

# Why do we need OneMinneapolis?

*Creating a community where everyone thrives is both the smart and the right thing to do.*

Imagine a city where jobs pay a living wage and parents can shape their family's future; where kids have caring adults outside of their family and feel safe at school and play; and where people enjoy the security of an affordable home. Imagine a place without inequalities. That's our vision for OneMinneapolis.

Sadly, today's reality is a far cry from that vision. Increasingly, our achievement and our unemployment gaps are getting nationwide attention. But this unflattering spotlight is more than an embarrassing mention – it speaks volumes about our values and ability to succeed. We know these two factors are intrinsically linked. Even more startling is the fact that these gaps just scratch the surface.

In each of the 24 community indicators outlined in this report, we're seeing deep racial disparities across some of the most fundamental measures of a decent, healthy and productive life. Behind the numbers, there's a child entering kindergarten not yet ready to learn, a single mother struggling in poverty, and a person who feels unaccepted because of his or her race, ethnicity, or culture. Individually, these gaps are concerning, but collectively they place our entire community at risk.

Our demographics are changing and the workforce of our future will look very different from the one we have today. If we don't close the gaps now, we'll be hard pressed to fill jobs, spark and invest in new businesses, sustain a sufficient tax base for basic services and a good quality of life, let alone compete globally. This is a pivotal moment for our community.

We're at risk of creating a two-tiered society and losing billions in wealth, resources, and potential. I was shocked to learn that only 22% of low-income households in Minneapolis have affordable housing, leaving many of our neighbors vulnerable to homelessness. Yet when you compare the average one-time expense of \$650 to prevent a family from becoming homeless with the \$2,700 cost per month to house a family in a shelter, it's obvious that helping individuals and families stabilize their lives before it reaches a crisis is the smarter *and* more sustainable investment.

But beyond the financial cost, we need to look hard at the statistics and see if this is the Minneapolis we know and love. Or if we'll choose to share what's great about this city with everyone who lives here.

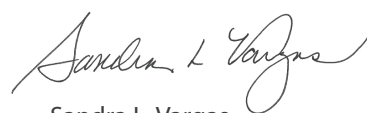
What's encouraging about this report – amidst the abundance of bad news – is that these numbers give us some direction. By learning exactly how each community is faring, we can start to ask the questions that will lead us to real solutions. By more accurately identifying the symptoms and diagnosing the problems, we can find the right remedy.

This report provides a baseline: we'll update the community each year, not only to report on how we're faring, but also to share what strategies are showing results. We'll use it to inform The Minneapolis Foundation's community investments, which are focused on transforming education, promoting economic vitality, and building social capital in order to achieve greater equity.

We know we're not alone in recognizing and seeking to close these gaps. OneMinneapolis builds on great work by the City, the County, the school district, the business community, and so many nonprofits, funders, policymakers, and individual Minneapolis residents. We hope this data and approach to measuring inequities will be a useful tool to all of these partners and will complement and bolster their efforts.

It will truly take a sustained commitment from all of us to ensure that everyone in Minneapolis has an opportunity to prosper and fully participate in our social, civic, and economic life.

Let's create *OneMinneapolis*.



Sandra L. Vargas  
President and CEO



Lynn Casey  
Chair, Board of Trustees

Visit [OneMinneapolis.org](http://OneMinneapolis.org) for the full report, a dashboard of findings, and stories about what's working in our community.

Our ability to compete as a 21st century city and an economic engine for the state depends on everyone fully participating in our workforce and benefiting from our shared quality of life. Yet Minneapolis faces costly racial disparities in education, jobs, housing, political representation, and other critical areas, according to data The Minneapolis Foundation commissioned from Wilder Research. A dashboard with all 24 indicators and the full report are available at [OneMinneapolis.org](http://OneMinneapolis.org).

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

Since “what gets measured, gets done,” we created *OneMinneapolis* to help our community better understand, track, and improve how all of our neighbors are faring. We sought data to inform how we can best target resources to strengthen our community. We want to ensure everyone’s doing well, rather than relying on misleading averages.

To that end, we commissioned Wilder Research to disaggregate data on a variety of measures either created by or broadly embraced by local experts (e.g., the City of Minneapolis, Heading Home Hennepin, Minneapolis Public Schools). The numbers are broken out by race and ethnicity, and in some cases home language, gender, and whether residents were born in the U.S. or abroad. In doing so, we uncovered shocking differences in how Minneapolis residents are faring on the most essential indicators of a healthy and productive life.

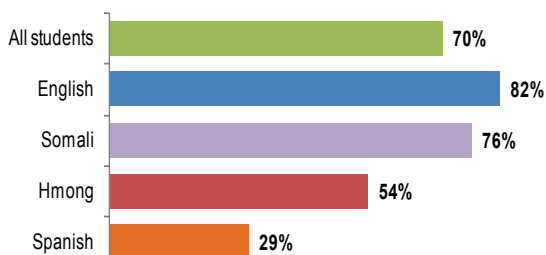
By going deeper and across issues, this data offers a nuanced understanding of the specific challenges facing our community that are often masked in other data sets. We’ve also quantified the gaps our city faces on each measure.

## FINDINGS ARE SHOCKING, BUT INSTRUCTIVE

The numbers shouldn’t paralyze us. It’s in our power to make better choices, smarter investments, and more conscious efforts to create an inclusive community.

The data paint a very stark picture of inequities in Minneapolis, but the information is also instructive. It can help us target resources towards the issues and gaps that place us at greatest risk, as well as identify and replicate pockets of success.

Kindergarten Readiness by Home Language  
Minneapolis Public Schools, Fall 2009



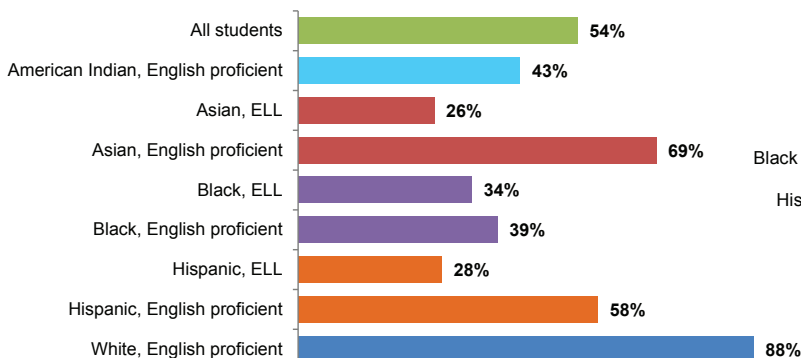
There is a domino effect to economic and social disadvantages, which makes it difficult for people to escape poverty. But the converse is also true: by positively impacting one area, we will likely see success in several others:

- On average, students who graduate from high school earn \$1 million more over their lifetimes.
- Early childhood programs offer a \$12 to 1 return on investment for our state.
- And keeping a family in their home has a one-time cost of \$650 vs. \$2,700 per month to shelter a family who’s become homeless.

Until our schools can provide every child a high quality education, jobs pay a living wage, our city has enough affordable housing for everyone who needs it, and everyone has a voice on the issues that affect their lives, we will all pay a price.

Let’s talk honestly about what the findings say about and mean for our city, empower those who are not being well served to shape solutions, and together realize a vision for our community’s success.

3rd Grade Reading Proficiency by Race, ELL Status  
Minneapolis Public Schools, 2010



Minneapolis Working-Age Adults  
Who Are Employed, 2006-08

