

Data Sharing Road Map: Improving Student Outcomes through Partnerships between Public Housing Agencies and School Districts

Nearly four million children live in HUD-assisted housing. This Data Sharing Road Map provides guidance on how Public Housing Agencies (PHAs) can collaborate with school districts and other education partners to identify data-driven strategies for strengthening the educational outcomes of students living in public housing and Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) units. Based on the experience of PHAs that have successfully negotiated data-sharing partnerships, this Data Sharing Road Map provides practical guidance for sharing data, forming and formalizing partnerships, and effectively using the data to benefit children and families.

Additional Resources

As a companion to the Data Sharing Road Map, this annotated list of resources has been organized into four categories: tool kits, best practices and promising practices guides, literature reviews and research reports, and case studies. Each of the entries includes a brief description of the resource, as well as information on the author and date of publication. Some of the resources specifically address data-sharing partnerships between PHAs and school districts, while others offer more general insights on the processes and practices that can make these partnerships successful.

Toolkits

[Data-Sharing Tool Kit for Communities: How to Leverage Community Relationships While Protecting Student Privacy](#)

Prepared by the U.S. Department of Education, this collection of one-page resources was developed to familiarize civic and community leaders with key provisions of the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Readers of the tool kit should gain a high-level understanding of: (1) the importance of data collection and sharing, (2) how to protect student privacy when using personally identifiable information from students' education records, and (3) how to manage shared data using integrated systems. Resource pages may be referenced individually or collectively as a comprehensive guide. Pages define key provisions and exceptions built into FERPA; identify best practices related to data usage and data sharing

under FERPA; and describe sample scenarios that stakeholders may encounter. Links throughout the tool kit and in a Resources section at the end provide access to supplemental details and legal guidance, document templates, and additional reference materials.

Author: U.S. Department of Education
Date Published: March 2016

[Attendance Works Webpage for Housing Authorities](#)

This webpage, prepared by the nonprofit organization Attendance Works, includes links to posters, decals, handouts, and other free resources that Public Housing Agencies and other organizations can use to emphasize the importance of school attendance at various grade levels. The webpage also includes a short list of tips to promote regular attendance in the first month of school.

Author: Attendance Works
Date Published: N/A

[The Intersector Toolkit: Tools for Cross-Sector Collaboration](#)

This toolkit is not specific to housing and education partnerships, or to any other issue area or sector, but rather provides more general guidance on process steps to promote successful collaboration among sectors. The toolkit includes 17 tools that can be employed during four stages of collaboration: diagnosis (Can collaboration across sectors help to solve the problem?), design (How do we create the structure to achieve our shared vision?), implementation (How does each sector bring its expertise to bear?), and assessment (What did we learn?). For each tool, the toolkit includes a case study example, guiding questions, and annotated list of additional resources.

Author: The Intersector Project
Date Published: N/A

Best Practices and Promising Practices Guides

[Community Developers' Guide to Improving Schools in Revitalizing Neighborhoods](#)

The second in a series of three reports on community development and schools, this report presents strategies that community developers can use to advocate for high-quality public elementary schools in low-income urban neighborhoods undergoing revitalization. The paper was informed by interviews with approximately 40 community development practitioners, funders and educators working on school improvement efforts in 12 low-income urban neighborhoods. The authors present practical guidance on finding the right school improvement strategy (based on school and district conditions, neighborhood conditions, and other factors); assembling a strong sponsor team; understanding the elements of successful schools (including principal and teacher quality, rigorous curriculum, and early childhood education programming); and supporting school improvement. In each of these areas, the report also includes real-world examples drawn from the practitioners' experience.

Authors: Jill Khadduri, Heather Schwartz, and Jennifer Turnham (Abt Associates, Inc.)
Date Published: 2008

[Developing Housing and Education Partnerships: Lessons from the Field](#)

This report discusses key elements of housing and education partnerships, which are drawn from case studies of three sites: Akron, Ohio; New Haven, Connecticut; and Vancouver, Washington. The report begins with a brief summary of each case study site, and then discusses in detail seven elements that the author identifies as having shaped and strengthened partnerships between public housing agencies and schools or school districts in one or more of the seven sites. The seven key elements are: shared goals and joint strategies, effective leaders and staff members, partnerships with strong service providers, flexible funding sources, promising programs and services (including in the areas of homelessness, early learning, family engagement, out-of-school time, absenteeism and attendance, postsecondary preparation, and case management), data for decisionmaking, and systems and protocols for coordination. Examples and illustrations from the case study sites are referenced throughout the discussion of each element. The report concludes with a summary of key findings and suggestions for next steps.

Author: Megan Gallagher (Urban Institute)

Date Published: March 2015

[Housing and Early Education: Policy Opportunities for Reducing Student Mobility](#)

This brief report lists four policy opportunities for linking public housing and public schools to reduce student mobility, distilled from a literature review and conversations with key policy informants. (While the report was prepared for use in Massachusetts, recommendations should be of value in other states as well.) The recommendations include: (1) Use data tracking systems to monitor the residential mobility patterns and enrollment locations of individual students in families that receive housing vouchers, including information on English proficiency, low-income status, and other data points that allow for analysis of how residential mobility affects educational stability; (2) within the PHA's discretion, modify the use of Section 8 funds to support education, including by allowing families to deposit incremental increases in rent payments into an escrow account that could be used to defray the cost of early education and childcare; (3) create public-private partnerships to foster cross-silo cooperation; and (4) mitigate the negative effects of mobility on learning, including through the use of standardized curricula in areas of high mobility. Real world examples accompany each policy opportunity discussion.

Author: Ethan Prall (Harvard Law School)

Date Published: February 2014

[Integrated Data Systems and Student Privacy](#)

This guidance document provides background information on what an Integrated Data System (IDS) is and why educational authorities may choose to participate in one, and clarifies how such authorities can participate in an IDS while ensuring student privacy in compliance with FERPA.

Author: U.S. Department of Education

Date Published: January 2017

[Interagency Data Disclosure: A Tip Sheet on Interagency Collaboration](#)

This tip sheet discusses best practices for student data sharing under the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), with a focus on cooperation among state and local education agency homeless education programs, housing and human service agencies, and organizations serving homeless families, children and youth. After providing brief background on the federal government's promotion of data use in interagency coordination and the challenges and benefits of data sharing, the tip sheet covers some of the key provisions related to sharing student data under FERPA. Specific topics covered include disclosure of de-identified student data without consent (typically through the use of aggregate data), disclosure of individual student data with consent, and disclosure of individual student data without consent under applicable exceptions outlined in FERPA. The brief also includes a section on how local education agencies can use the annual Point-in-Time count of people experiencing homelessness as an opportunity to promote coordination between schools and school districts and connect homeless youths and their parents or guardians to service providers and community organizations. Links and case study examples of interagency data disclosure efforts at the state and local levels can be found throughout the tip sheet.

Author: U.S. Department of Education

Date Published: May 2015

[Opportunity-Rich Schools and Sustainable Communities: Seven Steps to Align High-Quality Education with Innovations in City and Metropolitan Planning and Development](#)

This report, aimed at city and regional community development and planning practitioners, presents strategies for linking education and sustainable communities planning. Recommendations are drawn from interviews with civic and educational policymakers, researchers, and practitioners at all levels of government. The report begins with a brief introduction to challenges in aligning high-quality education and sustainable communities. After laying out a vision for creating "trajectories of opportunity" in sustainable communities, the authors describe seven action steps for planners, policymakers, educators, and others to overcome these challenges. The steps include: get to know your educational landscape; engage school leaders, families, and young people in planning and development; establish a shared vision and metrics for linking high-quality education to economic prosperity at community and regional levels; support the whole life of learners through services and amenities; align bricks-and-mortar investments for regional prosperity; maximize access to opportunities through affordable transportation; and institutionalize what works to secure gains and ensure ongoing innovation. Discussion of each step includes specific activities and examples of promising practices from local communities, regional partnerships, and nationwide initiatives. The report concludes with recommendations for three key areas of work for HUD, other government agencies, and philanthropic organizations to pursue.

Authors: Deborah L. McKoy, Jeffrey M. Vincent, and Ariel H. Bierbaum (Center for Cities and Schools at the University of California-Berkeley)

Date Published: June 2011

Literature Reviews and Research Reports

[Aligning Education and Housing Initiatives: Building a Foundation](#)

This paper reviews the evidence for promising practices to create and sustain partnerships between the housing and education sectors in four areas: early childhood initiatives, family engagement, out-of-school learning time, and neighborhood revitalization. Based on their findings, the authors identify two priorities for achieving better alignment between the education and assisted housing systems: (1) continue building the evidence base for aligned systems; and (2) define indicators or metrics for success that make it possible to track and compare results. The paper concludes with initial thoughts on possible indicators and metrics for success in each of the four programmatic areas discussed in the paper. This paper was prepared in advance of a summit on affordable housing and education hosted by CLPHA in February 2015.

Author: Council of Large Public Housing Agencies

Date Published: February 2015

[Housing as a Platform for Improving Education Outcomes Among Low-Income Children](#)

This paper was prepared to advance research and policymaking related to the role of high-quality, affordable housing as a platform for academic achievement among low-income students. The paper begins with brief overviews of the current state of housing and of education for low-income children. Acknowledging that many factors affect school outcomes, the authors then provide conceptual models for how housing can create positive pathways to educational success along four dimensions: housing quality, residential stability, housing affordability, and neighborhood location. Following a review of the research evidence for the impact of housing on educational outcomes, which the authors characterize as focused on the absence of housing and its negative consequences (rather than on ways that housing can be a positive pathway to better outcomes), and common methodological challenges and limitations, the authors conclude with a plan for future research that includes proposed research questions and research projects.

Authors: Mary Cunningham and Graham MacDonald (Urban Institute)

Date Published: May 2012

[How Housing Mobility Affects Education Outcomes for Low-Income Children](#)

This article in HUD's Evidence Matters publication describes findings from the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Making Connections initiative, a comprehensive community change demonstration project implemented in 10 low-income neighborhoods between 2002 and 2010. The article describes this place-based initiative, which included on-the-ground interventions and public policy advocacy as well as extensive data collection, and presents findings from a research study on the interplay between housing mobility and school mobility among Making Connections residents. Overall, researchers found mixed impacts, concluding that housing mobility enables low-income children to switch into higher-performing schools and potentially make educational gains; however, school mobility that results from residential moves can also disrupt or interfere with educational attainment, especially if the change is to a lower-quality school. View the full research study referenced in the article, [Getting to Better Performing Schools: The Role of Residential Mobility in School Attainment in Low-Income Neighborhoods](#).

Author: HUD Office of Policy Development and Research

Date Published: Fall 2014

[The Impacts of Affordable Housing on Education: A Research Summary](#)

Aimed at an audience of policymakers and practitioners, authors of this literature review present academic and non-academic evidence for seven hypotheses on how stable, affordable housing can impact children's educational outcomes. The hypotheses include: affordable housing may reduce the frequency of disruptive moves; some affordable housing and mobility policies may help families move to communities with higher quality schools; affordable housing can reduce overcrowding and other sources of housing-related stress; well-constructed and maintained affordable housing can help families avoid housing-related health hazards; affordable housing developments can effect change through holistic community development; affordable housing may reduce homelessness among families with children; and poor educational outcomes for children may actually be associated with low-income households spending too little on housing due to poor housing quality.

Authors: Maya Brennan, Patrick Reed, and Lisa Sturtevant (Center for Housing Policy)
Date Published: November 2014

Case Studies

[BPS and Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative Launch Data-Sharing Agreement to Boost Student Success](#)

This brief news article describes a pilot initiative launched by the Boston Public Schools (BPS) and Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI) to share data on approximately 2,000 students experiencing homelessness. The initiative involves confidential sharing of student-specific information in a manner that is compliant with the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act, in order to learn more about student engagement and opportunities to provide additional support to improve outcomes. Information collected in the shared database includes demographic information, pre-recorded district data (e.g., English Learner and special educations status), and student academic and engagement indicators that will be tracked over time, such as standard examination scores, course enrollment and grades, and attendance. The article includes a link to the memorandum of understanding between BPS and DSNI that describes the terms and conditions of the data-sharing partnership.

Author: N/A

Date Published: December 5, 2016

[Bringing Education Home: Housing Authorities and Learning Initiatives](#)

This report provides concise profiles of 14 housing authorities that are leveraging the housing assistance they provide to improve educational outcomes for residents. Common strategies and approaches used by housing authorities highlighted in the report include early intervention and parental engagement, partnerships with school districts and place-based programs, tutoring and workforce development, and emphasizing the value of education through requirements and incentives. The projects span the learning continuum, from early childhood to career readiness, and profiles are organized into four categories that reflect their varying orientations: a strong start, partnering for success, opportunities outside of school, and creating a culture of success.

Author: Council of Large Public Housing Agencies

Date Published: 2012

[The Case for Data-Sharing: San Francisco's Shared Youth Database](#)

While this brief does not address the housing-education nexus specifically, it outlines the benefits of data-sharing among service providers who work with vulnerable families, using anecdotes to illustrate the challenges and inefficiencies of a fragmented system for service providers and their clients. The author describes a local effort to undertake a data-sharing initiative among the public health, juvenile probation, and child welfare agencies in the city and county of San Francisco. (The school district subsequently joined the partnership.) A memorandum of understanding among these agencies allowed for the creation of the Shared Youth Database, which has yielded important insights about the families that use their services, where they are located, and the need for early intervention to prevent disciplinary problems.

Author: Jack Calhoun (National League of Cities)

Date Published: 2014

[Choice Neighborhoods: Placing School Improvements and Student Achievement at the Center of Neighborhood Revitalization](#)

Seattle Housing Authority (SHA) was first selected as a Choice Neighborhoods grantee in 2011. This issue brief profiles efforts by SHA and the Seattle Choice Neighborhoods grant team to prioritize educational improvements in the Choice Neighborhood encompassing Yesler Terrace, a large public housing development, and to improve educational outcomes for students in a high-needs neighborhood school. SHA worked with multiple partners, including Seattle University, the local school district, and child-centered nonprofit organizations to leverage its Choice Neighborhoods grant and work towards these goals. The profile describes the "cradle to college" pipeline of learning resources put into place by the Choice Neighborhoods team to improve the range and quality of educational opportunities and outcomes for students living in Yesler Terrace and the broader community. The case study underscores the importance of regular meetings among all of the partners and well-designed data sharing processes and agreements, and concludes with lessons learned from this partnership.

Authors: Martin Blank and Devon Minerve (Institute for Educational Leadership), Linda Jacobson

Date Published: September 2014

[Crossroads: The Intersection of Housing and Education Policy](#)

This interactive profile, which includes several videos, describes an educational program implemented by Tacoma Housing Authority at McCarver Elementary School in Parkland, Washington's Hilltop neighborhood. The profile highlights the connections between housing mobility and educational outcomes: the student body is drawn from a hypermobile population of low-income households and families experiencing homelessness, and before the Tacoma Housing Authority program was implemented, the school experienced a 179 percent turnover rate, leading to disruptions for individual students and entire classrooms. The profile describes the McCarver Elementary School Special Housing Program, a program developed by the housing authority, in partnership with the Tacoma School District and other neighborhood stakeholders, to stabilize homeless families with children through a combination of time-limited housing assistance, parental cooperation, supportive services, and data sharing. The profile also includes brief chapters on the role of the philanthropic community in promoting partnerships between housing authorities and school systems and the importance of testing different models and building evidence to understand the effects of various interventions.

Authors: Matthew Johnson, Justin Milner, and Adrienne Haney (Urban Institute)
Date Published: 2014

[Housing and Education Partnerships: A Case study of Akron, Ohio](#)

This case study describes two key elements of a partnership between the Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority (AMHA) and Akron Public Schools (APS): the Early Childhood Initiative and the Reach Opportunity Center at Summit Lake. The Early Childhood Initiative, a program offered across multiple AMHA properties, is designed to improve school readiness among AMHA's youngest residents. The initiative takes a holistic approach that addresses children's and parents' health and well-being through outreach events, home visits that follow the "Parents as Teachers" curriculum, maternal depression services, and referrals to community resources that address children's developmental needs. The Reach Opportunity Center at Summit Lake, a community center located near a 249-unit public housing development, is jointly operated by AMHA and APS and offers "cradle-to-career" services and programming including Head Start, kindergarten, and youth development programs as well as programs on workforce development. The case study describes the leadership and staff structure for both initiatives, as well as other partner organizations and funding sources. The case study concludes with sections on the importance of data-sharing between AMHA and APS and on systems and protocols for coordination between the partners.

Authors: Erwin de Leon and Priya D. Saxena (Urban Institute)
Date Published: March 2015

[Housing and Education Partnerships: A Case Study of New Haven, Connecticut](#)

This case study examines the Elm City Believes program, which was launched in April 2014 by Elm City Communities (New Haven's public housing agency) in coordination with the New Haven Public School district as well as with local charter and magnet schools and educational service providers. Students in Elm City Communities housing attend all 48 schools in the district, and have generally had worse academic performance than their peers. Elm City Believes is a "cradle-to-career" program designed to close the achievement gap, support parent engagement in their children's education, and promote participation in postsecondary opportunities. The case study describes various components of the program related to leadership, staffing and funding sources, as well as specific programs and services to address early learning, family engagement, out-of-school time, absenteeism and attendance, and postsecondary preparation. In administering the program, the housing agency partners with the school district and with individual schools to coordinate data-sharing, after-school tutoring, and case management. The case study describes the systems and protocols for coordination that contribute to the success of Elm City Believes.

Authors: Josh Leopold and Jasmine Simington (Urban Institute)
Date Published: March 2015

[Housing and Education Partnerships: A Case Study of Vancouver, Washington](#)

This case study describes a multifaceted partnership between the Vancouver Housing Authority (VHA) and the Vancouver Public School (VPS) district intended to support and encourage education and training for residents. One component of this partnership is the Stable Housing Voucher pilot program, in which families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and have

children enrolled in selected VPS schools receive a Housing Choice Voucher. In exchange, the families agree to stay in the district and, ideally, the same school. VPS refers families to the program and works with participants to create school engagement plans, while the VHA, a Moving to Work agency, helps the family move towards self-sufficiency. THE VHA and VPS have also jointly secured an AmeriCorps VISTA volunteer to work on programming that can help to address school absenteeism among VHA residents—a project that involves data-sharing among the organizations. Finally, many of the activities that are part of the partnership are centered on VHA’s Skyline Crest community. The community is home to the RISE & STARS Community Center, which hosts early learning programs; a preschool program similar to Head Start, to which VHA students have priority access in exchange for classroom space; afterschool activities; and a program designed to help high-school age VHA residents plan for college. The case study also describes the leadership, staff and funding sources for the programs, as well as additional partners who provide critical supportive services, and includes a detailed section on plans for data sharing among the organizations.

Authors: Martha Galvez and Jasmine Simington (Urban Institute)

Date Published: March 2015

[Housing Authorities Stepping Up for Children](#)

This collection of brief case studies profiles the efforts of five housing authorities that are working to promote grade-level reading among young children living in their properties. The report provides snapshots of the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles, which has entered into a data-sharing agreement with the school district and worked through an affiliated nonprofit organization to create community libraries at public housing developments; the Oakland Housing Authority, which partnered with the school district to share data in an effort to increase school attendance among housing authority youth and improve parent engagement; and the Springfield Housing Authority, which partnered with a foundation and regional employment/workforce board to promote reading proficiency; among others.

Author: The Campaign for Grade-Level Reading

Date Published: October 2014

[Supporting Educational Achievement with Afterschool Programs Located in Affordable Housing: A Profile of the Eden Housing Collaboration with the Partnership for Children and Youth](#)

This case study highlights the potential for affordable housing providers to offer afterschool and summer programs that help to improve academic outcomes among children living in their properties. The case study describes a partnership between Eden Housing (Eden), a nonprofit affordable housing developer and manager, and the Partnership for Children and Youth (PCY), a nonprofit organization that provides technical assistance and other supports for high-quality out-of-school learning opportunities. Following a conversation between the leadership of both organizations, they sought and secured philanthropic funding to enhance Eden’s afterschool learning programs at various developments, with technical support from PCY. The case study describes how the partners overcame some of the challenges to setting up and running the program, including securing funding, establishing relationships with schools, measuring impact, and complying with licensing requirements.

Author: Janet Viveiros (National Housing Conference)

Date Published: 2016