

# CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY I.D.E.A. COALITION

A County-wide coalition to promote Racial and Social Justice through Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access (I.D.E.A.)

The following document is a narrative that captures significant problems in our community, as defined by directly impacted community members themselves. These three barriers emerged as priorities during a series of town hall meetings and surveys held in the winter and spring of 2023. The next steps will be to develop solution teams to address these challenges. This report highlights one of the three barriers identified by the community.

## EDUCATION SYSTEM

### Contents:

- Narrative defining the problem and causes of the hurdles to education among the Black and Latino communities.
- Comparative data.
- Solutions offered by community members who attended April 2023 Town Hall meetings.
- Solutions proposed from the full I.D.E.A. Coalition meeting in May of 2023.

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# **EDUCATION SYSTEM**

*“The demographics of our teachers do not reflect the students they are serving.”*

## **1 . Definition of the problem**

An overarching issue that was voiced by students, parents/guardians, and the public is **a lack of representation in local public school systems.** Members of historically marginalized populations are not proportionally represented in the demographics of school board representatives, administration, teachers, counselors, paraprofessionals, and others working in the school system.

Of most concern is the **unequal treatment and discrimination** that students of marginalized populations face in the school system. This includes the over-disciplining of students, and bias or favoritism of white students over students of color by the administration, teachers, and others working directly in the school. It also includes a lack of access to advancement opportunities for students of color, such as student appointments or recognition (student of the month or other honors). This concern also translates into an **issue of safety for students of color**, who voiced that they feel their emotional, mental, and physical safety is at risk in the school setting.

Additionally, there is **little acknowledgment or celebration of student cultural diversity** in social activities or the curriculum across all grade levels.

Similar concerns were raised for students in higher education in our community.

## **2. (From our perspective) What is causing the problem?**

We recognize that the problem contains many compounded and multifaceted issues.

- Lack of representation in the public school system.
- Lack of relationships and trust in school representatives.
- Lack of acknowledgment or celebration of student cultural diversity.
- Unequal treatment and discrimination of students of color, over-disciplining, bias or favoritism, and lack of access to advancement opportunities.
- Issues of safety for students of color

## **3. What are the effects?**

- Academic Gains
- Graduation & Dropout Rates
  - Students of color have a lower graduation rate and higher dropout rate.
- Educational Attainment & Workforce Stats
  - Poverty status is directly correlated with educational attainment.

## **4. Comments Shared by Community Members:**

- “Race/Equity Dashboard for transparency and accountability”
- “Make efforts to have Black and Brown representatives on the school boards”
- “Poor performance of Black / Latino students. Low teacher expectations. Implicit bias.”
- “JPS leadership needs to be trained. The climate and culture are horrible. Those are leaders that should hold themselves accountable.”
- “The school needs to be questioned by someone higher than their friends who cover.”
- “Why is there one set of rules for the blacks and another for the white? Same for the rich and poor.”

## Public Data

### Demographics:

#### Chautauqua County Public School Student Enrollment K-12 (2021-22)

Race/ Ethnicity	Count	Percentage
American Indian or Alaska Native	151	1%
Black or African American	298	2%
Hispanic or Latino	2,877	17%
Asian or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	90	1%
White	12,727	75%
Multiracial	898	5%
Total	17,041	

\*Combined students of color (non-white) make up to 26% of enrollment

#### Teacher Diversity in (18) Chautauqua County Schools

Of 1,721 teachers, 32 or 1.86% identify as a person of color (non-white).

#### Dunkirk Public School Student Enrollment K-12 (2021-22)

Race/Ethnicity	Count	Percentage
American Indian or Alaska Native	5	1%
Black or African American	70	4%
Hispanic or Latino	1,120	57%
Asian or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	3	0%
White	691	35%
Multiracial	68	3%
Total	1,957	

\*Combined students of color (non-white) make up to 65% of enrollment **Teacher**

#### Diversity Dunkirk Public Schools:

Of 178 teachers, 5 or 2.8% identified as a person of color (non-white).

#### Jamestown Public School Student Enrollment K-12 (2021-22)

Race/ Ethnicity	Count	Percentage
American Indian or Alaska Native	11	0%
Black or African American	136	3%
Hispanic or Latino	1,042	24%
Asian or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	17	0%
White	2,610	61%
Multiracial	445	10%
Total	4,261	

\*Combined students of color (non-white) make up to 37% of enrollment **Teacher**

#### Diversity Jamestown Public Schools:

Of 426 teachers, 13 or 3.1% identified as a person of color (non-white).

**Graduation & Dropout Rates:**

**2021-22 Chautauqua County School Districts**

	<b>Graduates</b>	<b>Graduation %</b>	<b>Dropout %</b>
All Students	1,417	84%	10%
<b>Ethnicity</b>			
American Indian or Alaska Native	8	88%	13%
Asian or Native Hawaiian/ Other Pacific Islander	8	88%	0%
Black or African American	32	78%	13%
Hispanic or Latino	207	69%	19%
White	1,096	87%	7%
Multiracial	66	71%	24%
<b>ESL</b>			
English Language Learner	50	50%	36%
Non-English Language Learner	1,367	85%	9%

**2021-22 Dunkirk School District**

	<b>Graduates</b>	<b>Graduation %</b>	<b>Dropout %</b>
All Students	177	71%	20%
<b>Ethnicity</b>			
American Indian or Alaska Native	0	0%	0%
Asian or Native Hawaiian/ Other Pacific Islander	0	0%	0%
Black or African American	8	88%	12%
Hispanic or Latino	95	64%	25%
White	73	79%	15%
Multiracial	10	100%	0%
<b>ESL</b>			
English Language Learner	33	39%	42%
Non-English Language Learner	144	78%	15%

## 2021-22 Jamestown School District

	Graduates	Graduation %	Dropout %
All Students	354	75%	16%
<b>Ethnicity</b>			
American Indian or Alaska Native	1	100%	0%
Asian or Native Hawaiian/ Other Pacific Islander	0	0%	0%
Black or African American	15	87%	6.7%
Hispanic or Latino	72	74%	10%
White	228	77%	14%
Multiracial	38	58%	37%
<b>ESL</b>			
English Language Learner	14	79%	14%
Non-English Language Learner	340	75%	16%

### Data Sources:

- Student Enrollment, NYSED <https://data.nysed.gov/profile.php?county=06>
- Teacher Diversity, data was self reported by school districts to NYSED <https://data.lohud.com/ny-teacher-diversity/06/chautauqua/>

## Educational Attainment Correlation to Poverty Level

Poverty status of families was directly correlated with the educational attainment of the householder.

- Of families with a householder having less than a high school diploma, 31.1% were living below the Federal Poverty Level. (compared to only 5.9% of those with a bachelor’s degree or higher)

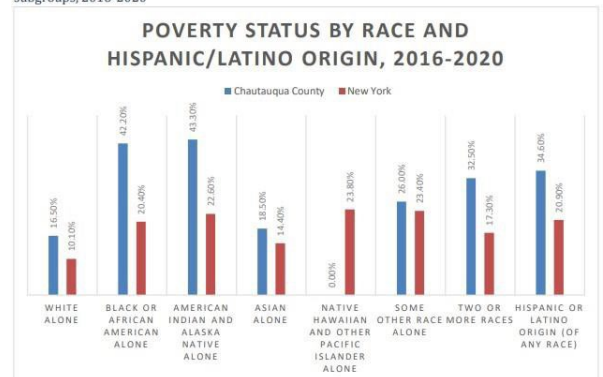
Poverty status by race and ethnicity figures indicate racial and ethnic populations were much more likely to live in poverty in Chautauqua County than NYS as a whole.

- 42.2%- Black
- 34.6% -Hispanic
- 32.5% -Two or more races
- 26%- identify as some other race

### Data Source:

- Chautauqua County Community Health Assessment, 2022-2024\_ [CHQ.CHA\\_2022.Final\\_.pdf \(chqgov.com\)](#)

Figure 12. Percent of families living below the Federal Poverty Level in the last 12 months by ethnic subgroups, 2016-2020



**What Was Said:**

*“The demographics of our teachers do not reflect the students they are serving.”*

*“Lack of spanish-speaking teachers, support and office staff in the schools.”*

*“Dealing with implicit and explicit bias from teachers and leaders in the school.”*

*“You are supposed to feel safe in school. You shouldn’t be made fun of (in school) because of the race you are. “*

