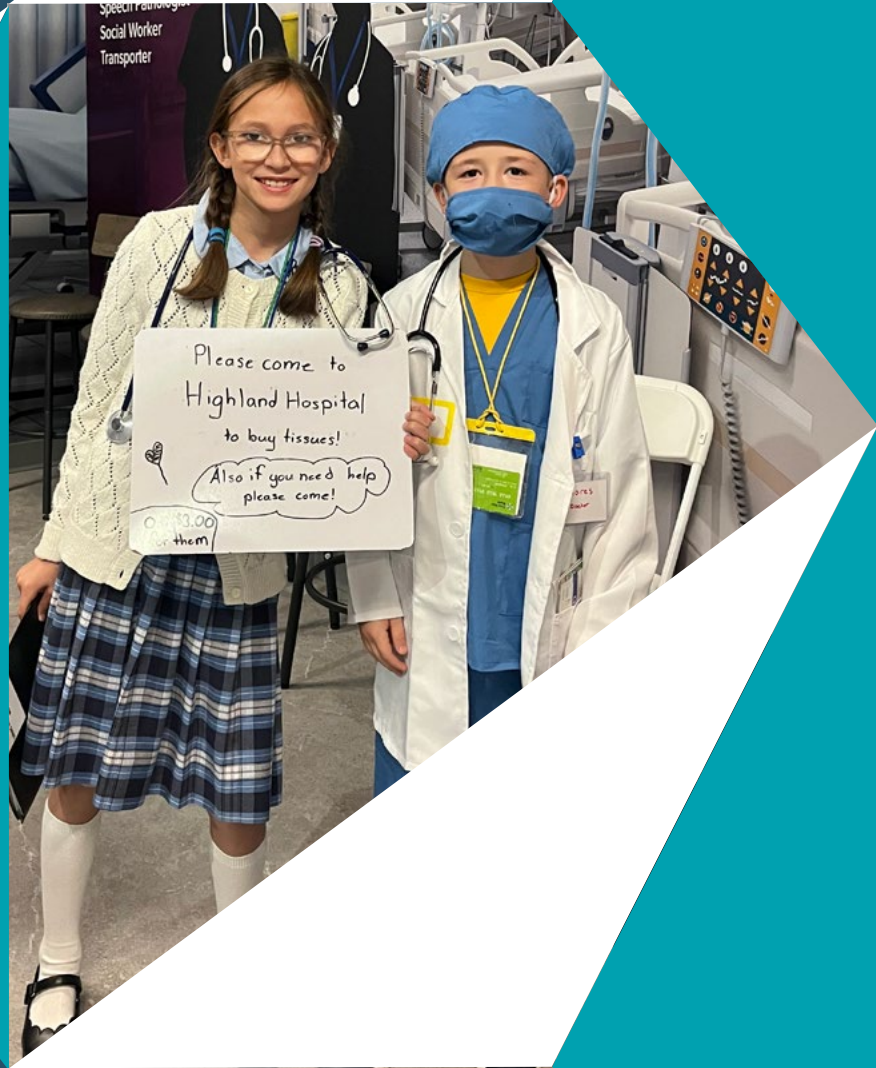


# Impact Report 2025



**discovery**  
C E N T E R



Junior  
Achievement™

**PAYCHEX**



Today's students are growing up in a world that's changing faster than ever. New technologies, industries, and ideas are transforming what's possible, and the need for adaptable, confident and engaged young leaders has never been greater.

Junior Achievement is helping students rise to that challenge. By connecting classroom learning to the real world, we're giving them not just skills but the confidence and curiosity to imagine their futures.

One of the most powerful examples of this work is the Paychex Junior Achievement Discovery Center, located at Kodak Center in Eastman Business Park. Inside this authentic "mini-city," students are immersed in our local economy as they take on real-life adult roles—exploring careers, performing jobs, managing money, and practicing the many essential soft skills that will drive their future success.

The Paychex Junior Achievement Discovery Center is a powerful example of what's possible when an entire community comes together—educators, industry leaders, entrepreneurs, government partners, nonprofits, and individuals—united by a shared commitment to the next generation. Together, we are equipping young people with the tools, confidence, and inspiration they need to pursue economic mobility and long-term success.



We extend our deepest gratitude to every stakeholder who has supported the Discovery Center's remarkable growth since its opening in January 2024. Whether you contributed your time, talent, or treasure, your belief in the boundless potential of our young people is strengthening our community for years to come.

**Patricia Leva**  
President & CEO

## A Sequential Program Experience Aligned with New York State Portrait of a Graduate and Next Generation Learning Standards

### JA Biz Town (4-6 grade)

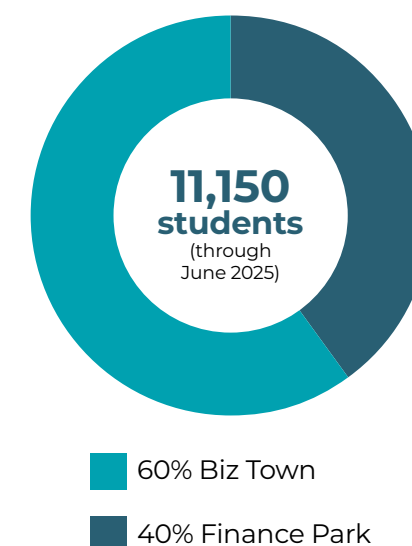
Features 13 classroom-based lessons that prepare students for their future roles as citizens, workers, and consumers in our economy. Students are introduced to fundamental business practices and civic responsibilities, develop money management skills, and learn essential workforce soft skills. The program culminates with students interviewing for jobs with employers represented in the Discovery Center and then stepping into those roles to run the Rochester economy for a day.

### JA Finance Park Entry (7-8 grade)

Includes 13 classroom-based lessons that explore the connection between careers and income, with focused learning objectives around budgeting, saving, investing, credit, taxes, and entrepreneurship. Students are assigned a "persona" and spend the day at the Discovery Center creating a realistic budget and making informed purchasing decisions.

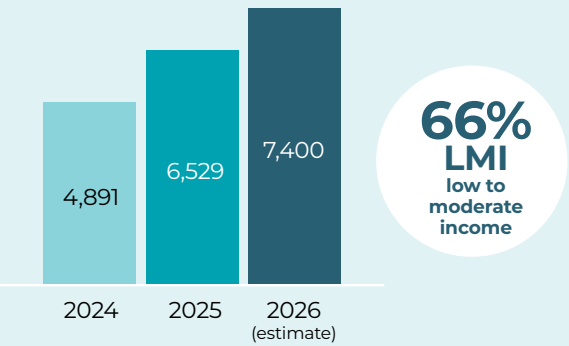
### JA Finance Park Advanced (High School)

Builds upon the JA Biz Town and JA Finance Park Entry experience with 8 classroom-based themes that focus on the long-term choices and consequences associated with careers and income. Learning objectives deepen and students once again spend a day at the Discovery Center applying their knowledge—practicing real-life decision-making and experiencing what it means to navigate life as an adult.

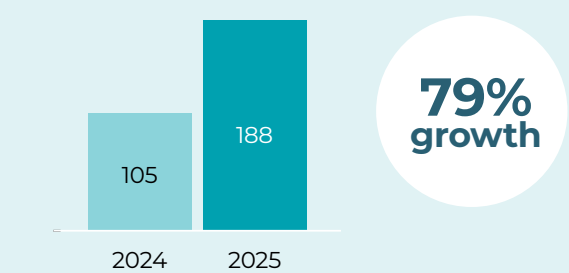




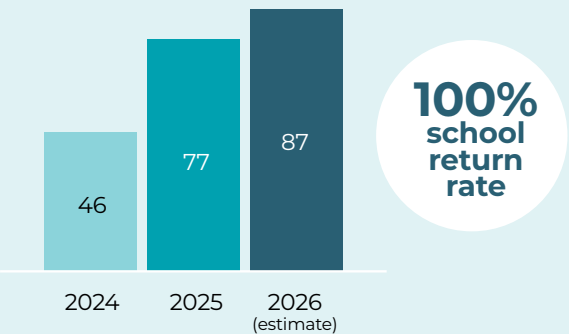
Participating Students



Educators Engaged



Participating Schools

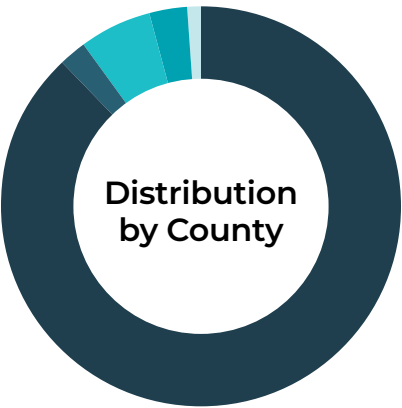


131,599 student instructional hours in 2025

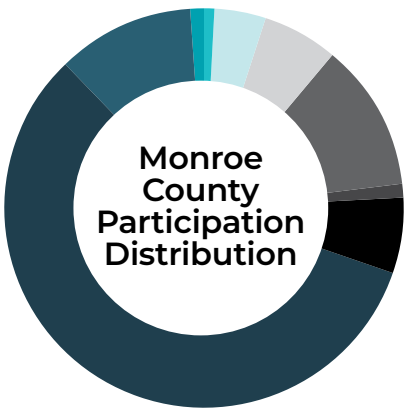
Partnership With Education

Education Partners

- Caledonia-Mumford Central School District
- Cato-Meridian Central School District
- Early College High School (Batavia)
- EnCompass: Resources for Learning
- Gates-Chili Central School District
- Geneseo Central School District
- Grand Island Central School District
- Hilton Central School District
- Kendall Central School District
- Keshequa Central School District
- LeRoy Central School District
- Livonia Central School District
- Monroe Community College (Summer Camp)
- Mt. Morris Central School District
- Nazareth Elementary School
- Pavilion Central School District
- Pittsford Central School District
- Port Byron Central School District
- Rochester City School District
- Rochester Preparatory High School (Uncommon Schools)
- Salt and Light Homeschool Co-op
- Spencerport Central School District
- St. Agnes Elementary School (Avon)
- St. Francis de Sales-St. Stephen Elementary School (Geneva)
- St. John Fisher University (Summer Camp)
- St. Lawrence Elementary School
- St. Louis Elementary School
- St. Mary’s Elementary School (Canandaigua)
- St. Pius X Elementary School
- St. Rita Elementary School
- The Charles Finney School
- Wheatland-Chili Central School District
- Vertus High School
- Victor Central School District



- Monroe 88%
- Livingston 6%
- Cayuga 3%
- Genesee 2%
- Erie & Orleans 1%



- RCSD 57%
- Greece 12%
- Spencerport 11%
- Gates 6%
- Pittsford 6%
- Diocese of Rochester 4%
- Charter Schools 1%
- Hilton 1%
- Wheatland Chili 1%

“This was such a fun experience because it was very helpful by telling us and showing us what a real adult with a job would do. Our business didn’t go into debt, instead we made a profit with over three hundred dollars! It made it really fun because our group was hardworking and put our minds together to create a great business that succeeded! I had so much fun at JA BizTown and I would love to go back!”

– JA BizTown Student, Wolcott Street School



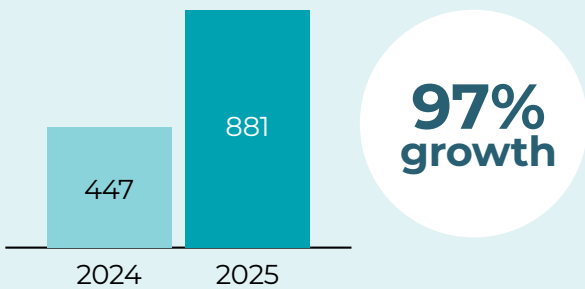
“We had a parent who was unsure about how the experience would go for his daughter, but when she got home, she was so excited, he brought her to the bank to open a savings account. That’s what we want to instill in our students, and that would not have happened in an everyday classroom in elementary school.”

–Dena Olson, K-5 Instructional Specialist, Spencerport Central School District



Community Impact

Volunteers Engaged



Top 10 Corporate Volunteer Companies  
(by number of unique volunteers):

- 1. Paychex
- 2. Five Star Bank/Courier Capital
- 3. M&T Bank
- 4. Citizens Bank
- 5. LiDestri Foods
- 6. Deloitte
- 7. RG&E
- 8. St. John Fisher University
- 9. MVP Health Care
- 10. PwC

Leadership Sustaining  
Program Sponsors

- Anderson & Associates Wealth Management
- Apogee
- Daisy Marquis Jones Foundation
- Davenport-Hatch Foundation
- ESL Charitable Foundation
- Flynn
- Forma Network Solutions
- Glover Crask Foundation
- JPM Chase Foundation
- William and Sheila Konar Foundation
- Lisk Morris Foundation
- M&T Charitable Foundation
- Florence M. Muller Foundation
- Helen and Ritter Shumway Foundation
- Louis S. and Molly B. Wolk Foundation

“It was my first time volunteering for JA and I’m so glad that I did. I volunteered with teammates at Paychex that I had never met before, which alone was great growth experience. I loved seeing [the students’] enthusiasm and hearing their opinions. And it was awesome seeing the seriousness they had in their roles and the activities they got to do. I think my favorite moment was when the townhall closing meeting was getting ready to start, one of the students picked up their things and said “thank you, Jessica.” It made my day. It wasn’t simply that they thanked me, it was the genuine joy and good connection I had built with them.”

– Jessica, Paychex Volunteer

Storefront and Kiosk Sponsors

















<b>Architecture and Engineering Consortium:</b>	Colliers Engineering & Design	LaBella	Stanec
	CPL	M/E Engineering	
	Fisher Associates	Passero	SWBR





# A Community Asset

The Discovery Center serves as a community asset and has been host to multiple businesses and non-profits, as well as other JA student-based events and competitions. It is estimated that approximately 3,000 individuals have attended over 40 different events in the Discovery Center in the last two years.

-  JA Young Women's Leadership Summit
-  JA Titan of Business Challenge
-  JA Stock Market Challenge
-  Community Champions Award
-  JA Entrepreneurial Youth Summit
-  RCSD Educator and Executive Cabinet Meetings
-  RCSD Office of Parent Engagement Meeting
-  LiDestri Foods 50 Year Anniversary Announcement
-  Greece Chamber of Commerce Meeting
-  Department of Labor Teacher Ambassador Program
-  SCORE Western NY Meeting
-  City of Rochester Pillars of Hope Meeting
-  Leadership Rochester Kick off
-  Paychex United Way Leadership Breakfast
-  Multiple Corporate Partner Meetings
-  CTE – Technical Assistance Center of NY



JA Young Women's Leadership Summit

# Student Impact

The JA Biz Town and JA Finance Park programs are externally evaluated nationally for efficacy and have been scientifically proven to increase skills, confidence and student engagement.

Locally, in collaboration with the evaluation team at JA USA, JACUNY conducts pre and post student testing to ensure increases in skills and knowledge as well as shifts in attitudes and behaviors.

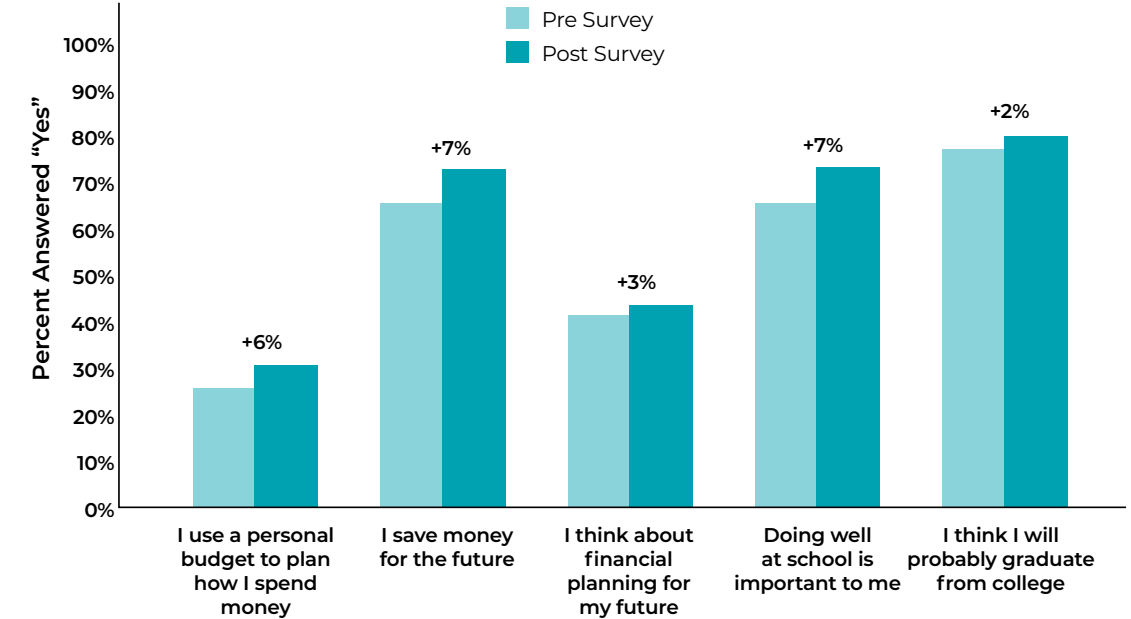
- 585**  
student-matched surveys  
(9.5% sample)
- 72%**  
of overall students  
demonstrated higher scores  
on knowledge-based  
questions after participation
- Improvements  
were noted in  
100%**  
of participating districts –  
urban, suburban and rural





# JA Biz Town

Answered Favorably Pre vs Post Survey

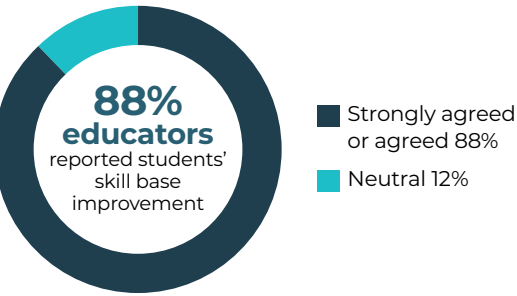


The simulation also provided every student the chance to “vote” as part of their civic duty, and the results were clear:

**95% students** of JA Biz Town want to return

**90% students** would share their experience with a friend

88% of educators agreed or strongly agreed that students' skill base improved as a result of the experience, across all 5 essential measured skills—**teamwork, decision making, problem solving, financial literacy and entrepreneurship.**

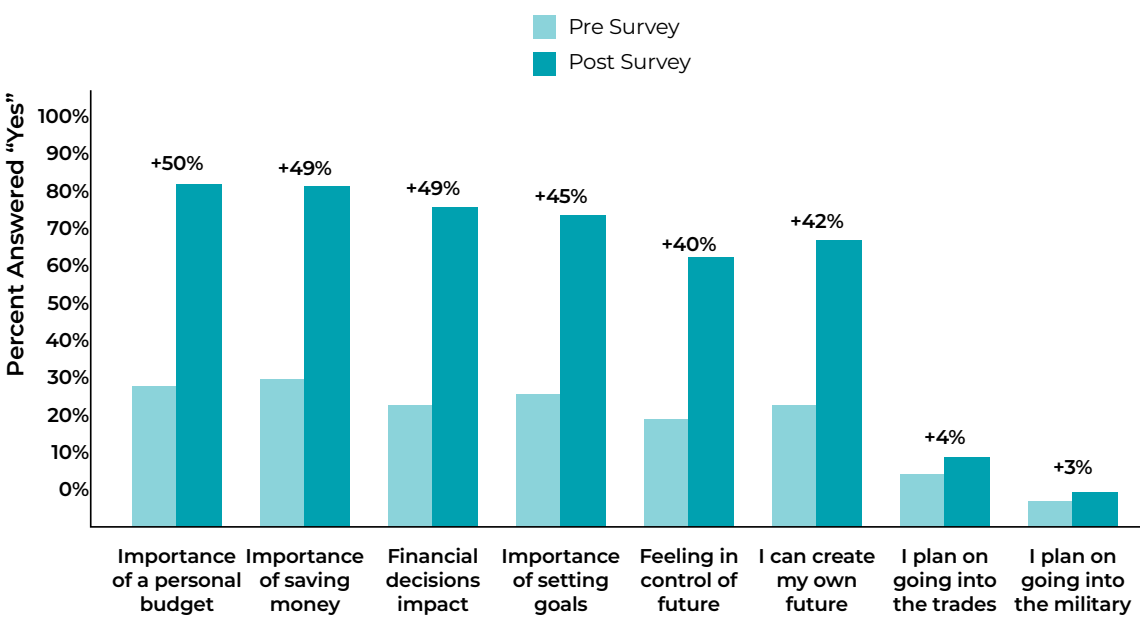


“Some students just aren’t able to apply lessons they learn in the classroom, regardless of the curriculum or the method. In the Discovery Center, they put lessons into action – into play – and all of a sudden start asking the right questions. They say things like ‘Oh, that’s what that means!’”

– Tricia Gonzales, Instructional Coach, K-12, Rochester City School District

# JA Finance Park

Answered Favorably Pre vs Post Survey



## 40-50% increase

Many students nearly doubled their pre-program levels of financial literacy attitudes and self-confidence.

Educators emphasized the effectiveness of the Discovery Center simulation in creating an engaging and memorable financial learning experience:

## 100% of educators

agreed that the students were engaged in the activities and discussion with volunteers

## 100% of educators

agreed the simulation experience reinforced the curriculum well

“I loved seeing the reactions of students as they experienced the cost of living here in Rochester. Through budgeting and shopping they quickly realized how much planning and prioritizing goes into managing everyday expenses. It was powerful to see students make real-world financial decisions; some had to rethink their habits on the spot!”

– JA Finance Park Teacher, Mariel Spano-Russel, East Lower School, RCSD

May 16th, 2025

Paychex  
Junior Achievement of Central Upstate NY  
Two Hundred West Ridge Road  
Rochester, NY 14615

Dear Paychex:

Our school recently visited *JA BizTown*, a mini-town offered by Junior Achievement that students operate for the day. Your company sponsors a business at *JA BizTown*. We want to thank you for contributing so that we could have a great day of fun and learning.

What I enjoyed most about your business was how we could interact with other businesses and we could experience what the real world feels like. Another thing that I enjoyed about your business was how much we as the students learned about work and how productive work is supposed to be. We learned about responsibility and hard work in your business and we learned about how difficult work really is.

Your company helped our school enjoy JA BizTown because of your philanthropy. We appreciate your generosity. Thank you! Thank you for teaching us about the real world and we are grateful for biztown giving us this opportunity to experience work. Hope your company keeps growing!

Sincerely,  
Destiny R



**Junior  
Achievement™**  
of Central Upstate New York