

COMMUNITY EQUITY PROFILE: EDUCATION

The Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque created Dubuque's first Equity Profile in 2015, and we are updating it to reflect the community today. The Equity Profile provides information on how all people in the community are affected by various systems, such as housing, education and health care. It will inform leaders, community members and policymakers and serve as a guide for creating an action plan that supports Dubuque's growth as an equitable and inclusive community.

This snapshot, along with the final Equity Profile, will take shape based on three types of input: local data; feedback from community members through conversations and surveys; and local professionals working in each focus area.

How can you get involved?

1. Share your perspective at a community conversation.
2. Anonymously take an online survey.
3. Attend a monthly panel discussion hosted in partnership with TH Media.
4. Spread the word. Bring a friend to a conversation or share the survey link.

See upcoming conversation and panel discussion dates and take the latest survey: dbqfoundation.org/equityprofile



Community Foundation
of Greater Dubuque

This snapshot of education, one of seven Equity Profile focus areas, provides a preview of what we have learned so far. The final Equity Profile will be completed in 2023 and will include additional information gathered on this topic and others.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

THE DATA

- ▶ 64% of all Dubuque Community School District students are reading at grade-level. That number drops to 46% for students of low socio-economic status, 32% for Black students, and 11% for Pacific Islanders.
- ▶ Between the 2019 and 2021 school years, the graduation rate at Dubuque public high schools dropped from 88.45% to 81.91%.
- ▶ In 2021, the graduation rate was 69.1% for Hispanic students, 65.9% for students of low socio-economic status, and 56.1% for Black students.

FROM THE SURVEY

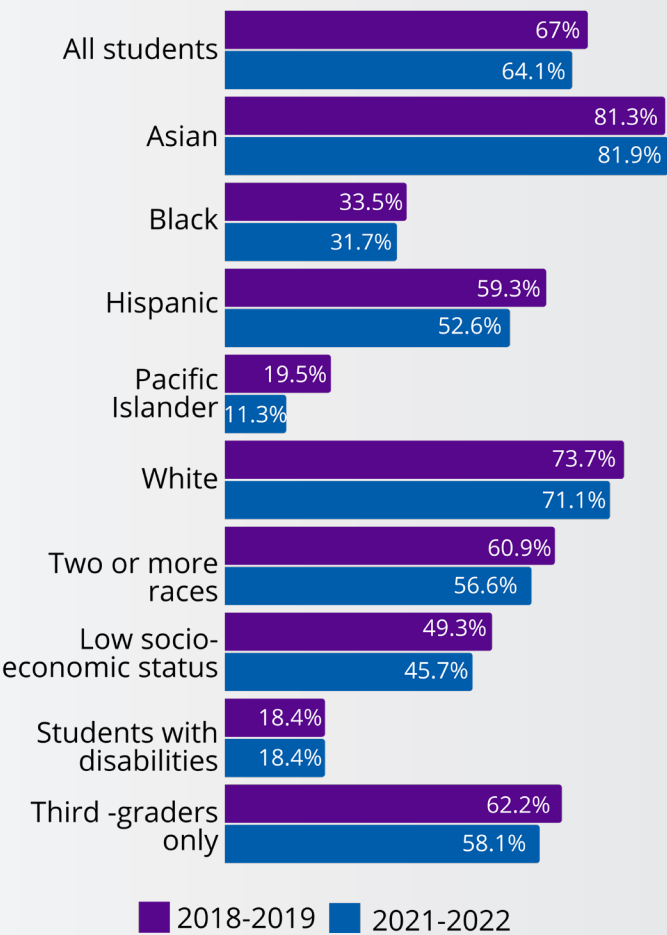
- ▶ 95% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that “Student success in the classroom” was a concern, making it the No. 1 issue in the survey.
- ▶ 60% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement “I am confident our schools are meeting the needs of students,” including 69% of parents and 73% of educators who responded.

WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING

- ▶ “Teachers work extremely hard. If we support teachers and administrators, it trickles down to the quality of education.”
- ▶ From an educator: “I really worry about the kids I send on to high school. Most of my students fail a lot of classes, yet still move on without the skills they need to succeed.”
- ▶ “Our school system is doing the best it can with the limited resources our state legislature gives them.”
- ▶ “Dubuque has great public and private schools, plus caring teachers and administrators.”

How can we **ELIMINATE BARRIERS TO ACHIEVEMENT** so all students can succeed?

Students Proficient in Reading
Dubuque Community School District



Reading proficiency by the end of third grade is a key indicator of high school graduation and future academic achievement.
Source: Iowa Dept. of Public Education

DIVERSITY

THE DATA

- ▶ Nearly one quarter of Dubuque Community School District students are from minority populations.
- ▶ The percentage of students who are Pacific Islanders has nearly doubled since the previous Equity Profile.

FROM THE SURVEY

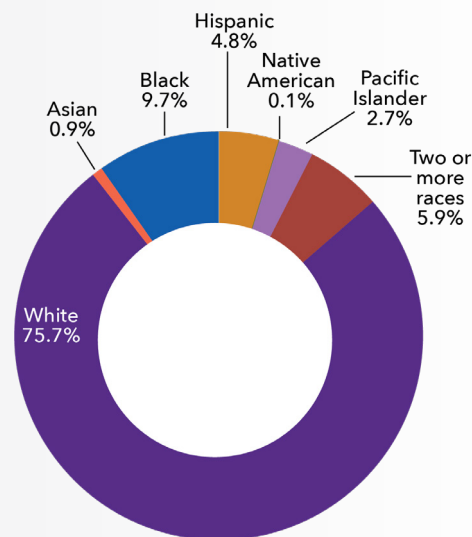
- ▶ Two-thirds of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they had concerns about discrimination in Dubuque's schools.
- ▶ 39% of respondents said they had experienced bias, discrimination or exclusion in Dubuque related to preschool and K-12 education or education-related services. This number jumps to 57% for respondents who identify as "Hispanic, Latinx or Hispanic Origin" and 100% for parents of children with disabilities.

WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING

- ▶ "Great disparities exist between schools — some have to scrap for resources; others can be described as 'the lap of luxury.'"
- ▶ "We need to improve services and opportunities for students with disabilities."
- ▶ "I don't think schools understand the needs of students with diverse backgrounds."

How has the student population **DIVERSIFIED** in terms of race, ethnicity, culture and language, and what does this mean for the **LEARNING EXPERIENCE?**

Student Demographics by Race & Ethnicity
Dubuque Community School District



Includes pre-K students
Source: Iowa Dept. of Public Education, 2021-2022 school year

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

THE DATA

- ▶ The average annual earnings for women with a bachelor's degree (\$41,114) is less than the average annual earnings for men with only a high school diploma (\$42,528).

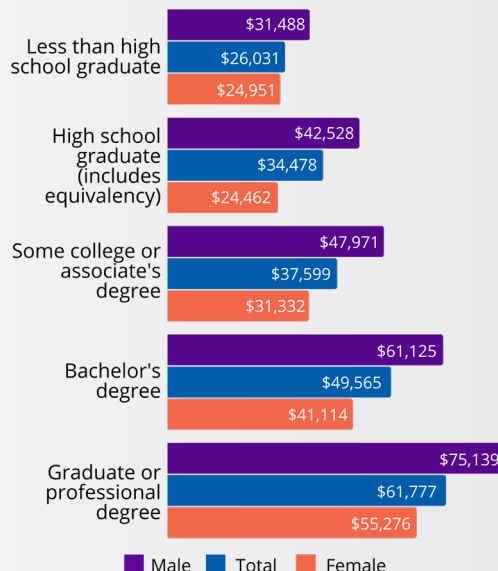
FROM THE SURVEY

- ▶ 76% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that their community offers quality higher education/post-secondary opportunities. However, respondents with advanced degrees were the most likely to disagree or strongly disagree (18%).

WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING

- ▶ "I stayed for college/university here because of the quality education."
- ▶ "Most of the schools are religious-affiliated, and since I'm not Christian, I experienced discrimination during undergraduate years."

Income by Education and Gender
City of Dubuque



Source: American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2020

STUDENT & TEACHER WELL-BEING

THE DATA

- ▶ Between the 2018-19 and the 2021-22 school years, the percentage of students chronically absent more than doubled from 12.5% to 27.4%.
- ▶ During August and September 2022, 419 students visited the new Brain Health Retreat Rooms at Hempstead and Dubuque Senior high schools.

FROM THE SURVEY

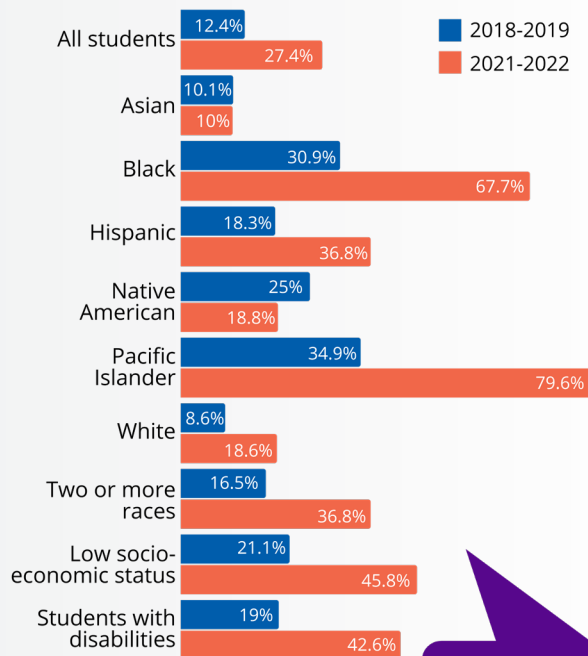
- ▶ 80% of parents agreed or strongly agreed that their children feel a sense of belonging at their schools.
- ▶ 81.1% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they had concerns about bullying in school.

WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING

- ▶ "Mental health cannot be met with ONE counselor for 200+ students."
- ▶ "Academics are strong for my kids' school, but social-emotional learning has been a struggle."
- ▶ "Teachers have multiple roles outside of their job description. They need to be compensated financially for their demanding job."
- ▶ "The concept of a neighborhood school for pre-K and later is important! Ours has buddy groups, student of the month recognition, events, etc."

Chronic Absentee Rate

Dubuque Community School District



Chronic Absenteeism is when a student misses at least 10% of school days.

Source: Iowa Dept. of Public Education

How can we make sure students and teachers **HAVE RESOURCES** that support a positive classroom experience?

LOOKING AHEAD...

Accessible education and resources that support students and teachers are essential to ensuring that children can succeed in school and later in life. There are many organizations that can help. Here are a few that align with topics in this snapshot and can serve as starting points for support.

Dubuque K-12 Schools

- ▶ Dubuque Community School District: dbqschools.org, 563-552-3000
- ▶ Holy Family Catholic Schools: holyfamilydbq.org, 563-582-5456

Post-Secondary Education and Training

- ▶ Dubuque College Access Network: dbqfoundation.org/DCAN, 563-588-2700
- ▶ Iowa College Aid: iowacollegeaid.gov, 515-725-3400

After-School Programs and Support

- ▶ Boys and Girls Club of Greater Dubuque: boysgirlsdubuque.com, 563-585-0599
- ▶ St. Mark Youth Enrichment: stmarkyouthenrichment.org, 563-582-6211
- ▶ Dubuque Dream Center: dubuquedreamcenter.org, 563-845-7591

Hempstead and Dubuque Senior High Schools Brain Health Retreat Rooms

- ▶ Make a gift to support these resources at dbqfoundation.org/butlerbrainhealth

Thank you to our host organizations, facilitators and scribes who have generously donated their time and facilities to assist with the community conversations. Information used to create this snapshot will be used to create the full Community Equity Profile in 2023.

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