

Metro Detroit's 20 Largest School Districts, Ranked by Student Attainment

By *Ardelia Lee* -
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Education is important, but it's very clear that not all students are educated equally. The New York Times [published an article](#) based on a [study](#) that looked at the correlation between money race, and student success. The results were fascinating and disheartening.

But what does that mean locally? Using the Stanford Center For Education Policy Analysis study data, we applied the findings to Metro Detroit's 20 largest school districts (using the tri-county area as definition this time) to see how their student attainment levels stacked up against the national average.

We found that, not surprisingly, districts with high median family incomes tended to have student attainment levels far above the national average. Check out the findings below.

+2.4 grades – Rochester Community School District



Students in the Rochester Community School District in Rochester Hills are 2.4 grade levels above the national average. For a school district of 15,051 students, that's quite impressive. The median family income in this district is a whopping \$117,000. Racially, the district is 76 percent white, five percent black, and four percent Hispanic.

+2.3 grades – Troy School District

The Troy School District runs a close second to Rochester Hills. The 12,540 students in the Troy schools are 2.3 grade levels above the national average, and like Rochester Hills, the Troy School District boasts a median family income of \$114,000. The racial composition in this school district is 60 percent white, six percent black, and two percent Hispanic.

+ 1.6 grades – Lake Orion Community Schools



There's quite a gap between Troy and the next district on the list. Lake Orion Community Schools in Orion Charter Township rank third with student educational attainment coming in at 1.6 grade levels above the national average. The median family income is a little lower here, but at \$96,000, it's still quite high. Like the first two districts, Lake Orion Community Schools is mostly white. Of the 7,549 students in the district, student race breaks down as 87 percent white, three percent black, and four percent Hispanic.

+1.5 grades – South Lyon Community Schools

South Lyon Community Schools follow Lake Orion closely, with student education attainment ranking at 1.5 grade levels above average. The school district has 7,430 students and a median family income of \$87,000. The district's racial composition is 91 percent white, three percent black, and three percent Hispanic.

+1.4 grades – Grosse Pointe Public Schools and Plymouth-Canton Community Schools



There's a tie for fifth place between Grosse Pointe Public Schools and Plymouth-Canton Community Schools. Both districts have students who are 1.4 grade levels above the national average. Grosse Pointe has 8,328 students and a median family income of \$108,000. Racially, the district is 78 percent white, 16 percent black, and two percent Hispanic. Plymouth-Canton schools have 17,646 students. Further data was not readily available.

+1.2 grades – Walled Lake Consolidated Schools

Located in Commerce Charter Township, Walled Lake Consolidated Schools have 14,944 students and an education attainment level at 1.2 grades above the national average. The median family income in the district is \$91,000. Like the previous districts, Walled Lake is mostly white (80 percent), followed by nine percent black, and three percent Hispanic.

+1.1 grades – Clarkston Community School District



Just below Walled Lake is the Clarkston Community School District in Independence Charter Township. The district has 7,893 students and an educational attainment of 1.1 grades above the national average. Median family income is \$91,000, and the district is mostly white. Student racial breakdown is 88 percent white, two percent black, and five percent Hispanic.

+ .9 grades – Livonia Public School District

With 14,732 students, Livonia is one of the larger districts in the list. Its students are .9 grade levels above average, and median family income is \$83,000. The racial composition for this school district is 82 percent white, eight percent black, and three percent Hispanic.

+ .8 grades – Farmington Public School District and Huron Valley Schools



The Farmington Public School District in Farmington Hills and the Huron Valley Schools in Highland Charter Township are tied with a student attainment level that's .8 grade levels above the national average. The larger of the two, Farmington Public Schools has 10,719 students and a median family income of \$92,000. Student race is 60 percent white, 23 percent black, and two percent Hispanic.

Huron Valley Schools have 9,751 students and a median family income of \$85,000. There's a higher percentage of white students in this district, at 93 percent. Black students make up just one percent, while Hispanic students count for three percent.

+ .1 grades – Chippewa Valley Schools

Chippewa Valley Schools in Clinton Charter Township are doing slightly better than the national average. The district's 16,477 students are .1 grade levels ahead of the national average. The median family income is \$85,000, and racial composition still hasn't changed much. White students count for 84 percent, blacks for eight percent, and Hispanics for three percent.

-.5 grades – Waterford School District



At 10,287 students, the Waterford School District is mid-sized on this list. However, it starts the decline to the below-average attainment levels. This district has an educational attainment level of .5 grade levels below average. Median family income in the Waterford district is \$64,000. It's one of the more diverse school districts on the list, at 77 percent white, 10 percent black, and 10 percent Hispanic.

-.7 grades – Warren Consolidated Schools

Close behind Waterford is Warren Consolidated Schools at 15,116 students. The district's student attainment level is .7 grade levels below the national average. Like Waterford, median family income is \$64,000. However, this district is far less diverse, at 73 percent white, 16 percent black, and one percent Hispanic.

-.8 grades – Dearborn City School District



The Dearborn schools are right on the heels of Warren schools, with a student attainment of .8 grade levels below national average. Dearborn, the larger of the two, has 19,190 students and a median family

income of \$44,000. Racially, the district is described as 83 percent white, 13 percent black, and three percent Hispanic.

-1.3 grades – Wayne-Westland Community School District, Southfield Public School District, and Taylor School District

A three-way tie is up next. Wayne-Westland schools, Southfield schools, and Taylor schools all have a student attainment level that sits 1.3 levels below national average. However, the similarities end there.

The Wayne-Westland schools have 12,412 students and a median family income of \$50,000. The students in this district are 57 percent white, 34 percent black, and four percent Hispanic.

Southfield Schools have 8,253 students and the highest median family income of the three schools at \$62,000. This district is more racially uniform, with five percent white, 94 percent black, and no Hispanic students.

The Taylor School District is the smallest of the three, with 7,400 students. Its median family income is \$44,000. Racially, the schools are 63 percent white, 27 percent black, and six percent Hispanic.

-1.5 grades – L’Anse Creuse Public Schools

L’Anse Creuse Public Schools in Harrison Charter Township have 11,266 students and a student attainment level that falls 1.5 grades below average. The median family income is \$36,000, the lowest on this list. The district is extremely racially uniform at 96 percent white, one percent black, and one percent Hispanic.

-2.3 grades – Detroit Public Schools



There's a sizable gap before we get to the final school district on the list. Detroit Public Schools have the highest number of students enrolled – 49,043. However, the district has the lowest educational attainment level at 2.3 grades below average. The median family income is \$27,000. Racially, the district is 3 percent white, 9 percent hispanic, 87 percent black, and one percent Asian/other.

Another thing to note about Detroit Public Schools – whereas most school districts are controlled locally, DPS has been under state control since 2009. Before that, they were under state control from 1999-2005.