

Education in Geneva, 2022



OVERVIEW

This report, in keeping with Geneva 2030’s mission of supporting the success of every child and helping to create and transform the systems that shape opportunity, is designed to shed light on challenges facing Geneva school students. We seek to measure successes and failures, and, with the assistance of data – show areas in need of improvement.

A LOOK BACK

In 2011, a review by the state Education Department and a school district intervention team analyzed the quality of education at Geneva High School and found it woefully lacking. The review found shortcomings in such areas as English language arts, foreign language and science, and a lack of emphasis on literacy. “Low expectations for students and a lack of instructional rigor were observed across the curriculum,” the report found.

One of the school’s strengths, however, was its long history of strong ties in the community, including a partnership with Finger Lakes Community College and collaborative projects with Hobart and William Smith Colleges, the Boys and Girls Club, and other organizations.

The review led to the formation of what is now known as Geneva 2030, which is committed to honing these relationships and improving our schools. Bo Wright, the school’s representative on the review team, is now district superintendent and a member of the Geneva 2030 executive board. The district also received a \$2.5 million grant from the state School Turnaround Office.

THEN AND NOW

High school enrollment has declined significantly by 14%, from 725 in 2011 to 621 in 2022. The proportion of Hispanic and ELL students increased, while the percentage declined for white students and black students.

GHS	2011	2022
Total students	725	621
% White	57	43
% Black	20	12
% Hispanic	11	33
% Multi-racial	0	10
% ELL	4	8

Despite declining enrollment the number and proportion of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch have risen.

GCS D	2011	2021
Eligible for free lunch	1066	1185
% eligible free	47	60
Eligible for reduced price lunch	208	59
% eligible reduced	9	3

Graduation rates improved over the years, but some groups still lag behind.

GHS	2011	2022
Grad rate overall (%)	71	81
Students with disabilities grad rate (%)	37	57
Economically disadvantaged students grad rate (%)	42	70
Black grad rate (%)	42	83

Sources: NYS Education Department, 2011 intervention team report. Note: 2011 figures are drawn directly from the report. They may differ slightly from those maintained by NYSED.

Assessment test scores were not part of the 2011 review, as they are administered at the elementary and middle school levels. In the 2010-2011 school year, the state reported the following scores for fourth graders and eighth graders:

4th grade	% proficient, 2011	% proficient, 2022
English	35%	18%
Math	36%	19%

8th grade	% proficient, 2011	% proficient, 2022
English	35%	50%
Math	30%	28%

ACCOUNTABILITY

The Every Student Succeeds Act, or ESSA, the main federal law for K-12 public education, includes provisions to support student achievement through advancing equity by upholding protections for high-need students; ensures information is provided to educators, families, and communities; and maintains an expectation that there will be accountability and action to effective positive change in schools where children are struggling.

The accountability system classifies schools into one of three categories:

1. In Good Standing
2. A Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) school
3. A Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) school.

GCSD has been named a targeted district, which means that the district has struggled to adequately prepare certain groups of students. Groups targeted for support at the elementary/middle school level are:

1. Black or African American;
2. Hispanic or Latino;
3. Multiracial;
4. And/or economically disadvantaged.

In addition, English language learners have been pinpointed as a potential target group.

At the high school level, targeted groups are Hispanic or Latino, and/or economically disadvantaged.

KEY AREAS

FINANCES

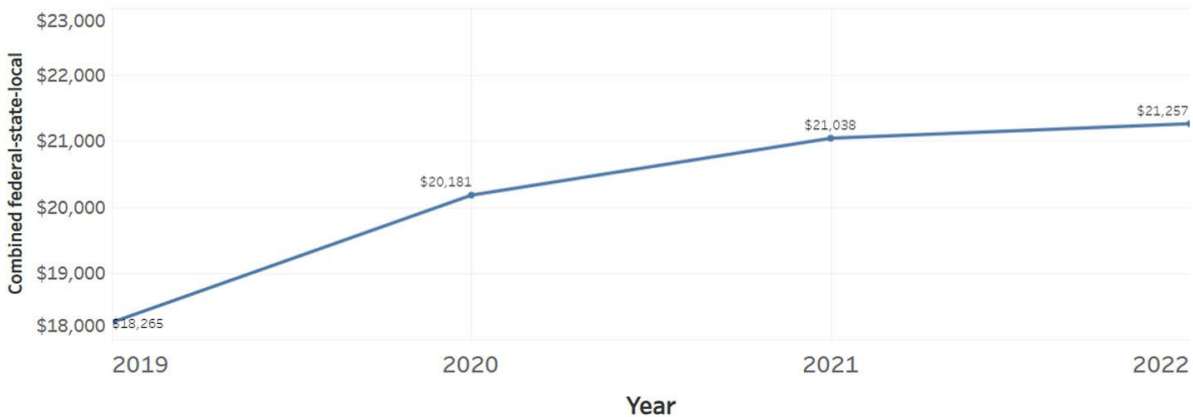
Voters passed a \$68 million school district budget in May, a 6.4% increase over the prior year. (For insights into how this spending benefits the larger community, see GenevaCollectiveImpact.com.)

The district's total revenue in 2022 totaled \$70.7 million, with state and federal aid contributing 51% and property taxes 30%.

The following chart shows the recent trend in federal, state and local funding of GCSD. The district received a major boost in 2022, with more than \$6 million in federal covid relief. As stated in the district's [2022 financial statements](#), the total allotted for stimulus funding related to the pandemic is more than \$7 million through June 2024.

The following graphic shows combined federal, state and local spending per pupil:

Combined federal, state & local spending per pupil
GCSD, 2019 to 2022



IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY

The quality of local schools is a prime consideration in where people choose to live. Choice is typically more available to the affluent. They can choose to live in other districts, even as they work in Geneva; they can send their children to private schools; they can move away until their children graduate in other school systems, then move back. Anecdotally, we have all heard variations on this theme.

Diversity includes education attainment and income. A robust city and a progressive school district need diversity in their populations, which should encompass educated, professional people – as residents, community leaders, and taxpayers.

Census data indicates that of the 7,635 people working in the city of Geneva in 2021, 1,534 lived outside the city. That's 20% of the city's workforce. (Some of those people may live in the town of Geneva, still within the Geneva City School District.) How many of these workers chose their location because of educational opportunity is unknown.

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Bo Wright, former superintendent of the Rush-Henrietta Central School District, joined the Geneva City School District as superintendent on July 1, 2022.

Like other districts across the country, GCSD has struggled with staff turnover and a shortage of teachers. As noted in the district's most recent [financial report](#), "the district has seen a significant increase in resignations and retirements." As of June 30, 2022, there were over 40 instructional positions that need to be filled.

DISTRICT DEMOGRAPHICS

Poverty

Of 490 Upstate school districts, Geneva ranks 122nd in its population of school-aged children (ages 5-17). It ranks 91st in the number of children living in poverty, and 202nd in the percentage of children in poverty.

An analysis of districts with similar-sized youth populations (age 5-17) shows that Geneva falls in the middle. Of 22 districts, it ranks 11th in percent poverty.

district	totalPop	pop 5-17	pop 5-17 in Poverty	povRate 5-17	city	county
Dunkirk City School District	14,136	2,134	600	28.1	Dunkirk	Chautauqua
Olean City School District	15,125	2,401	570	23.7	Olean	Cattaraugus
Cohoes City School District	18,083	2,128	496	23.3	Cohoes	Albany
Central Valley Central School District	13,812	2,172	413	19	Ilion	Herkimer
Hudson Falls Central School District	15,567	2,194	414	18.9	Hudson Falls	Washington
Mexico Central School District	12,311	2,193	400	18.2	Mexico	Oswego
Glens Falls City School District	15,390	2,090	365	17.5	Glens Falls	Warren
Cheektowaga-Maryvale Union Free School District	18,790	2,365	407	17.2	Cheektowaga	Erie
Malone Central School District	17,596	2,272	388	17.1	Malone	Franklin
Camden Central School District	12,806	2,088	354	17	Camden	Oneida
Geneva City School District	17,216	2,260	375	16.6	Geneva	Ontario
Newark Central School District	14,478	2,174	346	15.9	Newark	Wayne
Penn Yan Central School District	15,095	2,241	340	15.2	Penn Yan	Yates
Depew Union Free School District	15,802	2,089	280	13.4	Depew	Erie
Rondout Valley Central School District	16,657	2,090	278	13.3	Accord	Ulster
Evans-Brant Central School District (Lake Shore)	16,607	2,321	290	12.5	Angola	Erie

Schalmont Central School District	14,651	2,111	180	8.5	Schenectady	Schenectady
Lewiston-Porter Central School District	18,364	2,306	191	8.3	Youngstown	Niagara
New Paltz Central School District	20,062	2,316	180	7.8	New Paltz	Ulster
Wayne Central School District	15,366	2,375	175	7.4	Ontario	Wayne
Honeoye Falls-Lima Central School District	13,551	2,384	131	5.5	Honeoye Falls	Monroe
East Aurora Union Free School District	12,953	2,088	101	4.8	East Aurora	Erie

Source: [U.S. Census Bureau](#)

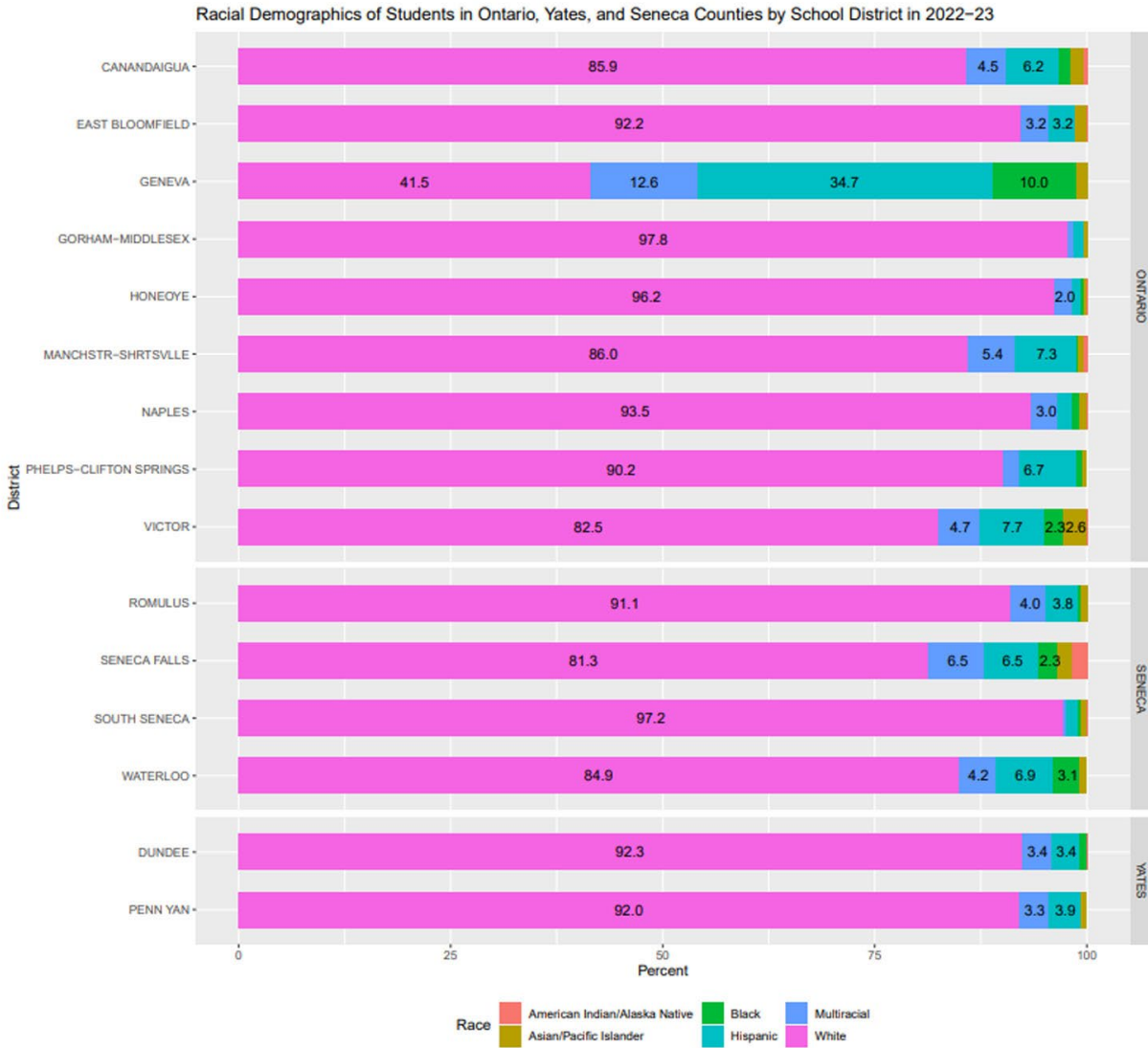
While poverty in Geneva is a serious problem, it is not the sole driver of GCSD's chronic absenteeism and low scores on assessment tests. Inequity and language are also directly connected to these challenges.

Diversity

Geneva is more diverse than many other Upstate districts, which is both a strength in preparing all of our students for the future, and a challenge in providing equitable, accessible education.

The following graphic compares GCSD with other Ontario County districts.

Student Diversity by School District: 2022-2023

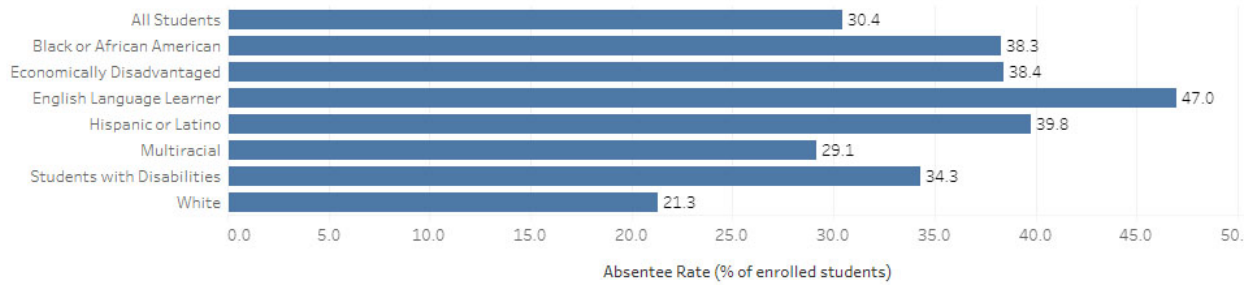


Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, [Success for Geneva's Children](#)

ATTENDANCE

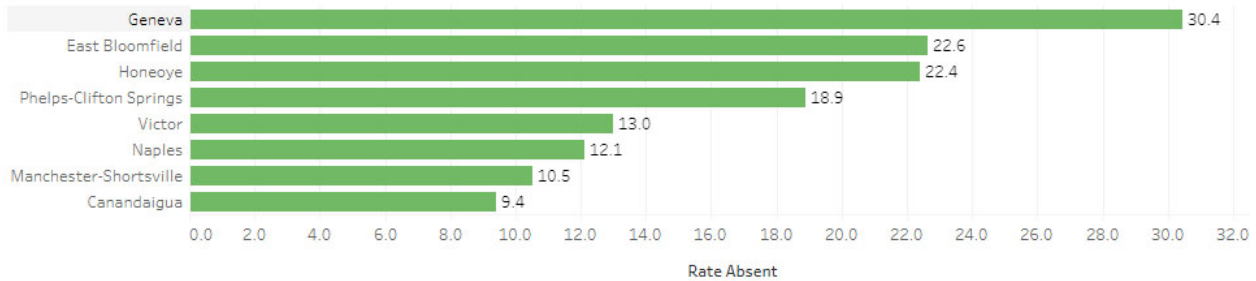
Chronic absenteeism rates at Geneva schools are alarmingly high, particularly since the pandemic. The following graphic shows rates for all elementary-middle school students, with breakout figures for subgroups. The rate is highest among English language learners.

Chronic absenteeism at GCS D elementary & middle schools



This next chart compares Geneva's overall rate to that of other Ontario County districts:

Elementary-middle school absenteeism, Ontario districts

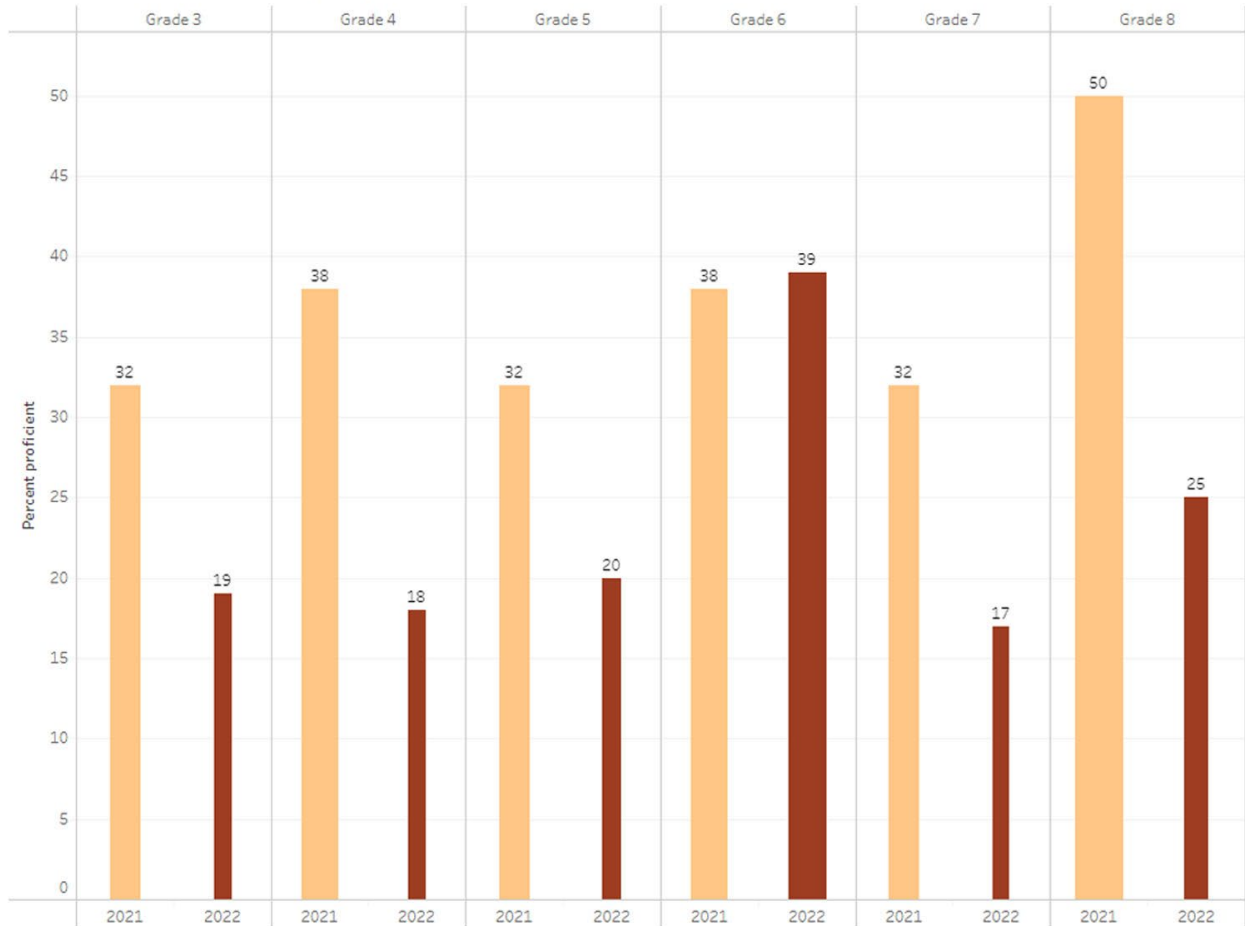


Source: NYS Education Department. For more information, see: GenevaCollectiveImpact.com.

ASSESSMENT TEST SCORES

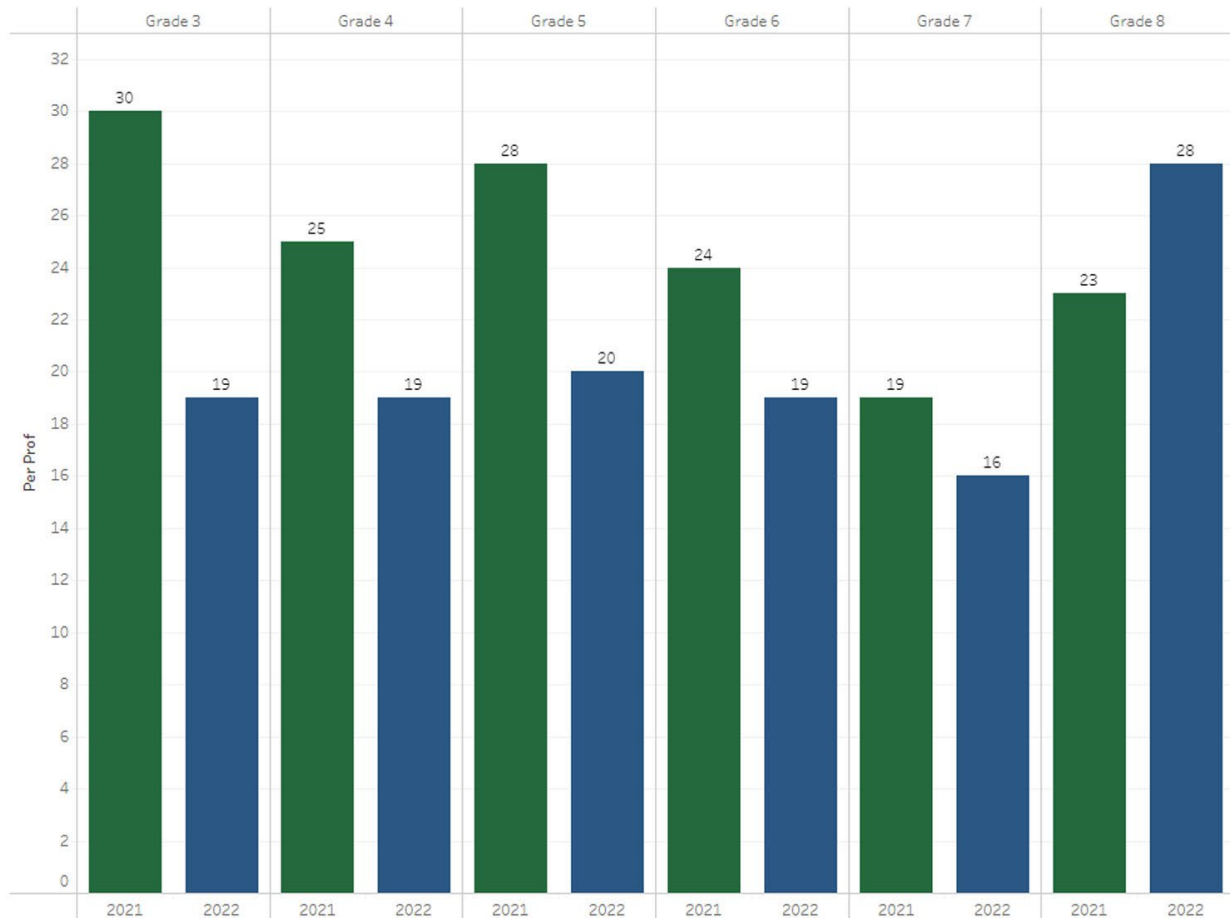
Each year, students across the state take tests to measure their reading and math skills. The graphic below shows Geneva students' proficiency in reading (English and Language Arts) for tests administered in 2021 and 2022.

Reading proficiency (pct) by grade



Math proficiency by grade, years 2021 and 2022:

Math proficiency (pct) by grade



LITERACY

Literacy is difficult to measure. There is no clear data that specifies whether people can or cannot read, whether they're literate in other languages but not English, whether they're capable of completing forms necessary for advancement, such as job applications, loan applications, and other documents.

One gauge, mentioned above, is assessment test scores. Another is educational attainment of parents and guardians. According to the 2021 American Community Survey, published by the U.S. Census Bureau, there are an estimated 879 people aged 18 and older in Geneva who lack high school diplomas. That's 8.4% of the city's adult population. Of those over age 24, 4.6% have less than a ninth-grade education.

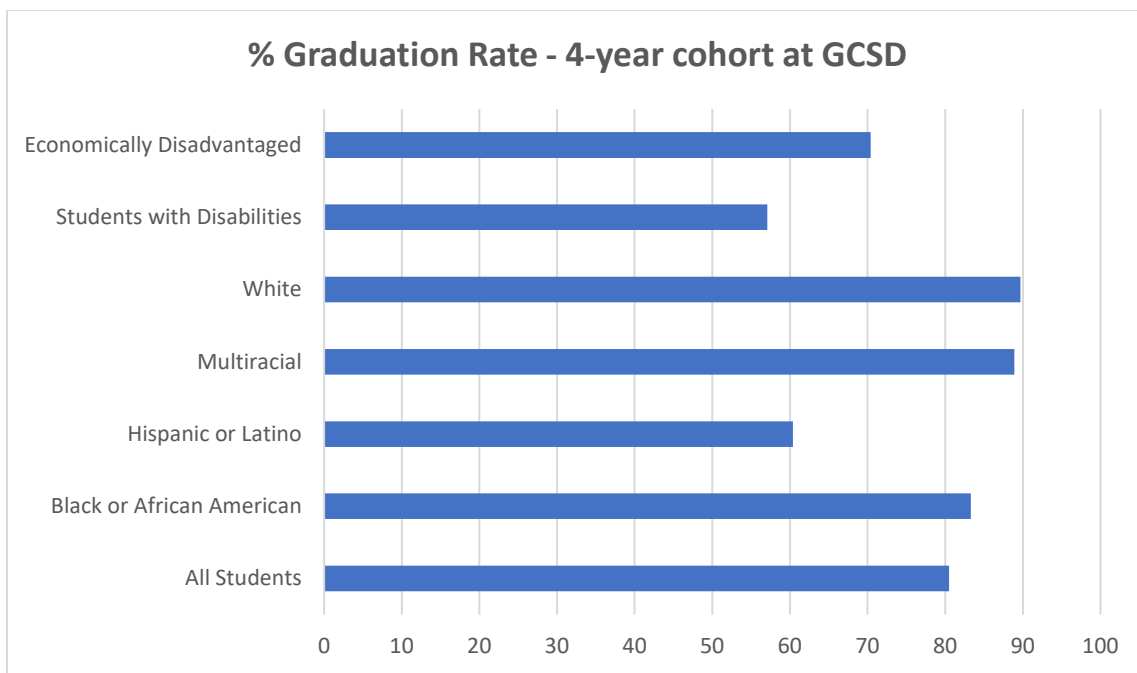
Language can be another impediment. In administering the 2021 ELA assessment tests, the state counted 120 students in Geneva, grades 3-8, who were designated English language learners; 74 were tested and just 3% were marked proficient.

The Census Bureau estimates the number of people who speak a language other than English at home. Of city residents aged 5 and over, 1,461 people - 12.4% of the population - speak a language other than English. The majority speak Spanish.

GRADUATION RATE, 4-YEAR COHORT

The best measure of graduation rate is not how many seniors get their diplomas, but how many freshmen remain in school for four years and then cross the commencement stage.

Because of the pandemic, data for classes after 2019-20 has not been released. The following numbers, for 2019-2020, show that the lowest graduation rates are among students with disabilities and Hispanic/Latino students:



[*Source: NYS Education Department*](#)

SUMMARY

As stated at the time of Geneva 2030's founding, one of the strengths of our school district is the many organizations and individuals in the community working to support and improve education. There is now a sense of urgency, particularly after the upheaval of the pandemic, that we have to work together to find solutions before more students drop out or graduate without the skills necessary to attain healthy and prosperous futures.

That is the mission of Geneva 2030.

