



**Maxwell School** OF SYRACUSE  
UNIVERSITY

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# Opportunity in Syracuse: An analysis of city-suburb disparities

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**PRESENTED FOR**

**ALLIANCE FOR COMMUNITIES TRANSFORMING SYRACUSE**

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**JUNE 11, 2010**

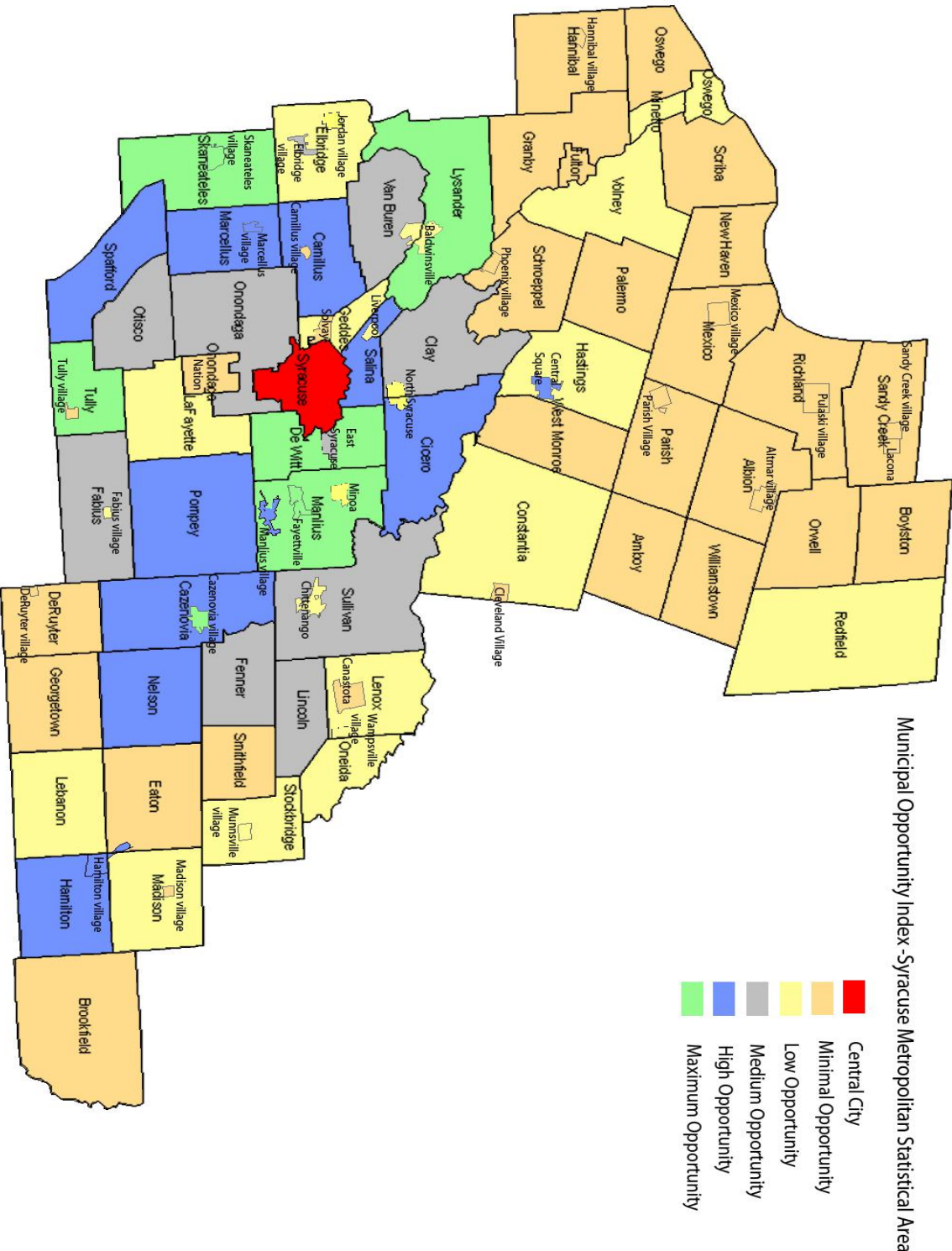
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# Map of Municipal Opportunity



# Syracuse MSA Municipal Opportunity Index

SYRACUSE (MSA) MUNICIPAL OPPORTUNITY INDEX															
OPPORTUNITY COLOR CODE:	MAXIMUM OPPORTUNITY		HIGH OPPORTUNITY		MEDIUM OPPORTUNITY		LOW OPPORTUNITY		MINIMAL OPPORTUNITY		CENTRAL CITY				
municipality	municipality type	median family income in 2000	ranking median family income in 2000	family poverty rate in 2000	ranking family poverty rate in 2000	low-income students (FARM) in 2009	ranking low-income students (FARM) in 2009	property tax base per capita in 2008	ranking property tax base per capita in 2008	jobs per capita 2008	ranking jobs per capita 2008	job growth 2002-2008	ranking job growth	composite ranking	estimated population July 1, 2008
Syracuse (MSA)															
		\$48,754		7.41		30.71		\$48,795		0.35		26.91			721,296
Stenantes	Town	\$69,023	92	1.8	93	4	95	\$167,084	83	0.81	80	7.6	63	14.12	7,506
DuVitt	Town	\$60,325	79	4.7	68	13	81	\$97,909	90	1.85	92	15.9	68	13.48	24,424
Shenantes	Village	\$85,403	95	0.9	95	4	95	\$145,610	92	0.54	69	-11.2	32	12.77	2,539
Tully	Town	\$63,266	85	3.9	75	18	71	\$92,703	87	0.48	66	30.8	73	15.57	2,692
Peperewille	Village	\$66,201	89	1.1	94	6	92	\$60,701	77	0.38	58	-0.8	55	12.45	4,110
Cazenovia	Village	\$61,750	84	2.8	85	8	89	\$68,960	82	0.70	85	-10.5	39	12.45	2,913
Manlius	Town	\$70,655	93	2	92	6	92	\$70,126	84	0.29	46	0.5	56	12.35	32,194
Lysander	Town	\$67,539	90	2.5	89	13	81	\$69,969	83	0.31	51	-2.3	53	11.92	21,113
Cicero	Town	\$57,531	75	3.9	75	22	66	\$66,032	79	0.40	60	43.3	77	11.90	30,059
Cazenovia	Town	\$73,590	94	2.4	90	8	89	\$103,900	91	0.35	54	-11.5	31	11.90	6,973
Merrells	Town	\$58,188	76	2.5	89	15	85	\$56,887	75	0.22	40	1.3	66	11.62	6,276
Poupy	Town	\$64,442	87	2.5	89	10	85	\$88,387	88	0.07	11	70.2	84	11.57	6,704
Central Square	Village	\$45,441	43	8.6	37	30	59	\$71,114	85	0.63	82	37.4	74	11.33	1,277
Hanilton	Village	\$68,964	91	3.1	83	17	73	\$31,866	19	0.83	88	28.7	72	11.30	3,784
Hanilton	Town	\$58,395	77	3.1	83	12	83	\$56,272	73	0.23	41	6.1	60	11.23	23,801
Canastota	Village	\$65,080	88	3.2	81	6	92	\$49,986	65	0.57	74	-22.3	21	11.22	4,579
Hanilton	Town	\$50,565	65	5.1	62	17	73	\$43,445	51	0.55	71	28.5	71	10.98	5,992
Nelson	Town	\$55,458	70	2.8	85	8	89	\$80,084	86	0.18	33	-7	41	10.88	1,669
Spartford	Town	\$61,250	82	4.7	68	4	95	\$187,154	94	0.03	4	2.2	58	10.87	1,677
Saltus	Town	\$49,394	58	5.3	61	23	62	\$45,691	57	0.69	84	7.1	62	10.82	32,498
Merrells	Village	\$57,143	71	6.4	50	10	85	\$38,586	39	0.56	73	7.7	64	10.72	1,814
Nanburen	Town	\$50,724	66	4.9	65	13	81	\$42,774	48	0.26	44	19.7	70	10.28	12,531
Fabius	Town	\$59,167	78	4.9	65	15	76	\$52,856	70	0.22	40	-2.9	50	10.25	1,959
Fennert	Town	\$46,447	47	4.4	69	8	89	\$44,854	56	0.10	18	12.3	86	10.23	1,645
Ontonoga	Town	\$57,250	73	2.6	86	25	60	\$55,530	72	0.30	48	-4.6	46	10.18	21,589
Ontonoga	Town	\$57,493	74	4.1	81	13	81	\$52,116	68	0.37	55	-14.4	28	10.15	58,558
Clay	Town	\$49,318	57	3.2	71	18	71	\$56,487	74	0.07	11	41.7	76	10.03	2,508
Lincoln	Town	\$50,000	60	3.6	78	33	47	\$49,948	64	0.16	28	1333.3	93	10.03	1,856
East Syracuse	Village	\$34,293	4	14.3	6	22	66	\$52,331	69	1.21	90	7.1	62	9.73	2,972
East Syracuse	Town	\$50,282	62	4.8	66	21	66	\$48,118	61	0.18	33	7.1	57	9.43	15,068
Sullivan	Village	\$49,539	59	3.8	76	32	50	\$41,576	45	0.21	38	55.6	81	9.38	10,959
Baldwinville	Village	\$51,549	67	5.6	58	13	81	\$37,158	32	0.43	63	-5.8	42	9.35	7,247
Liverpool	Village	\$45,179	40	10.8	17	23	21	\$41,199	44	0.56	73	18.3	69	9.22	2,343
Cittennango	Village	\$50,179	61	4.1	71	21	68	\$38,439	38	0.33	53	-3.3	49	9.13	4,882
Fabius	Village	\$55,417	69	4	72	15	76	\$31,917	20	0.66	83	-18.5	24	9.12	334
Ondea	Cities	\$45,242	41	8.8	35	34	42	\$43,702	52	0.61	80	-1.8	54	8.87	10,723
Lafayette	Town	\$60,523	80	3.3	79	33	47	\$63,611	78	0.17	30	-14.9	27	8.72	4,935
Hearings	Town	\$46,722	50	6.2	53	30	59	\$44,721	55	0.24	43	-3.3	49	8.56	9,005
Elbridge	Town	\$48,085	55	6	57	32	50	\$45,850	58	0.27	45	3.9	47	8.53	6,006
Stockbridge	Town	\$41,250	28	9.9	24	37	30	\$34,343	27	0.63	82	15.4	88	8.43	2,024
Minto	Town	\$61,094	81	3.6	78	30	59	\$50,179	31	0.08	13	-12.4	30	8.28	1,651
North Syracuse	Village	\$47,853	54	7	44	22	66	\$37,012	31	0.83	88	-9.74	11	8.17	6,570
Madison	Town	\$41,630	31	9.6	31	43	24	\$58,599	76	0.19	85	50.9	78	8.13	2,743
Valley	Town	\$46,408	46	6.3	75	43	24	\$41,746	46	0.15	25	130.8	87	8.08	6,014
Jordan	Village	\$40,234	22	6.3	51	32	50	\$29,528	10	0.38	58	85.1	85	7.98	1,307
Osawango	Cities	\$39,038	16	9.7	26	35	40	\$48,807	62	0.15	25	281.5	91	7.97	1,335
Lebanon	Town	\$41,613	30	1.3	9	30	59	\$42,899	49	0.59	75	-9.6	36	7.95	17,351
Westville	Village	\$42,679	34	5.4	59	37	54	\$38,057	37	1.41	91	-24.8	26	7.88	550
Geddes	Town	\$51,609	68	6.7	47	30	30	\$44,438	54	0.50	67	-15.7	26	7.82	7,882
Constantia	Town	\$45,373	42	6.2	53	30	59	\$49,642	63	0.10	18	-10.1	34	7.37	5,073
Bedford	Town	\$39,792	18	6.9	46	61	7	\$93,294	83	0.07	11	64.3	82	7.37	667
Bedford	Village	\$57,200	72	2.1	91	22	22	\$36,461	29	0.11	21	-20.8	22	7.32	3,281
Minna	Town	\$36,230	8	9.7	26	37	30	\$26,404	8	0.33	89	38	75	7.30	412
Munsville	Village	\$46,458	48	6.5	49	33	47	\$46,117	59	0.38	58	-5.5	6	7.28	8,663

## SYRACUSE (MSA) MUNICIPAL OPPORTUNITY INDEX

OPPORTUNITY COLOR CODE:	MAXIMUM OPPORTUNITY	HIGH OPPORTUNITY	MEDIUM OPPORTUNITY	LOW OPPORTUNITY	MINIMAL OPPORTUNITY	CENTRAL CITY									
municipality	municipality type	median family income in 2000	ranking family income in 2000	family poverty rate in 2000	ranking family poverty rate in 2000	low-income students (FARM) in 2009	ranking low-income students (FARM) in 2009	property tax base per capita in 2008	ranking property tax base per capita in 2008	jobs per capita 2008	ranking jobs per capita 2008	job growth 2002-2008	ranking job growth	composite ranking	estimated population July 1, 2008
Orondaga Nation	Town	\$63,674	86	8.6	37	33	47	na	na	na	53	na	na	723	1397
Oswego	Town	\$61,548	83	4.9	65	30	59	\$29,661	11	0.33	53	-266	18	717	8196
Richland	Town	\$43,564	36	9.6	31	39	26	\$44,091	53	0.31	51	-28	51	715	5661
New Haven	Town	\$44,900	39	7.2	43	35	40	\$40,468	42	0.04	5	696	83	703	2894
Madison	Village	\$37,708	11	9.9	24	43	24	\$32,397	21	0.61	80	142	67	698	301
Boynton	Town	\$44,792	38	6	57	61	7	\$68,328	81	0.08	13	2.6	59	692	517
Mexico	Town	\$46,852	51	9	34	35	40	\$41,858	47	0.31	51	-162	25	685	5304
Williamstown	Town	\$34,688	5	13.5	8	48	19	\$40,526	43	0.24	43	485.2	92	678	1314
De Ruyter	Town	\$41,417	29	7.3	42	36	35	\$66,993	80	0.21	38	-344	13	672	1497
West Monroe	Town	\$47,019	52	9.6	31	30	59	\$43,087	50	0.05	8	-7.4	39	658	4491
Pulaski	Village	\$40,089	21	12.1	13	39	26	\$36,459	28	0.61	80	-5.3	45	653	2282
Sandy Creek	Village	\$47,188	53	12.8	11	61	7	\$24,604	3	0.44	64	188.3	44	650	748
Georgetown	Town	\$38,804	15	7.5	41	36	35	\$37,795	35	0.03	4	188.9	90	640	895
Schroppel	Town	\$44,304	37	10.6	19	30	59	\$39,690	40	0.11	21	-5.4	44	640	7198
Tully	Village	\$45,766	44	7.7	39	36	35	\$40,373	41	0.17	30	-5.5	43	635	8423
Cannilus	Village	\$46,563	49	6	57	18	71	\$30,274	13	0.30	48	-58.2	4	630	867
Mexico	Village	\$48,125	56	6.9	46	12	83	\$33,412	24	0.11	21	-54.3	7	620	1175
Solvay	Village	\$41,696	32	9.4	33	35	40	\$33,764	26	0.54	69	-57.4	5	575	1531
Hannibal	Village	\$40,057	20	10.6	19	37	30	\$31,654	18	0.41	61	-9.4	37	552	6417
Canastota	Village	\$50,556	64	6.6	48	49	10	\$30,024	12	0.55	71	-35.7	12	537	513
Phoenix	Village	\$43,049	35	10	22	33	47	\$32,591	22	0.40	60	-70.3	1	528	4308
Fulton	Cities	\$36,442	9	9.6	31	36	35	\$24,811	5	0.47	65	-12.7	29	513	2138
Albion	Town	\$38,655	14	15.1	5	43	24	\$24,797	4	0.60	76	-7.9	38	505	11219
Granby	Town	\$40,000	19	10.4	21	48	19	\$31,262	17	0.08	14	539	80	500	2032
Palermo	Town	\$41,127	27	11.1	16	43	24	\$31,061	16	0.05	8	51.2	79	495	6823
Sandy Creek	Town	\$46,190	45	5.3	61	35	40	\$37,601	34	0.03	4	-28	16	490	3697
Parish	Town	\$41,089	25	11.9	14	61	7	\$55,409	71	0.16	28	-24.8	20	485	3784
Cleveland	Village	\$40,893	23	8.5	38	48	19	\$30,926	15	0.19	35	-7	41	468	484
Smithfield	Village	\$42,250	33	9.6	31	30	59	\$26,583	9	0.12	62	-27.3	17	463	731
Syracuse	Cities	\$38,333	12	12.6	12	48	59	\$37,941	36	0.42	22	-66.9	3	440	1218
De Ruyter	Village	\$33,333	1	21.7	1	69	1	\$36,364	7	0.75	86	-9.6	36	437	138,068
Eaton	Town	\$33,333	2	7.6	40	36	35	\$33,554	25	na	18	na	na	405	505
Ambry	Town	\$39,643	17	6	57	48	19	\$32,909	23	0.10	23	-20.3	23	400	4834
Brookfield	Town	\$34,702	6	9.5	32	48	19	\$47,634	60	0.03	4	-34.3	14	387	1317
Hannibal	Town	\$35,915	7	10.4	21	52	8	\$37,173	33	0.05	8	-2.7	52	383	2331
Parish	Town	\$38,355	13	13.6	7	49	10	\$24,966	6	0.14	23	9.9	65	380	4825
Hannibal	Town	\$40,926	24	11.2	15	48	19	\$36,978	30	0.18	33	-44.7	10	372	2649
Morrisville	Village	\$50,556	63	12.8	11	48	19	\$11,750	1	0.16	28	-29	15	333	2172
Orwell	Town	\$37,500	10	16.6	3	61	7	\$50,691	66	0.03	4	-45.2	9	308	1290
Laona	Village	\$41,111	26	19.3	2	61	7	\$30,549	14	0.21	38	-69.4	2	250	559
Albion	Village	\$33,750	3	15.9	4	48	19	\$20,686	2	0.10	18	-49.3	8	188	348

## Introduction

Alliance of Communities Transforming Syracuse (ACTS) requested the development of a Municipal Opportunity Index (MOI) for the Syracuse Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) to quantify and map the disparity of opportunity across the region.

Many post-industrial cities in the Northeastern United States show a similar trend of lower-opportunity in the inner city, as a function of lower income, higher rates of poverty and crime, reductions in the property tax base, and fewer jobs, as compared with inner- and outer-ring suburbs. Findings in Syracuse mirror this trend. Of the 95 municipalities within the tri-county Syracuse MSA (Madison, Onondaga, and Oswego counties), the city of Syracuse ranks as the lowest in median family income, 7<sup>th</sup> lowest in property tax base per capita, highest in rates of students eligible for free and reduced-lunch, and highest in crime rates (for those municipalities that report crime data). The composite opportunity index for the City of Syracuse is 85<sup>th</sup> out of the 95 municipalities. The majority of the maximum and high opportunity areas are found in the neighboring suburbs. Violent crime rates are much lower in the adjacent suburbs, further suggesting the degree of separation between Syracuse and the higher opportunity suburbs.

Based on the findings of the Syracuse MOI, this report analyzes how population decline, economic shift, discriminatory housing policies, infrastructure development, and deteriorating schools have produced the disparities that exist between Syracuse and its suburbs today. Next, the report gives detailed analysis of disparities in three key areas: *Local Economy*, *Housing*, and *Education*. Each area of analysis includes related recommendations that are summarized below.

### Recommendations

NY Reorganization and Empowerment Act; Communities of Common Interest  
Actively Support Self-Employment  
Promote the Benefits of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)  
Increase job training efforts and form employer connections  
Support the Use of Low-Income Housing Vouchers  
Increase Low-Income Housing through Inclusionary Zoning  
Redevelop Public Housing into Mixed-Income Developments  
Support “Say Yes to Education” in Syracuse  
Urban/Suburban School District Consolidation  
Support Early Childhood development programs  
Promote Charter School Innovations



## Historical Perspective

*“The reasons why cities like Syracuse imploded are complex.”*

This provocative quote by Gerald Grant from his 2009 book *Hope and Despair in the American City* highlights the difficulties in examining opportunity disparity for residents of various socioeconomic and racial backgrounds in the Syracuse Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). Looking at the history of the problems that have led to current conditions, we find that there are a few factors—such as regional population decline—over which local policymakers have had little control. Meanwhile, other factors affecting regional opportunity have been the result of specific policies and decisions implemented in the Syracuse MSA.

It is well known that the population of the City of Syracuse has been declining for decades. Since 1950, the City of Syracuse has witnessed a 37.4% decrease in population with no sign of abating (Figure 1). According to the *Syracuse Comprehensive Plan 2025*, the declining population in the city is largely explained by out-migration to surrounding suburbs. The data has reflected this: In 1996, 40% of people living in metropolitan areas nationally lived in their respective central cities (Downs 1996), while approximately 23.4% of people in the Syracuse MSA lived in the central city. In 2008, that percentage dropped further to 21.4%. However, larger regional population decline is also present. In 1993, the population of the entire Syracuse MSA—composed of Onondaga, Oswego and Madison counties—also began a steady and continuing decline (Figure 2). And for Onondaga County individually, a population decline was also recorded from a peak of 474,992 in 1993 to 452,546 in 2008, a 4.7% decrease (Lexis 2010). This results in the population loss of Onondaga County making up 88.5% of the population loss of the entire MSA.

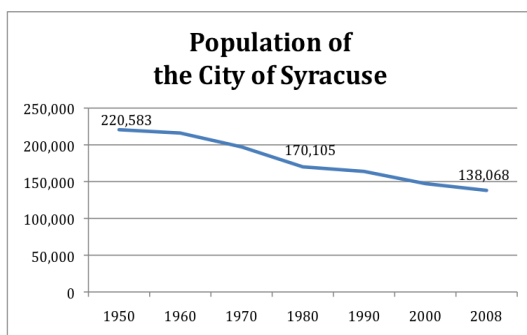


Figure 1: Population of Syracuse (U.S. Census)

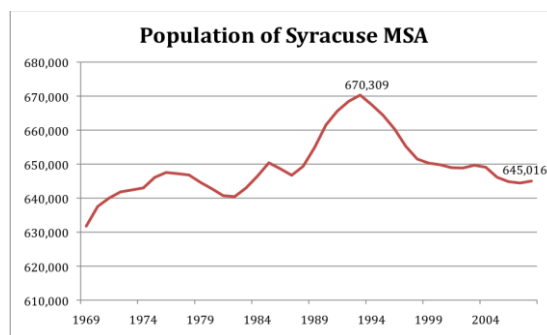


Figure 2: Population of Syracuse MSA (BEA)

Another regional trend largely beyond the control of local policymakers is economic decline. A Brookings Institute report ranked cities on two indices of economic health: “City Economic Condition” and “Residential Economic Well-Being.” Seven New York State cities were ranked in the bottom 65 cities out of 302 selected cities, and all seven are in what is considered upstate New York (Vey 2007). This proportion of weak cities within a state is second only to Pennsylvania. Of these seven cities, Syracuse and three other cities were not included on the list in 1990.



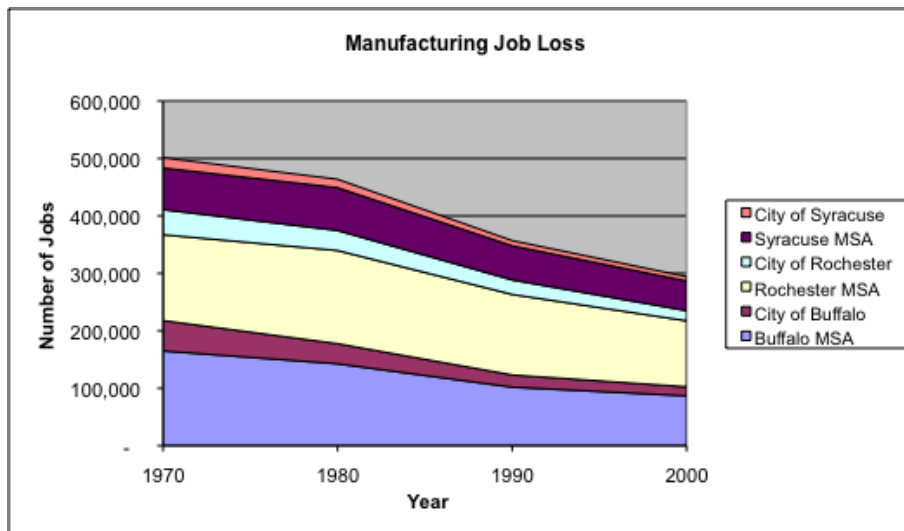


Figure 3: Manufacturing Job Loss

As with other upstate New York metropolitan area economies, this trend is partly the result of a gradual shift from manufacturing (Figure 3) to service and information industries (Vey 2007). A shift to a more information and knowledge-based economy has left these cities struggling. Along with an economic shift, there has been a spatial shift of industries from cities to suburbs, and from the Northeastern states to Southeastern and Southwestern states. This ‘double whammy’ rocked the economies of what were once the nation’s industrial powerhouses, leaving them still struggling to adapt to a very new, competitive landscape” (Vey 2007). These older industrial cities have been unable to replace the lost manufacturing jobs with jobs in growth industries.

Other factors are inherently under the control of local decision-makers and have historically contributed to a disparity in opportunity in the Syracuse MSA. Suburban migration in the region was in part promoted by Federal Housing Authority (FHA) and Veterans Administration (VA) federal mortgage policies, which favored neighborhoods deemed less risky over poorer, inner city neighborhoods—a practice known as redlining. Color-coded maps were used to determine the degree of loan risk for long-term mortgages, the lowest grade neighborhoods being outlined in red (Figure 4). “The older, more densely populated, and more ethnically or racially mixed a neighborhood was, the lower its rating” (Grant 2009, 15). Mortgages were much more likely to be denied in redlined neighborhoods than in other areas. Although the Fair Housing Act of 1968 prohibits redlining, racial discrimination in the housing market continued. “Current discrimination shuts off housing opportunities and induces many minority households to cut short their housing searches, that is, to settle for less desirable housing” (Yinger 1995, 106). In fact, most of the redlined districts still remain high in the percentage of poor households (Figure 5).

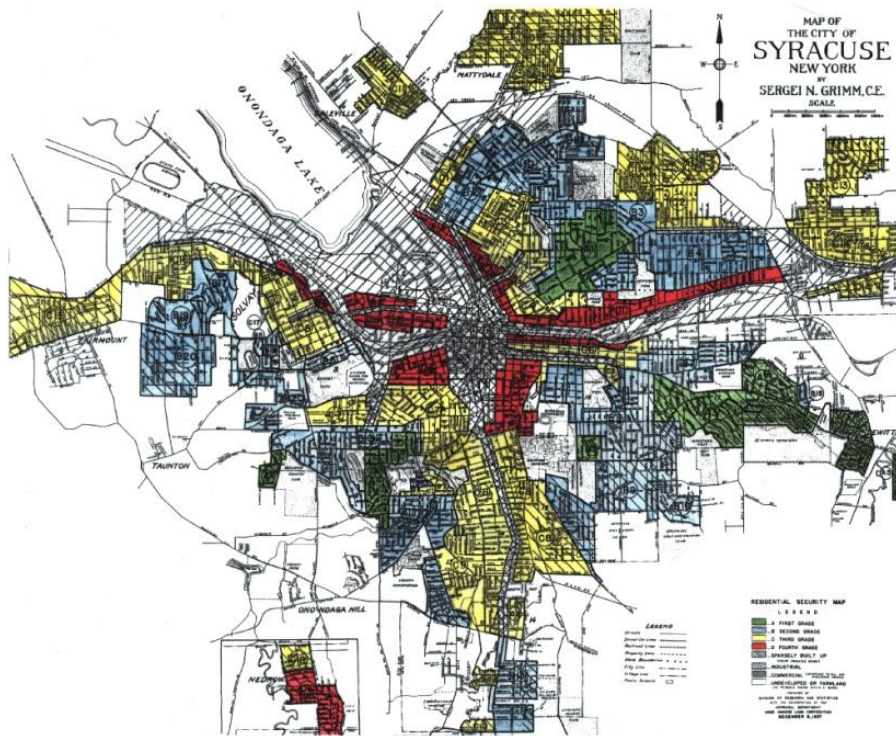


Figure 4: Redlining Map of the City of Syracuse in 1937 (PACNY)

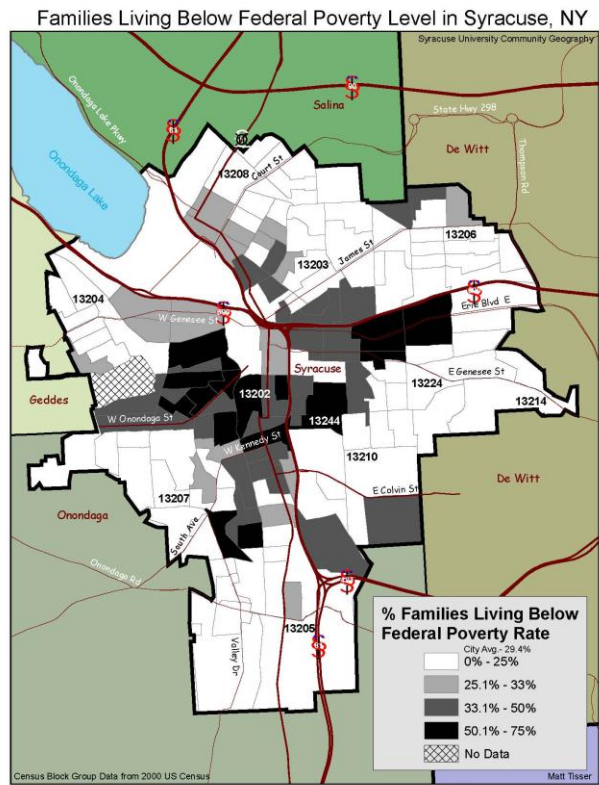


Figure 5: Syracuse Families Living Below the Federal Poverty Level in 2010 (Tisser 2010)

In the City of Syracuse, blacks were concentrated in the Fifteenth Ward (the area between Syracuse’s downtown and the campus of Syracuse University) by discriminatory housing practices until the 1960s. The ward was segregated but it was a neighborhood that offered jobs, informal mentoring, and community support. In the 1960s, federal urban renewal programs that assisted in construction of interstate highways devastated the Fifteenth Ward.

New public housing was built in the City of Syracuse to relocate those who had previously lived in the Fifteenth Ward. This public housing resulted in the concentration of low income blacks in particular areas of the city and was ultimately abandoned by residents fearful of crime and drug-related violence. Furthermore, some suburbs of Syracuse prohibited the use of Section 8 vouchers within their jurisdiction unless the holder of the voucher had been a resident of the suburb for at least a year. This meant, in effect, that “poor or working-class residents of some suburbs could qualify for Section 8 vouchers, but black residents of the city could not use the same federal subsidy to cross the city line in search of better housing” (Grant 2009, 26). It was not until the late 1990s that the Supreme Court struck down these discriminatory practices.

Since the late 1970s, the deteriorating fiscal health of the City of Syracuse has paled a growing role in the exodus of city residents to the suburbs, exacerbating opportunity disparities (Vey 2007, 24). The transfer of population and wealth from the City of Syracuse to the outlying suburbs has resulted in a decline in the proportionate value of taxable property in Syracuse. In 1970, the City of Syracuse contained almost 39% of all taxable fixed property in Onondaga County. But this has since declined by 56.4% to only 17% of all taxable fixed property in 2010 (Figure 6).

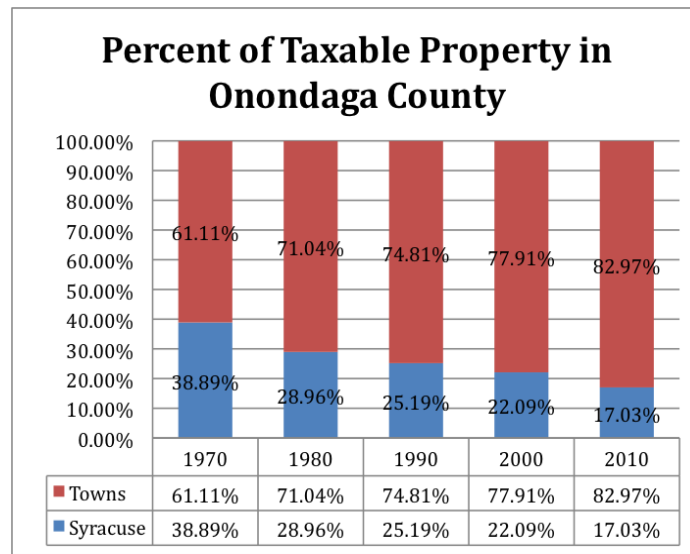


Figure 6: Percent of Taxable Property (Onondaga County)

This fact is corroborated by the data in Figures 1 and 2. The overall Syracuse MSA population growth remained relatively flat from 1970-2004, while the population of the City of Syracuse declined by 30 percent. This indicates that development in the suburbs has increased (also indicated by the growth in taxable property). As a result, disparities in home values have also increased, which has hurt the City’s ability to raise revenue through property taxes.

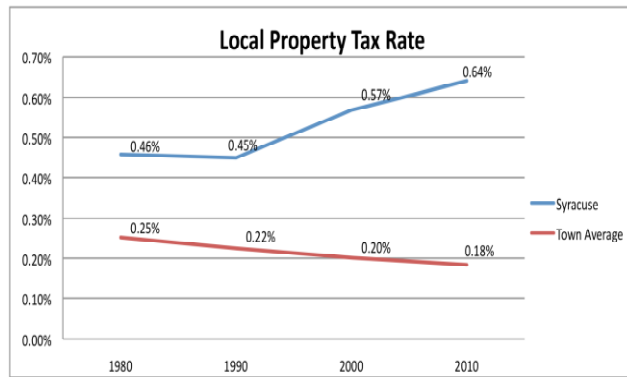


Figure 7: Local Property Tax Rate (Onondaga County)

To maintain municipal services in the face of a decreasing tax base, the City of Syracuse has been forced to raise its local property tax rates by 42% (to 0.64%) since 1990. The resulting tax rates are 3.6 times higher than the Onondaga County suburb average in 2010 (Figure 7).

The City of Syracuse also has a high percentage of renters due in part to a large student population and the inability of many permanent residents to afford a mortgage (Figure 8). As property tax rates have increased in the face of shrinking tax bases, landlords have become less inclined to invest in their rental properties, a contributory factor to the deterioration of housing quality in the City.

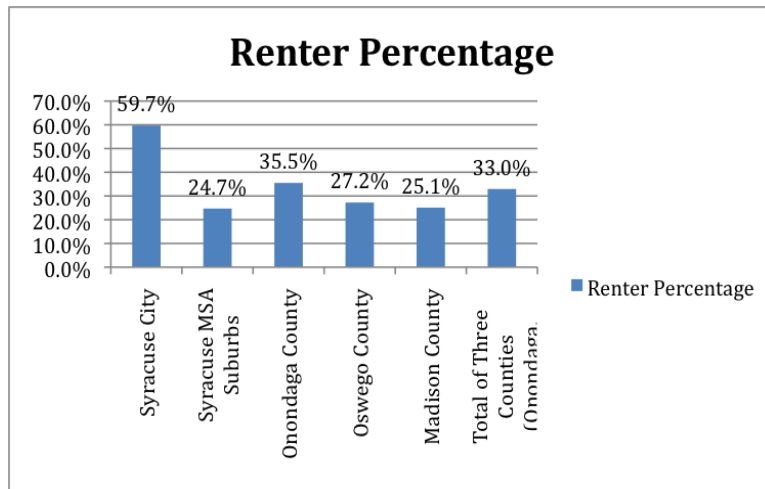


Figure 8: Renter Percentage (HUD 2000)

The state of urban infrastructure and amenities have followed suit. Due to the city's higher poverty rates (25.59% below the poverty line compared to 8.07% in the suburbs, Table 1) and the shrinking tax base, more urban public expenditure is directed to public health, safety and welfare and less toward other amenities (such as infrastructure improvements, public parks, etc). The City's fiscal crisis has contributed to deteriorating urban living conditions, prompting wealthier families to move from city to suburb.

<b>Demographics in the Syracuse MSA (2000) by Area</b>			
Geographic Breakdown	MSA	City	Suburbs
Population	732,177	175,900	556,217
Percent White	87.97	66.47	94.77
Percent Black	6.97	23.48	1.74
Percent Hispanic	2.06	4.87	1.18
Percent Asian	1.72	3.23	1.24
Median Income	39,750	25,726	43,943
Percent Under Poverty Line	12.13	25.59	8.07
Percent College Educated	24.08	21.47	24.83
Percent Professional	33.94	31.55	34.59
Percent Unemployed	6.16	8.78	5.43
Percent Homeowners	67.58	42.2	76.08
Percent Housing Vacant	9.88	12.29	9.04

**Table 1: Demographics in the Syracuse MSA (U.S. Census)**

The children of families remaining in the City lack advantaged peers and role models who are important to encouraging educational attainment. More advantaged peers matter for two reasons. First, they have positive spillover effects on less advantaged students and, second, schools that serve advantaged students often have better resources because of the greater political power of wealthier families (Harris 2008). “The first consistent finding from the [three] peer effect studies is that having more advantaged peers results in better outcomes for minority students” (Harris 2008, 555). These same studies also found that advantaged peers benefit all students.

In the history of Syracuse and many other cities, cause and consequence have become virtually indistinguishable—housing policy has contributed to the concentration of poverty. Concentrated poverty has bred economic disinvestment, and crime, which has induced the flight of wealthier residents to the suburbs and the deterioration of the City public school system. Coming full circle, the deterioration of the City public school system has generated even more concentrated poverty, disinvestment, and flight from the City to the suburbs.

## **Local Economy**

### ***Fiscal Concerns in the Syracuse MSA***

Since 2004, the City of Syracuse’s financial statements have noted that population decline is among the major economic factors affecting the City’s financial position, along with a stagnant property tax base and modest local revenue growth. The basis for this concern is that, while population within the city decreased by 6.8% from 2000 to 2008 from 147,306 to 138,068, the property levy increased by 21.4% from \$66 million to \$80.1 million. All the while, the city has seen the downtown’s share of property tax revenue shrink from 25% in 1980, to less than 10% today, which shifts the burden of taxes from commercial districts to residential neighborhoods (Then and Now 2010).

The Syracuse financial statements also indicate that in 2009 the portion of property tax levy devoted to the Syracuse City School District (SCSD), a component unit of the city, reached \$56.2 million or 70.2% of the total property tax levy. Since 1997, total SCSD expenditures have



increased 67.4% (\$146.8 million) while student enrollment has decreased by 14.3%. As a result, expenditures per student have skyrocketed from \$9,158 in 1997 to \$17,901 in 2007, a 95.5% increase. Because the overwhelming percentage of the Syracuse City tax levy is devoted to education, it is worthwhile to examine how SCSD compares to other school districts in the county. SCSD is above average in expenditures per student while below average in performance (see Education). And, while SCSD pays more of the county share of expenditures on education relative to its student population than do other districts, the ratio of SCSD's local share of revenue to total expenditures is the least of any district in the county (Table 2). While the additional subsidies from state and federal sources help keep SCSD's share of revenue very low, it also makes SCSD far more dependent on those subsidies. Interruptions in federal or state subsidies could drastically affect SCSD's ability to provide many of the basic services expected from a public educational system.

<b>Onondaga School Districts</b>	<b>Local Revenue 2006/7 (Thousands)</b>	<b>Total Expenditures 2006/7 (Thousands)</b>	<b>Ratio of Local Revenue to Total Expenses</b>	<b>Expenditures per Student 2006/7</b>	<b>% Students in Onondaga</b>	<b>% Expenditures for Education in Onondaga</b>
Baldwinsville	\$45,000	\$83,717	53.75%	\$13,957	8.10%	7.20%
East Syracuse-Minoa	\$36,000	\$64,185	56.09%	\$18,412	4.70%	5.50%
Fabius-Pompey	\$6,270	\$14,766	42.46%	\$16,895	1.20%	1.30%
Fayetteville-Manlius	\$44,784	\$62,024	72.20%	\$13,091	6.40%	5.30%
Jamesville-Dewitt	\$29,000	\$41,197	70.39%	\$14,374	3.90%	3.50%
Jordan-Elbridge	\$8,999	\$22,101	40.72%	\$13,476	2.20%	1.90%
La Fayette	\$4,906	\$19,970	24.57%	\$21,897	1.20%	1.70%
Liverpool	\$59,111	\$131,932	44.80%	\$16,564	10.80%	11.40%
Lyncourt	\$3,360	\$7,834	42.89%	\$23,957	0.40%	0.70%
Marcellus	\$11,998	\$36,816	32.59%	\$17,683	2.80%	3.20%
North Syracuse	\$65,000	\$132,188	49.17%	\$13,165	13.60%	11.40%
Onondaga	\$6,872	\$15,805	43.48%	\$15,965	1.30%	1.40%
Skaneateles	\$17,719	\$24,748	71.60%	\$14,207	2.40%	2.10%
Solvay	\$21,211	\$25,688	82.57%	\$15,173	2.30%	2.20%
<b>Syracuse City</b>	<b>\$66,342</b>	<b>\$364,492</b>	<b>18.20%</b>	<b>\$17,901</b>	<b>27.50%</b>	<b>31.40%</b>
Tully	\$7,158	\$15,665	45.69%	\$13,109	1.60%	1.30%
West Genesee	\$30,524	\$70,937	43.03%	\$13,716	7.00%	6.10%
Westhill	\$13,937	\$27,006	51.61%	\$13,463	2.70%	2.30%

**Table 2: Education Expenditures and Enrollment in Onondaga County (Lexis/Nexis)**

### **Jobs and Job Growth**

As a whole, the Syracuse MSA witnessed a 3% decline in total jobs from 2002 to 2008. The City of Syracuse fared worse with a nearly 10% decline in total jobs over the same period (U.S. Census).

Job loss across age and earnings groups is not uniform. Jobs held by those aged 54 and younger declined over the six-year period. This was especially true for jobs held by those aged 31-54: For the City of Syracuse, this decline was 18% and for the MSA it was 10%. Declines were also found for jobs held by those aged 30 and younger with 3% and 1% drops for the City and MSA, respectively. This trend was reversed for those aged 55 and older with 19% and 24% increases in the City and Metropolitan areas respectively (U.S. Census).

From 2002 to 2008, both the City of Syracuse and the MSA also saw the disappearance of lower-wage jobs (\$3,333 per month or less) while the number of higher-wage jobs increased. For those earning \$1,250 and less per month, there were 15-16% declines for the City and the MSA. For those earning between \$1,250 and \$3,333 per month, declines were 23% and 14% for the City and MSA, respectively. In the same 6-year period, high-wage jobs (those earning over \$3,333 per month) increased 14% in the City of Syracuse and 27% in the MSA as a whole (U.S. Census).

The disappearance of jobs held by younger people and lower-wage jobs, especially in the City of Syracuse, mirrors 2008 unemployment data showing higher rates of unemployment among those aged 16-29 in both City of Syracuse and the MSA than among older groups. For the City of Syracuse, unemployment among those aged 16-29 stood at over 11% contrasted with 4% and 6% unemployment among those aged 30-54 and 55 and older, respectively. Unemployment in the MSA as a whole also stood at over 11% for the youngest age category, while older groups showed unemployment rates ranging from 3-4% (U.S. Census, American Community Survey).

The relative presence of low-wage versus high-wage jobs is also related to family poverty rates. For the 24 municipalities closest to the City of Syracuse as well as the City itself, as the proportion of low-wage to high-wage jobs increases, the family poverty rate decreases (a moderately negative correlation of  $-.397$ ). This proportion shows that the Syracuse suburbs (all of which have lower family poverty rates than the City itself) have higher numbers of low-wage jobs relative to high-wage jobs. In combination with commuter patterns in the Syracuse MSA (see Economic Inter-linkages), these data suggest the presence of a spatial mismatch of skills and jobs between the City and suburbs that are associated with concentrated poverty in the City and suburbs.

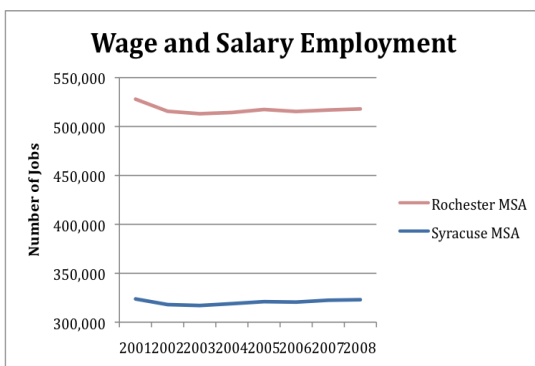


Figure 9: Wage and Salary Employment (BEA)

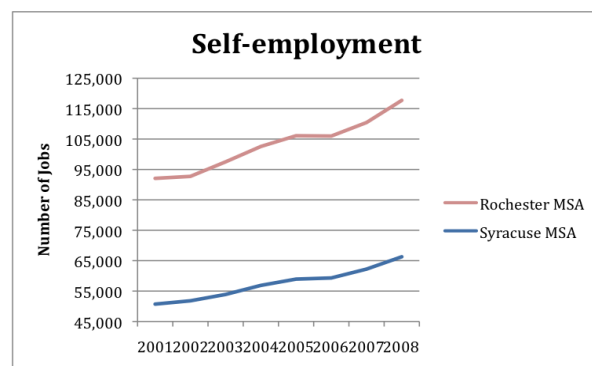


Figure 10: Proprietor Employment (BEA)

Different trends in job growth are also found by major industry and type of employment. For the overall Syracuse MSA economy, between 2001 and 2008 manufacturing jobs decreased by



20.7% from 41,642 to 33,033, while jobs in healthcare increased 27.2% from 35,455 to 45,099. Wage and employment jobs in the Syracuse MSA have remained relatively flat over the same time period with an average annual decrease of 0.03%, while self-employment has increased 30.7% (15,566 jobs), comprising the whole of job increases in the MSA during this period. This trend is not unique to Syracuse as can be seen in comparison to the Rochester MSA (Figures 9 and 10).<sup>i</sup>

### ***Economic Inter-linkages between City and suburbs***

Syracuse and its surrounding municipalities are linked in many ways. Examination of the commuting patterns between city and suburb is one way to assess the strength of these links. In 2008, there were over 103,000 jobs located in the City of Syracuse. Of those, over 75% of employees listed their residence outside the City (U.S. Census). The reverse pattern of commuting was also true: of 55,000+ working residents of the City of Syracuse, over half commuted to locations outside the City (U.S. Census). These numbers reflect clearly that the City, its suburbs, and the metropolitan area as a whole, are economically interlinked.

This relationship helps to demonstrate that Syracuse is not a freestanding economic entity (Salins 1993). Syracuse residents need the surrounding towns and villages, and suburban residents need Syracuse: Of the more than 309,000 jobs within the entire Syracuse MSA, the City of Syracuse is home to one-third of all jobs (U.S. Census), while comprising only 21.4% of the 2008 MSA population.

Considered together with the data showing the relative scarcity of low-wage jobs in the City (see Jobs and Job Growth), these commuting patterns suggest that there is a mismatch between the jobs that are located within the City and the qualifications of its residents. For instance, of the 5,700 workers in the goods-producing industry living in Syracuse, 77% commute to their job to a location outside the City. Similarly, of the 10,560 Syracuse residents working for a trade, transportation, or utilities industry, 78% commute out of the City to work. Conversely, 84% of people earning a high income (greater than \$3,333 per month) in a job located in the City of Syracuse commute from outside the City (U.S. Census).

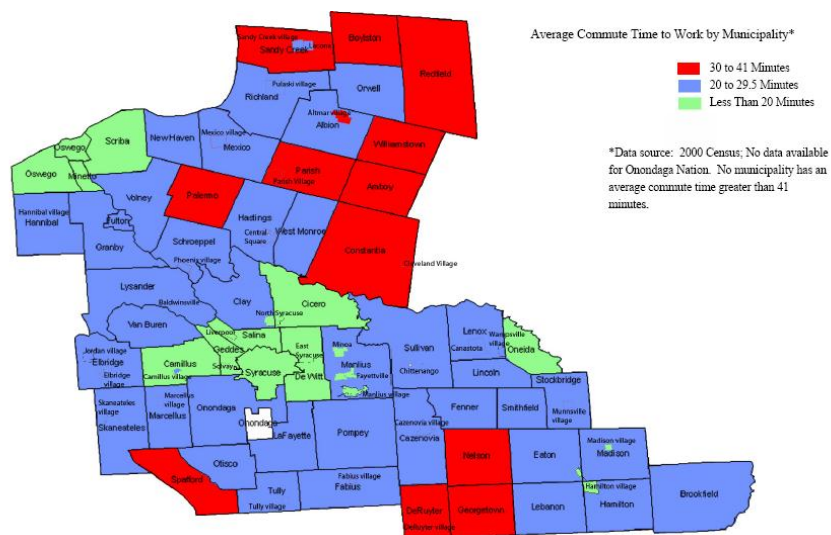


Figure 11: Average Commute Time by Municipality (U.S. Census)

An examination of commuting time to work by municipality also reveals the region's economic dependence on the City of Syracuse as well as other cities in the MSA (Figure 11). The shortest commuting times are found in and around the City of Syracuse, Oswego City and Oneida City, followed by longer commuting times for areas further from these cities. Such data suggest the importance of cities to the continued economic health of the Syracuse MSA.

### **Recommendation: NY Reorganization and Empowerment Act; Communities of Common Interest**

Population decline in the central city and, more recently, in the suburbs of the Syracuse MSA along with increased taxes, declining industry and slow growth in other sectors require shrewd, cost-saving strategies that will put taxpayer dollars to better use in the coming decades.

One such strategy is municipal consolidation. Consolidation of municipal districts such as villages, towns, fire protection districts and other special districts could save money for Onondaga County, for example, which would, in turn, reduce the tax burden of all county residents, including those living in the City of Syracuse. Facilitating this type of initiative was the passage in June 2009 of the *New York Government Reorganization and Citizen Empowerment Act* (effective date March 21, 2010) that proposes to streamline the consolidation process in New York State by creating a mechanism by which the governing bodies of municipal districts, or the electors of that district, through petition, can submit a recommendation for consolidation or dissolution to the voters of that municipality. This act specifically excludes cities and school districts from consolidation under the provisions outlined. County Executive Joanie Mahoney is already taking advantage of this by examining the efficiency of 57 taxpayer-supported fire departments in Onondaga County. This act would allow for a consolidation plan to be put before the voters of the fire protection districts if it is determined that efficiency could be improved.

Similarly, Communities of Common Interest (CCI) have been proposed by urban policy consultant David Rusk as a tool to ensure inter-municipal cooperation on issues that affect two or more municipalities. By designating a CCI, the county government could bundle together communities for the purpose of taking advantage of economies of scale or addressing any other issue of concern that requires the cooperation of multiple municipalities. For example, local road improvements might be determined to increase traffic through a region thereby increasing economic activity. Communities could vote to invest in road improvement through the newly established jurisdiction rather than being limited to vote on improvement in their respective town, village or city. Approval to move forward on an example like this could come through a supermajority of the governing bodies in the CCI or by a majority of the voters in the CCI.

As an alternative to municipal consolidation, the CCI has the major advantage of flexibility, allowing inter-municipal cooperation to proceed without the permanence of a structural change in governance institutions. This advantage is compounded when considering the unlikelihood of consolidation in upstate New York State, in which all existing land is incorporated into cities, towns or villages.

Both municipal consolidation and CCI are designed to look more carefully at how communities and municipal districts can better allocate their resources when attempting to provide services to their respective populations. Support of these initiatives is a perfect complement to a grassroots

effort focused on improving municipal opportunity because it empowers voters to make choices about how their tax dollars are spent.

### **Recommendation: Actively Support Self-Employment**

It is commonly understood that small businesses are responsible for a majority of the jobs across the country. This, along with declining manufacturing in many metropolitan areas, has encouraged many to rethink where energies should be directed regarding the economy. Tom Vass, an investment advisor, states plainly that “the new religion for economic development is small business innovation, which means creating . . . business investment opportunities in metro regional economies” (Vass 2009).

This fact, coupled with evidence in the Syracuse MSA that self-employment is increasing while wage and salary employment jobs are flat or decreasing, should encourage investment in programs that train MSA residents to be successful in small business ventures. Mark Ecko supported this sentiment at a recent conference on entrepreneurship in New York, NY when he suggested successful entrepreneurs are characterized by motivation more than by their specific skill sets. He also suggests that this motivation should be cultivated within the public school system (Tigar 2010).

Grassroots efforts that foster education on how to successfully start or maintain a business could be augmented by utilizing the members from the various organizations within ACTS. Such education might include direction from seasoned entrepreneurs and tax professionals for the nuts and bolts promotion of self employment, curriculum developers to assist in getting entrepreneurial courses in schools, or other community experts to give seminars on topics of insurance, marketing, branding, etc.

Additional support could come through promoting the use of the Southside Innovation Center in Syracuse. The Southside Innovation Center provides office space, use of equipment, assistance with business plans, training programs and more for those who are starting ventures on the south side of Syracuse.

These types of initiatives could result in the creation of stable small businesses in the MSA that expand in the future, thereby adding jobs to the local workforce.

### **Recommendation: Promote the Benefits of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)**

Efforts to stimulate the economy of the City of Syracuse forms an integral part of the *Syracuse Comprehensive Plan 2025*. One such effort aims to increase community wealth through the federal and New York State government's Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). Specifically, the City proposes to advertise the EITC through local newspapers as a method to increase personal wealth, and thus, the wealth and tax base of the City of Syracuse community as a whole.

Past research has demonstrated that the EITC helps the working poor make ends meet while providing a pathway to upward social mobility (Smeeding et al 2000). The impact of the EITC is not trivial in the United States. In 2006, federal EITC tax refunds totaled \$40 billion, and each year the tax credit is estimated to lift 5 million Americans out of poverty (Berube 2006). In the City of Syracuse, the total amount of 1998 EITC tax refunds exceeded \$26 million or roughly

\$1,500 per return filed (IRS 1998). For those earning between \$10,000 and \$25,000 a year, EITC refunds averaged over \$2,000 per return. In 1998, nearly half of all federal EITC tax refunds to the Syracuse Metropolitan Area flowed to the working poor in the City of Syracuse. The EITC refund also aided taxpayers closer to the median income in Syracuse, awarding on average \$450 per return to those earning \$25,000 to \$50,000 per year.

Research has also shown that the benefits of the EITC extend beyond the individual or family to the local economy. In the case of San Antonio, Texas, for each dollar refunded through the EITC, there was a \$1.58 returned in local economic activity (Berube 2006; Texas Perspectives, Inc. 2003). Stated in terms of jobs, for each additional \$37,000 in EITC refunds, an additional permanent job was created (ibid). Despite all of these benefits, many individuals and families eligible for the EITC forego the credit or spend much of their refund on the high fees of professional tax preparers (Berube 2006).

Realizing the full benefits of the EITC for the City of Syracuse is achievable with concerted grassroots efforts. First, as the *Syracuse Comprehensive Plan 2025* has suggested, awareness-raising of the EITC is needed to assure that every eligible recipient does not forego the tax credit. Second, teams of experienced tax preparers can be assembled to assist eligible individuals and families prepare their returns at no cost, thereby avoiding the fees of paid tax preparation service firms. Finally, a range of tax seminars and money management courses can be developed to assist EITC recipients in spending or investing their money in a manner most beneficial for the recipient.

### **Recommendation: Increase job training efforts and form employer connections**

The disparity among Syracuse residents' qualifications and the types of jobs that are available within Syracuse can be considered a spatial mismatch as well as a skills mismatch. The jobs available within the City of Syracuse may not match up with many residents' skills. There are many more middle and high wage jobs (75,800) than low wage jobs (27,400) in Syracuse (U.S. Census). To close the gap between workers' skills and the types of jobs in Syracuse, ACTS should lend its support to effective job training programs that cater to both jobseekers and employers.

While the spatial mismatch of jobs within Syracuse is an important factor, a person's relative location to potential employers has a much smaller effect on unemployment than a person's race and educational attainment (Chapple 2006). A training program needs to focus more on combating discrimination and providing skills than attempting to bring jobs back into the city. A job-training program should connect jobseekers and employers as well as provide skills that are needed in specific growth industries and among certain demographics.

A program that forms professional connections between employers and potential employees could help fight discrimination and provide direct access to employment. Studies have shown that employers are more likely to select a white person for an interview than a black or Latino person, even when both are qualified (Chapple 2006; Pager 2009). Similar studies have suggested that employers can also be discriminate on the basis of where a jobseeker lives in the city (Chapple 2006). By connecting several businesses with a job-training program, the employers know that individuals who complete the program will have the skills they are looking for regardless of race or education. This connection could help reduce employer discrimination.

This job training program should also provide specific skills for growth industries, such as healthcare, as highlighted earlier in the “jobs and job growth” section. Sixteen to 29 year-olds could also be targeted as they have been identified as an age group with relatively high unemployment. A major part of the skills development should also include instruction on soft skills such as professional appearance and communication.

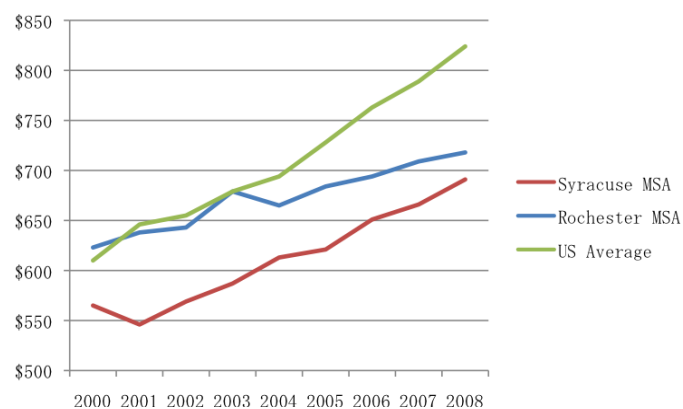
One way to advance this strategy is to support a dual-customer intermediary organization such as CNY Works, which works with both employer and the unemployed to enhance employment opportunities throughout Central New York. Such an organization can be effective if both sides of the labor market (employers and the unemployed) buy into the program and use it to build professional networks and opportunities.

Another potential partner is STRIVE (Support and Training Results in Valuable Employees) based in Harlem, New York. They are a dual-customer intermediary that focuses on job skills as well as counseling to improve attitude and soft skills. They have expanded their programs throughout the Northeast and could be a useful organization to replicate in Syracuse.

## Housing

### ***Affordability and Availability***

One measure of housing affordability is the median rent-to-income ratio (median gross rent as a percentage of household income) or how much an average household spends on rent in relation to their income. According to the American Community Survey, in the Syracuse MSA, the median monthly gross rent has increased from \$565 in 2000 to \$691 in 2008, while the median rent-to-income ratio has increased from 26.5% in 2000 to 30.9% in 2008 (Figure 12 and 13). Similar increases in median gross rent and the rent-to-income ratio are also found in other MSAs nationally, including Rochester, NY. Although the rent-to-income ratio in the Syracuse MSA in 2008 was smaller than that of Rochester, it has increased recently and is higher than the national average. When examined individually, the City of Syracuse, excluding suburban communities, has a lower median gross rent, \$679, and a larger rent-to-income ratio, 34.2% (U.S. Census).



**Figure 12: Median Gross Rent (U.S. Census, 2006-2008)**

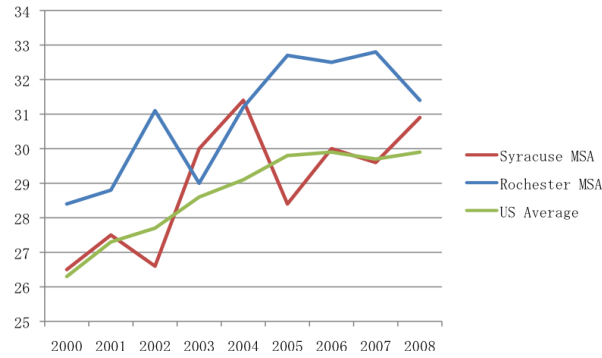


Figure 13: Rent-to-Income Ratio (U.S. Census)

The percentage of affordable housing measures the number of lower-rent housing affordable for low-income families. Rents in each municipality are examined to determine how many housing units are available for those earning less than 30% of the Area Median Family Income (AMFI) (HUD 2000). Utilizing information from U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the percentage of affordable housing units in each of Syracuse MSA municipalities is measured.

Figure 14 shows a map of Syracuse MSA municipalities, color-coded by the percentage of affordable housing. Most municipalities are colored in blue or green, meaning that the percentage of affordable housing in these municipalities is less than 6%. Considering that 9% of the households in Syracuse MSA earn less than 30% of the Area Median Family Income, the housing affordability for these households is low across the MSA. The only municipalities where the percentage of affordable housing is more than 9% are 4 cities and 11 villages, including the Cities of Syracuse, Oswego, Oneida, and Fulton.

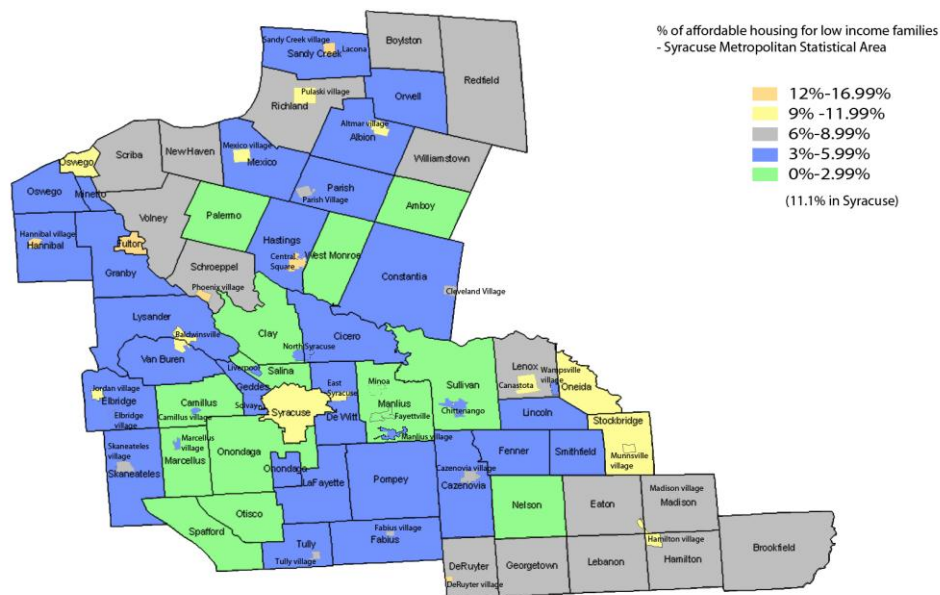


Figure 14: Percentage of Housing Stock Affordable to Low-Income Households (HUD)

When compared to the Municipal Opportunity Index, it is evident that housing is relatively unaffordable in municipalities with higher opportunity. Among the five towns and three villages within the maximum opportunity areas, only the Village of Skaneateles and the Village of Cazenovia have more than 6% affordable housing stock. Among the nine towns and four villages within the high opportunity areas, only the Village of Central Square and the Village of Hamilton have rates higher than 9% and only the Town of Hamilton has a rate between 6% and 9%. All other MSA municipalities have less than 6% affordable housing stock. Overall, housing affordability for low-income households is lower within municipalities with high or maximum opportunity.

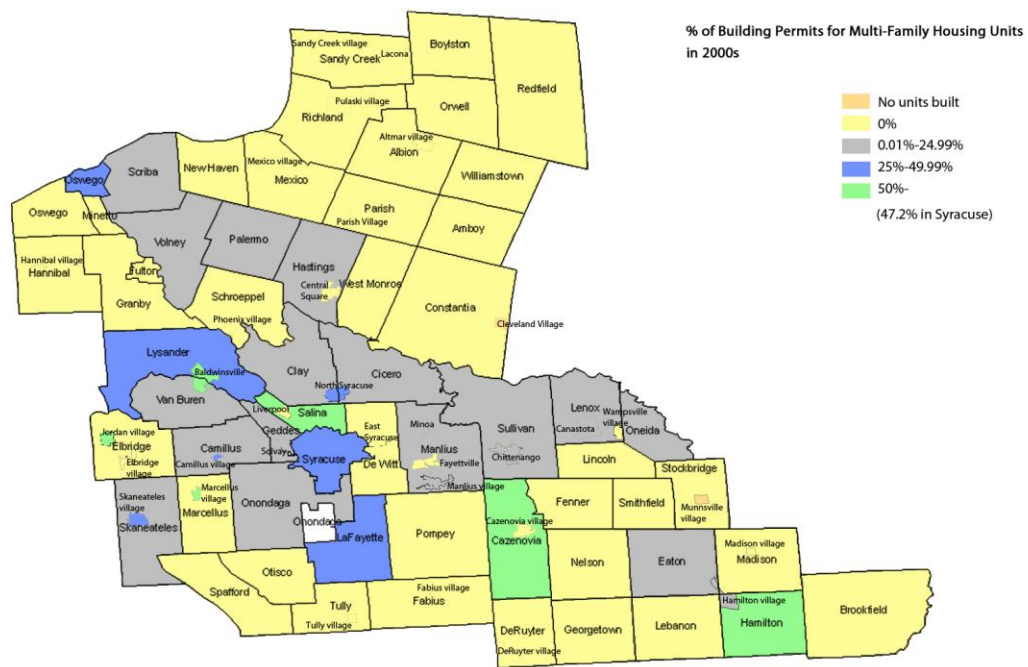
### ***Affordable Housing Supply***

What has caused the lack of affordable housing in these opportunity-rich suburban communities? Quigley cites strict zoning as an important factor leading to reduced housing affordability (Quigley and Raphael 2004).

In the 2000s, 15,346 housing units were built in the Syracuse MSA. Of these housing units, 97% were outside the City of Syracuse (HUD 2010). Looking at this figure alone, it may seem that there is an ample supply of affordable housing in the suburbs as compared to the City. However, if the percentage of multi-family housing units is considered, suburban communities do not provide as many affordable housing units per capita. The percentage of multi-family housing was 14.5% in the suburbs and 47.2% in the City. As single-family housing is generally not affordable to low-income families, suburban communities have not provided affordable housing for low-income families.

Looking at the percentage of multi-family housing building permits in each municipality based on data in Building Permits Database by U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, it is clear that most suburban municipalities have not permitted multi-family housing nearly to the extent of single-family housing. Figure 15 maps the percentage of multi-family housing units permitted in the 2000s across the Syracuse MSA. In 60 of the 95 municipalities, no multi-family housing units have been approved in the past 10 years. Of the remaining 35 municipalities, 22 have less than 25% of their building permits designated for multi-family construction. Only 13 municipalities have more than 25% multi-family housing building permits, and only 6 municipalities have more than 50%.





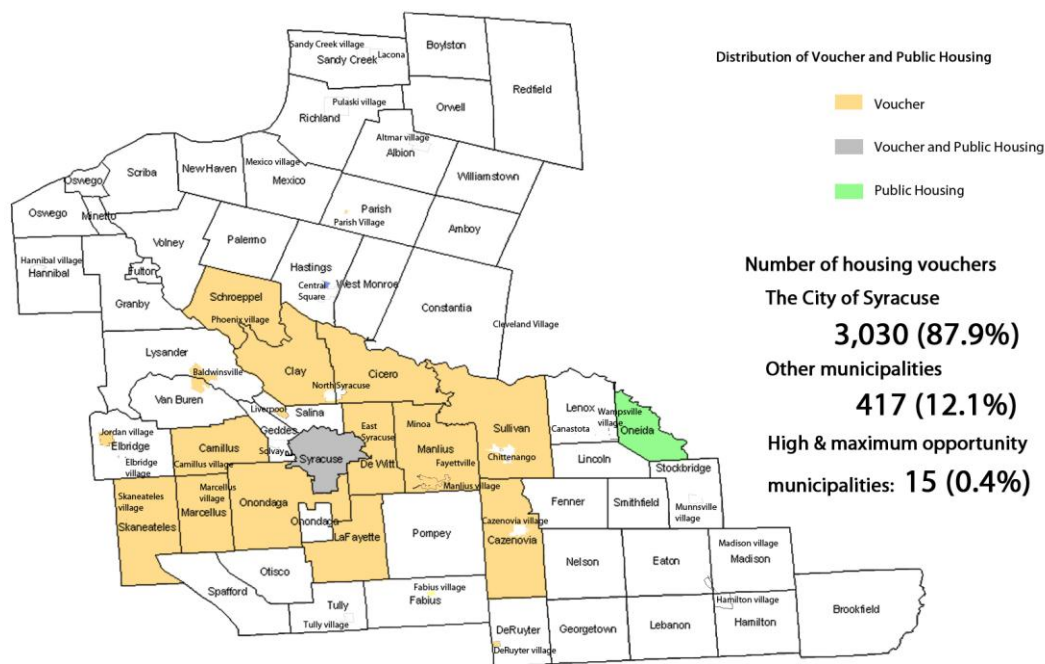
**Figure 15: Percentage of Building Permits for Multi-Family Housing (HUD)**

Among the five towns and three villages within the maximum opportunity category, only the Village of Skaneateles has more than 25% of their permitted housing units for multi-family housing. Among the nine towns and four villages within the high opportunity category, the Towns of Cazenovia, Hamilton, Salina and the Village of Marcellus have more than 50% and the Town of Lysander has between 25% and 50%. Overall, most municipalities within high or maximum opportunity areas have a low percentage of multi-family housing units permitted in the 2000s, while several, such as the Town of Cazenovia have more than 50%.

### ***Subsidized Housing***

Subsidized housing in the Syracuse MSA seems to be concentrated in lower opportunity areas. There were only 2,319 public housing units in the City of Syracuse and 139 public housing units in the City of Oneida in 2008 (HUD 2008). In the same year, eight public housing authorities<sup>1</sup> distributed housing vouchers as a means to deal with the low incidence of affordable housing. The Syracuse Housing Authority (SHA) distributed 3,233 housing vouchers, while the other seven public housing authorities distributed 2,131 housing vouchers in total. If most housing vouchers were used in the same municipalities where they were issued, housing vouchers are not helping low-income households to move to high or maximum opportunity areas.

<sup>1</sup> Eight public housing authorities include Syracuse Housing Authorities, City of Oswego Office of Community Development, Oneida Housing Authority, Village of North Syracuse Housing Authority, City of Fulton, Village of Phoenix, Canastota Housing Authority, and Village of Manlius.



**Figure 16: Public Housing and Housing Voucher Use by Municipality (HUD; SHA)**

Based on SHA data by zip code, estimates show the municipalities in which housing vouchers were used. Of 3,447 housing vouchers currently distributed by SHA, 88% (3,030 vouchers) are used within the City of Syracuse (SHA 2010). The remaining 9% (305 vouchers) were used in other municipalities in the Syracuse MSA and 3% (112 vouchers) were used outside the Syracuse MSA. Of the housing vouchers used in the Syracuse MSA outside of the City of Syracuse, 6% were used in minimum or low opportunity municipalities. Excluding 30 housing vouchers for which more detailed information could not be obtained, apparently only 15 housing vouchers were used in the municipalities with maximum or high opportunity (Figure 16).

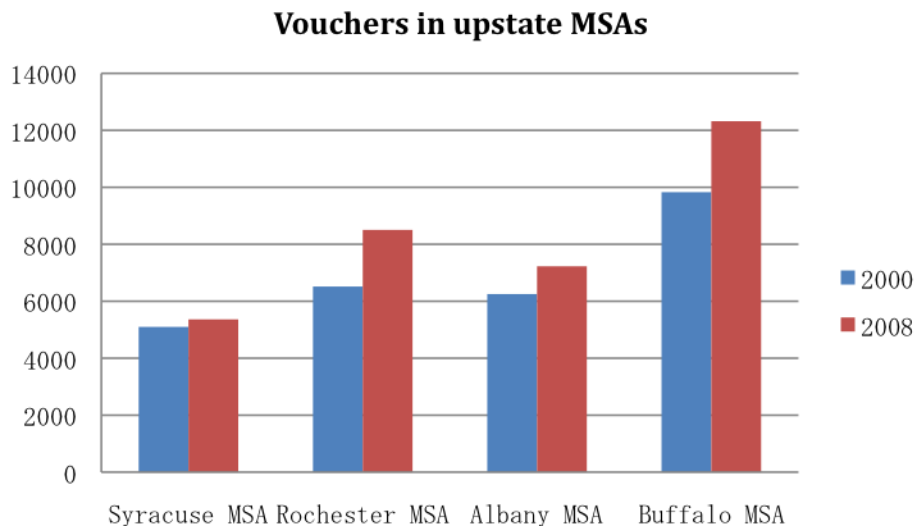
Without relocation assistance, low-income households with vouchers tend to live in lower opportunity areas. Therefore, it is important for the public housing authorities to increase support for low-income household mobility to high or maximum opportunity areas.

It is difficult to know whether the number of housing vouchers issued in the Syracuse MSA is sufficient without data on the total number of eligible households. However, statistics do show that the number of housing vouchers issued in the Syracuse MSA has increased at a slower rate than in other upstate MSAs and the total volume of vouchers in the Syracuse MSA is smaller, despite a comparable number of low-income households (Figure 17 and 18).

In 2008, 5,364 vouchers were issued in the Syracuse MSA compared with 8,505 in the Rochester MSA, 7,227 in Albany MSA, and 12,320 in Buffalo MSA<sup>2</sup> (HUD 2008). Additionally, the rate of increase in voucher issuance is lowest in the Syracuse MSA. From 2000-2008, the number of vouchers in the Syracuse MSA increased by 5.2%. This rate was more than five times larger in

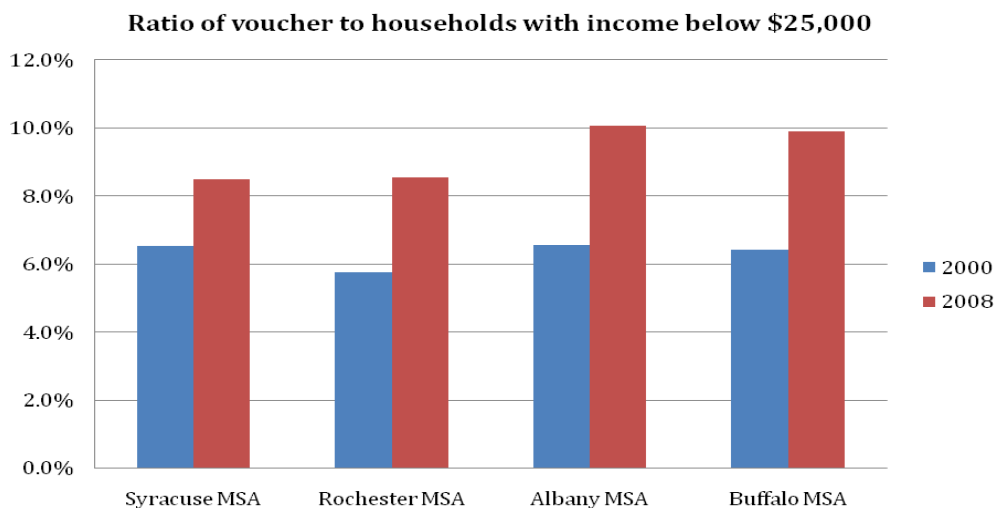
<sup>2</sup> Rochester MSA includes Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Orleans, and Wayne County. Albany MSA includes Albany, Montgomery, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, and Schoharie County. Buffalo MSA includes Erie and Niagara County.

the Rochester MSA, which experienced a 30.5% increase during the same period. The rates in the Albany MSA and the Buffalo MSA were also larger than in the Syracuse MSA, at 15.6% and 25.3%, respectively.



**Figure 17: Vouchers in upstate MSAs (HUD 2010)**

However, this figure is not a perfect measure of whether the number of vouchers provided in the Syracuse MSA is sufficient, because it does not consider the number of low-income households. To take lower-income households into consideration, the ratio of vouchers to households with income less than \$25,000 (about half of the median household income in each MSA) was calculated (Figure 18). Since there are 63,213 households with income below \$25,000 in the Syracuse MSA, the ratio is 8.5% in 2008 (U.S. Census). This is almost equal to the figure in the Rochester MSA, but much lower than that in the Albany MSA and the Buffalo MSA. The change in this ratio from 2000 to 2008 was least in the Syracuse MSA.



**Figure 18: Ratio of Voucher to Households with Income Below \$25,000**

## **Recommendation: Support the Use of Low-Income Housing Vouchers**

We recommend setting up an effective outreach program to promote the use of housing vouchers among landlords in suburban communities and to provide counseling and administrative support for households using vouchers in order to encourage low-income households to move to municipalities with higher opportunity.

The housing voucher program has given low-income households the opportunity to choose where to live, while project-based housing assistance programs have forced residents to live in inner-city neighborhoods. In fact, across the Syracuse MSA, public housing units are located solely in the City of Syracuse and the City of Oneida, whereas housing vouchers distributed by SHA are used in more than seven villages and eight towns outside the City of Syracuse, including several municipalities with maximum opportunity rankings<sup>3</sup>.

However, even with housing vouchers, most low-income families tend to stay within inner-cities. For example, in the Moving to Opportunity experiment (MTO), a large proportion of households using vouchers stayed within cities rather than moving to suburban areas (MTO 2003). In fact, only 16.3% of families in MTO wanted to move to different neighborhoods in the suburbs, while 64.7% wanted to remain within cities (Orr et al 2003).

There are some benefits to staying within cities for low-income households. For example, they can maintain their social ties and support systems to cope with hardship (Popkin, Katz, Cunningham, Brown, Gustafson, & Turner, 2004). Furthermore, even if they wish to move to opportunity-rich suburban areas, there are potential barriers to finding housing (Popkin & Cunningham, 1999). First, low-income households tend to face difficulty in finding landlords who will accept housing vouchers in low-poverty neighborhoods. Second, low-income families often do not have enough time or money to get information about affordable housing which meets their preferences. They also often lack the resources to demonstrate that they are a low financial risk.

Therefore, we recommend that ACTS, in cooperation with housing authorities and local nonprofit organizations, conduct effective outreach to landlords in suburban municipalities to increase those who accept housing vouchers. We also recommend that ACTS form a regional alliance with these landlords to provide counseling and administrative support to low-income households in order to improve mobility to higher-opportunity areas.

## **Recommendation: Increase Low-Income Housing through Inclusionary Zoning**

We recommend that suburban municipalities expand the supply of low-income housing through inclusionary zoning, because housing stock in suburban municipalities is generally not affordable to low-income households.

The percentage of housing units that are affordable to low-income households is especially low in suburban municipalities with high or maximum opportunity. Moreover, no multi-family

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<sup>3</sup> Because the available data is by zip code, we could not identify exactly in which municipalities some of these housing vouchers were used. For example, we know 24 housing vouchers were used in the area whose zip code is 13031 (Camillus). However, we could not know if they were used in the village or the town of Camillus.

housing units have been permitted in 60 of the 95 municipalities in the Syracuse MSA during the past 10 years, while single-family housing units have been permitted in nearly all municipalities.

Therefore, suburban municipalities should encourage private developers to build affordable housing units including multi-family housing. Inclusionary zoning has been implemented in more than 135 communities in order to increase affordable housing (Rusk 2006). It requires private developers to build a certain percentage of affordable housing along with the development of market rent housing. While local governments set income and price limits for these affordable housing units, private developers are provided a density bonus to make up for the costs of developing these units. Inclusionary zoning helps municipalities avoid concentrations of low-income housing and gives residents access to suburban opportunity (Rusk 2006).

However, suburban residents could oppose implementing inclusionary zoning. Limits on new housing developments satisfy the needs of suburban residents by excluding low-income or minority residents and by making existing homes more valuable (Been 2005). Therefore, it is important for ACTS to inform suburban residents of the mismatch between opportunity and affordable housing and to request County and State government to provide incentives for the development of affordable housing in these communities. These incentives may include state grants for suburban municipalities to promote income integration, or to draft state legislation that holds suburban communities accountable for inter-municipal problems.

### **Recommendation: Redevelop Public Housing into Mixed-Income Developments**

We recommend that Syracuse Housing Authority redevelop public housing sites into mixed-income developments in cooperation with private developers.

It is important to not only provide inner-city residents the chance to move to the suburbs with higher opportunity, but also to improve the quality of lower opportunity neighborhoods within the City. One of the ways to improve distressed inner-cities is to bring medium to high-income households into redeveloped sites. HOPE VI projects redeveloped the most distressed public housing sites into less dense mixed-income developments. Overall, these projects not only improved the physical condition of those sites but may also have had an ongoing positive impact on surrounding communities (Popkin et al 2004).

Therefore, we recommend that ACTS encourage the SHA to redevelop public housing sites into mixed-income developments, in cooperation with private developers. This may be done within the context of a Community Benefits Agreement not unlike that organized by ACTS and member organizations in 2009. It is also important to provide housing vouchers, sufficient counseling, and administrative support for residents previously in public housing so that they can choose to live in areas with higher opportunity.

## **Education**

Education is an area of immense importance when analyzing disparities in opportunity between the City of Syracuse and its surrounding suburbs, because education is a form of human capital

investment. Human capital investments are “activities that influence future real income through the imbedding of resources in people (Becker, 1964, p. 9).” In addition, income education also has important effects on other things such as health and active citizenship.

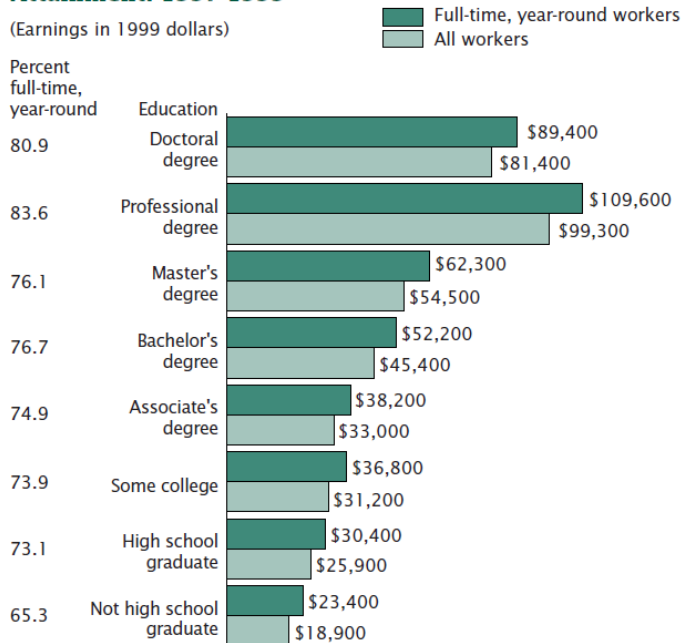
The following are the results of several studies on annual earnings and education, detailing the importance of education in regards to earnings and wages:

Researchers <sup>4</sup>	Demographics of Study	Results
Heckman et al, 2006	Annual Earnings of all men in 1990 (Census data)	Completing an additional year of schooling results in a 12.9% increase in annual earnings for whites, and a 15.2% increase in annual earnings for blacks.
Card, 1999	Heads of Households aged 24-61, 1974-1996 (General Social Survey)	Completing an additional year of schooling results in a 10.6% increase in annual earnings for men, and an 11.0% increase for women.
Acemoglu and Angrist, 2000	White males, 40-49 years of age in census year, (Census data 1950-1990)	Completing an additional year of schooling raises wages by 8.1%.
Jaeger and Page 1996	White males, 25-64 years of age, 1991 & 1992 (Current Population Survey)	Receiving a high school diploma raises hourly wages by 12.3%.

Table 3: Annual Earnings and Education

Not only does education translate into better earnings and wages, but the demand for highly-skilled labor is ever increasing, while the demand for low-skilled labor is on the wane. These trends are confirmed in Syracuse (see Local Economy). Adults with less human capital face higher levels of labor market competition and earn less than their more qualified peers as demonstrated by the following census data table (Figure 19).

**Work Experience and Average Annual Earnings of Workers 25 to 64 Years Old by Educational Attainment: 1997-1999**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Surveys, March 1998, 1999, and 2000.

Figure 19: Work Experience and Average Annual Earnings (U.S. Census)

<sup>4</sup> All information was taken from Ladd and Fiske, 2008



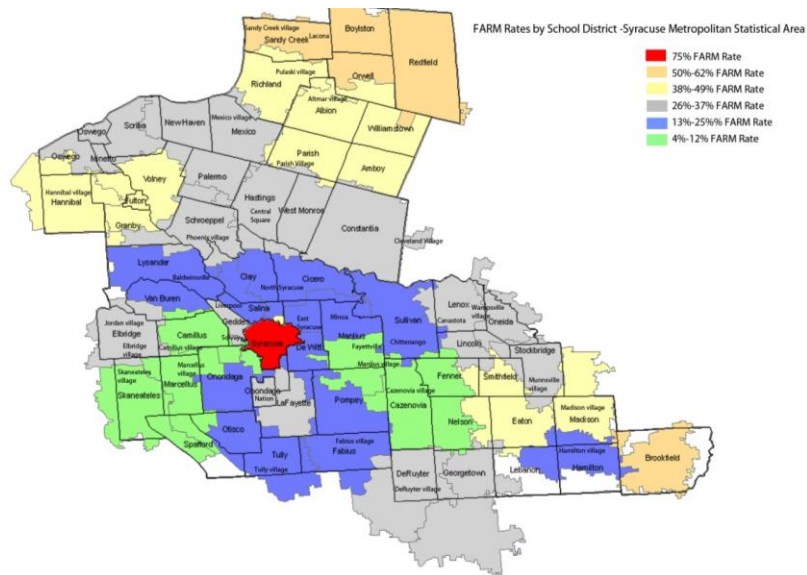
Analysis of the 2008 Current Population Survey (CPS) found that the median black and Hispanic male, full time worker earned 28% and 40% less, respectively, than the median white, male full time worker (Reardon and Robinson 2008). Research has also found that differences in human capital account for roughly half of the wage gap between blacks and whites, and nearly the entire wage gap between Hispanics and whites (Reardon and Robinson 2008).

Additionally, graduating from high school increases the probability that a person votes in the general election by 43.8 % (Milligan et al, 2004), indicating more active citizenship. Education also increases fringe benefits that one receives on the job (www.umich.edu) and directly leads to improved health (Lleras-Muney 2005).

### ***Indicators of Disparity in Syracuse***

In comparing school statistics across the Syracuse MSA it is evident that Syracuse city is burdened with substantially higher poverty rates and weaker outcomes in terms of graduation rates and test scores.

The 2008 Free and Reduced Meal (FARM) rate for the Syracuse City School District is 75%, 13 percentage points higher than any other school district in the MSA. The lowest FARM rates are found in the outlying suburbs, some as low as 4% (Skaneateles) and 7% in adjacent Westhill Central School District. “The average student from a low-income family scores much lower on such tests [standardized tests] than students from higher-income families” (Reardon and Robinson 2008, 497). Therefore, these disparities in SES are likely indicative of disparities in schooling outcomes.



**Figure 20: FARM Rates by School District (Great Schools 2010)**

Regression analysis of FARM rates in Syracuse reveals a correlation between FARM rates and



the percentage testing at or above grade level across all 38 Syracuse MSA school districts in 2008. For English Language Arts (ELA) scores, FARM rates explain 42% of the variation in testing outcomes. A one percentage point increase in FARM rate is predicted to decrease the percentage testing at ELA proficiency by 0.39 percentage points and is statistically significant at the 99% confidence level. For Math, FARM rates explain 36% of the variation. A one percentage point increase in FARM rate is predicted to decrease the percentage testing at Math proficiency by 0.31 percentage points and is statistically significant at the 99% confidence level.

This means that a school district with a lower percentage of students qualifying for free or reduced-price lunch is predicted to have a higher percentage meeting proficiency in Math and ELA, all else equal. Other factors that have not been controlled for include differences in teacher and school inputs, quality of teachers, parental support and home environment, and variations of concentrated poverty among schools within districts.

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	Correlation	R-Squared	Unstandardized Coefficient	Significance (P-value)
ELA % proficient	FARM rate	-.648	.420	-.388	.000**
Math % proficient	FARM rate	-.597	.357	-.312	.000**
** Statistically significant at the 99% confidence level					

**Table 4: Regression of Test Scores on FARM %**

A composite of ELA and Math test scores for 3<sup>rd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade was averaged to determine a percentage of students testing proficient at grade level for all districts (Figure 21). Again, Syracuse City School District ranks at the bottom at only 46% testing at grade level, 19 percentage points lower than the next-lowest performing district (Fulton City School District, 64%). The comparison is particularly stark with neighboring suburban districts, ranging from 70.7% in LaFayette to 93% in Lyncourt Union Free School District.

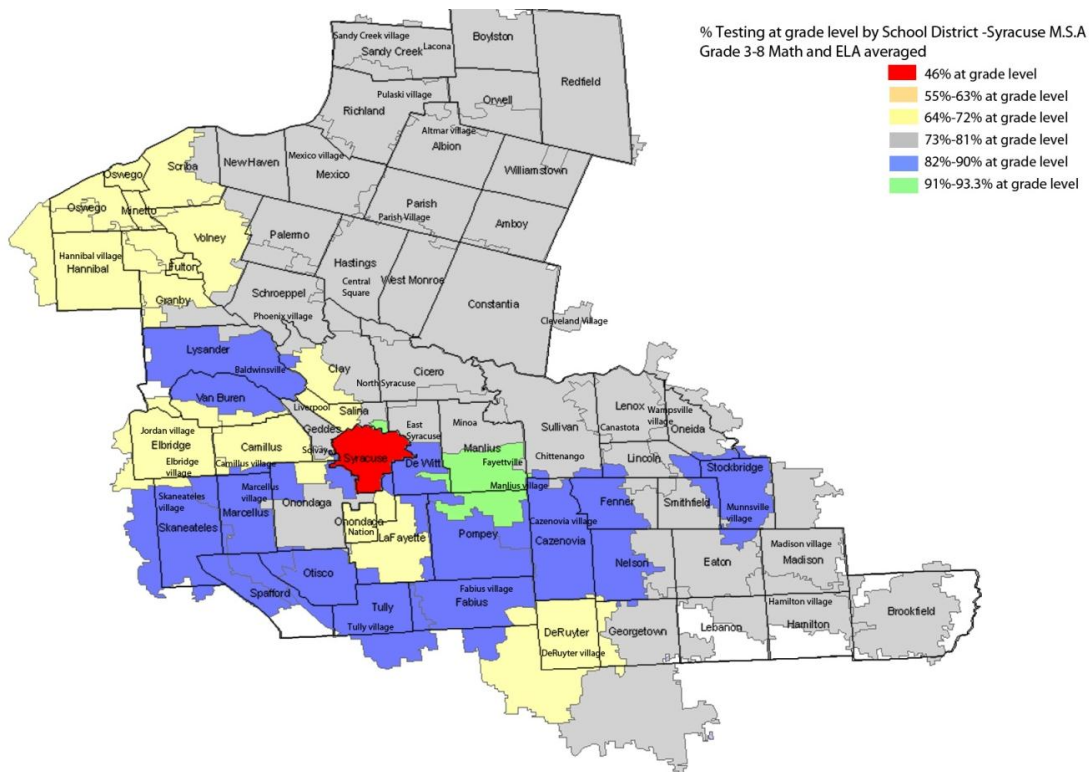


Figure 21: Percentage of Students Testing at Grade Level (Great Schools 2008)

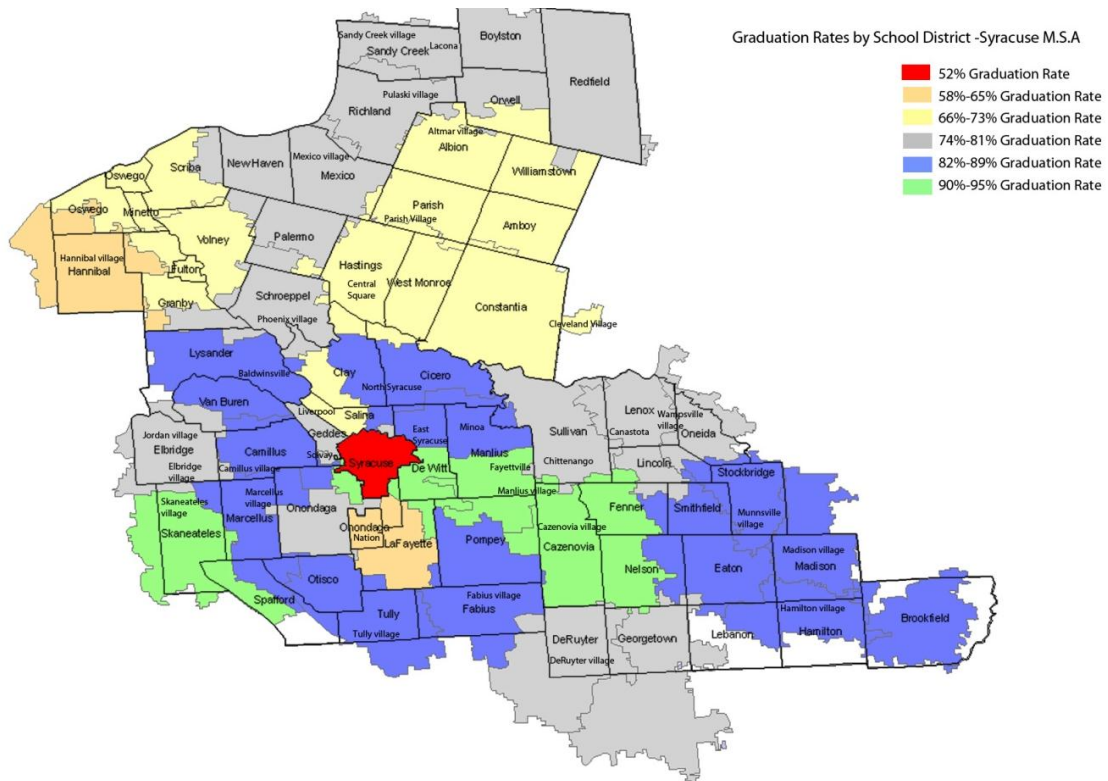


Figure 22: Graduation Rates by School District (NYSED 2009)

Disparities in high school graduation rates are also apparent (Figure 22). The 2008 high school

graduation rate in Syracuse Central School District is 52%, again 13 percentage points below than the second lowest (La Fayette Central School District, 65%). Graduation rates in adjacent suburbs are as high as 90% (Westhill) and 91% (Jamesville/Dewitt).

It is important to note that these disparities do not, alone, suggest that schools are of poorer quality in Syracuse. The quality of teachers is one aspect that requires further study. This can be measured in part by level of qualification and experience, but it still is not a complete determinant of quality of instruction and learning. Recent studies have found that teacher quality relates to creativity in instruction delivery and a dedication to experimentation and refinement. In reference to years of Teach For America data (in a soon-to-be-released study), "...the most stunning finding to come out of education research in the past decade: more than any other variable in education- more than schools or curriculum, teachers matter (Ripley 2010)."

The base rate of pay differs between school districts in New York State and has historically been higher in the suburbs, serving to attract more competitive teachers to those districts first. Proposed solutions include performance-based pay and urban school premiums to attract and retain teaching talent in city schools. Spending per pupil has been partially equalized through Title 1 federal funding and the No Child Left Behind Act. Syracuse City School District now spends more per pupil than the district average in the MSA (Figure 23) but increased spending alone has not been found to be correlated with improved outcomes.

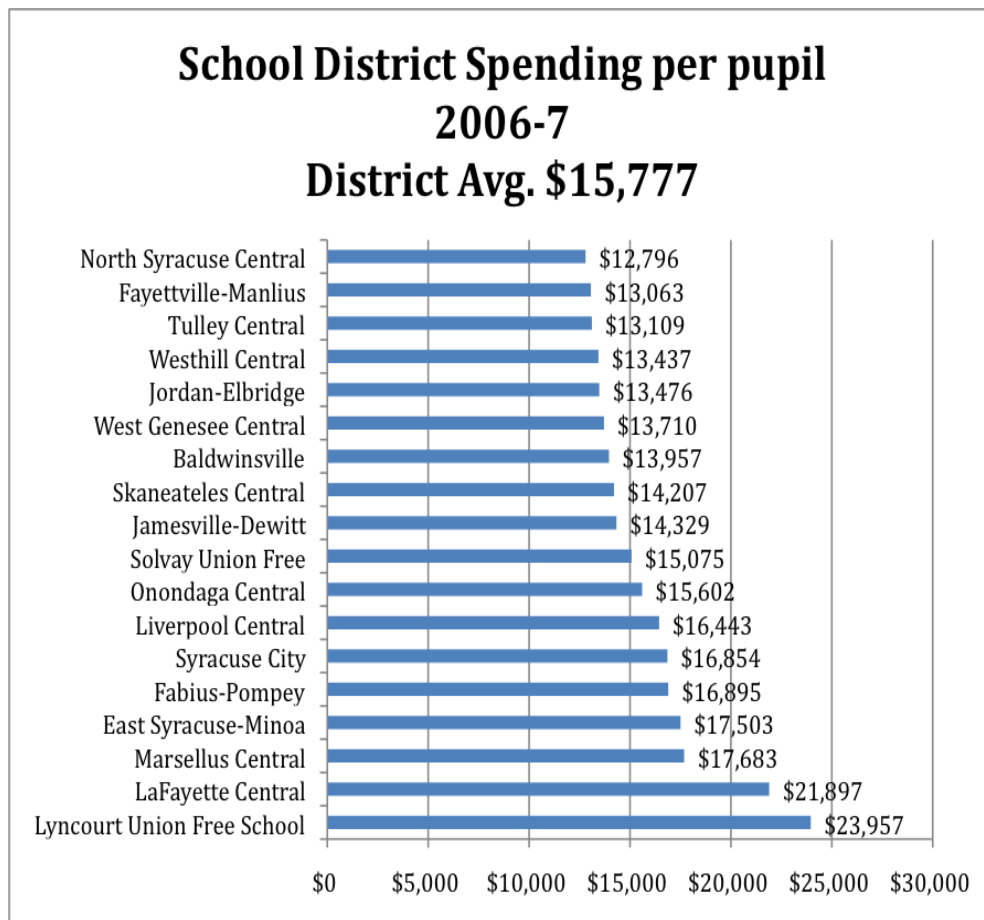


Figure 23: Spending Per Pupil (US Department of Ed. 2010)<sup>ii</sup>

## Recommendation: Support “Say Yes to Education” in Syracuse

Rather than focusing on fixing schools, Say Yes uses a different tactic and directly invests in the human capital of Syracuse city students. Students within the city school district are provided with various forms of support (such as after school programs, free legal services for the family, mentoring, and tutoring) in order to help them graduate. Upon graduation students are eligible for free tuition to over 90 partnering colleges. Say Yes also has the potential to increase the number of “advantaged” peers that students in the City of Syracuse interact with by incentivizing wealthier families in the suburbs to move back into the City so that their children can take advantage of the programs and free college tuition. Say Yes may also stimulate the City of Syracuse in other ways, by increasing the property values in the City, thus creating room to lower tax rates. A domino effect could incentivize more and more advantaged families to move into the City.

In 2006, a place-based “Promise” scholarship program was instituted in Kalamazoo, Michigan. In the school year following the announcement of the program, Kalamazoo School District (KSD) saw a 10% increase in enrollment. In fact, the district’s enrollment rates had consistently declined from about 12,500 in 1985 to just over 10,000 in 2005. Interestingly, Syracuse has faced a similar decline (Figure 24). In the three years after instituting the scholarship program, Kalamazoo has almost completely reversed the previous 8-year decline in enrollment (Miller-Adams 2009).

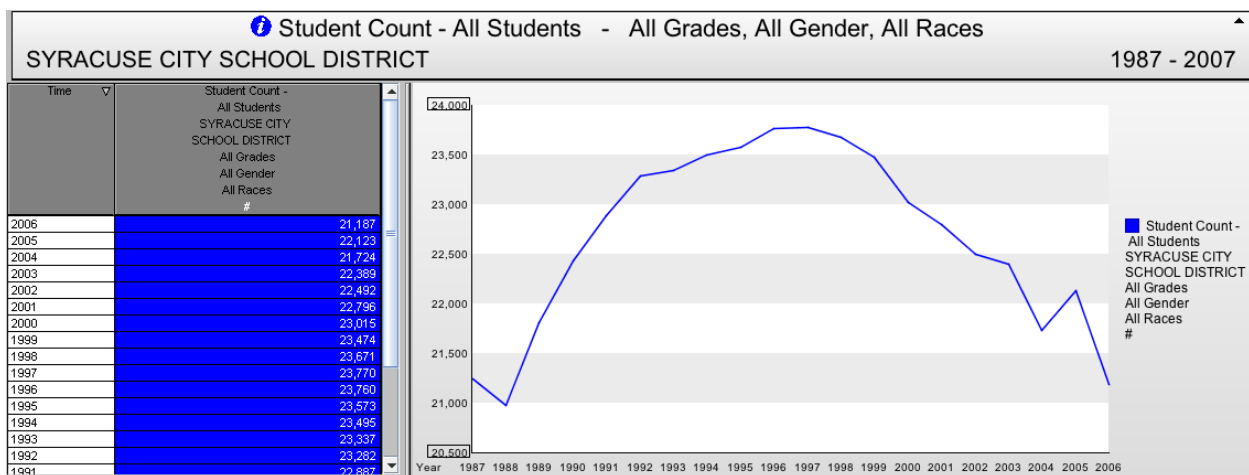


Figure 24: Syracuse City School District Enrollment Rates 1987-2006 (Lexis/Nexis)

Almost half of the new students came from outside of Kalamazoo County in 2006, meaning that Kalamazoo did not increase enrollment solely at the expense of neighboring districts (Miller-Adams, 2009). Attracting families to the city from outside the region and mitigating declining population rates are other potential benefits of such a program. Furthermore, the new students generated \$6.8 million through the state’s educational funding, at a cost of only \$4.1 million. As a result, Kalamazoo was able to avoid a budget cut “for the first time in many years” (Miller-Adams, 2009, p 144). Seventy percent of the class of 2006 attended local higher education institutions, and the number still remained high, at 60%, as of 2008 (Miller-Adams, 2009). A similar trend in Syracuse would bode well for increasing the supply of highly-skilled labor.

Findings related to the real estate market are inconclusive at this point, but sales of homes within the Kalamazoo district were up 6.7% within 12 months of the program's commencement, while they had declined over 5% in the county as a whole. Real estate agents have also given anecdotal accounts of people asking to view houses in the Kalamazoo School District, whereas before, people were asking these same agents to avoid houses in the KSD (Miller-Adams, 2009).

Perhaps the most important benefit of Say Yes to Education is the consequent increase in social capital. Kalamazoo's Promise program "has undoubtedly contributed to a heightened level of social and civic engagement...Diverse organizations, ranging from the symphony orchestra to local banks, have examined their missions in light of the Promise and begun to align their work with its goals" (Miller-Adams 2009, 215). This realignment has led to the collaboration and cohesion of organizations, "first across neighborhoods and then second across generational and income lines" (Miller-Adams 2009, 218). The Promise program has given the people of Kalamazoo something to rally and coalesce around, and Say Yes may provide the same inspiration for the City of Syracuse.

Much of Say Yes to Education's effectiveness and success will be driven by the "buy in" and community support it receives. Michelle Miller-Adams identified a "high level of community mobilization" as critical to maximizing the benefits of the Kalamazoo Promise program" (Miller-Adams 2009, 209). Say Yes to Education needs this same support to succeed.

The more that people know about Say Yes, utilize its programs, and lend their support, the more belief and participation in the program will grow. Therefore, it is important that Say Yes to Education receives grassroots support from organizations such as ACTS. By building support for Say Yes, ACTS will also build social capital and cohesion across its constituency. Say Yes has the potential to bring resolution to the broader concerns facing Syracuse and provide a vehicle for ACTS to build further partnerships.

### **Recommendation: Urban/Suburban School District Consolidation**

De-concentrating poverty requires the political will of an entire region to support housing, economic, and school policies that serve to integrate the poor with the middle class. This runs counter to decades of suburban flight and economic segregation. However, it is not without precedent. Raleigh, North Carolina has successfully integrated urban and suburban schools for 30 years and, as a result, boasts substantially higher rates of achievement than many other metropolitan districts (Grant 2009). School district consolidation has been more common in the South, following legally mandated desegregation. The Raleigh MSA began school consolidation in 1976 and by 2003, 91% of all 8<sup>th</sup> graders in the Raleigh/Wake County School District passed state achievement tests in math and English, as compared with only 25% in Syracuse (Grant 2009).

In 1974, the Supreme Court overturned, by a narrow 5-4 margin, a lower court ruling in favor of metropolitan school desegregation in Detroit. "It was a tragic decision that in many ways sealed the fate of cities in the North. Arguably, more than any other single factor, the Detroit ruling ensured that black and poor children in cities like Syracuse would continue to be segregated and that city school systems would have no power to merge with suburban schools" (Grant 2009, 145).

The most significant school integration effort in the North is the METCO cross-district busing program in Boston. Since 1966, over 8000 black students from the inner-city have graduated from 32 suburban schools, 86% of whom have attended college. The cases of Raleigh and METCO have shown that integration improves outcomes for the economically disadvantaged with no ill effect on the advantaged groups (Grant 2009).

Local voluntary cross-district busing was proposed as far back as the mid-1970s by Syracuse's first black school superintendent, Sidney Johnson, but was not supported by any suburban districts (Grant 2009).

Early discussion of consolidation of metropolitan school districts in New York state dates back to March of 1959, five years after *Brown vs. Board of Education*, when James E. Allen, Jr., State Commissioner of Education, asked in a speech at Columbia University: "What is more logical than to explore the possibility of bringing groups of school districts conforming to metropolitan areas into federation for financial purposes?" (Munger 1961).

On Feb. 14, 1960, a formal plan, endorsed by Governor Rockefeller, was submitted to the state legislature, calling for district consolidation for the purposes of creating fiscal balance across school districts. "Paul A. Miller, superintendent of the Syracuse city school system, hailed the proposal as a "forward step in principle" that would broaden the tax base and modify "the highs and lows" from one district to another; but several educators from poorer districts expressed fears that the federated district might dilute the "equalization" principle of state aid" (Munger 1961).

Despite support from the State Education Department and the New York State School Boards Association in drafting the legislation, the proposed bill was shelved by the state legislature and was never put to a vote. Gerald Grant, author of *Hope and Despair in the American City* (frequently referenced in this report), attempted to bring the question of city-county school consolidation before Onondaga Country school superintendents in 2009, but has yet to receive support from suburban districts (Coin 2009).

### **Recommendation: Support Early Childhood development programs**

The Early Childhood Longitudinal Study (ECLS-K) shows that kindergartners from low SES backgrounds have lower average cognitive scores than their peers from higher SES backgrounds. Many studies show that this gap surfaces as early as 18 months and grows throughout childhood (Loeb and Bassok 2008). Students from families where parents have less education score lower than those with more educated parents. These findings are consistent across successive levels of parental education as well: the less educated your parents are, the worse you are likely to score. This gap also widens between students over time (Reardon and Robinson 2008).

The Harlem Children's Zone has pioneered a 'conveyor belt' system of parent and youth support services designed to mitigate the achievement gap between poor urban and middle-class suburban youth. These programs include services for pregnant parents, parents of 3 year-olds, pre-kindergarten, K-8 charter schools, SAT prep, college application/retention/completion. (Tough 2008).

## Recommendation: Promote Charter School Innovations

A number of studies have explored the hype and hope surrounding charter schools. A 2009 comparative study of Harlem students lotteried-in and lotteried-out of charter schools by Caroline Hoxby found: “On average, a student who attended a charter school for all of grades kindergarten through eight would close about 86 percent of the “Scarsdale-Harlem achievement gap<sup>5</sup>” in math and 66 percent of the achievement gap in English. A student who attended fewer grades would improve by a commensurately smaller amount . . . . Compared to his lotteried-out counterpart, a student who attends a charter high school has Regents examination scores that are about 3 points higher for each year he spends in the charter school before taking the test” (Hoxby et al 2009).

The study also found the following policies to be positively associated with improved student achievement (Hoxby et al 2009):

- a long school year [the average is 12 days longer than traditional schools]
- a greater number of minutes devoted to English during each school day
- a small rewards/small penalties disciplinary policy
- teacher pay based somewhat on performance or duties, as opposed to a traditional pay scale-based strictly on seniority and credentials
- a mission statement that emphasizes academic performance, as opposed to other goals

This study points out that the most robust finding is the effect of the longer school year, even if financed through expanded class sizes. It should be noted that results of charter school research is conflicting. Another recent study by the Center for Research on Educational Outcomes, at Stanford University (Hoxby’s own colleagues) found no statistically significant benefits of charter schools across 15 states plus D.C., (80% of the 2400 charter schools performed the same or worse than comparable public schools in math). Debates have raged between the two camps over the veracity of each study (Viadero 2009).

It is clear that charter schools, alone, are not a panacea. Charter schools can be just as bound for mediocrity or failure as their public school counterparts unless there is a catalytic convergence of good ideas and persevering implementation.

## Where Do We Go From Here?

The timing of this report is fortuitous for ACTS. Much of the information collected for this report was taken from the latest available Census data in 2000, or other reports resulting from the 2000 Census. The data from the 2010 Census will be published soon. As a result, ACTS will soon be able to update the information and trends found in this report.

The centerpiece of this report was the Municipal Opportunity Index and resulting map, and the ensuing supplemental studies were based around this centerpiece. The MOI and supplemental

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<sup>5</sup> This is a proxy for the average achievement gap between affluent suburban students and those in poor urban settings, in this case. 35-40 points is the average gap.



studies identified and explained City/Suburb disparities, but there is information on other forms of disparities that may be of benefit to ACTS. Most noteworthy are racial, household and neighborhood disparities.

ACTS has expressed interest in social justice and has stated that they view concentrated poverty as a major problem in Syracuse. Concentrated poverty can only be sustained by economic disparities *and* residential segregation. Race-based economic disparities result in de facto residential segregation, and therefore concentrated poverty with all its deleterious effects. A clear evaluation of the racial disparities in Syracuse would not only further inform ACTS of disparities existing between Syracuse and its neighbors, but would provide a basis for addressing concentrated poverty.

ACTS would also benefit by investigating household and neighborhood-level differences between Syracuse residents and those in the surrounding suburbs. Disparities at the household and neighborhood level further highlight the disparity of living in the City compared to the suburbs, and the extent of concentrated poverty.

We hope the MOI and resulting report have given ACTS plenty of food for thought in its fight for social justice. We also encourage ACTS to remain proactive in gathering information that will further explain the decline of Syracuse, the uphill battles facing its residents, and how its neighbors can be part of the solution.

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## Methodology of Municipal Opportunity Index

The Syracuse Metropolitan Statistical Area MOI was created based on the research and methodology established by David Rusk. The creation of general opportunity rankings is achieved by looking at individual indicators of opportunity (income and other poverty indicators, property tax base by municipality, and jobs data), individually ranking those indicators, and then creating a composite ranking that demonstrates general opportunity by municipality. The substantive form of this MOI is akin to the Westchester County MOI created by Rusk with only a few exceptions.

First, there was a significant lack of data on violent and property crime for the Syracuse MSA due to the fact that many municipalities (especially towns) do not have Police Departments and therefore crime data is aggregated to the county level. Due to this lack of data, crime was removed from the MOI as an indicator of opportunity.

Second, the total number of jobs was regarded as a less reliable indicator of opportunity because it is not normalized for population. As a result, we used both jobs per capita and job growth as indicators to be included in the MOI.

We did, however, maintain the system of weighting established by David Rusk in our analysis such that jobs per capita, job growth, FARM % and property tax base per capita were weighted more than family median income and family poverty rate.

## Appendix

<b>2008 Graduation Rates by District</b>			
<b>District</b>	<b>Count of Cohort</b>	<b>Graduated with Regents or Local Diplomas</b>	<b>Rankings</b>
Syracuse City School District	1506	52%	1
Hannibal Central School District	122	63%	2
La Fayette Central School District	80	65%	3
Oswego City School District	411	66%	4
Fulton City School District	315	70%	5
Central Square Central School District	407	72%	6
Altmar-Parish-Williamstown Central School District	166	72%	7
De Ruyter Central School District	58	74%	8
Jordan-Elbridge Central School District	142	74%	9
Oneida City School District	222	74%	10
Solvay Union Free School District	181	75%	11
Lyncourt Union Free School District	see Solvay	75%	12
Sandy Creek Central School District	99	76%	13
Mexico Central School District	250	78%	14
Onondaga Central School District	79	78%	15
Canastota Central School District	129	78%	16
Pulaski Central School District	94	79%	17
North Syracuse Central School District	856	79%	18
Liverpool Central School District	704	80%	19
Chittenango Central School District	241	80%	20
Phoenix Central School District	203	81%	21
Georgetown-South Ostelic Central School District	47	81%	22
Madison Central School District	30	83%	23
Morrisville-Eaton Central School District	86	84%	24
Brookfield Central School District	20	85%	25
East Syracuse-Minoa Central School District	303	85%	26
West Genesee Central School District	426	86%	27
Hamilton Central School District	49	86%	28
Fabius-Pompey Central School District	78	86%	29
Marcellus Central School District	187	87%	30
Stockbridge Valley Central School District	48	88%	31
Baldwinsville Central School District	497	88%	32
Tully Central School District	95	88%	33
Westhill Central School District	172	90%	34
Jamesville-Dewitt Central School District	256	91%	35
Skaneateles Central School District	157	92%	36
Cazenovia Central School District	162	94%	37
Fayetteville-Manlius Central School District	391	95%	38

Table 5: 2008 Graduation Rates by District



Percentage of Free Lunches (1997-2009)									
District name	% Free lunch 1997	% Free lunch 1998	% Free lunch 1999	% Free lunch 2002	% Free lunch 2003	% Free lunch 2004	% Free lunch 2007	% Free lunch 2008	% Free lunch 2009
<b>Baldwinsville</b>	9.1%	8.4%	8.7%	9.4%	7.9%	9.0%	9.0%	9.0%	11.0%
<b>East Syracuse-Minoa</b>	16.0%	14.1%	15.9%	14.2%	14.4%	17.4%	17.0%	15.0%	20.0%
<b>Fabius-Pompey</b>	16.0%	20.3%	19.7%	10.4%	9.0%	10.7%	11.0%	11.0%	13.0%
<b>Fayetteville-Manlius</b>	3.6%	3.7%	3.0%	3.2%	3.1%	3.2%	3.0%	4.0%	4.0%
<b>Jamesville-Dewitt</b>	7.1%	10.2%	8.8%	7.3%	6.9%	6.7%	11.0%	9.0%	9.0%
<b>Jordan-Elbridge</b>	20.4%	16.9%	26.1%	14.0%	17.7%	16.3%	18.0%	25.0%	24.0%
<b>La Fayette</b>	25.1%	28.2%	24.2%	24.6%	25.7%	27.0%	24.0%	23.0%	21.0%
<b>Liverpool</b>	11.5%	11.8%	11.4%	12.4%	13.7%	12.4%	14.0%	15.0%	15.0%
<b>Lyncourt</b>	17.1%	16.3%	21.7%	22.9%	22.4%	19.2%	27.0%	24.0%	23.0%
<b>Marcellus</b>	5.9%	8.9%	5.3%	5.1%	10.2%	6.8%	7.0%	7.0%	6.0%
<b>North Syracuse</b>	11.6%	10.8%	14.2%	11.8%	13.9%	15.4%	16.0%	16.0%	17.0%
<b>Onondaga</b>	16.5%	16.1%	16.0%	15.9%	14.2%	17.2%	21.0%	18.0%	20.0%
<b>Skaneateles</b>	6.3%	5.8%	6.2%	3.7%	3.8%	2.4%	3.0%	4.0%	4.0%
<b>Solvay</b>	16.5%	18.7%	18.3%	20.3%	20.2%	27.1%	31.0%	29.0%	30.0%
<b>Syracuse City School District</b>	61.1%	60.9%	58.6%	59.1%	58.0%	59.9%	66.0%	65.0%	66.0%
<b>Tully</b>	8.7%	12.0%	10.6%	8.4%	9.7%	10.5%	11.0%	11.0%	10.0%
<b>West Genesee</b>	6.8%	7.1%	7.5%	7.4%	7.9%	7.8%	9.0%	8.0%	10.0%
<b>Westhill</b>	3.6%	4.2%	4.3%	4.1%	4.0%	4.6%	5.0%	5.0%	4.0%

Table 6: Percentage of Free Lunches

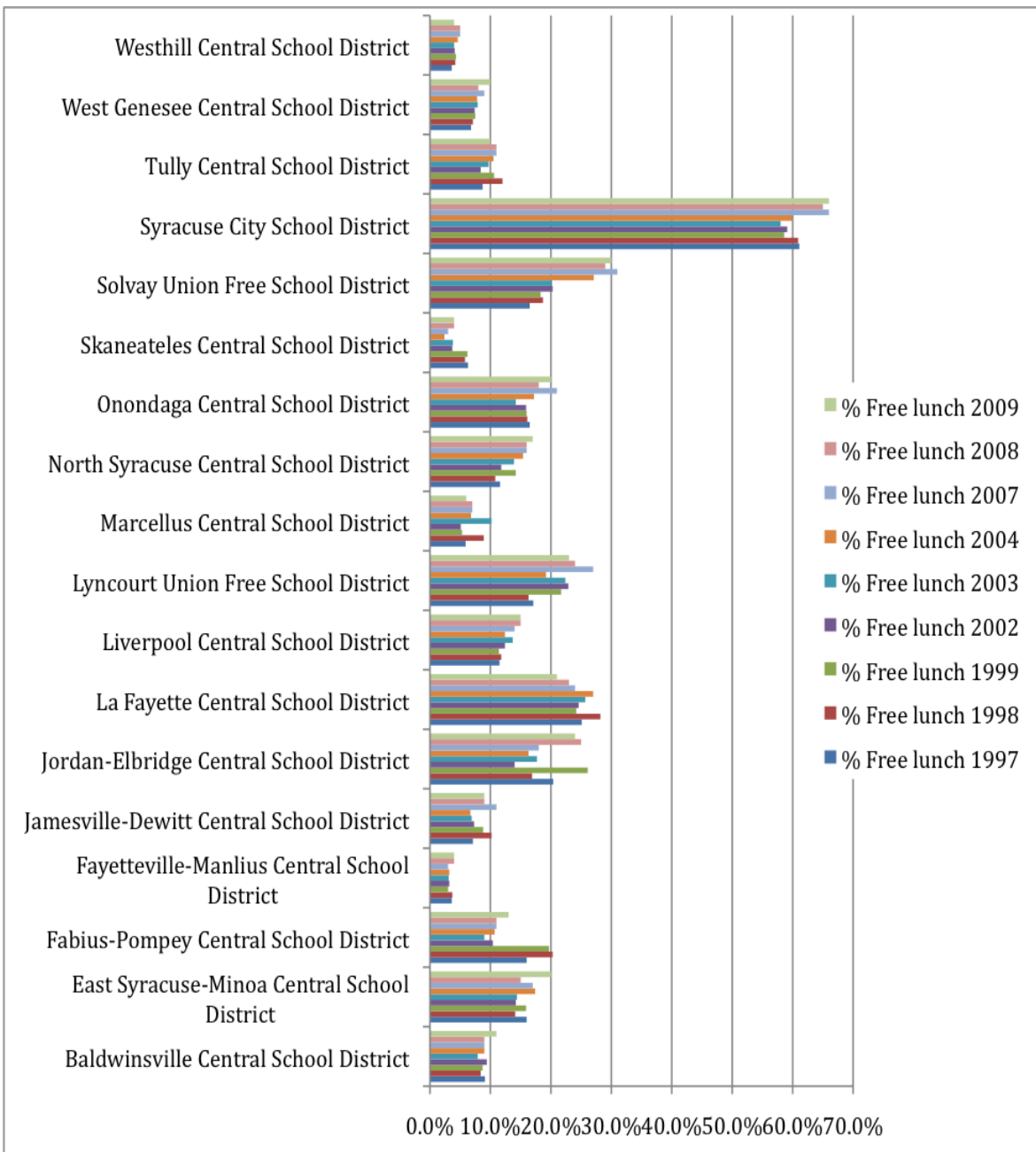


Figure 8: Percentage of Free Lunch

## 2008 FARM Rate by District

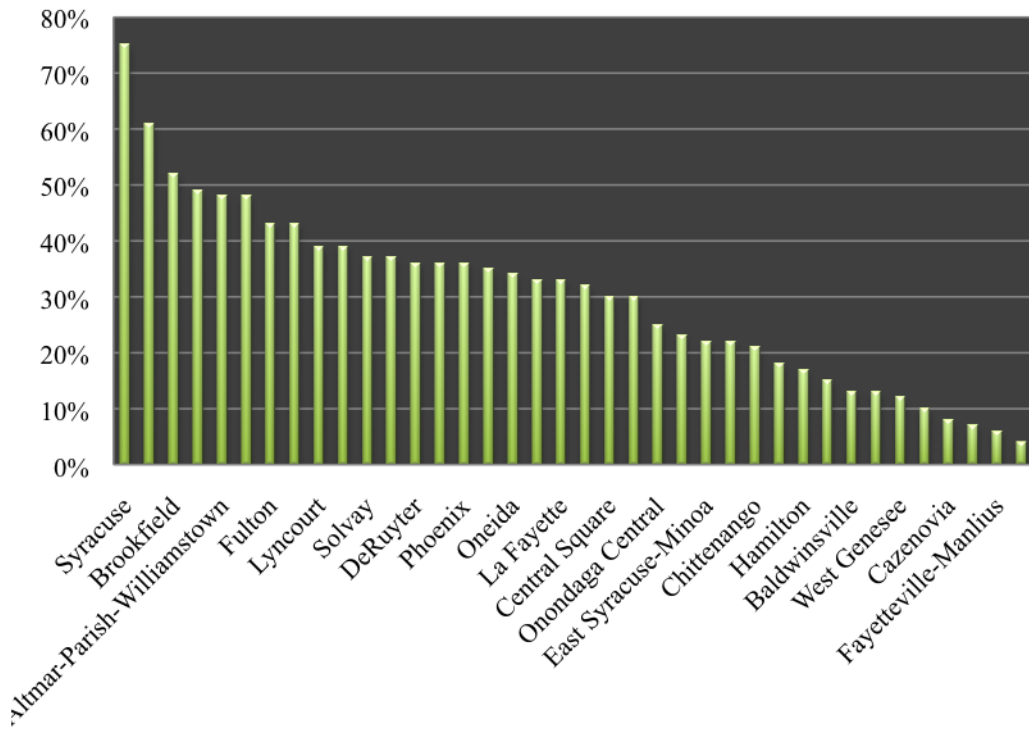


Figure 9: 2008 Farm Rates by District

District	ELA Proficiency by Grade and District						ELA Proficiency Average
	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	
Syracuse City School District	44%	45%	52%	41%	40%	31%	42%
Fulton City School District	50%	50%	78%	73%	54%	47%	59%
Hannibal Central School District	78%	65%	66%	44%	55%	45%	59%
West Genesee Central School District	70%	71%	70%	59%	67%	44%	64%
Oswego City School District	67%	67%	76%	74%	70%	49%	67%
La Fayette Central School District	73%	65%	76%	67%	60%	45%	64%
De Ruyter Central School District	50%	59%	60%	74%	59%	68%	62%
Jordan-Elbridge Central School District	67%	70%	74%	64%	69%	66%	68%
Liverpool Central School District	55%	45%	80%	69%	67%	60%	63%
Central Square Central School District	71%	54%	77%	73%	72%	62%	68%
Solvay Union Free School District	70%	66%	70%	71%	69%	66%	69%
Oneida City School District	56%	73%	74%	75%	81%	63%	70%
Canastota Central School District	73%	60%	85%	65%	82%	54%	70%
Mexico Central School District	75%	61%	75%	69%	70%	60%	68%
Onondaga Central School District	76%	64%	77%	60%	73%	64%	69%
Phoenix Central School District	77%	69%	89%	70%	81%	38%	71%
Pulaski Central School District	70%	68%	89%	66%	70%	52%	69%
Sandy Creek Central School District	76%	65%	81%	67%	69%	53%	69%
Chittenango Central School District	67%	66%	81%	65%	75%	72%	71%
Altmar-Parish-Williamstown Central School District	72%	61%	77%	70%	78%	63%	70%
Hamilton Central School District	87%	45%	79%	77%	81%	65%	72%
Madison Central School District	87%	80%	87%	62%	66%	62%	74%
Morrisville-Eaton Central School District	73%	74%	81%	73%	78%	61%	73%
Brookfield Central School District	79%	70%	74%	75%	74%	66%	73%
East Syracuse-Minoa Central School District	74%	72%	83%	76%	73%	66%	74%
North Syracuse Central School District	73%	65%	77%	75%	76%	66%	72%
Georgetown-South Ostelic Central School District	73%	73%	87%	76%	71%	63%	74%
Fabius-Pompey Central School District	81%	85%	88%	73%	82%	71%	80%
Stockbridge Valley Central School District	80%	82%	91%	78%	81%	67%	80%
Marcellus Central School District	85%	80%	89%	77%	78%	76%	81%
Westhill Central School District	81%	81%	86%	81%	91%	74%	82%
Baldwinsville Central School District	77%	75%	87%	95%	88%	68%	82%
Tully Central School District	81%	82%	94%	78%	85%	73%	82%
Skaneateles Central School District	85%	87%	88%	87%	85%	77%	85%
Cazenovia Central School District	81%	83%	92%	91%	90%	85%	87%
Jamesville-Dewitt Central School District	87%	92%	90%	88%	88%	77%	87%
Fayetteville-Manlius Central School District	88%	92%	92%	87%	95%	85%	90%
Lyncourt Union Free School District	88%	89%	94%	92%	89%	90%	90%

Table 6: ELA Proficiency by Grade and District

District	Math Proficiency by Grade and District						Math Proficiency Average	Math Ranking
	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8		

<b>Syracuse City School District</b>	66%	60%	53%	49%	41%	29%	50%	1
<b>Fulton City School District</b>	94%	75%	65%	56%	67%	55%	69%	2
<b>Hannibal Central School District</b>	95%	81%	76%	84%	82%	51%	78%	3
<b>West Genesee Central School District</b>	88%	70%	78%	79%	82%	68%	78%	6
<b>Oswego City School District</b>	74%	86%	43%	79%	81%	81%	74%	8
<b>La Fayette Central School District</b>	84%	68%	78%	80%	81%	71%	77%	7
<b>De Ruyter Central School District</b>	91%	80%	83%	93%	80%	53%	80%	4
<b>Jordan-Elbridge Central School District</b>	87%	69%	66%	68%	79%	75%	74%	11
<b>Liverpool Central School District</b>	73%	76%	86%	90%	74%	94%	82%	5
<b>Central Square Central School District</b>	85%	85%	83%	72%	84%	71%	80%	9
<b>Solvay Union Free School District</b>	89%	75%	70%	87%	89%	81%	82%	13
<b>Oneida City School District</b>	72%	90%	74%	94%	85%	68%	81%	18
<b>Canastota Central School District</b>	84%	77%	89%	83%	83%	73%	82%	16
<b>Mexico Central School District</b>	86%	89%	74%	79%	79%	96%	84%	10
<b>Onondaga Central School District</b>	95%	72%	90%	80%	82%	83%	84%	14
<b>Phoenix Central School District</b>	90%	75%	84%	77%	84%	83%	82%	19
<b>Pulaski Central School District</b>	92%	77%	81%	79%	86%	89%	84%	15
<b>Sandy Creek Central School District</b>	90%	83%	85%	84%	85%	84%	85%	12
<b>Chittenango Central School District</b>	94%	78%	72%	81%	94%	77%	83%	20
<b>Altmar-Parish-Williamstown Central School District</b>	88%	79%	81%	91%	86%	77%	84%	17
<b>Hamilton Central School District</b>	83%	88%	82%	59%	91%	87%	82%	22
<b>Madison Central School District</b>	92%	83%	90%	84%	70%	84%	84%	27
<b>Morrisville-Eaton Central School District</b>	90%	80%	83%	88%	89%	78%	85%	24
<b>Brookfield Central School District</b>	92%	87%	86%	90%	88%	79%	87%	23
<b>East Syracuse-Minoa Central School District</b>	100%	74%	83%	83%	94%	87%	87%	26
<b>North Syracuse Central School District</b>	95%	89%	92%	87%	92%	79%	89%	21
<b>Georgetown-South Ostelic Central School District</b>	92%	88%	87%	86%	87%	87%	88%	25
<b>Fabius-Pompey Central School District</b>	97%	87%	88%	86%	91%	78%	88%	29
<b>Stockbridge Valley Central School District</b>	91%	92%	90%	88%	94%	84%	90%	28
<b>Marcellus Central School District</b>	93%	90%	94%	90%	92%	85%	91%	30
<b>Westhill Central School District</b>	93%	88%	86%	87%	96%	93%	91%	33
<b>Baldwinsville Central School District</b>	98%	92%	93%	90%	93%	87%	92%	31
<b>Tully Central School District</b>	97%	88%	92%	96%	94%	95%	94%	32
<b>Skaneateles Central School District</b>	94%	93%	94%	85%	93%	92%	92%	34
<b>Cazenovia Central School District</b>	99%	91%	92%	92%	92%	89%	93%	35
<b>Jamesville-Dewitt Central School District</b>	93%	94%	95%	91%	94%	93%	93%	36
<b>Fayetteville-Manlius Central School District</b>	97%	94%	92%	97%	95%	96%	95%	37
<b>Lyncourt Union Free School District</b>	98%	95%	97%	96%	95%	96%	96%	38

**Table 7: Math Proficiency by Grade and District**

<b>District</b>	<b>Composite Average Meeting Proficiency in Math and ELA</b>	<b>Composite Rank</b>
Syracuse City School District	45.9%	1
Fulton City School District	63.7%	2
Hannibal Central School District	68.5%	3
West Genesee Central School District	70.5%	4
Oswego City School District	70.6%	5
La Fayette Central School District	70.7%	6
De Ruyter Central School District	70.8%	7
Jordan-Elbridge Central School District	71.2%	8
Liverpool Central School District	72.4%	9
Central Square Central School District	74.1%	10
Solvay Union Free School District	75.3%	11
Oneida City School District	75.4%	12
Canastota Central School District	75.7%	13
Mexico Central School District	76.1%	14
Onondaga Central School District	76.3%	15
Phoenix Central School District	76.4%	16
Pulaski Central School District	76.6%	17
Sandy Creek Central School District	76.8%	18
Chittenango Central School District	76.8%	19
Altmar-Parish-Williamstown Central School District	76.9%	20
Hamilton Central School District	77.0%	21
Madison Central School District	78.9%	22
Morrisville-Eaton Central School District	79.0%	23
Brookfield Central School District	80.0%	24
East Syracuse-Minoa Central School District	80.4%	25
North Syracuse Central School District	80.5%	26
Georgetown-South Ostelic Central School District	80.8%	27
Fabius-Pompey Central School District	83.9%	28
Stockbridge Valley Central School District	84.8%	29
Marcellus Central School District	85.8%	30
Westhill Central School District	86.4%	31
Baldwinsville Central School District	86.9%	32
Tully Central School District	87.9%	33
Skaneateles Central School District	88.3%	34
Cazenovia Central School District	89.8%	35
Jamesville-Dewitt Central School District	90.2%	36
Fayetteville-Manlius Central School District	92.5%	37
Lyncourt Union Free School District	93.3%	38

**Table 8: Composite Performance by Grade and District**



## Endnotes

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<sup>i</sup> It should be noted that the differing estimates of job growth in the Syracuse MSA (3% decline in U.S. Census data versus 0.24% decline from the BEA) is due to differing methods of estimating total jobs by the two federal government agencies. The U.S. Census jobs data are derived from Unemployment Insurance Wage Records reported by employers and maintained by each state. For more information on the U.S. Census methodology, see <http://lehd.did.census.gov/led/datatools/aboutdata.html>. Although the BEA also utilizes unemployment records to make its estimates, it also counts numerous forms of wage and salary employment in industries not covered by the unemployment insurance program. In addition, the BEA makes adjustments to job counts in unemployment records to correct for common issues of underestimation in these records. For more information on the BEA methodology, see <http://www.bea.gov/regional/pdf/lapi2008/employment.pdf>.

<sup>ii</sup> Data for expenditures per student varies depending on whether pre-kindergarten enrollment is reported.