

## Mobilizing Communities

# DASHBOARD: COMMUNITY EDUCATION INDICATORS

Education, Income Stability, and Health are the building blocks for opportunity – both individually and collectively. Education is essential to getting and keeping a job with wages and benefits that can sustain a family. An income that can cover today and save for tomorrow builds a family’s solid foundation. Good health helps children stay on track at school and makes adults more productive at work. Remove any of these building blocks and the other two topple. Build them all up and you have a cornerstone for individual and community prosperity.

## EDUCATION

Every year, more than one million students drop out of high school nationwide. As a result, fewer young Americans are likely to earn a diploma than their parents, a distinction not shared by any other industrialized country. That’s why United Way of Washington County is working to ensure that local kids are:



- » Starting school with the skills they need to succeed
- » Reading proficiently by fourth grade
- » Transitioning successfully to and from middle school
- » Graduating high school on time

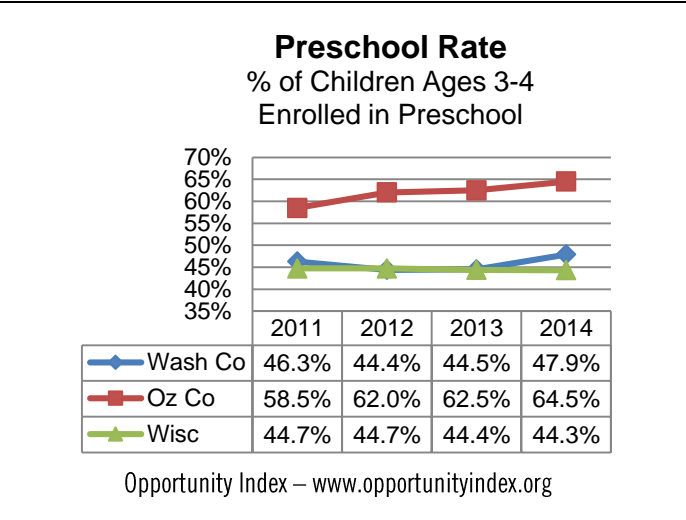
In 2014, United Way of Washington County adopted the following county-wide education indicators as metrics to track progress towards these goals.

**United Way’s Community Education Goal**  
 Local youth achieve academic goals and demonstrate the life skills necessary to become positive, contributing members of the community.

**School Readiness**  
 Goal: Children ages 0-5 enter school prepared to succeed.

**Why this is important:** Language and literacy skill development doesn’t start at school. Children who start school with poor language and communication skills often have a hard time catching up. A child who starts behind falls even farther behind, long before school. Disparities in child development are evident by nine months.

Further Reading: *Education Research Overview*, United Way Worldwide



## Early Grade Reading

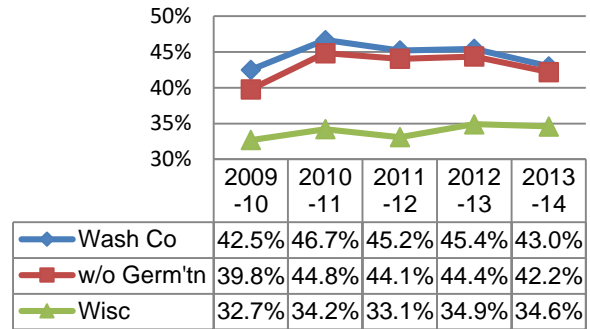
Goal: Children enter 4<sup>th</sup> grade with reading and comprehension skills that provide a strong foundation for learning.

**Why this is important:** Children generally learn to read by third grade. By fourth grade, they should be reading to learn. Students who don't read well have difficulty keeping up. This can lead to bad grades, disengaging from school, and dropping out.

**Further Reading:** *Charting a Course for Change: Advancing Education, Income and Health Through Collective Impact*, United Way.org, May 2012

## 3rd Grade Reading Proficiency

Public Schools only



Wisconsin Information System for Education  
www.wisedash.dpi.wi.gov

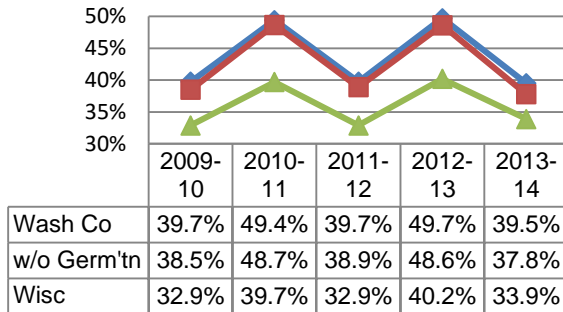
## Middle School Success

Goal: Students successfully transition through middle school, gaining the knowledge, skills, and abilities they need for high school success.

**Why this is important:** As poor readers enter middle school, they are more likely to fail courses and eventually drop out of school. Research shows that poor transitions into and out of the middle grades are strongly linked to failing to finish high school.

## 8th Grade Reading Proficiency

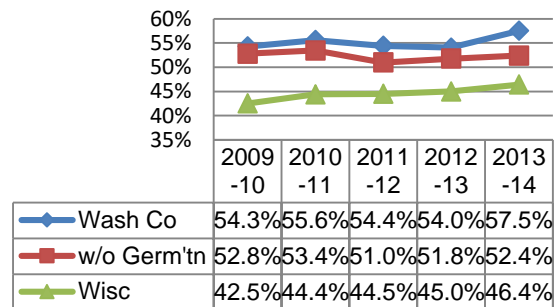
Public Schools only



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## 8th Grade Math Proficiency

Public Schools only



Wisconsin Information System for Education – www.wisedash.dpi.wi.gov

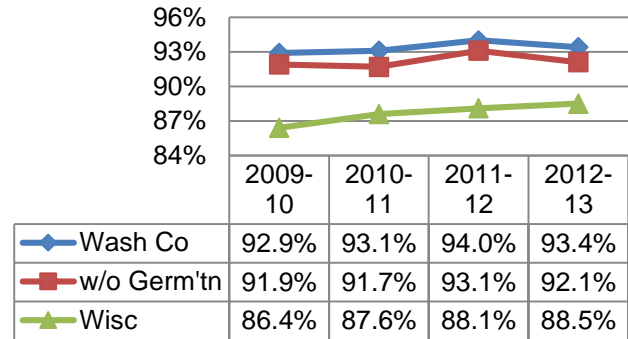
## High School Graduation

Goal: Students graduate high school on time prepared for college, work and life.

**Why this is important:** High school dropouts are more likely to be unemployed, to earn low wages and to end up on welfare or in prison. They are also less likely to pay taxes or vote. One study estimates that U.S. taxpayers would save \$45 billion annually if the number of school dropouts were cut in half.

**Further Reading:** *Charting a Course for Change: Advancing Education, Income and Health Through Collective Impact*, United Way.org, May 2012

## Graduation Rate for 4-Year Cohort



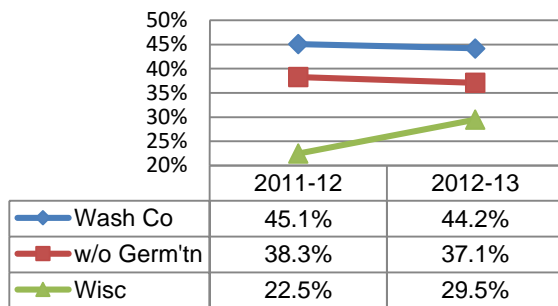
Wisconsin Information System for Education – [www.wisedash.dpi.wi.gov](http://www.wisedash.dpi.wi.gov)

## Youth Life Skills

Goal: Youth develop life skills including work ethic, self-respect and respect for others, confidence, decision-making, leadership, and teamwork.

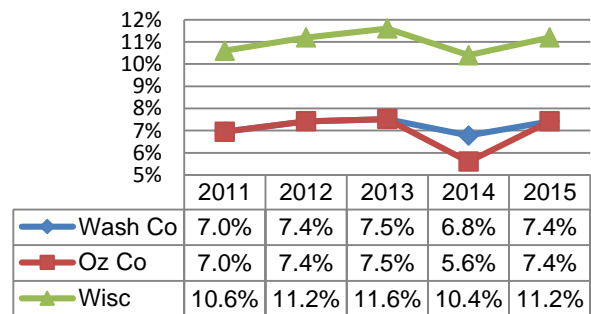
**Why this is important:** Afterschool programs using evidence-based approaches consistently produce multiple benefits for youth, including improvements in children's personal, social, and academic skills. Youth who participate in service learning are more engaged in school and less likely to engage in risky behaviors.

### Voluntary School-Sponsored Community Activities



[www.wisedash.dpi.wi.gov](http://www.wisedash.dpi.wi.gov)

### Youth Ages 16-24 Not in School and Not Working Full-time



[www.opportunityindex.org](http://www.opportunityindex.org)

Learn more about United Way of Washington County's work at [UnitedWayOfWashingtonCounty.org](http://UnitedWayOfWashingtonCounty.org)