



Winter news & updates

November 15, 2024 | Issue 30



Workgroup Meetings

High School Graduation Outcomes Team -
December 10, 2024
PECAN Public Session – December 19,
2024

Sponsor the 12th Annual State of Our Children Address



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Message from the Executive Director

“Nobody’s coming to save us, and this is good for us, because how empowering is it for us to know that we can save ourselves?” - Dr. David Kirkland

Dear Friends,

Recently, ROC the Future Alliance was featured in the [news](#) for our work co-developing solutions with parents, system partners and youth around chronic absenteeism. A recent [report](#) by New York State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli conveyed that last year, 1 in 3 students in our state experienced chronic absenteeism. Chronic absenteeism is defined by the U.S Department of Education as “the share of students who miss at least 10 percent of days (typically 18) in a school year.” In New York, chronic absenteeism increased significantly during the pandemic and peaked during the 2021-2022 school year.

Network News



EdCeptional joins ROC the Future Alliance

We are proud to welcome EDceptional to ROC the Future Alliance! By unanimous decision during the October RTFA convener meeting, EdCeptional is the newest member to join the alliance.

EDceptional provides proactive supports and resources for a sustainable ecosystem encouraging collaboration within the entire charter school sector.

Through their flagship project, GoodSchoolsRoc, all Rochester charter schools collaborate to provide access and enrollment at high performing schools.

GoodSchoolsRoc.org is a web portal where parents learn about Rochester charter schools.

[Learn more](#)

Youth Leadership Coalition welcomes new students

We are thrilled to announce the recruitment of 19 dynamic students into ROC the Future Alliance's Youth Leadership Coalition bringing our total to 31 youth leaders! These students, representing RCSD, charter schools and private schools (grades 8-12), are stepping into powerful roles as systems change leaders, earning \$15 per hour for their dedicated work.

In this role, students develop policies and strategies that impact education, health care and social services. As part of our High School Graduation Outcome Team, our students will collaborate with systems partners, stakeholders and their peers to identify community and data driven strategies to positively impact:

- Attendance
- 9th grade experience
- Increasing the high school graduation rate

Going forward, our students will participate in a youth-led Community Onboarding and Reboarding Experience (C.O.R.E.) to build capacity and shift mental models. Then they will receive a commemorative pin during a recognition ceremony in December marking their formal commitment to leading systems change. Each student's school and

community-based organization will receive a letter informing leadership of their vital role as members of the alliance.



Centering Youth Voice with a Youth and Family Café

In partnership with Rochester Academy Charter School, the High School Graduation Outcomes Team (HSGOT) hosted a youth and family café. The HSGOT is focused on improving high school outcomes by prioritizing what really works to change systems, including shifting policies, practices, resources, and decision-making.

This café focused on high school success. Cafés provide a space to hear directly from those most impacted by the system in order to learn what's needed to be successful in high school and beyond.

Here's what some of the youth & parents had to say about their experience:

- *"I felt very welcomed and heard with my concerns."*
- *"I enjoyed hearing ideas and concerns the youth presented – better ways to get our youth at a higher graduation rate."*
- *"I learned a lot from people who are older than me that are graduating and are successful and [about] being social and being yourself."*
- *"I enjoyed talking with others about attendance and the 9th grade experience. I would 100% come back as a participant for this whenever there is another Youth & [Family] Café."*



RTFA in the News

Schools, communities, and advocates across the nation have successfully taken steps to ensure children are attending school more regularly.

We know that data-driven, comprehensive approaches that begin with engaging students and families is important, as well as preventing absences from adding up before students fall behind academically.

Check out this interview on WROC News 8, featuring Nazareth Miller, Youth Leadership Coalition participant, Brian Lewis, ROC the Future Executive Director and Dr. Shaun Nelms, ROC the Future Vice Chair, addressing chronic absenteeism.

[Watch Now](#)

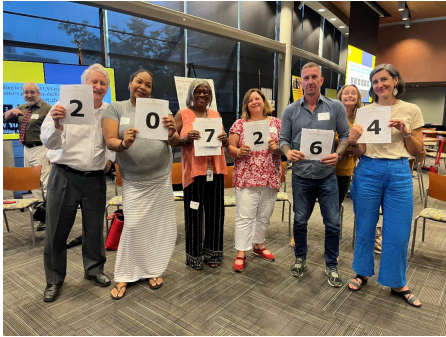
The Children's Agenda Survey on

Chronic absenteeism (missing at least 10 percent of school days in a year) is up sharply across the nation and in the Greater Rochester region. Though we know that missing class time has a negative impact on students' academic progress, we have limited information about why students continue to miss more time than before the pandemic. With more information we could find out what supports would be most helpful to students and families.

To get a better picture of why students are missing school locally The Children's Agenda has created an [anonymous survey](#). Please fill this survey out with your own children and share widely with your networks.

You can access the survey here: English Version - [School Absences Survey \(surveymonkey.com\)](#);

Spanish Version - [Ausencias Escolares Survey \(surveymonkey.com\)](#)



Become a Cradle to Career Champion

ROC the Future Alliance has set a bold new goal to put 11,000 more children on a path to upward mobility by improving critical [Cradle to Career](#) milestones by 2030.

As a member of the Alliance, your work will help us get there. We are collecting stories from our partners to capture the way your work is making shifts in the areas of policy, practices, resources, and/or power structures to benefit Rochester youth and families.

We will utilize the Systems Change form throughout the year to identify your contribution to the 11,000 target and advance our Common Agenda. The benefits of completing this form include growing publicity for your work by sharing it with a larger audience, building alignment by ensuring collective community knowledge, and mutually reinforcing one and other's work by identifying areas for collaboration and breaking down silos.

[Complete now](#)

Register for the Growing Strong Readers, Growing Strong Families Parent Café

Literacy is the gateway to academic achievement. Join us for our upcoming Parent Café, "Growing Strong Readers, Growing Strong Families," to discover how literacy and family well-being are linked. Tools and



ROC the Future Alliance — Parent Cafe

Growing Strong Readers, Growing Strong Minds: An emphasis on literacy as part of a broader family journey, connecting reading skills to emotional resilience.

Thursday, November 21st – 5:00 - 7:30p.m.

Children's Institute (1st Floor)

205 St. Paul St, Rochester, NY 14604

The Parent Cafe is a nationally recognized model of small group discussions based on the five protective factors that reduce trauma and fortify families, ultimately strengthening our community.

All participants will receive a \$40 gift card!
Registration for each adult is required.

Dinner will be served from 5:00 - 5:30 p.m.
There is capacity for 25 participants.

Childcare and bus passes will be provided.
If needed, please confirm by Monday 11/18/24.



Scan QR code to register by November 20th!

resources will be provided to develop students into strong, confident readers.

Date: Thursday, November 21, 2024

Time: 5:00pm - 7:30pm

Location: Children's Institute - 1st Floor, 205 St. Paul St., Rochester, NY 14604

RSVP by Wed, Nov 20, 2024.

[Register Now](#)



Purchase tickets for the 12th Annual State of Our Children Address & Report Card Release!

Date: Friday, January 17, 2025

Time: Lunch 11:30 am | Program 12PM - 2PM

Location: Harro East Ballroom, 155 N. Chestnut Street, Rochester, NY 14604

Keynote Address: Dr. David Kirkland, equity education expert and founder of [forwardED, LLC](#)

[Purchase Tickets](#)



ROC the Future Alliance | 205 St. Paul Street | Rochester, NY 14604 US

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