

The New Economy, and its growing and changing demand for more highly skilled workers, presents new challenges and opportunities for our education system. The foundation for a good education begins in the home.

But our schools also have a tremendous task in helping the region's businesses and manufacturers meet the growing demand for a more qualified workforce. A great deal of attention at the national level is focused on the relationship between education and economic health, and how to best ensure that the U.S. maintains its position relative to other nations. The same concept is true at the community level. Competitive regions must make education a priority and strive to prepare individuals to participate in the economy.



"Historically, the economy did not depend on education as much as it does today. A strong back mattered more than a strong mind. Today, there is an opportunity for schools and businesses to work together to meet the demands of a new workforce. Businesses can communicate needs, standards and expectations to our educators – and schools can work to respond to those needs."

Thomas Wolf
President, The Wolf Organization

EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

After the family, education is the most pervasive component in the socialization of a community's children. Research has shown that education offers the greatest potential for economic advancement, upward mobility and the economic and social vitality of a community.

Achievement Levels

One measure of how well our children are doing in school is their performance on statewide math and reading tests. The average percentage of 11th graders who scored in the 75th percentile for the four years starting with 1995/96 and ending with 1998/99 is shown. The average for the four years is used to smooth out fluctuations that occur from one year to the next.

Being in the 75th percentile means students scored better than 75 percent of all students taking the test statewide.

In York City School District, 9 percent of 11th graders had scores in the 75th percentile on both the math and reading tests. In York Suburban School District, the percentage of students in the 75th percentile was 37 percent for reading and 39 percent for math (Edu. 1 & 2).

High School Dropout Rate

The high school dropout rate is a risk indicator of wasted and lost potential and future societal costs due to under- or unemployment. The dropout rate for

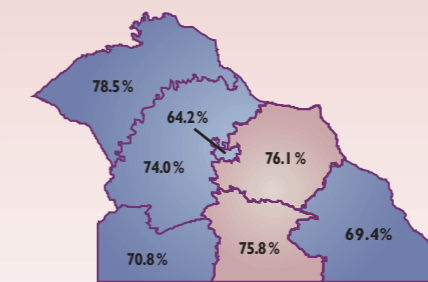
grades 9 through 12 for 1998/99 for the county was 3.3 per 100 students. With the exception of 1996/97 when the rate decreased to 1.9, this rate has been relatively steady since 1995/96. The York City School District had the highest rate at 9 percent in 1998/99. This is a slight increase from 8.7 in 1995/96.

The lowest rate, .5%, was in York Suburban School District (Edu. 3).

Edu.4



PERCENT OF PEOPLE AGE 18 AND OVER WITH A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

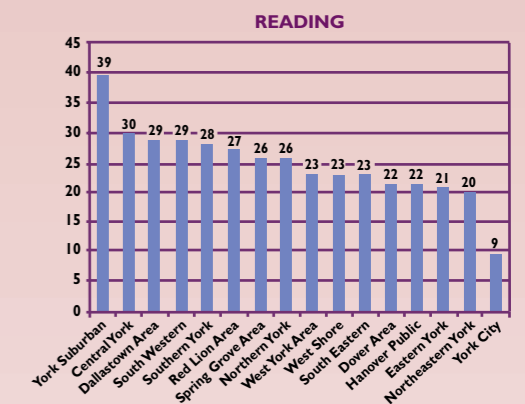


Population with High School Diplomas

In the 1990 Census, 73.5 percent of the York County population 18 years old and over had at least a high school diploma. The percentage with a diploma varies by geographic region. Using the York County Planning Commission's planning regions to group municipalities, York City had the lowest percentage of high school graduates with 64.2 percent (Edu.4).

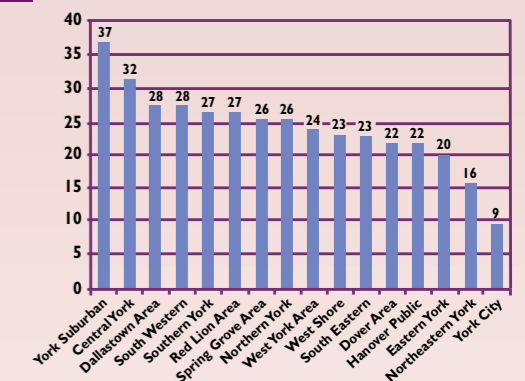
Edu.1

AVERAGE ANNUAL PERCENTAGE OF 11TH GRADERS SCORING IN THE 75TH PERCENTILE ON STATEWIDE TESTS



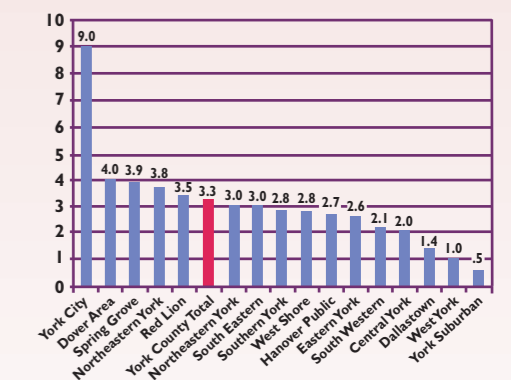
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MATH



Edu.3

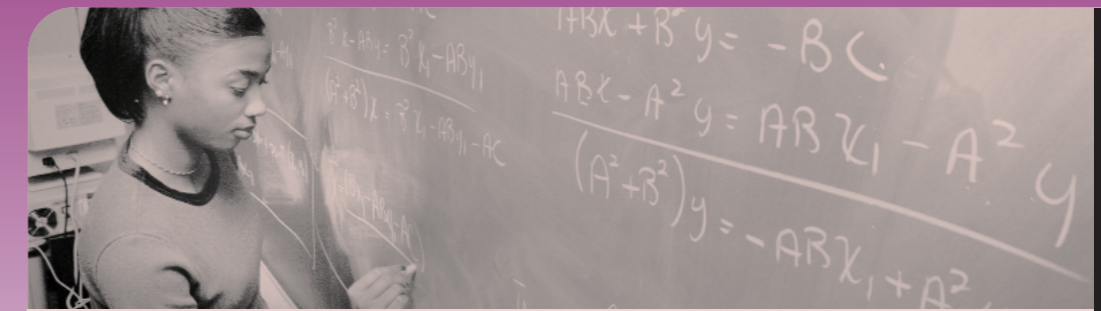
HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUT RATE PER 100 STUDENTS, 1998/99



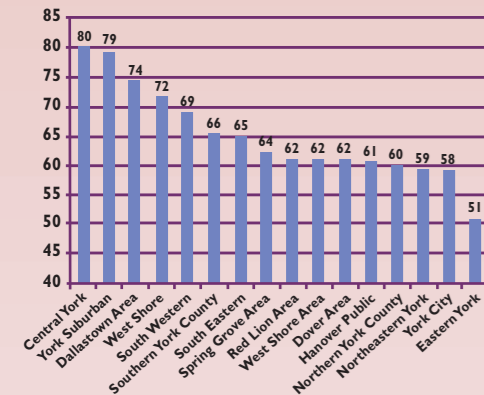


“Knowledge – and the capacity to put knowledge to good use – is now the only dependable source of wealth all over the world. The people, organizations and nations that succeed will be those that make the most of the human desire and capacity for never-ending learning.”

Marc S. Tucker
President, National Center on Education and the Economy



AVERAGE ANNUAL PERCENTAGE OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS PLANNING TO ATTEND POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS



Edu. 5

However, when examining individual municipalities, Seven Valleys Borough had the lowest level at 57 percent. The highest percentage of high school graduates were found in Fairview Township. A total of 82 percent of residents of this township had at least a high school diploma in 1990.

Plans to Further Education

The percentage of high school seniors in each school district planning to attend some form of post secondary school ranges from a low of 51 percent in Eastern York School District to a high of 80 percent in Central York. These percentages are an average for the four school years from 1994/95 to 1997/98. Using available 1996/97 data, the percentage of seniors planning further education

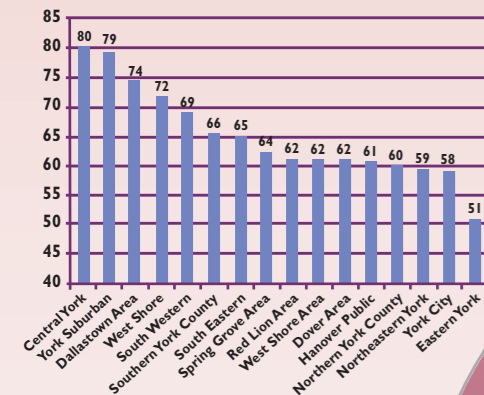
for all of our school districts was 66.6 percent. This is slightly below the 71.8 percent of the 1996/97 high school seniors across the state (Edu. 5).

College and Post-Secondary Ambitions

The demands of today's work environment require employees to be capable of independent, analytical thinking, decision-making and action. Often, these skills are developed through higher levels of education and real-world experience.

Similar to plans for post secondary education, Eastern York School District has the lowest percentage of high school students (51 percent) planning to attend college. Central York School District has the greatest percentage at 80.5 percent (Edu. 6).

AVERAGE ANNUAL PERCENTAGE OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS PLANNING TO ATTEND POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS



Edu. 6

FOCUS ON OUR FUTURE

QUALITY CHILD CARE = SUCCESS IN EARLY LEARNING

Last year, a major, national study was released that followed more than 800 preschool children through second grade and established a link between quality child care and school readiness. The study showed that young children receiving poor quality child care were less prepared for school and tended to have less success in the early phases of school than students who received high quality care in their preschool years.

York County recognizes the importance of Early Childhood Education. The Focus on our Future program is a strong, highly collaborative partnership to enhance the quality of child care for children under the age of six in York County. The program works with parents, legislators, educators and businesses to develop affordable and accessible care for all children. It works to ensure that providers of child care services are treated with dignity and compensated fairly.

Focus on our Future is guided by the vision that early childhood education begins at birth – and a child's earliest experiences affect long-term development for better or worse.

CHILD CARE

Recent research shows that the early years of a child's life are critical. During the first three years of life, 85 percent of the physiological development of the brain takes place. Approximately 60 percent of a child's cognitive skill, the ability to learn, is developed by age four.

Based on labor statistics in York County, 62 percent of the parents or primary caregivers of children under the age of six work outside the home, affecting over 18,000 children. Statewide, primary caregivers working outside the home have tripled since 1960.

Edu. 7

CHILDCARE FACILITIES

238 REGULATED FACILITIES

- 148 home-based (4-children)
- 20 family group homes (7-12 children)
- 70 child care centers



10 ACCREDITED FACILITIES

- 4 home-based
- 6 child care centers

Child Care Facilities

In York County, there are 238 regulated childcare facilities, comprised of 148 home-based programs (4-6 children), 20 family group homes (7-12 children), and 70 child care centers. Approximately 7729 children receive services through these programs. Each of these facilities is licensed and thus meets minimum safety and other standards criteria.

Accreditation is a process whereby facilities meet additional standards and employ developmentally appropriate practices to educate children and prepare them for school. Included in an accredited facility are lower staff-to-child ratios, increased staff training, strong partnerships with families, sound administrative practices, and many other components essential for nurturing our children.

To date there are six childcare centers and four home-based programs that are accredited. An additional 12 centers are working towards accreditation. The 10 accredited programs serve 768 children or approximately 10 percent of the total population in regulated care (Edu. 7).

ACHIEVEMENT...

- There is a large gap between the academic performance in the York City School District compared to most other school districts in the county.
- The percentage of York City students scoring in the top 75th percentile on the statewide math and reading tests is significantly lower than the other school districts. This applies to all grades taking the tests – 5, 8, and 11.

LOWER MATH SCORES...

- Over a four-year time span, from 1995/96 to 1998/99, 12 of the 16 school districts decreased in the percentage of students in the 75th percentile for math.

HIGHER READING SCORES...

- More districts had improvements in reading scores over the same time period – 11 increased and 5 decreased.

HIGH SCHOOL DROP OUTS...

- The drop out rate for the county's high school students has been relatively steady since 1995/96. In 1998/99, the county's drop out rate was 3.3 per 100 students.
- The York City School District had the highest drop out rate at 9 percent. York Suburban was the lowest, with a rate of .5 percent.

FUTURE EDUCATION...

- With the exception of Eastern York School District, all districts had at least 60 percent of their seniors planning to attend post secondary school.

CHILD CARE ACCREDITATION...

- York County presently has six child care centers and four home-based programs that are accredited. An additional 12 centers are working towards accreditation. Accredited facilities have lower staff-to-child ratios, increased staff training and many other components essential for nurturing children.