

New to Time To Educate? Here's where to start

TIME TO EDUATE

From Staff Reports Rochester Democrat and Chronicle USA TODAY NETWORK

Time To Educate is a people-powered, solutions-driven journalism project dedicated to helping transform the Rochester City School District. Here's a road map you can use to help you navigate all the stories in our ongoing series.

Start with our most popular stories and videos

Our most-read story so far is about the background to the closure of Kodak Park School 41, a school with a century of history that also encapsulates many of the demographics of the wider school district. Mandated to close by the state for under performance at the end of the school year, it is operating as a new school. You can follow the students, families and teachers with reporter Erica Bryant as they navigate their way through their "new school" — name still unknown.

You can also ask us questions about school culture at bit.ly/2NC7PK5.

The video telling the story of this small school is among our most popular with readers.

The shutdown of School 41 is the latest in a string of closures for the Rochester school district. Did you know that the district has closed and opened dozens of schools since 2002, but the new schools that opened have rarely ever performed better than the schools they replaced?

Readers were also deeply interested in how historical racial segregation in Rochester continues to play a role in shaping educational opportunity for students today. What does that look like? In 2018, only 10 percent of RCSD students are white, including those of Middle Eastern descent.

Our reporting has also highlighted the need to maintain a diverse pool of teachers for the district, a challenge for smaller metro school districts like Rochester less capable of growing their own. The school district says it needs to continue to recruit from black colleges and from Puerto Rico to maintain diversity among teacher ranks.

Read stories that highlight possible solutions

Time To Educate is focused on highlighting solutions and successes, wherever they are.

Our reporting took you to Indianapolis with reporter Justin Murphy and photographer Max Schulte to visit what are called "innovation schools" — a cross between public schools and charter schools. These schools are not a "silver bullet" but have produced results that are worth investigating further and are attracting a lot of national attention.

And right here in Rochester, aspects of the innovation school model are also achieving success in place like East High.

We're also highlighting successful initiatives that are underway that could be expanded or scaled to help more students succeed, such as summer learning programs and new approaches to providing mental health services for students and families.

Read stories about people making a difference

Buffalo parent Sam Radford led a school strike in that district and created a 14-point plan to address problems in the Queen City public schools, and shares how he did it.

Our parent and expert advisory panels are looking to develop a similar plan to present to the school board here, and you could be part of it.

You can visit P.S. 294, The Walton Avenue School in New York City, the school that state Education Commissioner MaryEllen Elia said was an example of a public school that had successfully reopened.

The principal there, Daniel Russo, was a fifth-grade teacher before turning around the former P.S. 64. He told us how he did it.

Here's what we learned from that story about tips for successful school reopenings: 1. Build a healthy school culture.

2. Outsource mental health treatment to professionals.
3. Support teachers and help them support each other.
4. Let math and ELA teachers focus on a single sub-

Continued on next page



Kanyia William, 6, is going into first grade at RISE Community School. She had the opportunity to visit some of the classrooms before the start of the school year. JAMIE GERMANO/ROCHESTER DEMOCRAT AND CHRONICLE