



EDUCATION

VISION: ALL STUDENTS SUCCEED ACADEMICALLY AND GRADUATE HIGH SCHOOL, PREPARED FOR HIGHER EDUCATION, CAREER AND COMMUNITY.

GOAL: Increase the graduation rate for Dane County students of color and students from low-income families.

WHY IT MATTERS: Individuals who finish high school are more likely to have the skills required to be successful in postsecondary education, an increasingly complicated job market and society. Adults with higher education levels are more likely to have employment with family-sustaining wages.



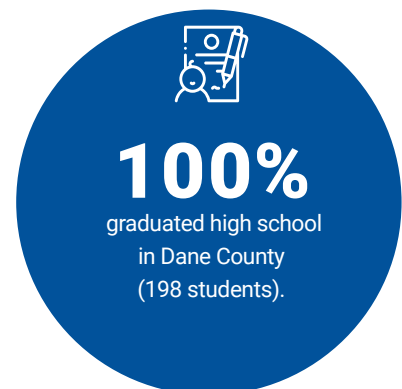
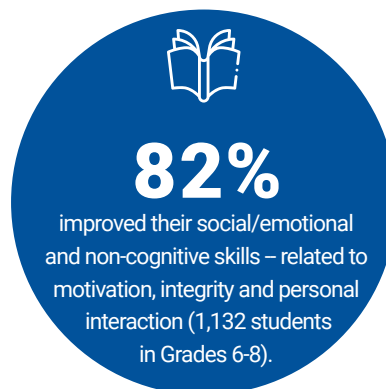
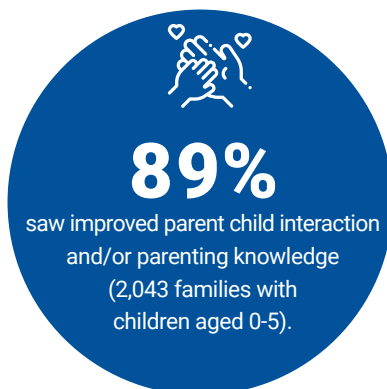
Currently, 93% of Dane County students graduate high school within six years – however, the graduation rate is 80% for Black students, 89% for Hispanic/Latino students and 86% for economically disadvantaged students (2020-2021 School Year, Department of Public Instruction).

United Way of Dane County identifies local issues and invests in solutions designed to increase family well-being. In collaboration with our volunteers and community partners, we leverage resources, track data and advocate for policy to drive systems change.

Here's how we invested in Education in 2021:



THE IMPACT ON LOCAL STUDENTS AND FAMILIES PARTICIPATING IN EDUCATION PROGRAMMING IN 2021:



STRATEGIES:

- Support parents so they may be engaged and informed on how to be their child's first teacher to help their children be developmentally ready for school.
- Ensure young children have age-appropriate skills in five key areas (cognitive, language and speech, social and emotional, fine motor, gross motor).
- Facilitate access to additional learning opportunities across settings to enhance students' mastery of academic content.
- Build students' social/emotional and non-cognitive skills.
- Foster connection, belonging, leadership and academic success with youth (disconnected or at risk of disconnecting).
- Increase family engagement as a key component to improve student success.



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SCHOOLS OF HOPE: CREATING ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITY IN AREA SCHOOLS

The Schools of Hope Project (SOH) began in 1995 as a civic journalism project by the Wisconsin State Journal and WISC-TV that studied how active community engagement could address critical local area needs. Led by United Way and in partnership with the Madison and Sun Prairie School Districts, the project focuses on increasing reading achievement for K-5 students. United Way has received grant support since 1998 from the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) and local donors to provide in-school tutoring for area elementary schools. Schools of Hope provides:

- **Trained one-on-one literacy tutors** for elementary students identified by teaching staff
- **Ongoing tutor training** provided by school district professionals
- **Tutoring sessions** guided by materials provided by the classroom teacher
- **Support** for school-based family literacy programs

LEARNING BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Many of our partners focus on helping kids and families build a foundation for educational success through literacy, access and tutoring. Some programs inspire kids to embrace learning outside of the classroom, too. Last summer, the Goodman Community Center offered a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) program to local middle-schoolers through their Girls Inc. of Greater Madison Initiative. Zhu, an attendee of this program, had never before heard of STEM. But, thanks to this inspiring program, she was able to learn through fun workshops – such as making ice cream to learn about phase changes and freezing/melting points. Before long, she was hooked! Now, Zhu looks forward to more science classes and hopes to one day pursue a career in STEM.



UNITED WAY OF DANE COUNTY INVESTS IN EDUCATION PROGRAMS AT THESE AGENCIES

100 Black Men of Madison
Access Community Health Centers
ARC Community Services
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Dane County
Boys & Girls Club of Dane County
Briarpatch Youth Services
Centro Hispano
Charles Hamilton Houston Institute
Children's Hospital of WI
Community Coordinated Child Care (4-C)
Families & Schools Together (FAST)
Goodman Community Center
JustDane
Literacy Network
Lussier Community Education Center
Operation Fresh Start
RISE Wisconsin
Simpson Street Free Press
The Hmong Institute
The Rainbow Project
Trained To Grow
Urban League of Greater Madison
Vera Court Neighborhood Center

United Way donors support 850 nonprofits.
To see a complete list of agency partners, visit
www.unitedwaydanecounty.org/100years

PUBLIC POLICY PRIORITIES

- Expand access to affordable, high-quality early care and education for under-resourced families and early learning opportunities that meet children's developmental, cultural and linguistic needs for all children in Dane County.
- Provide effective professional development and equitable compensation to early childhood educators and help the early care and education industry respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.
- Close educational achievement and opportunity gaps, particularly for children of color.
- Increase access to affordable, high-quality post-secondary education and training programs to ensure all Dane County students are prepared for college, career and community life.
- Expand broadband services to increase children's access to educational opportunities and bridge the digital equity divide in learning.

