



CHAPTER SEVEN

HUMAN SERVICES ELEMENT

What you will find in this chapter:

- Demographic, economic and social trends;
- Statement of goals and policies to provide a framework defining the City's role in contributing to the social development of the community; and
- Goals that support the provision of services to assist those in need and opportunities to encourage a healthy community.

Purpose Statement:

Invest in the delivery of human services programs which are essential to the community's growth, vitality and health.

Purpose

Kent will be a place where children, individuals and families can thrive, where neighbors care for each other and where our residents share the responsibility of ensuring a safe and healthy community for all.

A healthy city depends on the health and well-being of its residents. Human services programs are essential to the health, growth and vitality of the Kent community. Programs assist individuals and families meet their basic needs and create a pathway to self-sufficiency. By investing in the delivery of these services to Kent residents, the City of Kent is working to promote building a healthy community. Housing and Human Services invests in the community to create measurable, sustainable change and to improve the lives of its residents. Investments are focused in order to generate the greatest possible impact. They address the issues that matter most to our community and are targeted in order to deliver meaningful results.

To achieve community impact, investments are made in a variety of ways:

- **Meeting Community Basics**
Ensuring that people facing hardship have access to resources to help meet immediate or basic needs.
- **Increasing Self-Reliance**
Helping individuals break out of the cycle of poverty by improving access to services and removing barriers to employment.
- **Strengthening Children and Families**
Providing children, youth and families with community resources needed to support their positive development, including early intervention and prevention services.
- **Building a Safer Community**
Providing resources and services that reduce violence, crime and neglect in our community.
- **Improving Health and Well-Being**
Providing access to services that allow individuals to improve their mental and physical health, overall well-being and ability to live independently.
- **Improving and Integrating Systems**
Leading efforts to ensure that human services systems meet demands and expectations by increasing capacity, utilizing technology, coordinating efforts and sharing resources.

The City of Kent is one of the most diverse communities in the State of Washington. As the City continues to strive to meet the needs and expectations of an increasingly culturally and ethnically varied population, a better understanding of cultural differences and their relationship to quality service – respect, inclusiveness and sensitivity – becomes essential. Serving diverse populations is not a “one size fits all” process. Diversity includes all differences, not just those that indicate racial or ethnic distinctions. Diversity transcends racial and ethnic distinctions to include groups, their members and affiliations. The concept of diversity also refers to differences in lifestyles, beliefs, economic status, etc.

Community Context

The demographic changes that have taken place in Kent and the surrounding cities have had a broad impact on the provision of human services. It is evident that segments of Kent’s population are growing more rapidly than others. Census 2010 data and the subsequent American Community Survey data indicate that while the percentage of minorities in Seattle remained relatively flat, it skyrocketed in the suburbs south of the city limits, including Kent. The shift happened as people of color moved out of Seattle’s historically lower-income and diverse neighborhoods, joining waves of immigrants who continue to relocate and settle in South King County. While Seattle is scarcely more diverse than it was ten years ago, Kent and several other South King County cities are now communities where minorities either comprise a majority of the population or very close to it.

This trend is sometimes referred to as the suburbanization of poverty and its prevalence in South King County drew the attention of the Brookings Institution, a think tank based in Washington D.C. that conducts research and education in the social sciences. Kent and the surrounding cities are now home to a wide variety of people living in poverty. According to research conducted by Brookings, 68 percent of the poor in the three counties surrounding Seattle now live in the suburbs, particularly in South King County. The suburbanization of poverty is now a defining characteristic of the Kent community and it appears to be increasing across the nation.

As the suburbanization of poverty trend continues, Kent's population will become increasingly diverse, challenging our already overburdened service delivery systems to deliver culturally and linguistically competent services. Individuals and families will continue to need accessible transportation, health care, child and dependent care. Housing cost in part fuels this growth and, although housing in Kent is less expensive than other parts of King County, it is still not affordable for many (defined as a threshold of 30 percent of income). Kent has a large inventory of old housing, both apartments and single-family homes. This housing stock is in need of upkeep and improvements in order to maintain an appropriate level of livability. Low-income households are too often crowded in older apartments not intended for their family size, and home ownership opportunities are limited for working families.

Additional challenges related to the suburbanization of poverty include the development of health disparities. People living in poverty are more likely to have underlying contributors to conditions that adversely affect health – factors such as poor diet, tobacco use, physical inactivity, drug and alcohol use and adverse childhood experiences. The leading causes of death and disability are shaped in large part by the places where people live, learn, work and play. Therefore, to improve the health of Kent's residents, more attention must be focused on community features that affect health - such as decent housing, access to healthy food, transportation, parks, living wage jobs and social cohesion. The economy and quality of life depend on the ability of everyone to contribute. By investing in human services that are accessible to all, the City is working to remove barriers that limit the ability of some to fulfill their potential.

Regional efforts in South King County are critical for high priority issues such as housing, transportation and human services. While the migration of low-income individuals and families to South King County is well documented, the proportion of public funds has not followed. Additionally, simply moving the resources will not solve the fundamental problems associated with poverty in the region. Kent and other South King County cities do not have the necessary infrastructure to meet the needs because public policy has not kept pace with the rise of poverty in the suburbs. While there is no simple solution to this issue, it is critical that any approach to system change must be addressed at a regional level, including local partners in every part of the process.



Issues

Demographics, Economics and Special Needs

The needs of Kent residents are varied and range from the need for one-time assistance to the need for more complex, ongoing case management. It is critical to provide a continuum of human services programs that meet residents where they are, prevent them from requiring more intensive services later and guide them toward a path of self-sufficiency.

Kent's History in Human Services

Kent is recognized as a leader in South King County in the human services arena. The City has been funding nonprofit human service agencies to provide services to its residents since 1974. In 1989, the City took a major step in its funding efforts by allocating one percent of its general fund revenue to fund human services. This nearly doubled the amount of funding in the first year. In addition, the City has consistently allocated the maximum allowable of its Federal Community Development Block Grant dollars to human services.

The City of Kent Human Services Commission was established by the City Council in 1986. The Commission serves in an advisory capacity to the Mayor, City Council and Chief Administrative Officer on setting priorities, evaluating and making recommendations on funding requests, evaluating and reviewing human service agencies and responding to City actions affecting the availability and quality of human services in Kent. Commissioners take an active part in promoting community awareness and education on human services issues. In 1989 the City created the Office of Housing and Human Services (now Housing and Human Services).

In 2011 (for the 2012 budget) Human Services requested a budget adjustment of \$95,000 due to a significant decrease in the human services one percent funding allocation. The decrease occurred when a number of factors converged that had the potential to drastically reduce the City's investment in human services. As a result the Human Services Commission was charged with developing a new, more stable funding strategy. Beginning in 2013, the City shifted to a per capita rate with a Consumer Price Index (CPI) escalator. The CPI will not exceed three percent or drop below zero percent. In 2013 the rate was established at \$6.96.

City's Role in Human Services

Housing and Human Services, a division of Kent's Parks, Recreation & Community Services Department, is responsible for human services planning at both the local and regional levels, facilitating human services activities and funding through the Human Services Commission. Housing and Human Services also operates the City's Home Repair program, funded entirely by Federal Community Development Block Grant money.

City of Kent staff provides leadership in human services as a planner, facilitator, educator and funder. The City plans for human service needs by assessing the current state of the community, as well as anticipating future needs. The City facilitates and convenes community partnerships to address emerging issues. The City educates others on the resources available and the value of these services. Kent funds programs through both General Fund dollars and Federal Community Development Block Grant dollars to support and enhance existing services, as well as to address emergent needs.

Housing and Human Services invests in the community to create measurable, sustainable change and to improve the lives of its residents. Investments are focused in order to generate the greatest impacts.

Volunteers from the community who comprise the City's Human Services Commission determine the City's community investments using the following criteria:

- address the City's funding priorities;
- are of high quality and fiscally sound with a track-record of achieving measurable results;
- reflect the continuum of human service needs;
- are collaborative in nature;
- provide an opportunity to leverage other resources for the greatest impact; and
- are accessible to all residents who need to access services.

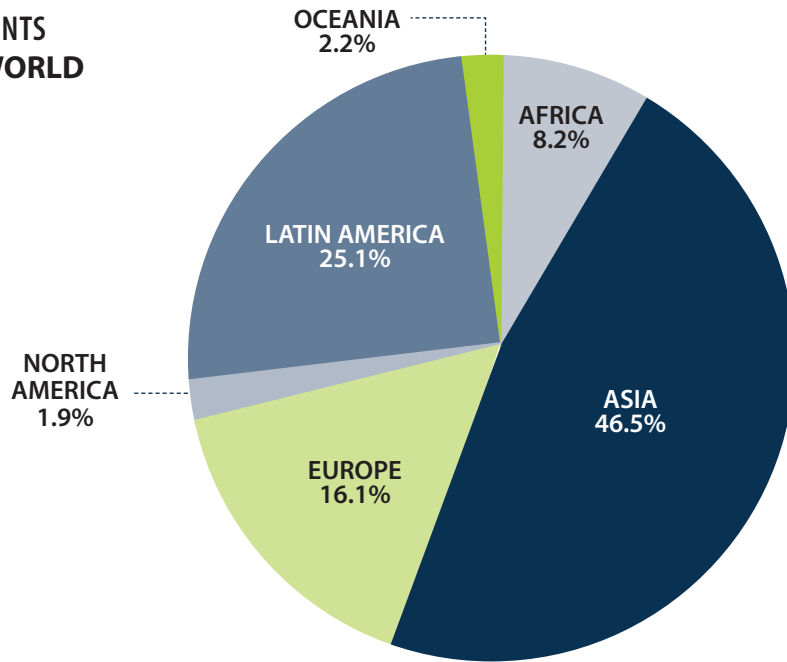
The City's investments in the community are not only monetary in nature, but are also evidenced through the dedication of staff time and resources to community initiatives that will benefit the greater Kent community. Several divisions of the Parks, Recreation, and Community Services Department are involved in providing human service programs and assistance. The department provides a variety of education, recreation, prevention and intervention services for children, youth, seniors and people with disabilities. Other divisions within the City of Kent also play important roles in the provision of human services. The City's Neighborhood Program was created to promote and sustain an environment that is responsive to resident involvement while building partnerships between the City and its residents. The Police Department coordinates a very successful Youth Board that exists to educate and raise awareness of youth issues through youth-driven activities, including having a positive influence on peers toward making healthy choices, and community based projects focused on drug and alcohol prevention.

Data

In 2010-2012 there were approximately 42,000 households in Kent. The average household size was 2.9 people.

Seventy-three percent of the people living in Kent were native residents of the United States. Twenty-seven percent of Kent’s residents were foreign born. Of the foreign-born Kent residents, 47 percent were naturalized U.S. citizens and 93 percent entered the country prior to the year 2010. Foreign-born residents of Kent come from many different parts of the world.

Figure HS-1
FOREIGN-BORN RESIDENTS
REGIONS OF THE WORLD



Source: 2010-2012 American Community Survey Data

Table HS.1
RACIAL DIVERSITY

	MORE THAN ONE RACE	OTHER	ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER	NATIVE AMERICAN	BLACK	WHITE
1990	0*	1.2%	4.4%	1.4%	3.8%	89.2%
2000	5.4%	9.8%	10.2%	1%	8.2%	70.8%
2010	6.6%	8.5%	17.1%	1%	11.3%	55.5%

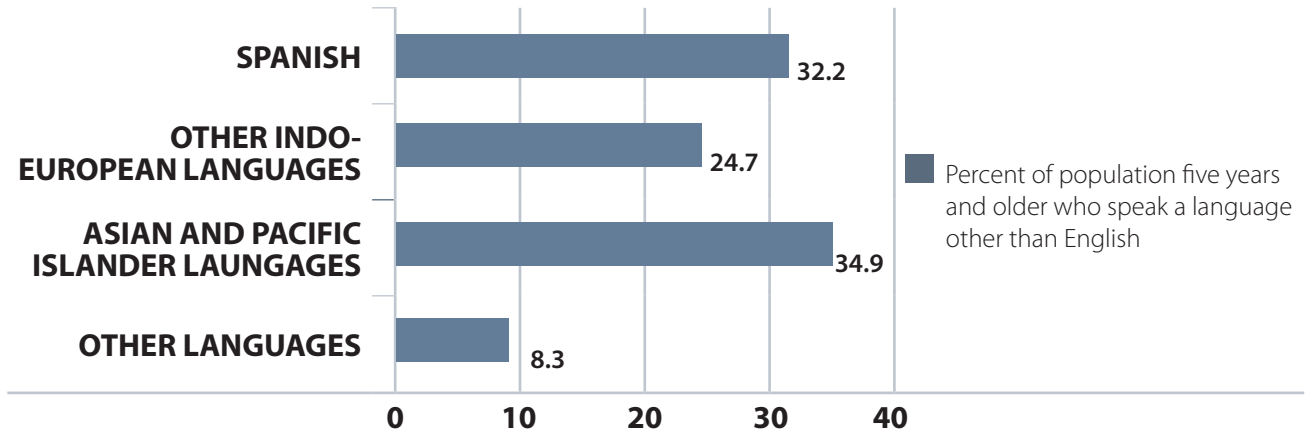
*More than one race was not an option in the 1990 Census

Source: 1990, 2000, 2010 US Census Data

Among people at least five years old living in Kent in 2010-2012, 41 percent spoke a language other than English at home. Of those speaking a language other than English at home, 32 percent spoke Spanish and 68 percent some other language. Forty-seven percent reported that they did not speak English “very well.”

Figure HS-2

POPULATION SPEAKING LANGUAGE OTHER THAN ENGLISH



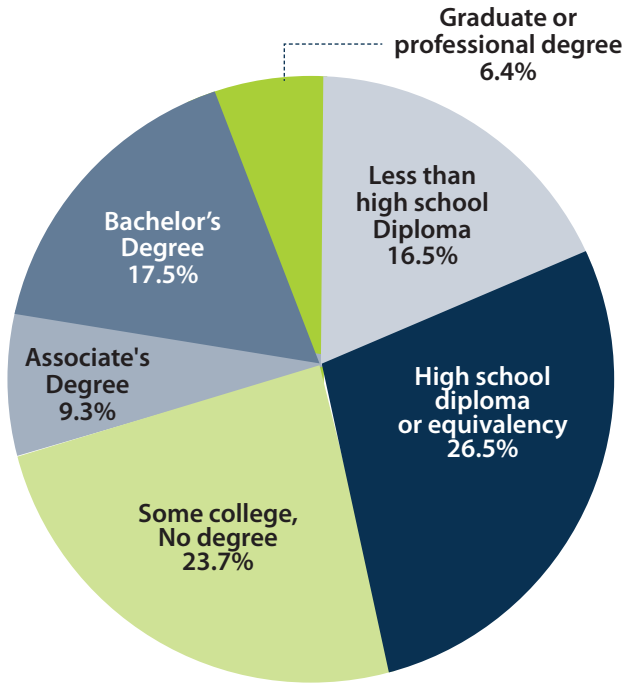
2010-2012 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates

Education

In 2010-2012, 27 percent of people 25 years and over had a high school diploma or equivalency and 24 percent had a bachelor's degree or higher. Seventeen percent were dropouts; they were not enrolled in school and had not graduated from high school.

Figure HS-3

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF PEOPLE IN KENT



2010-2012 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates

Table HS.2

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

SUBJECT	TOTAL		MALE		FEMALE	
	ESTIMATE	MARGIN OF ERROR	ESTIMATE	MARGIN OF ERROR	ESTIMATE	MARGIN OF ERROR
POPULATION 18 TO 24 YEARS	12,712	+/-1,073	6,059	+/-766	6,653	+/-779
Less than high school graduate	17.4%	+/-3.9	18.2%	+/-5.4	16.8%	+/-4.9
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	27.9%	+/-4.5	33.3%	+/-7.3	23.0%	+/-5.5
Some college or Associate's degree	47.9%	+/-5.5	42.5%	+/-7.2	52.7%	+/-6.6
Bachelor's degree or higher	6.8%	+/-2.4	6.0%	+/-3.4	7.5%	+/-2.9
POPULATION 25 YEARS AND OVER	75,934	+/-1,582	36,730	+/-1,184	39,204	+/-1,191
Less than 9th grade	8.4%	+/-1.1	8.6%	+/-1.4	8.1%	+/-1.3
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	8.2%	+/-0.9	8.5%	+/-1.4	7.8%	+/-1.2
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	26.5%	+/-1.5	26.1%	+/-2.0	26.9%	+/-2.2
Some college, no degree	23.7%	+/-1.5	23.8%	+/-2.0	23.6%	+/-2.0
Associate's degree	9.3%	+/-0.9	9.2%	+/-1.3	9.4%	+/-1.2
Bachelor's degree	17.5%	+/-1.4	17.6%	+/-1.9	17.5%	+/-2.0
Graduate or professional degree	6.4%	+/-0.8	6.2%	+/-1.0	6.7%	+/-1.1
Percent high school graduate or higher	83.5%	+/-1.2	82.9%	+/-1.7	84.0%	+/-1.6
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	24.0%	+/-1.4	23.8%	+/-1.8	24.1%	+/-2.1
POPULATION 25 TO 34 YEARS	18,062	+/-1,311	8,888	+/-851	9,174	+/-876
High school graduate or higher	81.0%	+/-3.7	79.5%	+/-5.4	82.5%	+/-3.8
Bachelor's degree or higher	20.8%	+/-2.8	20.1%	+/-4.3	21.6%	+/-3.6
POPULATION 35 TO 44 YEARS	17,173	+/-1,235	8,230	+/-705	8,943	+/-802
High school graduate or higher	79.5%	+/-2.9	78.7%	+/-4.5	80.3%	+/-4.1
Bachelor's degree or higher	25.2%	+/-3.2	20.2%	+/-3.6	29.7%	+/-4.6
POPULATION 45 TO 64 YEARS	29,170	+/-1,233	14,873	+/-782	14,297	+/-775
High school graduate or higher	87.6%	+/-2.4	86.4%	+/-3.0	88.8%	+/-2.8
Bachelor's degree or higher	26.0%	+/-2.6	26.4%	+/-3.0	25.5%	+/-3.4
POPULATION 65 YEARS AND OVER	11,529	+/-590	4,739	+/-425	6,790	+/-515
High school graduate or higher	82.9%	+/-3.0	85.6%	+/-3.8	81.1%	+/-4.3
Bachelor's degree or higher	22.1%	+/-2.7	28.8%	+/-4.8	17.4%	+/-3.1

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT (CONT'D)

POVERTY RATE FOR THE POPULATION 25 YEARS AND OVER FOR WHOM POVERTY STATUS IS DETERMINED BY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT LEVEL						
Less than high school graduate	32.2%	+/-5.3	26.0%	+/-6.4	38.4%	+/-6.4
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	13.9%	+/-3.4	11.4%	+/-4.0	16.1%	+/-4.2
Some college or Associate's degree	10.4%	+/-1.9	9.8%	+/-2.5	10.9%	+/-2.6
Bachelor's degree or higher	4.8%	+/-1.8	4.7%	+/-2.7	4.9%	+/-2.4
MEDIAN EARNINGS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS (IN 2012 INFLATION-ADJUSTED DOLLARS)						
Population 25 years and over with earnings	36,231	+/-1,353	41,689	+/-1,885	30,642	+/-1,438
Less than high school graduate	23,785	+/-3,519	27,171	+/-3,597	14,035	+/-2,876
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	30,570	+/-2,453	37,137	+/-3,457	25,731	+/-3,073
Some college or Associate's degree	35,906	+/-1,429	41,128	+/-3,396	31,451	+/-1,829
Bachelor's degree	53,131	+/-2,181	65,766	+/-3,989	39,857	+/-5,945
Graduate or professional degree	65,873	+/-7,549	92,149	+/-23,593	58,197	+/-7,696
PERCENT IMPUTED						
Educational attainment	6.0%	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)

2010-2012 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates

Kent School District

The increasing diversity in Kent is even more pronounced when examining school statistics. Kent School District is the fourth largest school district in the State of Washington. Currently, the district consists of four large comprehensive high schools, six middle schools, twenty-eight elementary schools and two academies. Kent School District benefits from a wealth of diversity as at least 138 languages are spoken within its boundaries, with the top five languages other than English including: Spanish, Russian, Somali, Punjabi and Vietnamese.

Ten Years of Change

Over the past ten years, the Kent School District has seen increased enrollment as well as a shift in student population demographics.

Table HS.3

KENT SCHOOL DISTRICT STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

2001-2002		2012-2013	
Student Enrollment:	26,670	Student Enrollment	27,539
Male:	51.6%	Male:	52.3%
Female:	48.3%	Female:	47.7%
Caucasian:	68.7%	Caucasian:	39.5%
Asian/Pacific Islander:	13.6%	Asian/Pacific Islander:	17.1%
African American:	9.5%	African American:	11.9%
Hispanic	6.8%	Hispanic:	19.8%
American Indian:	1.2%	American Indian:	0.7%

KENT SCHOOL DISTRICT STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS (CONT'D)
2013-2014

ENROLLMENT		
October 2013 Student Count		27,688
May 2014 Student Count		27,484
GENDER (OCTOBER 2013)		
Male	14,513	52.4%
Female	13,175	47.6%
RACE/ETHNICITY (OCTOBER 2013)		
American Indian/Alaskan Native	156	0.6%
Asian/Pacific Islander	5,446	19.7%
Asian	4,799	17.3%
Native Hawaiian / Other Pacific Islander	647	2.3%
Black / African American	3,377	12.2%
Hispanic / Latino of any race(s)	5,779	20.9%
White	10,459	37.8%
Two or More Races	2,471	8.9%
SPECIAL PROGRAMS		
Free or Reduced-Price Meals (May 2014)	14,399	52.4%
Special Education (May 2014)	2,996	10.9%
Transitional Bilingual (May 2014)	4,918	17.9%
Migrant (May 2014)	39	0.1%
Section 504 (May 2014)	1,095	4.0%
Foster Care (May 2014)	146	0.5%
OTHER INFORMATION (MORE INFO)		
Unexcused Absence Rate (2013-14)	348	0.4%
Adjusted 4-Year Cohort Graduation Rate (Class of 2013)		78.7%
Adjusted 5-year Cohort Graduation Rate (Class of 2012)		82.8%

Source: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

While the Kent School District serves the majority of Kent residents, several neighborhoods have children and youth who attend schools in nearby Federal Way. The demographics of the two school districts are similar in many ways. Sixty seven percent of Federal Way Public Schools students are an ethnicity other than white. 60 percent live in or near the federal poverty level (based on free and reduced lunch figures). Sixteen percent are transitional/bilingual English Language Learners. Over 112 languages are spoken in the district.

Table HS.4**WASHINGTON STATE PUBLIC SCHOOLS STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS
2013-2014**

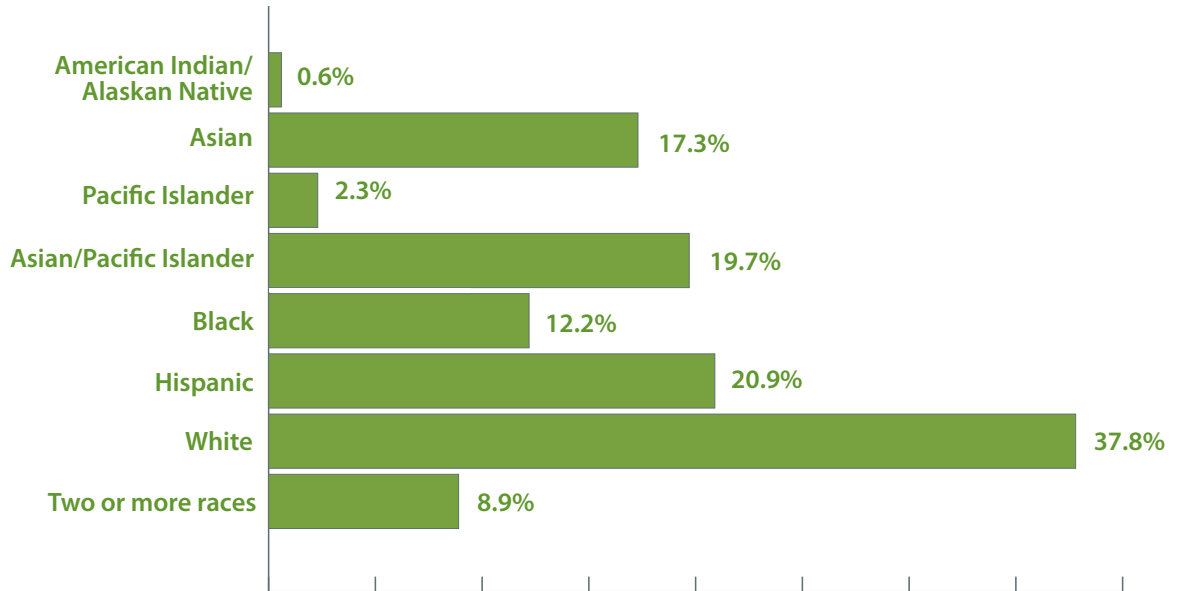
ENROLLMENT		
October 2013 Student Count		1,056,809
May 2014 Student Count		1,055,517
GENDER (OCTOBER 2013)		
Male	544,860	51.6%
Female	511,949	48.4%
RACE/ETHNICITY (OCTOBER 2013)		
American Indian/Alaskan Native	16,417	1.6%
Asian/Pacific Islander	85,686	8.1%
Asian	75,587	7.2%
Native Hawaiian / Other Pacific Islander	10,099	1.0%
Black / African American	47,840	4.5%
Hispanic / Latino of any race(s)	222,493	21.1%
White	612,836	58.0%
Two or More Races	71,463	6.8%
SPECIAL PROGRAMS		
Free or Reduced-Price Meals (May 2014)	484,363	45.9%
Special Education (May 2014)	139,601	13.2%
Transitional Bilingual (May 2014)	102,339	9.7%
Migrant (May 2014)	20,295	1.9%
Section 504 (May 2014)	25,591	2.4%
Foster Care (May 2014)	7,914	0.7%
OTHER INFORMATION (MORE INFO)		
Unexcused Absence Rate (2013-14)	525,714	0.5%
Adjusted 4-Year Cohort Graduation Rate (Class of 2013)		76.0%
Adjusted 5-year Cohort Graduation Rate (Class of 2012)		78.8%

Source: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

The race/ethnicity makeup of students as of October 2013 is shown in *Figure HS-4*.

Figure HS-4

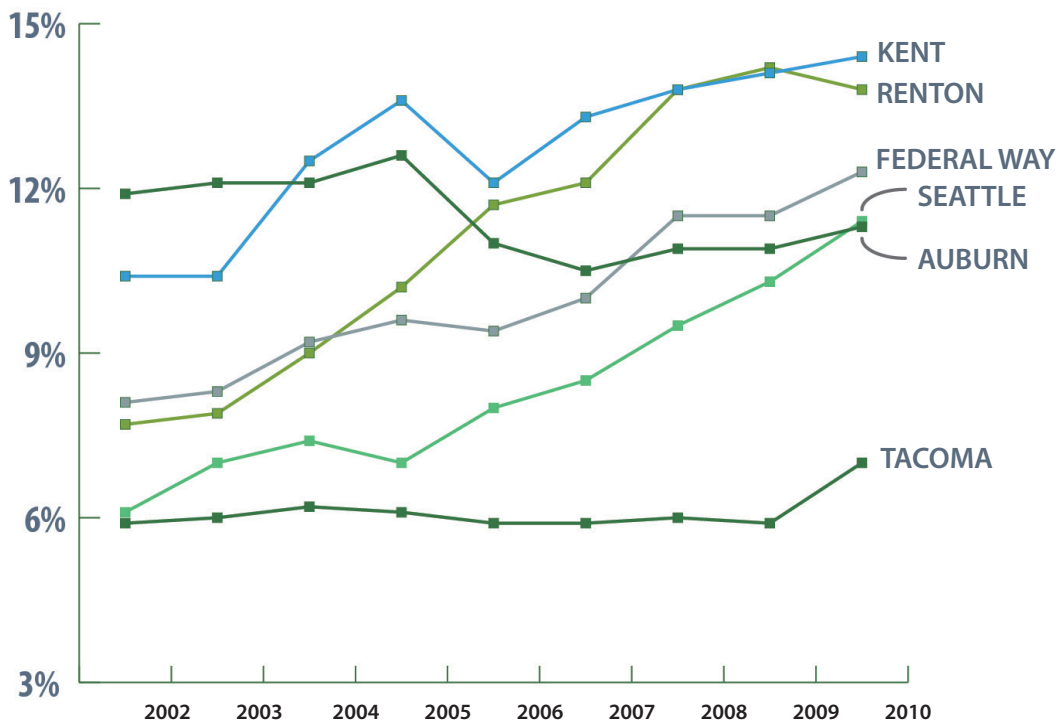
KENT SCHOOL DISTRICT RACE/ETHNICITY



Source: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction 2013-2014 Report Card.

Figure HS-5

CENTER FOR EDUCATION AND DATA RESEARCH (CEDR) PERCENTAGE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS



Source: Kent School District's State of the District 2011-2012.

Health Indicators

The following selected indicators from Public Health's Communities Count data released in 2012 and early 2013 illustrate important factors for healthy communities. The data refer to South King County as a region, and will be generally applicable to challenges faced by the City of Kent:

- Thirteen percent of adults experience "food insecurity", reporting that household food money did not last the whole month. Of those reporting food insecurity, 38 percent were Latino, 21 percent African American, 13 percent were Multiple Race, 6 percent Asian and 7 percent white.
- Fifteen percent of adults in South King County reported that their household could not afford to eat balanced meals or went hungry during the past 12 months. This compares to 9 percent of King County residents on average.
- Households with children in South King County are far more likely to experience food hardship than those without children (18 percent compared to 8 percent).
- At 27.7 per 1,000, West Kent had one of the highest teen birth rates in King County. All neighborhoods and cities with teen birth rates greater than the King County average were found in South King County and South Seattle. These areas had teen birth rates 1.5 to almost 3 times higher than the county average.

Homelessness

Spotlight on Homeless Families:

The City of Kent is experiencing increasing numbers of homeless individuals. The One-Night Count, conducted annually by the Seattle-King County Homeless Coalition and Operation Nightwatch, conducted their annual count of people sleeping outside in January 2014. Sixty-three people were found on the streets, a smaller number than anticipated. Fifty-four persons were counted in 2013 and 104 were counted in 2012.

In addition to the homeless individuals sleeping outside, many homeless people are not visible – many families are in "doubled up" housing conditions, in shelter or in hotels. Since the beginning of the recession in 2007 the number of homeless children in the Kent School District has been between 400 and 500. The Kent School District had 420 homeless students in the 2012-13 school year.

In April 2012 King County launched the Coordinated Entry "Family Housing Connections" system for all families county-wide experiencing homelessness. Families searching for housing use a single entry point facilitated by 2-1-1. All families are served through Catholic Community Services who uses the full range of housing providers to place the family. During the first year of the project a number of issues have emerged and planners are working on the best strategies to resolve the issues.

Goals and Policies

Goal HS-1

Build safe and healthy communities through mutually supportive connections, building on the strengths and assets of all residents.

Policy HS-1.1: Provide children, youth and families with community resources needed to support their positive development, including early intervention and prevention services.

Policy HS-1.2: Provide resources and services that reduce violence, crime and neglect in our community.

Policy HS-1.3: Support efforts to strengthen neighborhoods and ensure individuals and families feel connected to their community and build support systems within neighborhoods.

Policy HS-1.4: Increase community participation from traditionally under-represented populations, including youth, persons of color, immigrants and non-native English speakers.

Goal HS-2

Support residents in attaining their maximum level of self-reliance.

Policy HS-2.1: Ensure that people facing hardship have access to resources to help meet immediate or basic needs.

Policy HS-2.2: Improve access to services that allow individuals to improve their mental and physical health, overall well-being and ability to live independently.

Policy HS-2.3: Promote access to jobs and services, especially for lower-income individuals, when planning local and regional transportation systems and economic development activities.

Goal HS-3

Build community collaborations and seek strategic approaches to meet the needs of Kent residents.

Policy HS-3.1: Lead efforts to improve the ability of human services systems to meet demands and expectations by increasing capacity, utilizing technology, coordinating efforts and leveraging resources.

Policy HS-3.2: Collaborate with churches, employers, businesses, schools and nonprofit agencies in the community.

Policy HS-3.3: Encourage collaborative partnerships between the City and the school districts to align resources to accomplish mutual goals that meet the needs of children and families.

Goal HS-4

Support equal access to services, through a service network that meets needs across age, ability, culture and language.

Policy HS-4.1: Promote services that respect the diversity and dignity of individuals and families and are accessible to all members of the community.

Policy HS-4.2: Encourage service enhancements that build capacity to better meet the needs of the community, reduce barriers through service design and are responsive to changing needs.

Policy HS-4.3: Ensure that services are equally accessible and responsive to a wide range of individuals, cultures and family structures and are free of discrimination and prejudice.

Goal HS-5

Oversee city resources with consistent ethical stewardship, fairness in allocating funds and strong accountability for ensuring services are effective.

Policy HS-5.1: Provide funds to nonprofit human services providers to improve the quality of life for low- and moderate- income residents.

Policy HS-5.2: Continue the City's active participation in subregional and regional planning efforts related to human services.

Policy HS-5.3: Support new and existing human services programs, and coordinate policies, legislation and funding at the local, regional, state and federal levels.

Related Information

2013-2018 Human Services Master Plan

