



Focus Area Measures

Community and Economic Development	Poverty to Prosperity	Education
Outcomes: 1. Total employment 2. Labor force participation rate 3. Median income 4. Households below ALICE threshold	Outcomes: 1. Households below ALICE threshold 2. Post-high school certificates awarded 3. Total employment 4. Low birth weight	Outcomes: 1. Third-grade reading level 2. Eighth-grade math 3. High school graduation rate 4. Post-high school certificates awarded
Outputs: 1. Number of new businesses 2. Number of jobs created	Outputs: 1. Number of people demonstrating skill development 2. Number of people increasing assets or wealth 3. Number of people reporting increased social capital	Outputs: 1. Attendance/participation 2. Academic achievement through state and standardized assessment

Outcomes: level of achievement generated in part by grant-funded programs/partners and initiatives; often long-term

Outputs: data generated during the grant-funded year measuring specific accomplishments, such as the number of people served

How will we use this data?

Newaygo County is unique with its mix of strengths, challenges, and opportunities. At the same time, many of the issues we face are common across the state and country. The use of the West Michigan Regional Dashboard and focusing on key data provides a compelling, useful picture that leaders, service providers, and community residents can use to tack our challenges and enhance our assets.

Community Foundation staff will use this data to work with its local community partners and donors to prioritize resources and meet the aspirational goals defined by the Community Foundation board.

Total employment

[Data source](#)

Bureau of Labor Statistics: “Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages”

[What does this measure?](#)

The growth or decline in total jobs, shown as a percentage gain or loss from the previous year.

[Why is this important?](#)

Job growth is a key indicator of economic health and vitality and reveals whether and by how much an economy is expanding. In addition to the number of jobs, the quality of jobs should be considered. This is reflected in measures of average salary.

Labor force participation rate

[Data source](#)

W.E. Upjohn Institute’s analysis of Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) and population estimates from the US Census

[What does this measure?](#)

The labor force participation rate measures the percentage of the total population (16 years and older) who are either employed or looking for work. The rate does not take into account those who are not seeking employment.

[Why is this important?](#)

This is an important indicator because it measures the ability and willingness of an area’s residents to find employment. The flow of workers into and out of a geographic area is an indicator of that area’s economic vitality and ability to draw in employers and employees.

Median income

[Data source](#)

US Census Bureau: “American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates”

[What does this measure?](#)

Income includes the following components: wages and salaries; self-employment income; Social Security, private and government retirement; interest, dividends, rental income, and other property income; unemployment, workers’ compensation and veteran’s benefits; public assistance, supplemental security income, and food stamps; regular contributions for support (including alimony and child support); other income (including cash scholarships, fellowships or stipends not based on working, and meals and rent as pay).

Why is this important?

Median household income is a gauge of the overall economic health of the region and the financial resources of households. It allows for comparison to other regions or states.

Households below ALICE threshold

Data source

The ALICE Project is made possible by United Ways across Michigan and the Consumers Energy Foundation. United Ways of Michigan:
www.UnitedWayALICE.org/Michigan

What does this measure?

ALICE is an acronym for **A**sset **L**imited, **I**ncome **C**onstrained, **E**mployed. ALICE represents those among us who are working, often at more than one job, yet still falling behind. No matter how hard these Michiganders try, they can't get ahead; and all West Michigan communities ultimately pay the price.

Why is this important?

The percentage indicated in this dashboard shows the percentage of households within the individual counties, West Michigan region, and the state of Michigan which, as of 2012, had a difficult time financially, but are indeed employed and above the poverty levels set by the federal government.

Post-high school certificates awarded

Data source

Economic Modeling Specialists International: www.economicmodeling.com

What does this measure?

This number represents the total number of certificates and degrees awarded by educational institutions within the region. It does not represent the number of certificates or degrees for residents within the region.

Why is this important?

According to the Commerce Department, STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) trained individuals are expected to earn 26 percent more than non-STEM experienced peers.

Low birth weight

Data source

Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

What does this measure?

Babies born weighing less than five pounds, eight ounces have higher infant mortality rates and are an indicator of a region's healthcare services and its overall health.

Why is this important?

Low birth weight has been linked to a wide range of negative outcomes, including developmental problems related to health, psychological adjustment, and intellectual functioning. Research suggests that very low birth weight is associated with poorer educational achievement, lower college attendance, and a higher incidence of health problems like high blood pressure and respiratory disorders. Some research has found that low birth weight is a significant predictor of future socioeconomic status.

Third-grade reading level

Data source

Michigan Department of Education: "M-STEP"

What does this measure?

The percentage included in this indicator shows the percent of students who tested proficient or advanced on the exam.

Why is this important?

Recent research finds that students with low reading levels in third grade have a higher likelihood of not graduating from high school and living in poverty. Early reading skills are critical to a successful school experience. Third grade is considered an important milestone in a student's career in terms of reading proficiency and is highly correlated to whether a student will graduate high school. Up through third grade, students are learning to read; after third grade, they must be able to read in order to learn.

Eighth-grade math level

Data source

Michigan Department of Education: "M-STEP"

What does this measure?

The percentage included in this indicator shows the percent of students who tested proficient or advanced on the exam.

Why is this important?

Eighth grade math is considered an important milestone. Mastery of math skills is tied to critical thinking and analysis, abilities crucial to success in secondary and post-secondary studies and in the workplace.

High school graduation rate

[Data source](#)

MI School Data: www.mischooldata.org. Data only includes public and public charter school data.

[What does this measure?](#)

The number of students graduating after four years of high school, expressed as a percentage of their cohort. A cohort is a class of ninth-graders beginning high school in the same academic year.

[Why is this important?](#)

A high school diploma is often considered the first educational milestone for success in the workplace. Increasingly, employers, including those in manufacturing, are looking for candidates with at least a high school diploma. Furthermore, failure to complete high school denies a person access to higher education and the higher earnings that come with it.