

MILESTONE 5: SUCCESSFULLY EMPLOYED

MILESTONE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Lisette Colón-Collins
Assistant Superintendent,
Yonkers Public Schools

Sean McGrail
Executive Director, Yonkers Workforce
Development Board

Chanele Harris
Yonkers Workforce Development

Johny Nelson
New York State Department of Labor's
Division of Research & Statistics

Derick Adu
Medicaid Compliance Officer

Rhonda Cloud
Peace Program Specialist

Nicole Toro
Constituent Services, City of Yonkers

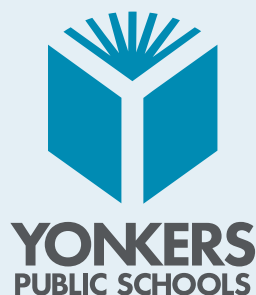
Hope Coaxum
Constituent Services, City of Yonkers

Paulina Villanueva
School Psychologist

Michelle Botelho
Human Resources

Laura Mulcahy
YPS Health Services

Anderson Loaiza
Medicaid & Library Services

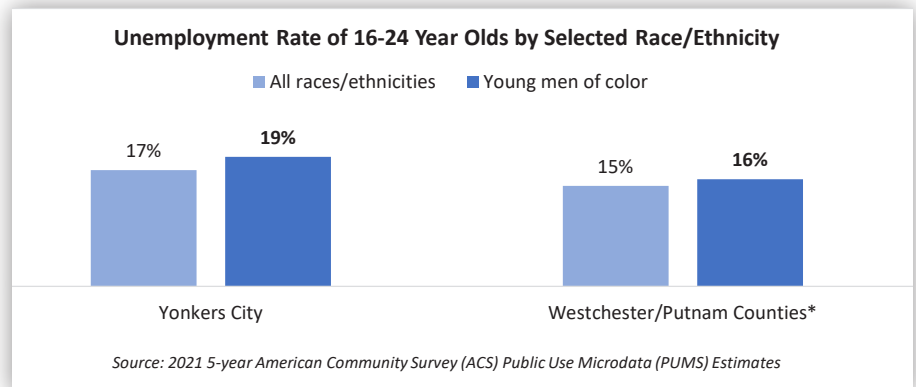


What is your five-year goal for the selected Milestone?

The Yonkers School District, in partnership with the City of Yonkers and County of Westchester will implement a comprehensive initiative to reduce the unemployment rate among young men of color ages 16-24 to 14% over five years, starting at a baseline of 19%. This will in turn enhance their economic opportunities and financial well-being. We will take a multi-pronged approach, with strategies ranging from holding trainings aligned with potential employment opportunities through to mentorship activity in partnership with local organizations.

Context for the Work

As per the 2021 5-Year American Community Survey, the combined unemployment rate for African American and Latino residents aged 16-24 in Westchester/Putnam County is 16%. In the City of Yonkers, this rate is higher at 19.2%, indicating a 3.2% disparity compared to the overall county. Although the specific unemployment rate for Yonkers Public School graduates, receiving benefits from the Dept. of Social Services is unknown. It is important to note that our district's low-income demographics further highlight the need for targeted support.



Our Current Impressions + Insights: Informing our Year 1 Strategic Activity

We know that our district serves a population that overwhelmingly comes from low-income households—over 70% of students served (16% African American, 62% Hispanic) come from economically disadvantaged households. In other words, the majority of the population we serve comes from households with significant economic needs.

At the same time, we know that the Yonkers Workforce Development Board received more than 1500 applications for employment as part of the summer youth employment program for those—but they could only accept 200 children from economically disadvantaged households to participate.

What progress do you hope to achieve by the end of year one implementation?

The Yonkers School District, in partnership with the City of Yonkers and County of Westchester will strive to decrease the unemployment rate of African American & Latinos ages 16-24 by 2%.

Strategic Activity

DATA COLLECTION AND REVIEW TO INFORM ACTION

Our first priority is to better scope and understand the problem through comprehensive data collection and analysis, to inform a more strategic plan to enhance our 5-year goal. Our data effort will be guided by the following key questions:

- How many African American and Hispanic young men are actively seeking employment?
- What is the unemployment rate for African American young men ages 16-19 & 20-24 years old?
- What is the unemployment rate for Hispanic and Latino young men ages 16-19 & 20-24 years old?
- What percentage of YPS graduates continue to post-secondary education?
- What percentage graduate and obtain employment within their first year?

CREATION OF AN INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Create an internship program that is supported by YPS alumni and that serves current young men of color in our high schools

- several types of funding, incl. Title 1, 4, and McKinney Vento Grant, will be leveraged.

CREATION OF AN ALUMNI NETWORK

YPS will create an Alumni Network to strengthen relationships with our YPS graduates and to provide continuous supports as they relate to employment.

In collaboration with the City of Yonkers, YPS will create its first Alumni Network, which will track all graduates and provide them with continuous support as they embark on their journey to successful employment. This support will include resume workshops, interview preparation, empowerment assemblies, career fairs, and provide access to the Yonkers Alumni Network (YAN). The YAN will be the first of its kind to follow and track Yonkers graduates, offering ongoing support as they continue in post-secondary education. YPS will leverage the knowledge and experiences of current and former MBK Fellows to lead this work, ensuring that all graduates have the resources they need to succeed.

CTE TRAINING IN YPS SCHOOLS

YPS will seek to better understand what's needed to increase the number of Career and Technical Certification within the schools, and additional CTE opportunities for students, more generally. This work may include a recommendation around what's needed re: hiring CTE certified teachers.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS

Establish a Memorandum of Understanding with local businesses, nonprofit organizations, and partnerships to create entry-level employment opportunities for young men of color.

Yonkers School District will strengthen its collaboration with City of Yonkers Workforce Development Board and Yonkers Partners in Education to create and inform a strategic plan to establish a workforce development program specifically for young men of color. This partnership will be a catalyst for identifying solutions that address barriers to youth unemployment.

