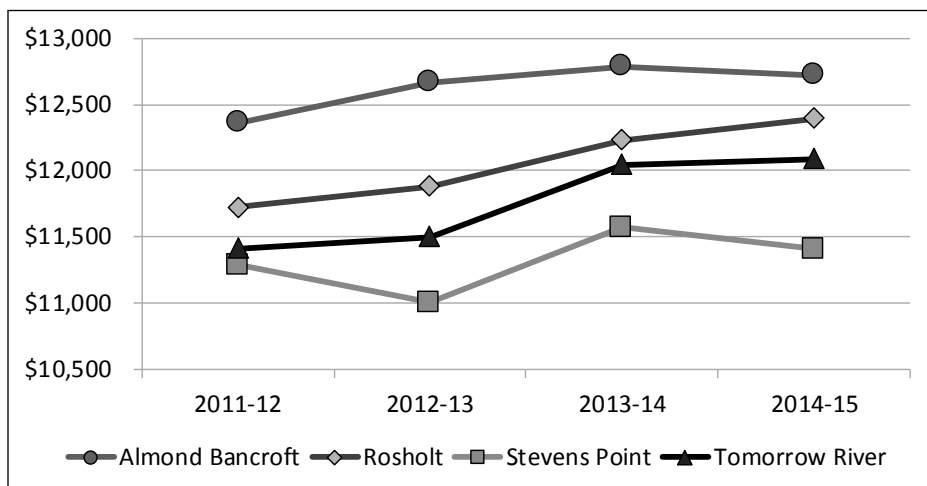
(HSED). Schools are allowed to offer the GED Option 2 program which allows students to earn a regular high school diploma through GED programming. Portage County places a high level of priority on secondary and post-secondary education. The benefits to the county are both societal and economical.

For students who do not earn a diploma, the State of Wisconsin has several pathways for earning a General Equivalency Degree (GED) or a High School Equivalency Degree

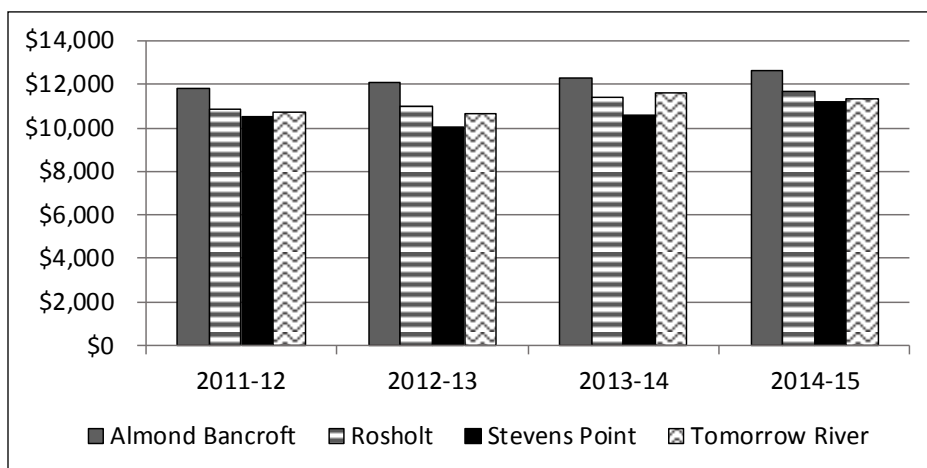
SOURCES

- Wisconsin Information System for Education**
<http://wisedash.dpi.wi.gov/Dashboard/portalHome.jsp>
- National Center for Educational Statistics**
<https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/elsi/>

Key Measure: Total Revenue Per Pupil in Portage County, 2011-2015



Key Measure: Total Education Cost Per Pupil in Portage County, 2011-2015



DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- Funding for schools comes from two main sources: state aid and property taxes.
- Membership is a head count adjusted for full-time-equivalency and is based on where a pupil resides. This number is used for financial purposes. Enrollment is a head count at a point in time based on where a pupil attends school. It is used for performance purposes.
- Average expenditure per district in Portage County in 2014-15 was \$12,154.
- Revenue and cost data, by itself, cannot indicate the extent or quality of a particular district's education program.
- The Total Education Cost per district in Portage County increased in some school districts and decreased in others.
 Wisconsin: 1.3% increase
 Almond-Bancroft: 3.3% increase
 Rosholt: 1.0% decrease
 Stevens Point: 12.4% decrease
 Tomorrow River: 1.3% decrease

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Portage County is dedicated to providing its residents with quality educational opportunities. Total expenditures and education costs have fluctuated dramatically amongst districts.

Total revenue for a school district in Wisconsin is determined from the Wisconsin Pupil Count (PI-1563); this report collects the pupil count as determined on the third Friday in September. The count is converted to a full-time equivalency and used in the calculation of a district's revenue limit and equalization aid.

Education costs per pupil is compiled from multiple variables, including declining/increasing enrollment, inflation in goods and services, and transportation costs. This also includes

heating, cooling, curriculum, supplies, and building maintenance.

School boards then decide how to best allocate the financial resources so teachers can teach and students can learn.

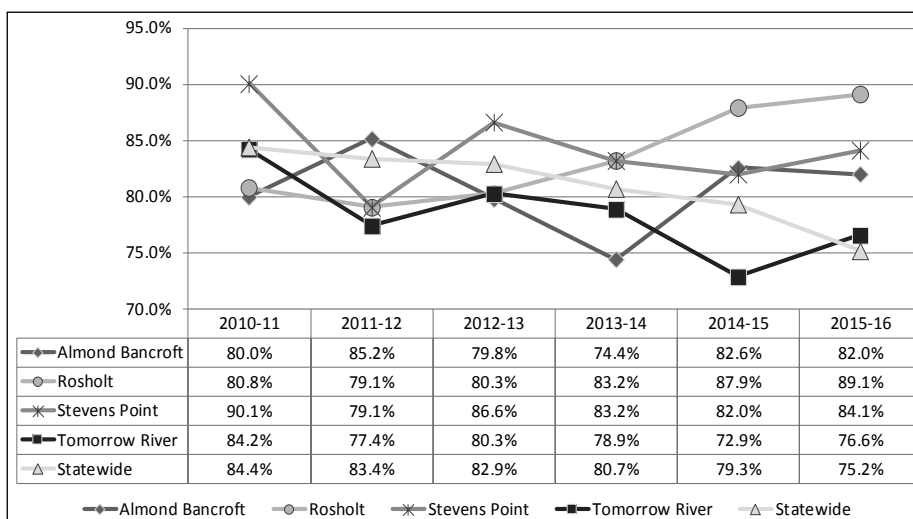
SOURCES

- Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction**
 Report: Wisconsin District and School Performance Reports
<https://apps2.dpi.wi.gov/sdpr/spr.action>
 School Finance Data Warehouse
<https://apps4.dpi.wi.gov/sfsdw/>

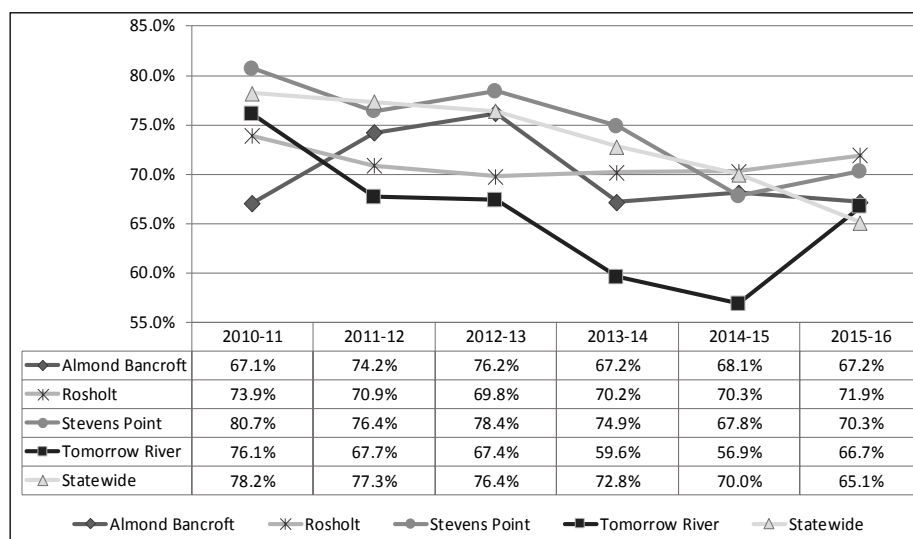
DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- Teachers improve their ability to boost student test scores on average by 40% between their 10th and their 30th year on the job. The findings from studies also show that experience can be beneficial to students in ways other than simply developing their cognitive skills.
- From 2010 to 2016, all districts except Almond-Bancroft saw a decline in the percentage of faculty who have been in their respective districts for 5 years or more: Almond-Bancroft 0.1% increase; Rosholt 2% decrease; Stevens Point 10.4% decrease and Tomorrow River 9.4% decrease.
- Districts also had a change from 2010 to 2016 in the portion of their staff who had 5 years of experience overall: Almond-Bancroft 2% increase; Rosholt 8.3% increase; Stevens Point 6.0% decrease; and Tomorrow River 7.6% decrease.
- Advanced degrees in faculty also positively impact students. The percent of faculty throughout Portage County from 2010 to 2016 who hold a MS or higher varied: Wisconsin .4% decrease; Almond-Bancroft 3.2% decrease; Rosholt 8.5% increase; Stevens Point 6.7% decrease; and Tomorrow River 1.6% increase.

Key Measure: Total Percent of Faculty with 5 years or More of Teaching Experience Overall by District in Portage County and State, 2010-2016



Key Measure: Total Percent of Faculty with 5 years or More of Teaching Experience in and by District in Portage County and State, 2010-2016



COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Portage County is dedicated to providing its residents with quality educational opportunities, and valuing the intricacies of education should always be a priority.

There is more to education than test scores in math and reading. An excellent teacher goes far beyond the test in rigor, substance, and understanding, and life experience, teaching experience, and advanced learning degrees enrich teaching. Besides teaching the actual subject, a teacher offers insight, knowledge, experience, and wisdom, whether directly or indirectly. Experience can bring

humility, good judgment, and an ability to see and hear the larger story.

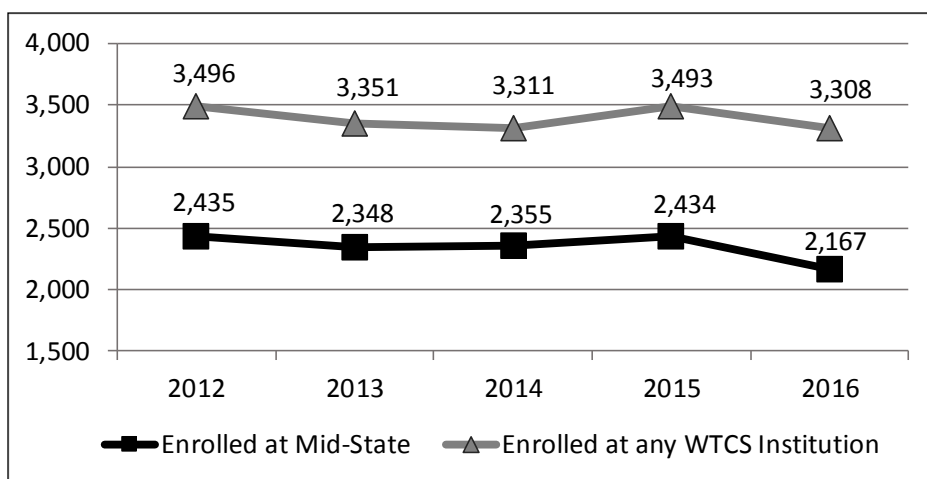
Students notice these things. Life experience and immersion in the subject affect teaching in all sorts of ways, large and small. When a school goes through upheavals every few years with regard to staff, a veteran teacher can help keep the school and its purpose intact.

If high quality teachers do not remain in the schools, the schools face high costs both in the form of teacher turnover and in the form of loss of the productivity that comes with experience.

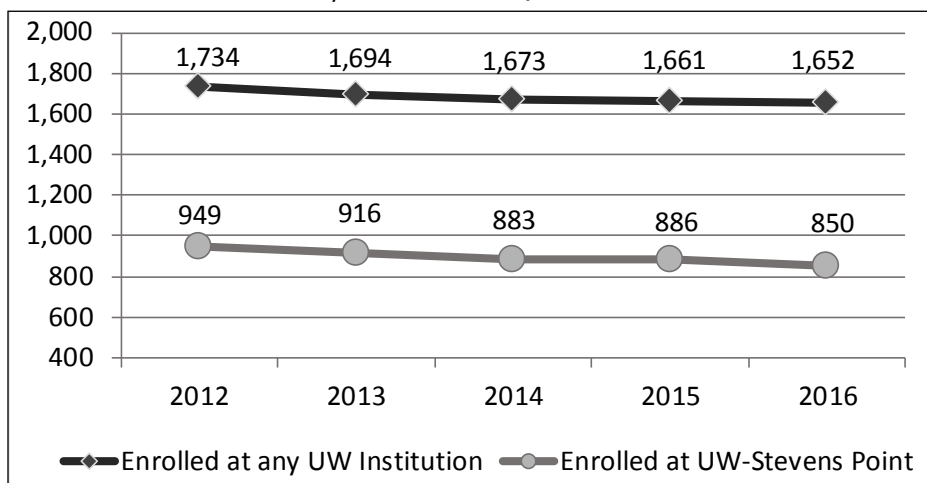
SOURCES

- Wisconsin DPI Report: Wisconsin District and School Performance Reports**
- Journal of Public Economics** Productivity Returns to Experience in the Teacher Labor Market: Methodological Challenges and New Evidence on Long-term Career Improvement (Papay & Kraft, 2015)
- Education Finance and Policy** Returns to Teacher Experience: Student Achievement and Motivation in Middle School (Ladd & Sorenson, 2017)

Key Measure: Portage County Residents Enrolled at Mid-State and Any Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) Institution, 2012-2016



Key Measure: Portage County Residents Enrolled as Undergraduates at UW-Stevens Point and Any UW Institution, 2012-2016



*This data does not include students who may be attending colleges or universities outside the UW-System.

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Portage County is the home of both UW-Stevens Point and Mid-State Technical College. Although the mission of each is distinct, both focus on transforming the lives of our students and communities through access to high-quality education. They also build on strong partnerships by offering an ever-growing array of transferable courses and programs.

The combined student and faculty groups make a positive impact on community service work and civic participation. Additionally, continuing education and outreach provide noncredit courses, workshops and programs for professional development and personal enrichment for residents

of all ages. UW-Stevens Point provides significant experiences in the arts, other cultural enrichment opportunities, intercollegiate athletics, and recreational opportunities.

The LIFE in Portage County Community Survey indicates that residents acknowledge the presence and impact of these postsecondary educational institutions, with 91.5% agreeing that postsecondary education is available. However, the cost of higher education in general remains a concern for Portage County residents, with only 31.2% of LIFE Survey respondents reporting that postsecondary education was affordable.

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- During the 2015-16 academic year, 6,687 individuals enrolled as part-time or full-time students at Mid-State, 2,167 of whom came from Portage County.
- Between 2012 and 2016, Mid-State added 15 new programs to ensure the workforce needs of Central Wisconsin are met.
- In 2016, 71% of students at Mid-State attended part-time.
- UW-Stevens Point enrolled approximately 8,600 students in Fall 2016.
- UWSP has significantly increased its diversity enrollment. More than 14% of enrolled students are from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds and 46% are first generation college students.
- The average ACT score of first-year UWSP students is 23, above the national average of 21.
- Continuing Education noncredit enrollment at UWSP was 19,868 in 2015-16.
- Over half (54%) of Portage County residents attending UW institutions are enrolling at UW-Stevens Point.
- Many postsecondary institutions are experiencing declining enrollments, due in part to an improved economy, increased graduation rates, and fewer high school graduates.

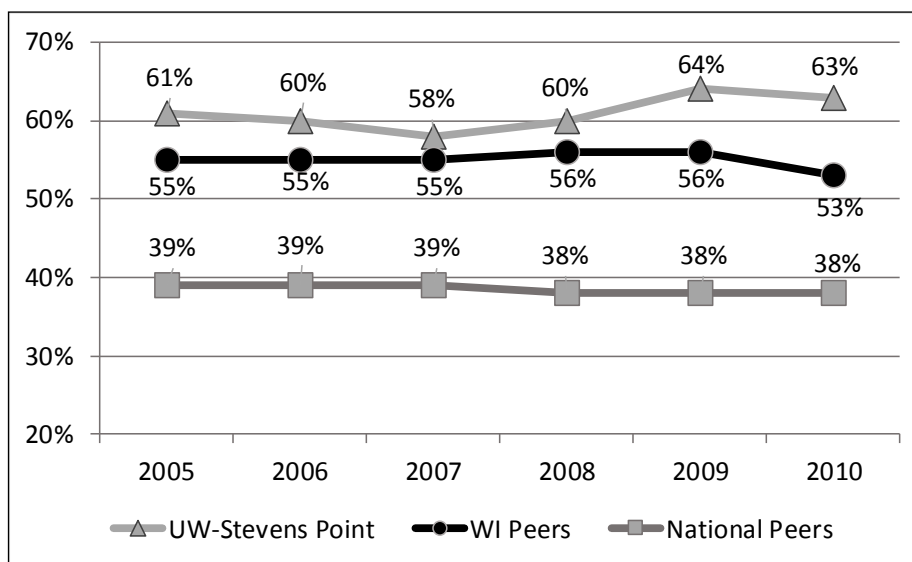
SOURCES

- **Wisconsin Technical College System**
Client Reporting
<http://www.wtcsystem.edu/>
- **University of Wisconsin—Stevens Point**
UW System Office of Policy Analysis and Research
<https://www.wisconsin.edu/offices/office-of-academic-and-student-affairs/office-of-policy-analysis-research/>
UWSP Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness
<http://www.uwsp.edu/oire/Pages/default.aspx>

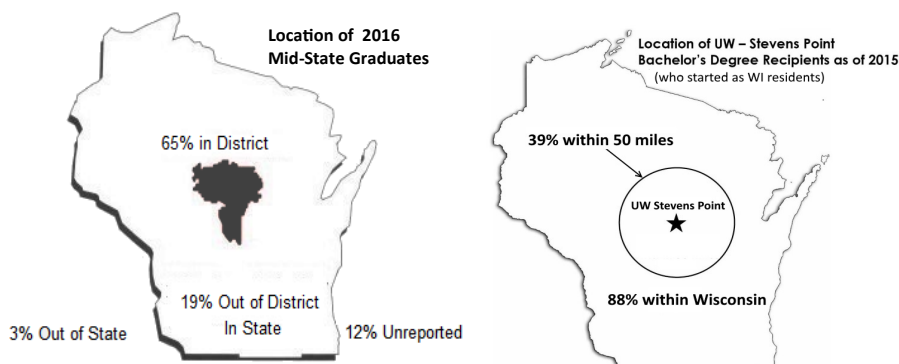
DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- Nearly 1,000 students graduate from Mid-State Technical College every year.
- Of Mid-State graduates, 98% said they are very satisfied or satisfied with the education and training they received.
- UWSP continually boasts higher graduation rates than its state and national peers. They have increased their 4-year graduation rate by 10% over the last decade.
- Both Mid-State and UWSP remain more affordable relative to their state and national peers.
- Graduates of UWSP have lower levels of student debt than the UW system average and about \$5,000 below the national average.
- UWSP graduated more students in the STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) and health science fields than any other UW campus outside the research institutions of Madison and Milwaukee.
- UWSP contributes over \$420 million annually to the community, region and state through jobs and revenue creation.

Key Measure: UWSP Average Six-Year Graduation Percentage Rate Compared to Peer State & National Institutions, 2005-2010



Key Measure: Employment Location of Employed Mid-State Technical College and University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point Graduates



SOURCES

- Wisconsin Technical College System**
Client Reporting
<http://www.wtcsystem.edu/>
- UW System Office of Policy Analysis and Research**
<https://www.wisconsin.edu/offices/office-of-academic-and-student-affairs/office-of-policy-analysis-research/>
- UWSP Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness**
<http://www.uwsp.edu/oire/Pages/default.aspx>
- MSTC Graduate Survey Report**
<http://www.mstc.edu/gradfollowup/>

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Having two postsecondary institutions in Portage County contributes to economic development through jobs and revenue generation, and it creates an appealing environment for business investment and growth. It also provides access to physical and human resource infrastructure that comes with a highly-educated workforce. College graduates are more likely to be engaged in civic activities, earn greater incomes, and demonstrate a commitment to lifelong learning.

Mid-State and UWSP collaborate with local businesses, nonprofits, and schools, and they contribute to the community in many ways. For instance, in the past year, 1,242 UWSP students logged 4,752 hours in volunteer time

with various organizations in the community. Their time has a dollar value of \$109,628.

Mid-State and UWSP both have success with their alumni remaining in the state. Of the Mid-State graduates, 65% are employed in-district and 84% are employed within the state. More than 88% of Wisconsin residents who attended UW-Stevens Point remained in Wisconsin after graduation.

Graduates also are successful in finding employment. Of Mid-State's 2016 graduates, 93% were employed within six months of graduation. UWSP ranked No. 3 nationally in the Top 100 Best Value Universities for 2017 based on increased employability and earnings of graduates.