

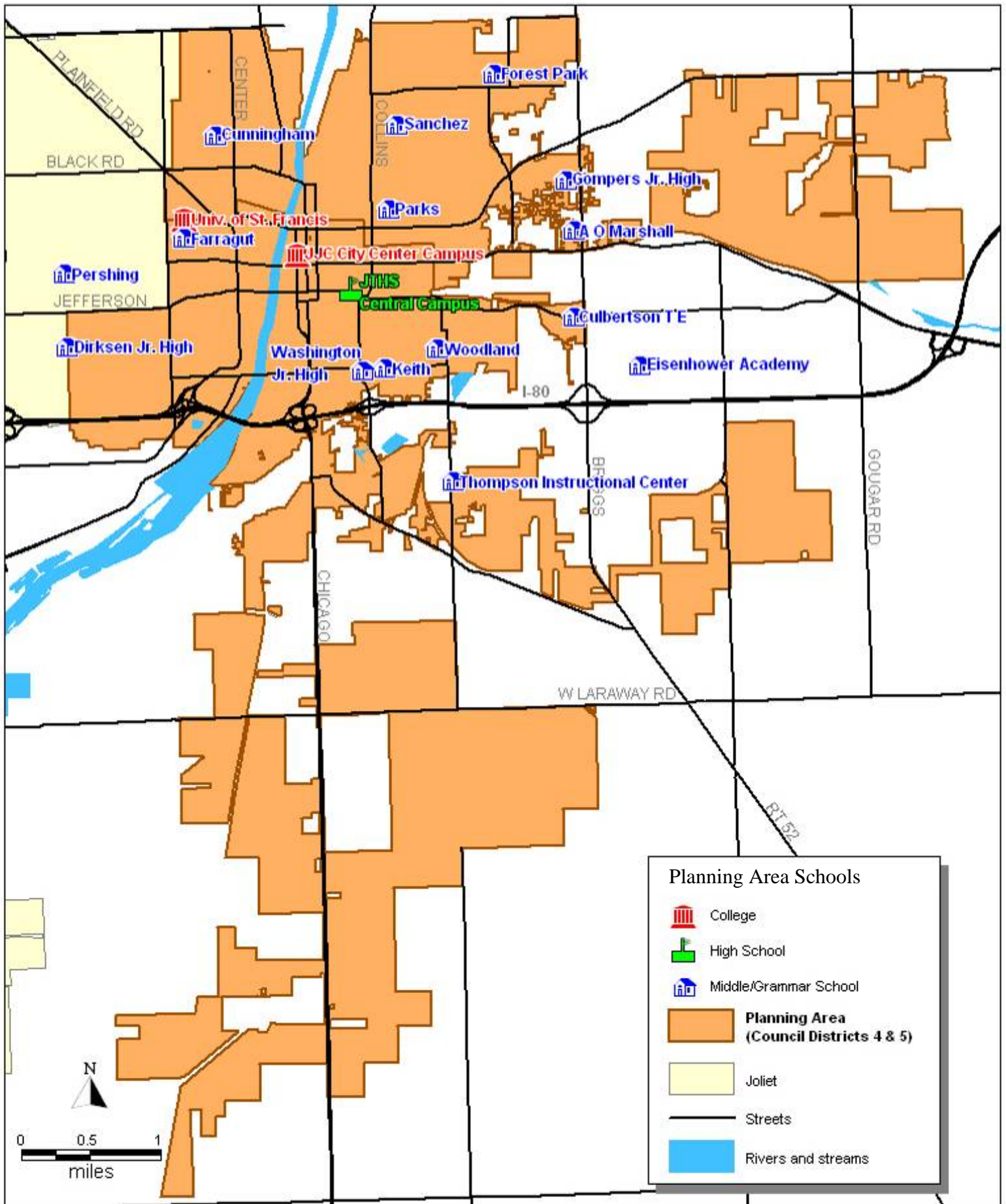
H. Education

Overview

As in other sections of the Quality of Life (QOL) Plan, this section on Education focuses on Council Districts 4 & 5 of the City of Joliet, the Planning Area for this Project. The findings for this section of the Plan provide an objective review of the current education infrastructure that supports children and youth living in the Planning Area. The purpose in conducting this review focused on understanding the current conditions within the various schools and programs serving children and youth. Steps taken as part of the review included interviews with key stakeholders, review of secondary documents including school report cards, strategic plans, and community sessions with residents.

Outcomes from this review yield findings and proposals for supporting the education infrastructure of Planning Area neighborhoods. These proposals serve to ensure that children and youth living in the Planning Area have maximum opportunities to advance academically and prepare to pursue a variety of post secondary education or career opportunities.

While there are various elements to the QOL Plan, education serves as an important foundation for addressing the needs and opportunities of residents in the short term as well as the long term. Continued investment in improving the quality of the entire education system ensures that children and youth will be prepared for the opportunities of tomorrow.



Key Findings

1. Schools on the Academic Warning List (WL) and Academic Early Warning List (AEWL).

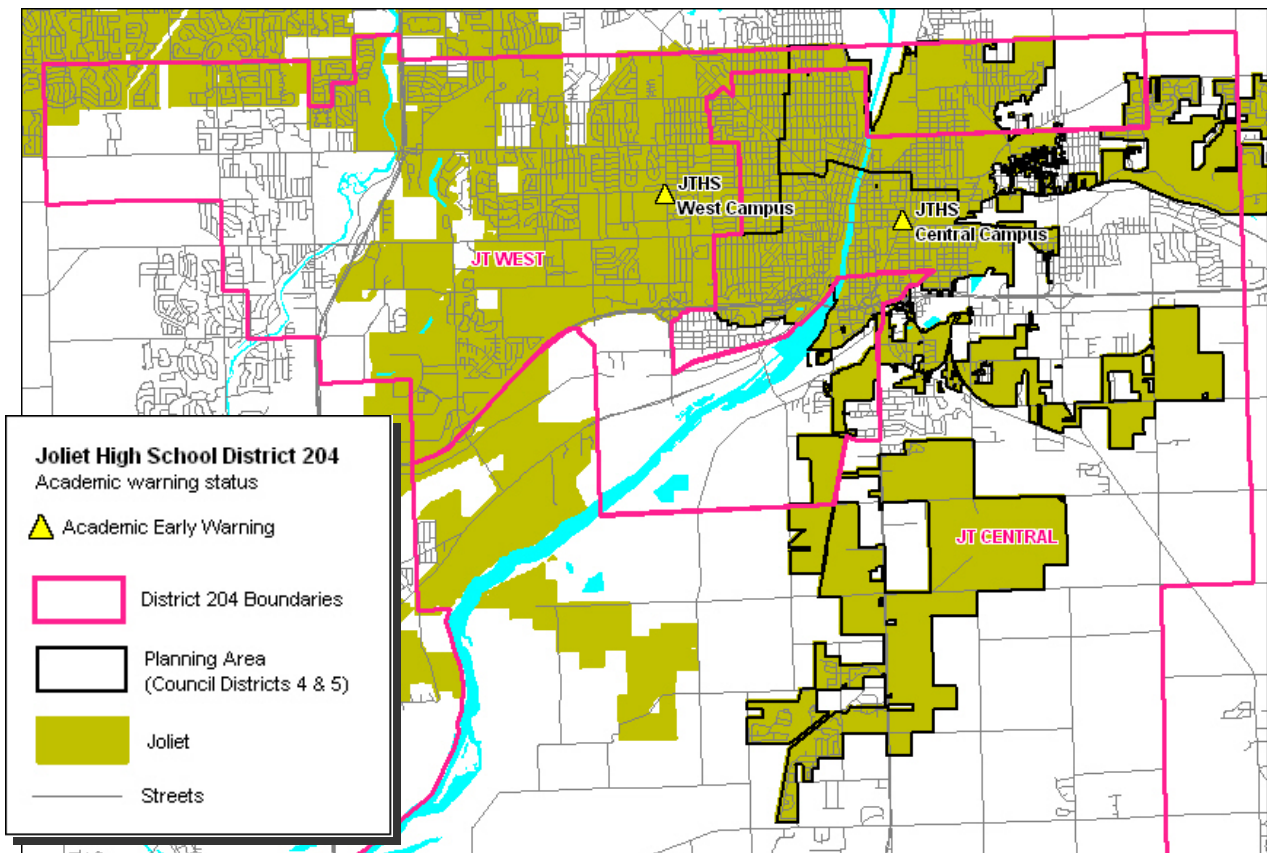
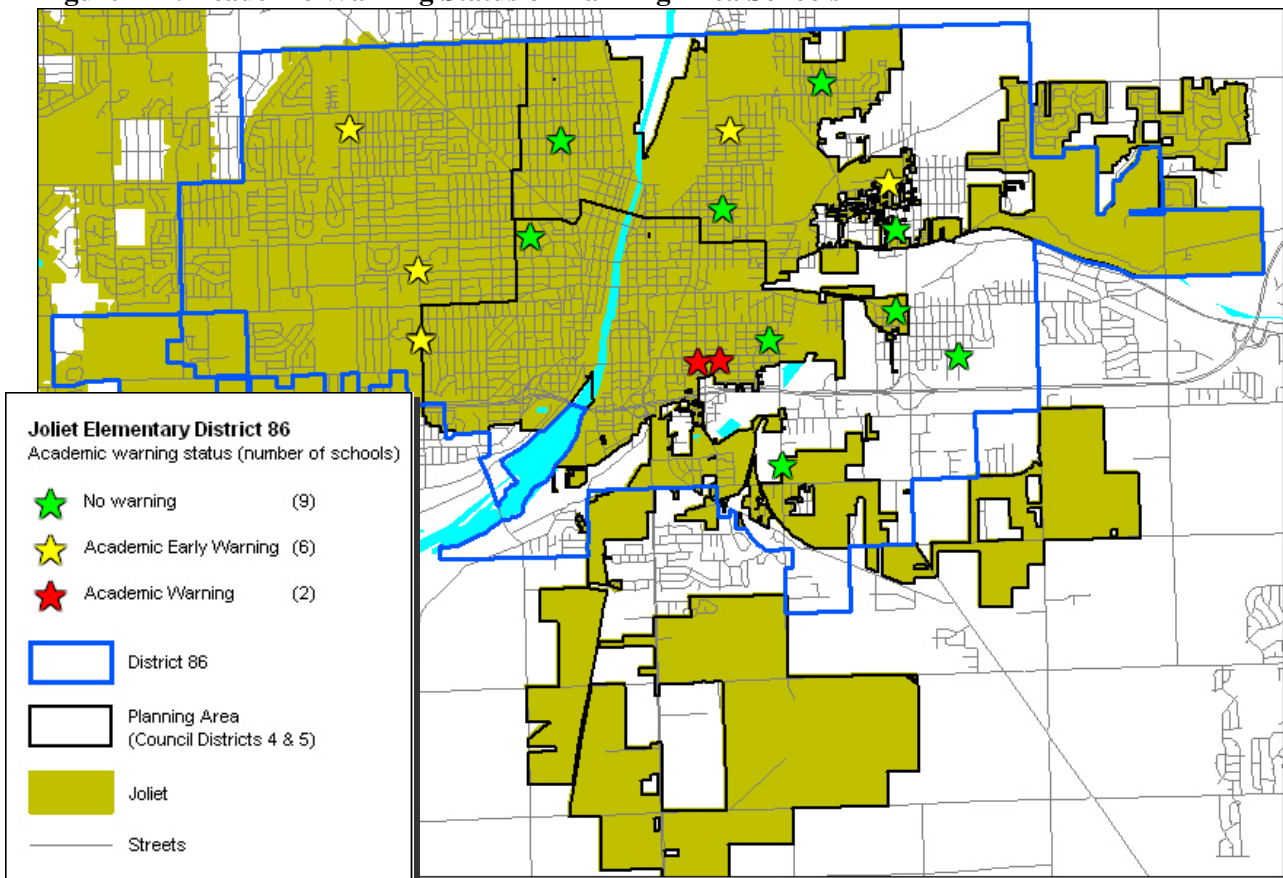
There are 28 private, charter and alternative schools (K-12) serving children and youth in Joliet. The focus of this review centered on the public schools within Districts 86 and 204, which are located in the Planning Area and serve primarily children from Planning Area neighborhoods.

In examining the 2006 School Report Cards for the elementary, junior high and high schools, ten schools were placed on the Illinois Academic Early Warning or Academic Warning List. From the elementary district (District 86) 3 elementary schools and 3 junior high schools were placed on the Early Academic Warning List. Also 1 elementary school and 1 junior high school were placed on the Academic Warning List. No report was available for Park Elementary, and Thompson Instructional Center has not been graded.

Academic challenges not adequately addressed at the elementary or junior high school level are likely to result in continued poor academic performance of students as they move to high school. So it is not surprising that both Joliet High Schools (District 204) have been placed on the Academic Early Warning List.

To provide a clearer picture of where the schools are located throughout the city, two maps depicting all of the schools in School Districts 86 and 204 are provided below. Schools reflecting either the AEWL or AWL status are also reflected in the map.

Figure H-2. Academic Warning Status of Planning Area Schools



To examine some of the commonalities as well as differences among the schools that serve children and youth living in the Planning Area, the following grid reflects all of the schools within Districts 86 and 204. It is understood that children and youth in the area may also attend schools in other school districts.

Table H-1. Planning Area Schools: Scores and Warning Lists

	Located in Planning Area	ISAT math grade 3/8	ISAT reading grade 3/8	PSAE Math Grade 11	PSAE reading Grade 11	AEWL	AWL
Joliet Schools							
A O Marshall Elementary School	*	78%	52%				
Cunningham Elementary School		86%	63%				
Edna Keith Elementary School	*	66%	46%				✓
Eisenhower Academy		98%	87%				
Farragut Elementary School		84%	62%				
Forest Park Individual Ed School	*	90%	69%				
Lynne Thigpen Elementary School		87%	76%			✓	
Pershing Elementary School		88%	64%			✓	
Sator Sanchez Elementary School	*	87%	58%			✓	
T E Culbertson Elementary School	*	67%	46%				
Thompson Instructional Center	*	---	---				
Woodland Elementary School	*	63%	41%				
Dirksen Junior High School		72%	70%			✓	
Gompers Junior High School	*	73%	64%			✓	
Hufford Junior High School		60%	63%			✓	
Washington Junior High School	*	57%	63%				✓
Joliet Central High School	*			28%	39%	✓	
Joliet West High School				39%	51%	✓	
Joliet Township High School - Alternate							

In addition to reviewing the school report cards and conducting interviews with key school officials, an examination was made of various documents including school improvement plans, strategic plans and special initiatives. This review confirms that District 86 is working to implement a variety of programs to help improve the academic performance of students – particularly in the area of reading. Some of the programs underway in the District include: 21st Century, Accelerated Reader, Children for Peace, Guided Reading, Larson Math, Reading Power Tutors, Read 180 and Joliet Reads.

2. Planned response to address academic deficiencies

Joliet District 86, which serves the elementary and junior high schools appears to be working aggressively to address and improve the academic performance of students. In looking at the District's overall and individual school ISAT scores between 2005 and 2006, all of the schools in the District experienced increases in the percentage of the students meeting or exceeding the Illinois Learning Standards. Based on the District's strategic plan, a number of programs and priorities have been established including federally and State funded initiatives to increase the reading levels of children. Only one school within the entire District, Edna Keith is on the Academic Warning List. In looking at a three-year trend of the reading score of third grade students, while the scores are still considerably lower than the District or State, there has been improvement in the scores. The following chart depicts a three-year trend in the Edna Keith elementary school reading scores.

Table H-2. Edna Keith Reading Scores

% Meeting/Exceed ISAE Standards	2004	2005	2006
3rd grade	41.1	45.6	45.6
4th grade	21.5	33.8	53.1
5th grade	35.4	19.8	40.5

District 204 failed to make Adequate Yearly Progress in both reading and math in 2006. Areas of concern include only 27% of the African American students meeting or exceeding standards for reading and 15.1% of the African American students meeting or exceeding standards for math. Students with disabilities and the economically disadvantaged also failed to meet or exceed standards in reading and math. Other indicators of concern include the low graduation rates among African Americans, Hispanics, students with disabilities and the economically disadvantaged.

The District developed a School Improvement Plan beginning in 2003 in an effort to address the deficiencies in reading, writing and math. Based on the plan, various grants have been secured to increase after school learning, while modifications have been made to in-school programming to provide additional assistance. The impact of the various programs deployed to date remains unclear; however, community stakeholders continue to be optimistic.

3. Chronic Truancy and Mobility rates in the elementary schools

Chronic truancy is more of a problem at the elementary school level versus high school. In looking at the 2006 Chronic Truancy rates for the elementary schools located in the Planning Area and comparing these rates with overall rate for District 86 and the State, TE Culbertson reflects one of the highest chronic truancy rates. While the District and State chronic truancy rates were 3.1 and 2.2 respectively, TE Culbertson's rate was 10.9. The remaining schools in the Planning Area maintained truancy rates lower than the District's or consistent with the State's rate.

There are several factors that may contribute to a high truancy rate for a child including lack of parental supervision, problems in the home, high mobility resulting from parent employment,

school factors including relationships with teacher, other students, or even the administrators as well as personal issues. Truancy is considered an early warning sign that a child could be headed towards involvement in other delinquent activities, if not addressed.

In looking at the mobility rates among the elementary, junior high and high schools, several elementary and junior high schools reflect significantly higher rates than the District and State. While the District's overall rate is higher than the State, Sator Sanchez, AO Marshall and TE Culbertson, all maintained rates near the District's rates. Edna Keith and Woodland, reflect mobility rates that nearly double the State's mobility rate. Factors contributing to the high mobility rates may be related to unstable housing or seasonal employment for parents. The following chart depicts the chronic truancy and mobility rates for the elementary schools in the Planning Area as compared with the District and State. It should be noted that at the junior high level, three of the four schools also reflected high mobility rates in excess of the District's rate.

Table H-3. Chronic Truancy and Mobility

	AO Marshall	Edna Keith	TE Culbertson	Forrest Park	Eisenhower Academy	Woodland	Sator Sanchez	District	State
Chronic Truancy	2.8	2.2	10.9	1.7	0	2.4	0.8	3.1	2.2
Mobility	20.7	30.9	25.5	11.1	5	31.5	24.4	24.4	16

4. Higher Drop Out Rate Among African American High School Students

Completion of high school is a critical benchmark as youth are successful in completing the first hurdle in preparation for the workforce. In looking at the high school drop out rates by race/ethnicity, the graduation rate among white students increased from 2003 to 2006. Hispanic students attending Central High School experienced a drop in the graduation rate for the same time period, but experienced an increase in the graduation rate for West High School. Asian, Pacific Islander and Native American students either achieved a 100% graduation rate or moved from a lower rate in 2003 to a 100% rate in 2006. Between 2003 and 2006, the number of African Americans graduating from both schools in the District declined. There are several factors that may be contributing to the low graduation rate among African American students, which may stem from academic challenges from earlier years.

It is imperative to focus on why the graduation rate among African Americans is actually declining, while other racial/ethnic groups are rising. Again, other risk factors involving family, the environment, the school or the individual student need could be contributing to the decline in high school graduates. Research shows that students experiencing academic challenges are more likely to drop out of school after years of frustration. Failing to see other role models among family and friends in successfully completing school and then moving on to a well-paying vocation or college can also contribute to a student's decision to drop out.

Table H-4. High School Graduation Rates

Graduation Rates	White Students	Black Students	Hispanic Students	Asian/Pacific Islander Students	Native American Students
Central - 2003	71.8	↓ 69.8	85.8	100	0
Central - 2006	73.9	↓ 67.0	73.5	100	100
West - 2003	93.2	↓ 82.9	79.7	78.6	100
West - 2006	93	↓ 77.1	86.5	100	0
District - 2003	84.3	75.1	84.2	84.2	100
District - 2006	84.9	71.3	76.3	100	25
State - 2003	91	73.3	75.5	92.5	77.8
State - 2006	92.3	78.3	77.1	94.1	80.5

5. Preparation of Youth for Opportunities Beyond High School

District 204 and in particular, Central High School has implemented several in-school programs designed to prepare youth for broader career or education options upon graduation. Seeking to respond to disappointing academic performance, and to better prepare students for a future career and/or college, Central High School has established a series of small learning communities. The “Freshman Academy” helps 9th graders transition to high school and make informed decisions about their high school and post-secondary opportunities. A longer school day for freshman also enables the school to provide more academic support and on-site support from various community service groups. 10-12th graders are then tracked into 5 “Career Academies”: Art/Communications, Business Management and Information Systems, Engineering/Industrial Technology, Health and Sciences and Human Services. The academies provide all students with a college preparation level of instruction, which is made more relevant by the focus areas of the academies. Within the Career Academies there are designated “Career Pathways:” coherent, articulated sequences of academic and career/technical courses which, in partnership with postsecondary education, business and employers, prepare students for postsecondary employment. Through these Career Pathways, the high school offers several articulated courses with Joliet Junior College to allow students to secure college credits while completing high school. The format of the career academies provides an excellent opportunity to encourage youth to explore various career options.

While the Career Academies/small learning communities program is still coming to full implementation it is difficult to assess the full benefits the program may provide in terms of immediate and future academic success (i.e. drop-out rates and college enrollment or career placement). The challenge remains for District 86 and other surrounding elementary/middle school districts to prepare students from the junior high schools to perform at their appropriate academic levels, to ensure they are adequately prepared to take advantage of these high school opportunities.

Joliet Junior College offers 45-50 technical programs including nursing, logistics/warehousing, radiology, business management and truck driving. There is a commitment to add more programs to meet the need of area employers. JJC currently does not track the ethnic breakdown

of the community and there is a desire to expand minority outreach efforts. JJC's relationship with District 204 continues to build a continuum of career programs for students.

6. Growing Diversity of Students and Lack of Diversity among District Teaching Staff

In looking at the student population for Districts 86 and 204 from 2003 to 2006, the number of white students attending public schools in Joliet is declining. In contrast, the number of Hispanic students is rising in both Districts. There has been a slight decline in African American students, an increase at the elementary/junior high level for Asian/Pacific Islanders and a slight decrease at the high school level. Native American students remained constant at both levels.

Table H-5. Student Diversity

	White Students	Black Students	Hispanic Students	Asian/Pacific Islander Students	Native American Students	Total Students
District 86- 2003	23.8	38.5	36.7	0.8	0.2	9,448
District 86 - 2006	19.1	34.2	43.9	1.5	0.2	9,773
District 204 - 2003	41.6	30.6	26.2	1.4	0.3	4,779
Central High	30.5	31.6	36.8	1	0.1	2,633
West High	55.2	29.3	13.1	1.9	0.4	2,146
District 204 -2006	38.3	29.7	30.1	0.8	0.3	5,120
Central High	27.6	30.9	40.5	0.5	0.4	2,702
West High	50.1	28.4	18.5	1.2	0.2	2,418
Aurora District 131- 2006	7.3	9.8	80.8	0.7	0.2	12,316
Aurora District 129 - 2006	37.9	18.5	40.6	2	0.2	12,301

While the number of Hispanic students appears to be growing, the teaching staff within both districts has remained relatively the same. Interviews with stakeholders indicate that both Districts are working to find new ways to recruit Hispanic teachers; however, this appears to be a problem across the State. One District that looks to have made some progress in diversifying its teaching staff is Aurora School District 131. Given the 80.1% Hispanic student population, the District reflects a 22.2% Hispanic teaching staff.

Table H-6. Student and Teacher Diversity Comparison

	White Students	White Teachers	Black Students	Black Teachers	Hispanic Students	Hispanic Teachers	Total Students	Total Teachers
District 86- 2003	23.8	85.3	34.2	8.9	36.7	4.5	9,448	529
District 86 - 2006	19.1	83.3	34.2	7.8	43.9	7.4	9,773	564
District 204 - 2003	41.6	86.9	30.6	8	26.2	4.5	4,779	313
Central High	30.5		31.6		36.8		2,633	

West High	55.2		29.3		13.1		2,146	
District 204 - 2006	38.3	87.3	29.7	6.8	30.1	4.7	5,120	322
Central High	27.6		30.9		40.5		2,702	
West High	50.1		28.4		18.5		2,418	
Aurora 131 2006	7.3	72.7	9.8	4.6	80.8	22.2	12,316	700
Aurora 129 2006	37.9	90.2	18.5	4.1	40.6	5.1	12,301	713

7. Need for Increased Community and Parent Engagement

Through interviews with community stakeholders and review of various District level and school level documents, there are several programs deployed to focus on improving the academic performance of children and youth in school. In looking at the test scores, several of the schools appear to be making progress. A consistent concern expressed relative to improving the reading, science and math levels of area students pertains to the engagement of the overall community and more specifically parents. While the school report cards suggest that parent participation is relatively high, consistent involvement in working with their children resonated repeatedly during interviews and discussion groups. Parent-focused initiatives such as the Premier Academy, which offers Parents University for at-risk youth is just one example of a program focused on parents. Districts 86 and 204 encourage parent involvement and offer different programs and meeting opportunities for parents to become involved in working with the schools. For example, a Hispanic branch of Central High School's Parent Club is large and well-attended. Yet the need still remains for more parents or caregivers to become involved with the development of their children on a consistent basis.

In a survey conducted by a Lansing Michigan-based coalition, the results demonstrated it is imperative that a parent take responsibility in helping their child's teacher understand their child. When parents worked with the teacher to better understand their child, these parents were less likely to feel like outsiders at the school and take a more active role in helping their child learn. While most parents argue that they have limited time to devote to their child's school work, it is important for parents to understand the critical role they play in helping to create a stimulating environment for their child at school and at home.

Parents also need to work with other parents to help address some of the challenges in schools that ultimately affect a child's behavior. The concern for crime in the school is one example of something parents can work to address for the safety of all children in school.

Proposals

Strategic Considerations

While some of the Joliet schools face serious academic challenges, in reviewing multiple years of the report card data, school strategic plans, school improvement plans and comparing this data

with feedback from community stakeholders, progress is being made in most areas. In looking at the various programs offered to focus on learning improvement, Joliet has successfully tapped the full range of funding opportunities available by public and private sources to help improve the academic performance of students. One of the elementary schools, Eisenhower Academy, received the 2006 Academic Excellence award.

District 86, along with community partners should continue implementing diverse programs designed to stimulate learning and overcome risk factors that may affect a child's learning environment. Collaborating with the University of St. Francis to implement the Professional Development Series is another example of how schools are working together to identify and test best practice models to help increase the academic performance of students. Although several of the schools face AWL, AEWL or chronic truancy or high mobility rates, there are some bright notes for the community.

As for the District 204, the focus on career academies and small learning communities seems promising. The deployment of programs at both elementary/junior high and high school levels should continue to be endorsed.

As Districts 86 and 204 continue to implement their respective improvement plans and strategic plans, there are some factors associated with the academic progress of students that should be monitored by the overall community. While it is expected that the collective scores of each school should continue to rise, the community should continue to look at the racial/ethnic, gender, income level breakdown of students to determine if all students are making acceptable progress. For example, while the overall high school graduation rate for District 204 is considered acceptable, the rate for African American students attending Central High School is extremely low as compared with other school districts such as Aurora and the State. This may suggest that while there are programs in place to help the general student population improve academically, other factors may be contributing to the declining graduation rate among African Americans.

Conditions in the home environment, historical high mobility rates, or exposure of the juvenile justice system are some of the factors that could be affecting the graduation rate. The District may need to deploy some type of early warning system to monitor whether a student is at risk of not graduating. Convening human service providers that serve high school youth to discuss potential factors outside the school environment that may be affecting the graduation rates should be conducted on a bi-annual basis. This will help determine if new programs or modifications to existing programs is warranted.

District 204 may also want to look more aggressively at finding ways to expand the pool of role models for its students who are at risk of not graduating. The District is encouraged to provide more opportunities for recent high school graduates who have enrolled in vocational programs or college to return and interact with students on a limited basis (summer or school breaks). Given the low number of minority teachers on staff, increasing exposure of minority students to minority graduates may help more students to realize their dreams beyond high school.

It is also important to examine the progress of the schools from an individual level as well as in comparison with other schools in Joliet and the State. Strategies and programs deployed by both Districts may be achieving some success, but closing the gap in academic performance throughout the Districts will require continued commitment and focus of resources for many years to come.

As is the cases for proposals in other section of this plan, the implementation of Education proposals will require the formation of an organization that can act on behalf of the Planning Area community. Other sections of the Plan discuss and propose the formation of a Planning Area Community Development Corporation (CDC) that would succeed the Quality of Life Task Force in representing the community and share responsibility for implementing the overall Plan and many of its critical proposals. Working with Districts 86 and 204 and with other organizations involved in providing educations services for Planning Area children and youth, an Education Committee of the CDC could coordinate the implementation of the Plan's proposals for Education.

Proposals

1. Establish mechanisms to monitor the impact of all academic enrichment efforts.

Given the number of programs underway in the community focused on improving the academic performance of children and youth, the opportunity exists to assess the collective impact of these programs and monitor the number and diversity of students accessing these programs. Sharing data relative to attendance, testing, and other environmental factors affecting children and youth will help to assess the progress of children and youth residing in the community. In creating this mechanism, more information can be collected and analyzed to understand what percentage of the students actually receive assistance and what barriers may exist that prevent other students from accessing the various programs and services available in the community. This mechanism is especially important in examining potential efforts to increase the graduation rate of Central High School students and tracking the next steps of graduates to ensure successful transitions into post secondary education or the workforce.

2. Reduce high mobility and chronic truancy rates through community education.

Various studies confirm that mobility along with ethnicity and socioeconomic status are all factors that serve as predictors of poor performance for children and youth in school. In looking at schools with high mobility rates, these schools did perform lower on tests than schools with lower mobility rates. While chronic truancy is a concern in some of the schools, more schools are struggling with high mobility rates. High mobility rates for children in the elementary schools might explain why all of the junior high schools are experiencing academic challenges as students are not receiving consistent educational training in their early years.

While parents may not be moving their children in and out of the District, leading researchers contend constant changes in schools may have a negative impact on the student's performance.

While housing appears to be a top factor in contributing to the frequent moves, the community should be encouraged to examine whether access to safe and affordable housing might contribute to the high mobility rate. It is important to stress that ‘safe and affordable’ are relative terms. If a family has experienced some level of crime in a neighborhood, it may no longer consider the area to be safe. Affordability is tied to income and expenses. If a family experiences swings in the household income, a home considered to be affordable in 2005, may no longer be affordable in 2006. Other factors such as gas, medical bills and food are also factors that influence whether a home remains affordable to the family.

Increased coordination with workforce development agencies may also help identify families that are high risk for moving. Area schools appear to be trying different initiatives to help address this issue internally, but it is imperative that the community receive more information regarding this issue and the long term implications for children and youth.

3. Broaden efforts to increase the level of parental/care giver engagement with area schools

The Planning Area reflects a number of prominent faith-based and community-based organizations. As area schools have implemented various educational campaigns and work to increase the level of parental involvement, faith-based institutions could be instrumental in broadening the dissemination of a unified message to parents about the importance of their involvement with their child’s education. A unified message may also help raise the awareness of what parental involvement means while also identifying other barriers that may prohibit parents from being more engaged.

4. Create a community technology plan to increase the use of technology in Joliet’s Planning Area homes.

While no specific estimates could be determined on the number of computers located in homes in the Planning Area, national research confirms that low-income communities and communities of color are less likely to have computer technology in the home. The proposed Education Committee of the Planning Area Community Development Corporation, discussed above, can help stimulate increased use of computer technology in the homes by supporting the development of a computer technology plan.

Although a number of the community service providers offer computer labs, the proposed CDC – working with the City of Joliet may want explore how to help families gain access to the internet from their homes. In developing a community technology plan including financial feasibility and funding sources, the CDC and City of Joliet may want to investigate establishing a WiFi network. Cities including Aurora have established a WiFi network with some financial support derived from both public and private sector sources.

Recognizing that creating a WiFi network will be useful to only individuals and families with existing computer technology in the home, the community technology plan should focus on exploring more ways to provide families with refurbished computers. The CDC may want to encourage public agencies that regularly purchase new computers and discard older models to donate these computers to the local high school to increase training opportunities for youth to

work on computers that can ultimately be given to families. Public agencies to be tapped for this type of project may also include federal agencies operating in Chicago. Several public and private programs exist around the country providing an outlet for individuals to donate their old computers for refurbishing.

5. Diversify the tools used to celebrate the educational progress in the schools.

Communicate the overall progress of both Districts to the community so that all can celebrate the accomplishments as well as work on common areas of improvement. This may be done through a community wide newspaper or public access channel on television.

6. Convene regular community dialogues to discuss accomplishments and areas of improvement relative to all aspects of the community including education.

Allowing community residents to share in discussions about the overall transformation of their neighborhoods allows them to become active participants in the transformation process versus recipients. Community dialogues provide an excellent forum to share with community residents, what has been accomplished to date, what is currently being implemented and areas for improvement. The goal in hosting this type of dialogue is to help more community residents learn how to become more engaged in issues affecting their community such as education. Community dialogues also provide opportunities for long-term residents to network with new residents and engage in constructive problem solving activities that support the work of the local schools.

7. Increase opportunities for minority role models to help reverse poor graduation rates among African American and Hispanic high school students.

District 204 has the unique opportunity to expand the bridge in the target communities between the African American and Hispanic students who graduated from high school and those that are at risk for not graduating. Allowing more students who moved onto the next phase of their life to come back and share their experiences with high school students can serve as a powerful tool for students and high school graduates. The District is encouraged to work with other community groups, institutions of higher education, and faith-based institutions to explore ways to connect recent high school graduates with high school students. This may include activities over the summer, during school breaks and should not be limited to only those students who are in college to ensure students are exposed to the widest range of career options.

8. Establish a goal to increase the number of minority teachers.

Support of strong education improvement plans must include as a top priority, a focus on increasing the number of minority teachers. While schools districts across the State struggle to identify and retain good minority teachers, it must become a priority for the community and the schools to achieve this goal. Recognizing that over the next five years, many of the current teachers within Districts 86 and 204 will be retiring, it is imperative that both Districts establish plans to focus new hiring opportunities for minority candidates.

To achieve a more diverse workforce, the schools will need additional resources to invest in developing a minority recruitment program. A 2004 report conducted by the National Education Association reinforced the importance of diversifying the teaching pool and the challenges associated with recruiting teachers of color. At least three options exist to support the goal of hiring more minority teachers. While one option might be to recruit from other school districts, Joliet has a number of quality secondary education institutions that could play an important role in helping to groom high school students for these important positions. An early preparation program that begins preparing high school students who might be interested in returning to Joliet to teach could be established. Beyond traditional career academies, this type of initiative will require students to be exposed to younger teachers – some of whom may have graduated from the same high school. These younger teachers can help students understand the requirements and benefits of selecting teaching as a profession. A pilot program already exists in the Future Teachers club at the high school level which partners the University of St. Francis. This program could be expanded as part of this proposal. Support from the corporate sector could also aid in providing scholarships for students who elect to pursue this path.

Educational institutions such as Governors State University have established urban teaching programs to help expand the pool of teacher working in urban schools. This program should be explored by the Education Committee of the CDC. Another avenue is for Joliet to consider is partnering with Historically Black Colleges and Hispanic Institutions to recruit graduating students to move to Joliet. Internship opportunities created for these students could help prepare future teachers to consider employment opportunities in Joliet.

Finally officers in the CDC, the school districts, and City government should take advantage of the broad perspective of the QOL Plan to consider strategies for attracting minority teachers. For example, the Housing section of this Plan proposes implementation of an Employer Assisted Housing program to help more working families become home owners in the Planning Area. This program could provide a strong incentive to teachers to work in Planning Area schools and live in their school neighborhoods.

Plan of Action

Proposals Summary					
Short Term (0-3 years)	Responsibility	Priority	Completion Date	Estimated Costs	Potential Funding Sources
1) Establish mechanism to monitor the impact of all academic enrichment efforts.	Planning Area community organization, possibly the Education Committee of a Community Development Corporation	1		\$30,000- \$50,000	City of Joliet, Foundations, IL Dept of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO)

	(CDC), Districts 86 and 204, Community service providers				
2) Increase education throughout the community on the affects of high mobility and chronic truancy rates.	CDC, Districts 86 and 204	1		\$50,000- \$75,000	IL State Board of Education (ISBE), Foundations, Dept. of Education
3) Broaden efforts to increase the level of parental/care given engagement with area schools.	CDC	1			IL Dept. of Human Services (DHS), ISBE, Foundations
4) Create community technology plan to increase the use of technology to help bridge the digital divide.	City of Joliet, CDC	2			DCEO, Homeland Security, Foundations
5) Diversify the tools used to celebrate educational progress in the schools.	CDC, Districts 86 and 204 Joliet Junior College (JCC) and area universities	2			Private sector, Foundations
6) Convene regular community dialogues to discuss accomplishments and areas of improvement relative to all aspects of the community including education.	CDC, City of Joliet, Faith and community-based organizations, Districts 86 and 204	1		\$15,000 annually	Small businesses, Foundations, Corporations

Long Term (3+ years)	Responsibility	Priority	Completion Date	Estimated Costs	Potential Funding Sources
----------------------	----------------	----------	-----------------	-----------------	---------------------------

7) Increase opportunities for minority role models to help reverse poor graduation rates among African American and Hispanic high school students.	Districts 86 and 204, JCC, University of St. Francis	1			
8) Establish a program to increase the number of minority teachers.	Districts 86 and 204, JCC, CDC, Lewis University, University of St. Francis	1			U.S. Department of Education, Ford Foundation