

AIM

Aligned Impact Muscatine County

ANNUAL REPORT

2023-2024



www.alignedimpactmuscatine.org

Letter from the Director



Kim Warren

Director



Kindergarten readiness increased in Muscatine County from

57% to **63%**
(Fall 2022) (Fall 2023)



Partnered with local employers and schools to host

8

Summer Melt events to help students with post-graduation career decisions.



2,581

elementary students exposed to

93

hands-on activities aligned to school curriculum.

At Aligned Impact Muscatine County, we share a powerful vision: every student in our community has the opportunity for a bright future. We believe this future is achievable, only through deep collaboration with the families, educators, and community members.

This past year, we've actively listened to your voices. Parents have expressed a need for increased resources to prepare their children for kindergarten. School districts have sought partners to drive innovation in the classroom. Young adults have sought assistance in navigating the complexities of the new FAFSA system.

This report highlights how we've translated the community's concerns into action. You'll see how community voices have informed our initiatives, ensuring community collaborations directly address the needs of Muscatine's students and families.

Together, we are transforming Muscatine into a place where every young person has the chance to succeed.

Leadership Council & Staff

Leadership Council

Brenda Arthur-Miller
West Liberty Community School District
Tyler Baars
UnityPoint Trinity Muscatine
Clint Christopher
Muscatine Community School District
Dr. Naomi DeWinter
Muscatine Community College
Rich Dwyer
Kent Corporation
Leslie Eichelberger
HNI Corporation
Robert Fiedler
Musser Public Library
Jesse Garcia
LULAC

Heidi Hoffman
ISU Ext. and Outreach Muscatine County
Jamie Leza
Community Foundation of Greater Muscatine
Rebecca Paulsen
GMCCI
Bret Olson
Muscatine Community YMCA
Shane Orr
United Way of Muscatine
Erick Recinos
UnityPoint Health-Trinity
Danni Zumwalt
UI Center for Advancement

AIM Staff

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Data Manager

Kaitlyn Wintermeyer
Early Childhood Facilitator
Allison Eagle
Office Coordinator
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Communications Manager



The work of Aligned Impact Muscatine County (AIM) is supported through funds from Iowa College Aid, StriveTogether, United Way of Muscatine, Community Foundation of Greater Muscatine, Muscatine Community School District, and West Liberty Community School District.

Mission & Goals

Mission

AIM aligns community resources and identifies effective practices for implementation to reduce achievement gaps and improve outcomes for all students and families.

Our Goals

Every child enters Kindergarten ready to learn.

Every child succeeds academically through support in and out of school.

Every student graduates from high school prepared for post-secondary education or career training.

Every adult has the education, training, and skills to obtain a career that can sustain a family.

STRATEGY NETWORKS



**Early
Education**



**Academic
Success**



**Post
Secondary**



**Adult
Success**



**Data
Team**



Early Education

Goal: Every child enters Kindergarten ready to learn.

SMART Targets: • Increase available 0-5-year-old child care slots (1653 as of July 2021) by 10% (165) by the summer 2023.

AIM convenes a cross-sector group (Family Effectiveness Coalition) focusing on Kindergarten readiness. Over the past year, this group reached out to parents, AEA, Rock Valley Physical Therapy, UnityPoint Family Medicine, early education educators, and childcare providers to understand why children are not entering kindergarten ready compared to before the pandemic. Through this outreach, the group learned that the pandemic significantly affected early education services, experiences, and screen time usage. These societal changes have impacted the children's ability to reach important developmental milestones.

We then met directly with small groups of parents to understand how they know if their child is developmentally on track, how they would like to receive that information, what's working well for parents, what challenges parents are facing, and if they would like to join in our community efforts.

This upcoming year, we plan to work with these parents to design a strategy to increase children meeting developmental milestones. We heard from many parents that they want the resources to determine where their children are developmentally and know what activities to do with them at home. We believe that parents are the most qualified people to know how, where, and when parents will receive this information. We have many organizations in our community that support early childhood development through parent groups, events, classes, and online resources. Engaging parents in the work will ensure that we develop a strategy that meets the needs of families.

In addition to these new efforts, members of the Family Effectiveness Coalition maintained the preschool transportation scholarship program in partnership with Nonememrgcey Transport and Musatine Charities. This program is vital to ensure that all families have access to preschool.

Members of the Leadership Muscatine class of 2024, Shannon Radle and Anne Burnham, chose childcare as their project. They worked with the Muscatine Community College video studio to create a childcare advocacy video, which AIM helped support.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bjO52yF8zs4>

Active Family Effectiveness Coalition Members

Child Care Resource and Referral

Early Childhood Iowa Muscatine County

Iowa State University Ext. & Outreach-Muscatine County

Lutheran Services in Iowa

Mississippi Bend AEA

Muscatine Community School District

Muscatine Community YMCA

Muscatine County Conservation

Musser Public Library

Parents as Teachers

United Way of Muscatine

UnityPoint Trinity Muscatine Public Health

Academic Success

Goal: Every child succeeds academically through support in and out of school.

- SMART Targets:**
- Increase 3rd grade reading proficiency from 41.5% in spring of 2021 to 75% by spring of 2025.
 - Decrease the number of D's and F's in math of 7th and 8th graders by 50% by the end of the 2021-2022 school year.

Elementary Programming

Our community believes learning extends far beyond textbooks. That's why we're passionate about forging connections between classrooms and our vibrant community. By bringing local partners and businesses into Kindergarten through 6th grade classrooms in the Muscatine Community School District, we aim to achieve three key goals:

- Increase students' hands-on experiences with community partners/businesses related to their curriculum.
- Connect students to the broader community.
- Expose students to various careers.

By fostering a collaborative learning environment that extends beyond the classroom walls, we empower students to become active participants in their own education and prepare them to be engaged citizens of our community.

During the past school year, we also collaborated with West Liberty Elementary to create a pilot program for their 3rd-grade and kindergarten classes. This initiative provided students with hands-on experiences to enhance their engagement with classroom content.

Students explored STEM through basic coding activities using Hexbugs, learned about migration history and cultural artifacts through Civils, and interacted with animal friends as part of our conservation efforts, among other activities.

We reached over 180 students with this program. Thanks to these partnerships, students can connect with their community and gain a deeper understanding of various subjects.



Academic Success, cont.

Muscatine

Community Partners

City of Muscatine
Eulenspiegel Puppets
ISU Extension and Outreach Muscatine County
Indigenous Coalition of Muscatine
It Takes a Village Animal Rescue
Kent Corp
Muscatine Art Center
Muscatine Community College Biology, Nursing, and Outreach
Muscatine County Conservation
Muscatine Police Dept K-9 Units
Muscatine Power and Water
Stanley Center for Peace and Security

Muscatine Programming

→ **29**

Unique Experiences

Led by

→ **14**

Community Partners

With

→ **2,108**

Students

West Liberty

Community Partners

Diversity Services Center of Iowa
ISU Extension and Outreach Muscatine County
Muscatine County Conservation

Kindergarten & 3rd Grade in West Liberty

→ **4**

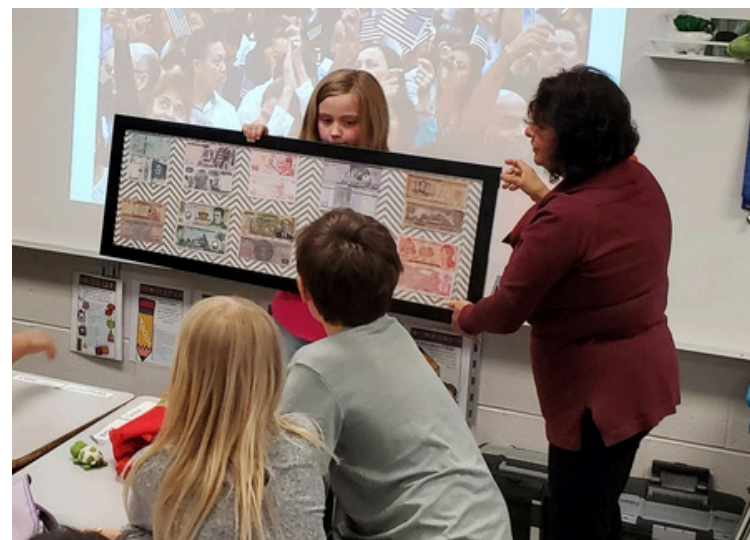
Unique Experiences

→ **3**

Community Partners

→ **183**

Students



Academic Success, cont.

SPARK Program

The Muscatine Community School District has partnered with AIM for the fourth summer to offer SPARK. SPARK is an all-day summer learning program focusing on reduced summer learning loss, supporting academic achievement, and exposing students to new interests. In the morning, students engage in reading and math activities. In the afternoon, they rotate through engaging hands-on enrichment classes that expose them to STEM, creative, and career exploration activities. AIM continues to support the afternoon enrichment class time of SPARK.



60

Unique Experiences



Led by

38

Community Partners



With

320

Students



Academic Success, cont.

Community Partners

Class Guests/Field Trips:

B100

Betty Collins, prehistoric teeth

CultureAll

Don Lampe, beekeeping

HNI

ISU Ext & Outreach Master Gardeners

ISU Water Rocks

Joshalyn Johnson, Susie Clark book author

Kent Corp

Mama Katambwa, African Storyteller

Miss Teen Iowa

Muscatine Ag Center

Muscatine Art Center

Muscatine Community College

Muscatine County Conservation

Muscatine Fire Department

Muscatine High School Soccer Team

Muscatine Police Department

Muscatine Power and Water

Muscatine School District Central Kitchen

Musser Library

Pilot Club

Rachelle Chase, Susan Clark book author

Stanley Center for Peace and Security

Twisted Sister Pretzel

MCC Career Exploration

Class Guests

Arnold Motor Supply

Carver Pump

City of Muscatine

Community Health Center- Dental

Department of Corrections

Electricians Union

Greater Muscatine Chamber of Commerce and Industry

HeartSafe Coalition

John Deere

Kent Corp

Muscatine Community College CDL, HVAC, Agriculture and Vet Tech programs

Muscatine Fire Department

Muscatine Power and Water

Muscatine Radiology

Muscatine Sheriff's Dept - Criminal Investigations

Rendezvous

Sinclair

West Hill Cakery



Post Secondary

Goal: Every student graduates from high school prepared for post-secondary education or career training.

SMART Targets:

- Increase high school graduation at Muscatine County Schools within the Free and Reduced Lunch category from 79.9% in 2018 to 84.9% (21 students) by 2023.
- Increase postsecondary enrollment within one year after high school of students of color from 60.1%* (92) to 70.1% (15 additional students) and students on FRL from 58.7%* (105) to 68.7% (18 additional students) by the class of 2023.

Course to College

AIM collaborates with local high schools to secure Impact Grants from the Community Foundation of Greater Muscatine. These grants support our Course to College initiatives, which include Career Exploration classes, College Application Day, Senior Days, and other related activities.

Prepare - The first goal for the student is to prepare. This is achieved through various career experiences, such as job shadowing and having guest speakers in the Career Exploration class, which has enrolled 143 students. Additionally, the Strategies for Academic Success class has 82 students enrolled. Other preparatory activities include concurrent and Career Academy enrollments, and hosting the ACAC College Fair with MCC on September 14th for 10th, 11th, and 12th graders.

Apply - When it comes to applying to universities and colleges, the schools hold a College Application Day (or Senior Day in West Liberty). The Muscatine High School College Application Day had 56 students participating and applying to 14 different institutions. West Liberty's Senior Day has 86 students participating applying to over 15 different institutions.

Finance - FAFSA-related workshops were conducted to help students create their accounts. Several FAFSA Completion Events took place during February, with ongoing support provided throughout the semester. Additionally, Local Scholarship Packet workshops were held for both Muscatine and West Liberty High schools, resulting in 188 applications being submitted.

Decide - Senior Decision Day took place at Muscatine High School on April 26th, 2024, with 50 students from the Class of 2024 in attendance. West Liberty High School celebrated its Senior Decision Day on May 3rd, featuring a school-wide assembly to acknowledge the senior plans of the entire Class of 2024.

Go - Complete the senior exit survey and receive assistance from the Summer Melt program to transition to college (May-August).

Post Secondary

Summer Melt

Every student should have equal access to post-secondary education, and we are dedicated to bridging educational gaps. These gaps are often due to missed opportunities, lack of information, and insufficient support from family and friends. This is why our Summer Melt program continues to support students as they transition from high school to college, helping them feel prepared and confident in their education.

The Summer Melt program begins right after school ends in May and runs through August. Our mentors offer services such as financial aid assistance, college enrollment guidance, career building and exploration, and post-secondary mentorship. Our mentors are bilingual in English and Spanish, accommodating students' schedules and meeting them at easily accessible public places.

In 2023, we supported 19 students from four different academic institutions, awarding two full grants and three last-dollar scholarships amounting to \$15,175. Among these students, 68% were first-generation college students. This year, we organized 8 summer melt events, such as Family and Friends Nights, participation in National Night Out, coffee shop drop-in hours, and more. We assisted 12 students, with Pell grants and scholarships totaling \$26,336, and 83% of those we helped were first-generation college students.

Aligned Impact Muscatine County has collaborated with various community organizations, including Muscatine Community School District, West Liberty Community School District, Eastern Iowa Community College, and Iowa State Extension and Outreach Muscatine County, to provide this valuable resource to students and the community for a fourth year.



Summer Melt Family Night



Post Secondary, cont.

PostSecondary Workshop

The postsecondary strategy group hosted the annual postsecondary workshop at Muscatine Community College. This workshop convenes school district staff, EICC staff, and community organizations to review local data and student input. This group works together to determine what programs are working well that can be scaled, best practices to incorporate into education systems, and ways to increase engagement with students and families.



142

Students participated in College Application Day



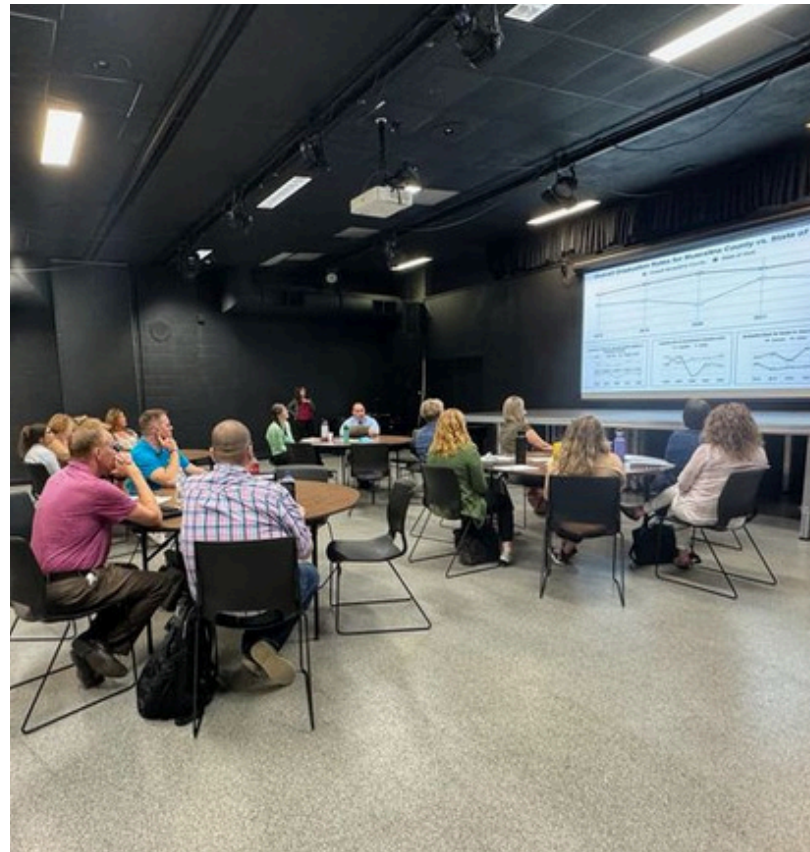
82

Students enrolled in Strategies for Academic Success



130

Students participated in Senior Decision Day



Post Secondary Workshop



Muscatine Senior Day

Community Partners

Community Foundation of Greater Muscatine
Eastern Iowa Community College
Iowa State Extension and Outreach Muscatine County
Muscatine Community School District
West Liberty High School

Post Secondary, cont.

West Liberty Youth Boards

Aligned Impact Muscatine County (AIM) continues to encourage students to be active in their community and have their voices heard. By participating in the program, students apply what they learn on community boards to brainstorm and create promotional materials for educational community events. This experience helps them develop valuable collaboration skills with each other and their community.

This pilot program provided organizations with the chance to gain insights from a youth perspective while fostering future community leaders. These community organizations have served as positive role models, inspiring youth to become leaders and role models for others.

The program took place at the West Liberty High School where 10 students were interviewed and then selected by one of the organizations of their choice.



West Liberty Youth Boards

Community Partners

Diversity Services Center of Iowa
Muscatine Symphony Orchestra
Dream Catchers
West Liberty Chamber of Commerce
West Liberty Public Library

Adult Success

Goal: Every adult has the education, training, and skills to obtain a career that can sustain a family.

SMART Targets: • Increase the educational attainment of Muscatine County residents with only a high school diploma or equivalent by 250 individuals, from 11,351 to 11,601 by 2025.

The adult success team tackles the challenges of helping adults achieve financial security through education and training. Recognizing the need for collaboration, the group is comprised of various support organizations. These meetings function as a solution-oriented social service network. Agency representatives anonymously share client needs and obstacles. This unified approach allows the community to address challenges more comprehensively, identify systemic issues, and ultimately empower clients to overcome barriers. The team also identifies system barriers for clients and is currently working on solutions to transportation barriers.

AIM is also a partner for the Fueling the Future project alongside MCSA, the Community Foundation of Greater Muscatine, Muscatine Community College, United Way of Muscatine, UnityPoint, and the City of Muscatine. Fueling the Future targets adults in low-income families of elementary-aged children receiving weekend "backpack" food subsidies in Muscatine County. It engages them in a six-week intensive "earn while you learn" upskill training. This multi-stepped program will stabilize emergent family issues; education for the custodial adults in high-demand jobs; long-term advancement of skilled workers in the community; and a stronger next-generation Iowa workforce. To learn more about Fueling the Future, visit fuelingthefutureiowa.org.

Community Partners

1st Five

Bi-State Regional Commission

City of Muscatine Public Housing

City of Muscatine Muscabus

Diversity Services Center of Iowa

Fueling the Future

Goodwill of the Heartland

Iowa Probation

Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services

IowaWorks

Mothers Mentoring and Support Program

Muscatine Center for Social Action

Muscatine Community College

Muscatine County Community Services

Promise Jobs

Riverbend Transit

The Salvation Army of Muscatine County

UnityPoint Trinity Muscatine Public Health

Community Data Team

Over the past year, the data team has been relatively quiet. The data manager has been collaborating closely with WillBridge, our new data warehouse provider, to develop a comprehensive county-wide shared data system. Their efforts have focused on cleaning and standardizing the educational data from all the county's school districts to ensure it can be integrated for county-wide results. They have successfully completed the demographic data for each district, which is the most complex dataset to be added to the system.

Several community partners have already integrated their data into the system, while most others are in the process of cleaning and organizing their data for future intake. The shared system is now beginning to generate individual reports for each participating entity. Excitingly, it is also starting to combine data from the three districts, including FAST testing, ISASP, and community partners.

As word spreads, more people are showing interest in our progress. The data team is now reconvening to review and approve a flyer that will clearly explain the data system and how we will generate and distribute reports for our partners.

Data Team Members

West Liberty Community School District
Stanley Center for Peace and Security
Lutheran Services of Iowa
Eastern Iowa Community College
Community Foundation of Greater Muscatine

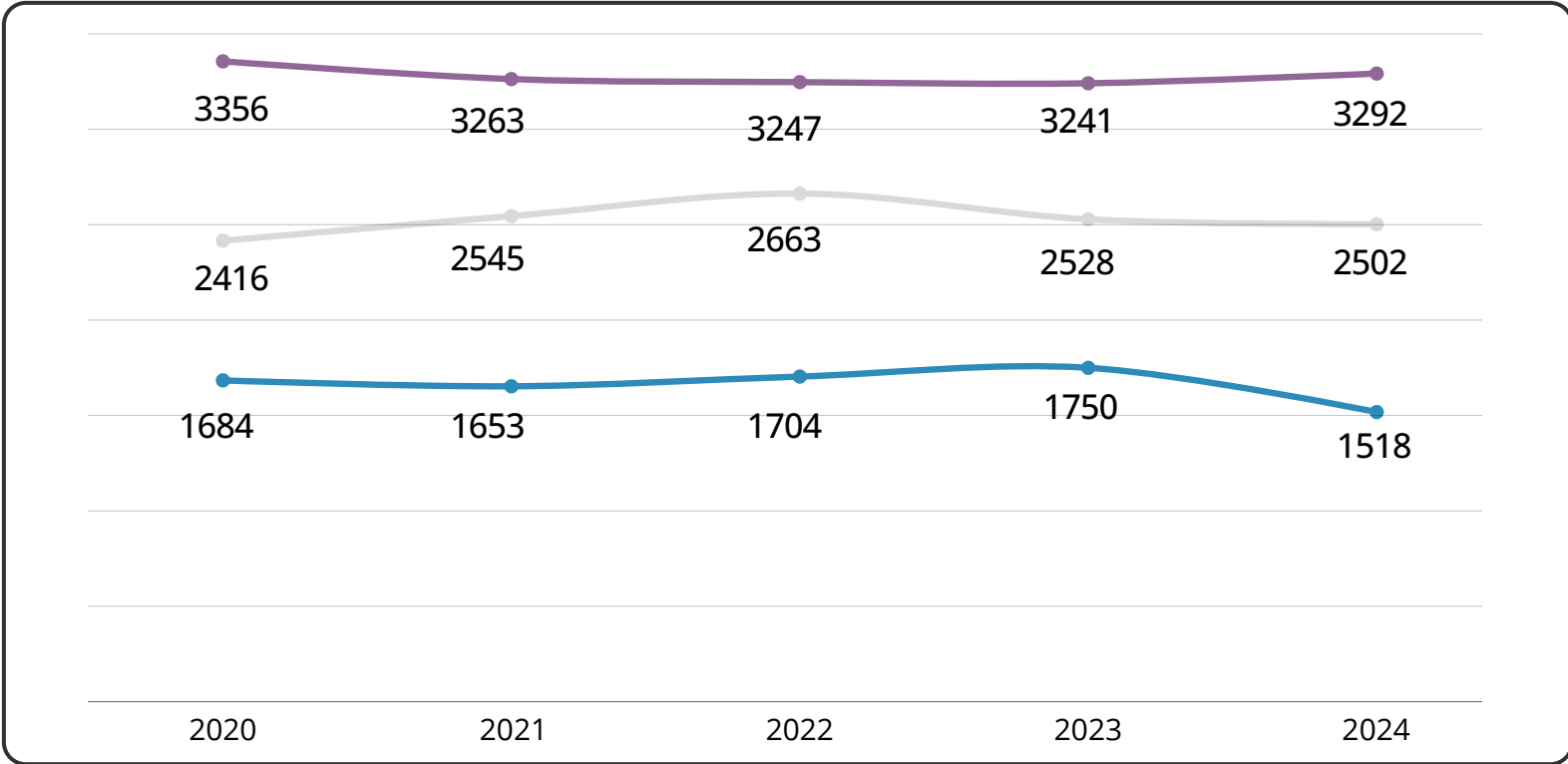


**Muscatine
County**
Shared Data System

Community Data

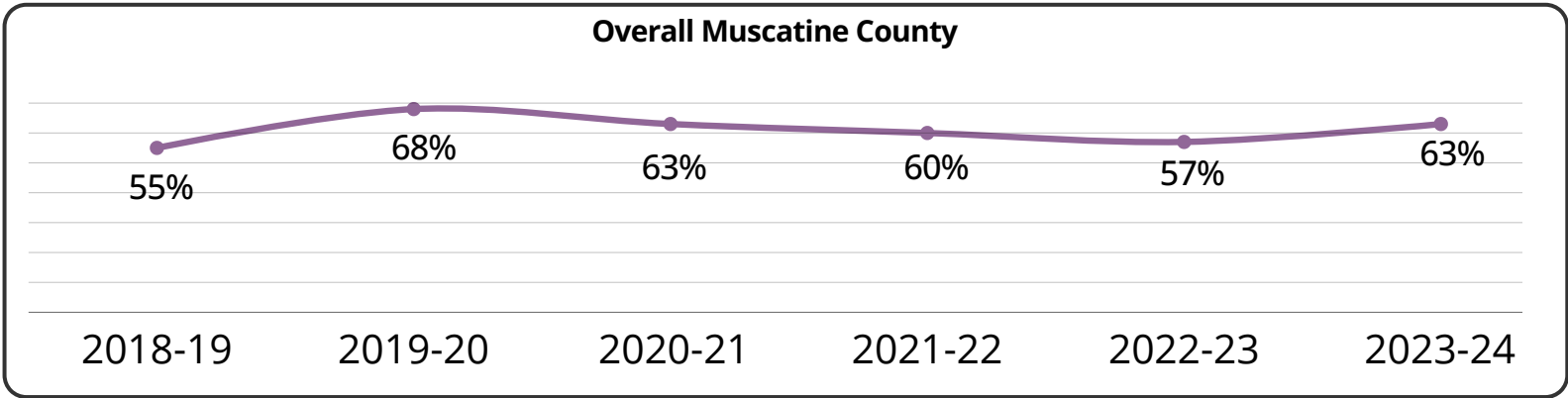
MUSCATINE COUNTY CHILDCARE DATA

■ Total Population ■ Both Parents Working ■ Registered/Licensed Capacity

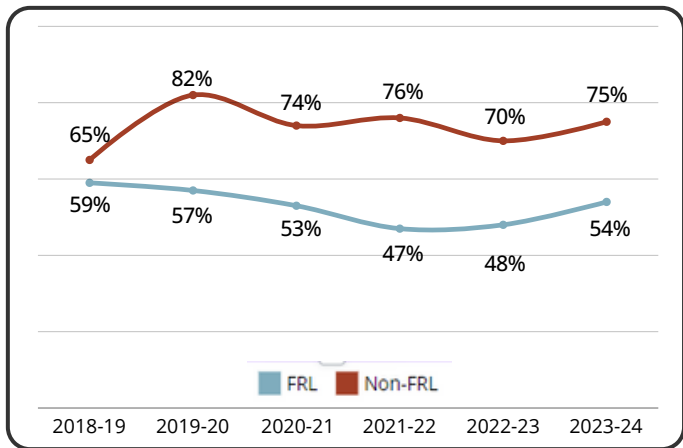


Community Data, cont.

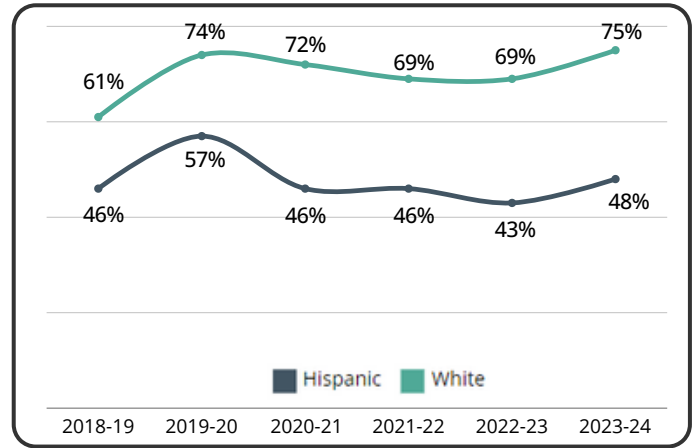
PROFICIENT KINDERGARTEN FALL FAST SCORES MUSCATINE COUNTY



Socioeconomic Status in Muscatine County

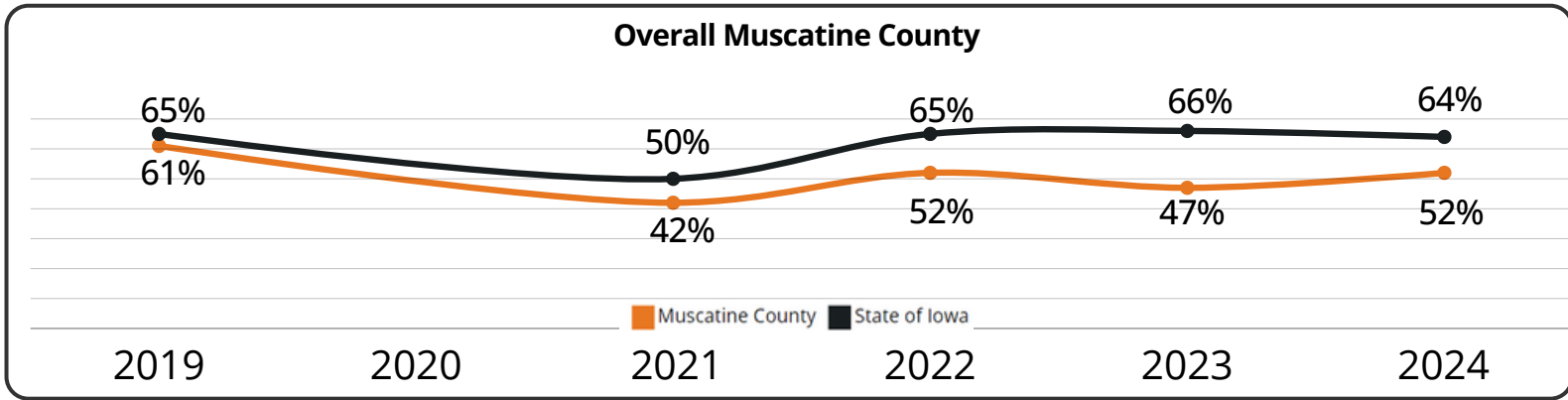


Race/Ethnicity in Muscatine County

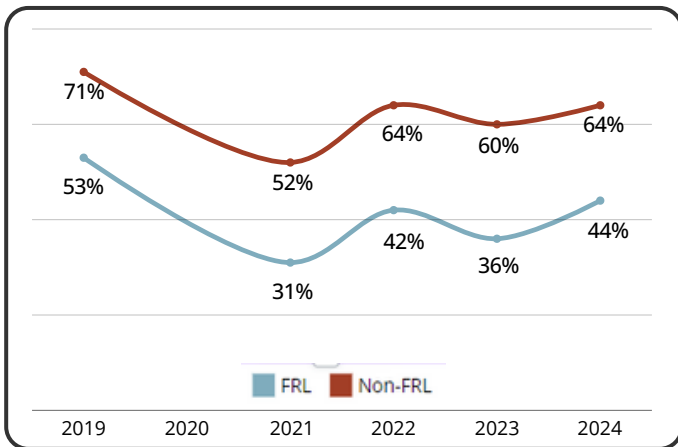


Community Data, cont.

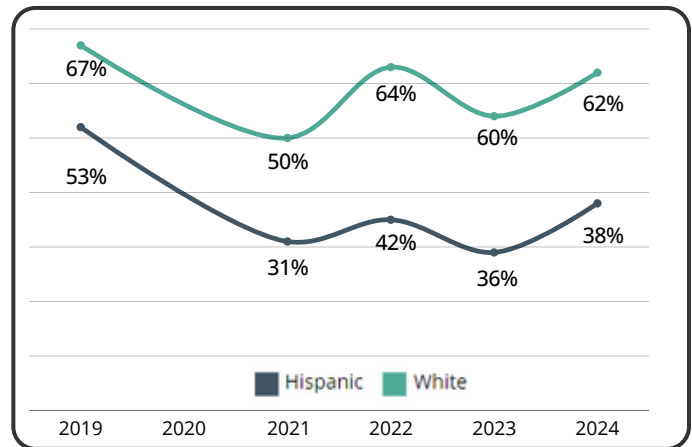
PROFICIENCY ISASP SCORES FOR 3RD GRADE READING MUSCATINE COUNTY



Socioeconomic Status in Muscatine County

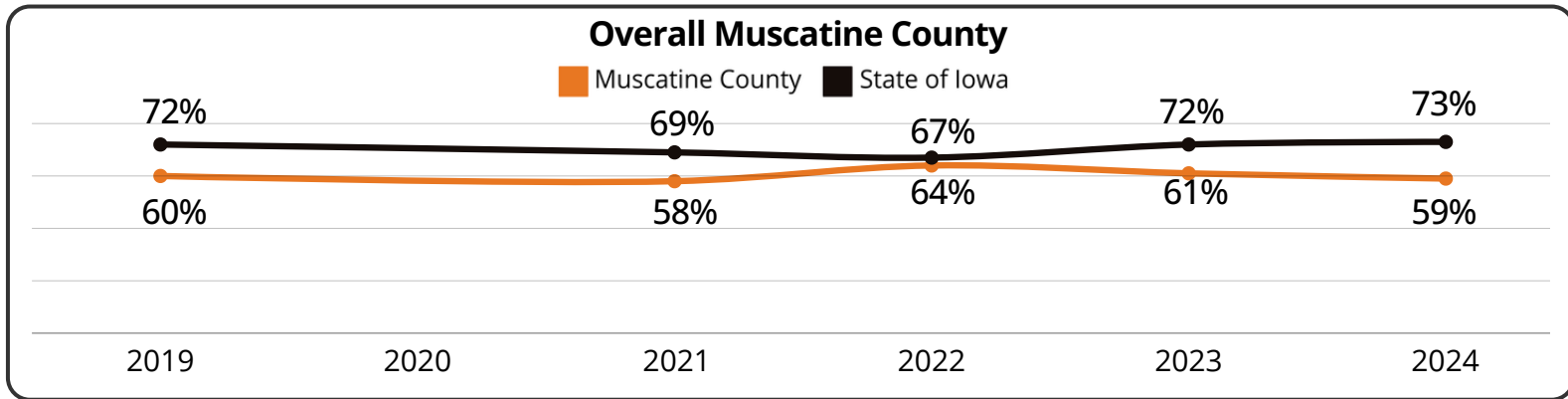


Race/Ethnicity in Muscatine County

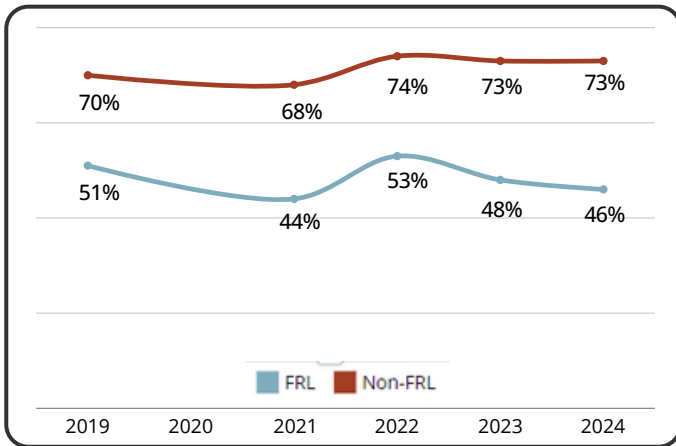


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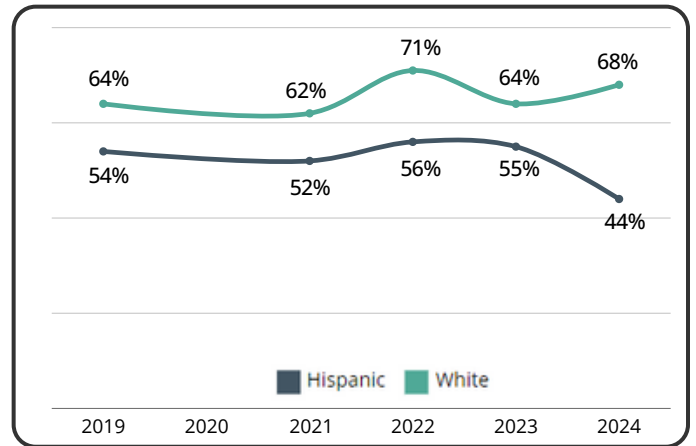
PROFICIENCY ISASP SCORES FOR 8TH GRADE MATH MUSCATINE COUNTY



Socioeconomic Status in Muscatine County

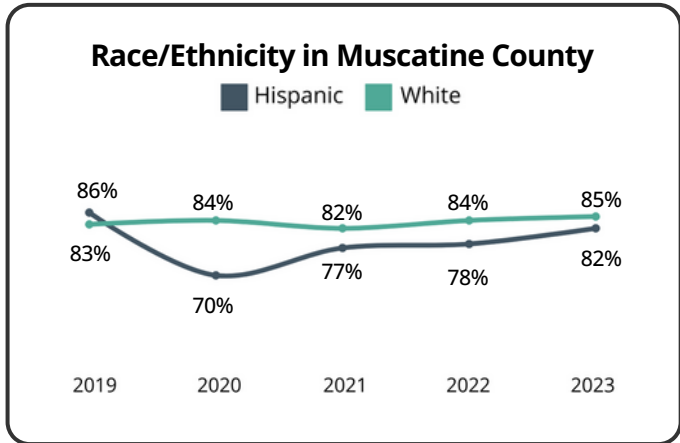
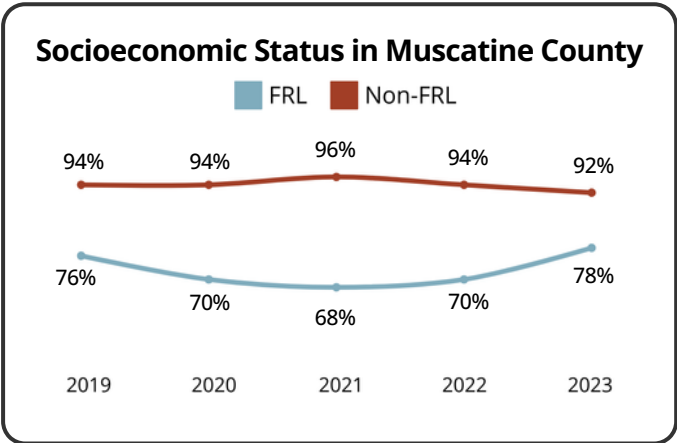
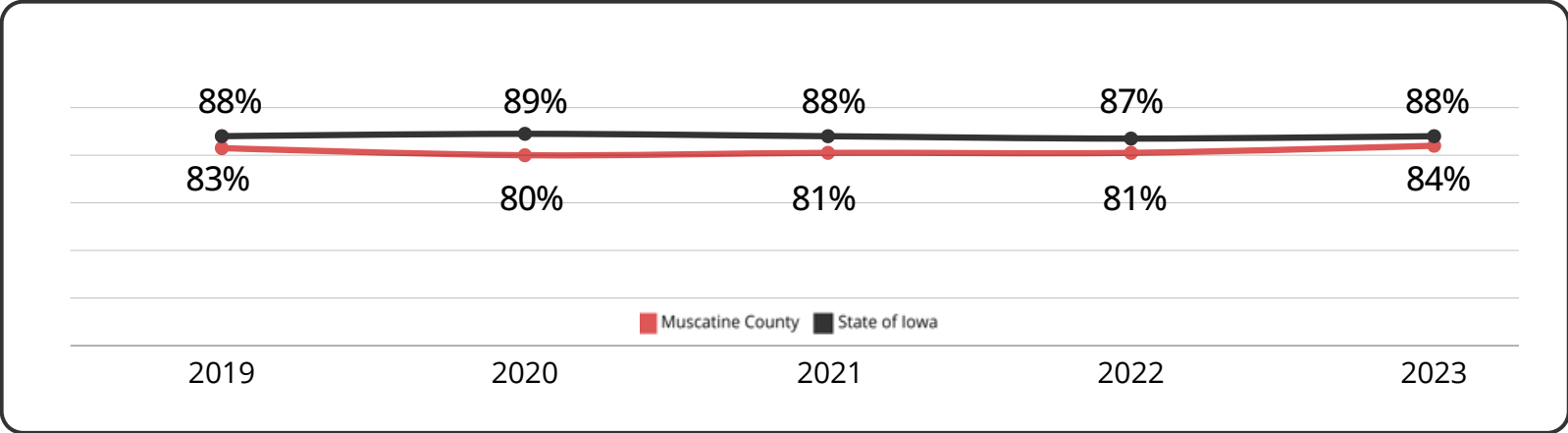


Race/Ethnicity in Muscatine County



Community Data, cont.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATE FOR MUSCATINE COUNTY Overall Muscatine County



Community Data, cont.

NATIONAL STUDENT CLEARINGHOUSE FALL ENROLLMENT AFTER HS GRADUATION

