

May 19, 2006

*Dear Donors and Friends  
of the Stark Education  
Partnership –*

We are pleased to send you this first edition of “Looking at the Issues.” Each week we will send you an update on the work of the Stark Education Partnership and/or a brief on a topic of interest related to our work.

Your feedback is welcome and will be appreciated. And, if you know someone else who would enjoy this communication please forward their email to us and we’ll add them to our mailing list.

Sincerely yours – The Staff of  
the Stark Education Partnership

Adrienne O’Neill, Ed.D. – President  
Joseph Rochford, Ph.D. – Vice President  
Adele Gelb – Program Officer  
Kim Ross – Graphic Designer

---

*Questions or Comments?*

Email [aoneill@edpartner.org](mailto:aoneill@edpartner.org)  
or call 330-452-0829.

*Our Website*

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

*Our Address*

220 Market Ave S - Suite 350  
Canton, Ohio 44702-2181

## Looking At The

# ISSUES

### **High School Graduation Rates are Increasing in Stark County**

If you have attended any events recently where Dianne Talarico, Superintendent of the Canton City Schools has spoken, you would have heard her tell about the rising high school graduation rates in the Canton City Schools. Over the last five years, the graduation rates have increased from 48% to 75%. The 75% rate has not yet been officially reported by the State of Ohio Department of Education, but when it is, it will be the high school graduation rate for the 2004-2005 school year because the reporting is one year behind. While Dianne always adds that this increase does not yet put the district where it needs to be, clearly significant progress is being made. Progress will continue as the faculty and staff of McKinley high school implement their mission: “We will not rest until we graduate 100% of our students.” The goal of the Timken faculty and staff is stated slightly differently, but is the same. When the goal is accomplished, Stark County can be proud of having the first urban school district in the nation to have done so.

The Stark Education Partnership regularly publishes the Stark County high school graduation rates. Those rates are reported by the State of Ohio Department of Education using 9th grade students graduating four years later. We are interested in the data because it is an educational progress indicator and one dimension of economic health in our community. Currently, 87% of the Stark County adult population has earned a high school diploma. Our goal is to raise that percentage in collaboration with our school district and college partners using strategies that uniquely work in Stark County. Future bulletins will talk about some of those strategies.

There have been national publications that have discredited state data regarding graduation rates and suggest that all states are reporting inflated graduation rates. While those studies may well be correct, the position of the Stark Education Partnership is that in Stark County we are looking at data that has been calculated in the same way for the comparison periods. Thus, if the trends are showing an increase, we are satisfied that progress is being made.

Moreover, we are interested in the fact that rigorous course work for all students is increasing in Stark County. One of our next *Looking at the Issues* will discuss rigorous course work and why we believe that is important in the context of a “flat world” and in the context of Stark County where we need to have an educated workforce to be competitive.

Listed below are the latest graduation figures reported for Stark County.

### Stark County High School Graduation Rates

School	SY 2002-2003		SY 2003-2004	
	HS Graduates	Graduation Rate	HS Graduates	Graduation Rate
Alliance City Schools	203	86.8	212	80.0
Alliance High School	203	86.8	212	80.0
Canton City Schools	609	54.1	754	67.3
McKinley High School	364	73.4	331	76.8
Timken High School	170	59.6	178	62.5
Choices Alternative School	53	24.7	194	74.9
Passages	6	40.0	4	16.7
Canton City School Digital Academy	-	-	4	NC
Canton Local Schools	174	97.8	178	97.3
Canton South High School	174	97.8	178	97.3
Fairless Local Schools	133	89.3	150	96.2
Fairless High School	133	90.5	150	96.2
Jackson Local Schools	406	95.3	427	96.8
Jackson High School	406	96.4	427	97.3
Lake Local Schools	284	96.9	260	98.1
Lake High School	284	97.6	260	98.1
Louisville City Schools	232	94.7	223	94.5
Louisville High School	232	95.1	223	94.5
Marlington Local Schools	183	94.8	221	96.5
Marlington High School	183	96.3	221	96.5
Massillon City Schools	280	88.9	321	88.9
Washington High School	280	88.9	320	89.1
Massillon Digital Academy	-	-	1	NC
Minerva Local Schools	147	87.5	134	89.3
Minerva High Schools	147	87.5	134	89.3
North Canton City Schools	376	97.9	395	98.5
Hoover High Schools	376	97.9	395	98.5
Northwest Local Schools	172	100.0	172	90.0
Northwest High School	172	100.0	172	90.0
Osnaburg Local Schools	84	91.3	84	91.3
East Canton Digital Academy, Inc	4	NC	4	NC
East Canton High School	80	96.4	80	96.4
Perry Local Schools	329	99.1	385	96.5
Perry High School	329	100.0	385	97.0
Plain Local Schools	432	95.2	437	96.0
Golden Eage Digital Academy	1	NC	0	-
Glen Oak High School	431	95.6	437	96.0
Sandy Valley Local Schools	121	93.8	127	95.5
Cardinal Digital Academy, Inc	-	-	15	100.0
Sandy Valley High School	121	94.5	112	94.9
Tuslaw Local Schools	100	87.0	122	96.1
Tuslaw Jr./Sr. High School	100	87.0	122	96.1

Source: Stark/Portage Area Computer Consortium (SPARCC)



After a request by the Governor’s Office to the Stark Education Partnership, *Canton Local students testified in Columbus to the House and Senate Education committees* on behalf of a rigorous core curriculum and increased dual credit opportunities. The legislators were very impressed and in some cases, changed their minds on these issues.

Dr. Joseph Rochford, as one of 100 invited representatives, attended a conference sponsored by ACT on Monday, May 15, 2006. *Governor Taft commended the work of the Stark County P-16 and ACT speakers recognized the value of the Stark County ACT study* (see our website for a complete copy of the publication “Advancing Ohio’s P-16 Agenda: Exit and Entrance Exam.”)

### You’re Invited to Attend...

An Early College celebration in the Timken High School auditorium at 6:00 PM on Thursday, May 25, 2006