



Overview

Affordability Comparison

Economic Development

Public Health

Educational Opportunity

Transportation

Accessibility

Why the Coalition?

The need for this coalition was identified in the 2008 Regional Housing Conference. At the time, it was determined that the affordability of housing in our community was an issue that needed more public attention. In the intervening years, housing has taken on an even greater sense of urgency. The message of the coalition is that an adequate supply of decent and affordable housing intersects with each of our community's aspirations. A healthy housing supply truly is the foundation of community prosperity.

The Coalition consists of non-profit housing organizations, private developers, community foundations, local housing committees, and others. We are aligned in the mission of pointing the spotlight on our diverse housing needs and seeking a more favorable regulatory environment and funding support for safe, decent, and affordable housing.

All facets of a student's life contribute in some way to his or her education and development. Since the home is where a significant amount of time is spent, it's hardly surprising that the nature of the housing itself has an effect on the ability to learn.

Children from families with high housing cost burdens start out with several disadvantages. They tend to have less stability, move more often, resort to overcrowding, live in substandard structures, and concentrate into neighborhoods with others in the same situation. Researchers have linked each of these conditions to lower educational achievement. The provision of safe, decent, and affordable housing can assist area educators in shaping the future of our community for the better.



Fields of Venable homes are short walk from Venable Elementary School (Piedmont Housing Alliance).

Staying in a Home, Staying in a School

Families who spend an inordinately high proportion of their income on housing may perpetually be in jeopardy of being evicted, foreclosed upon, or forced to move to a less costly home. Without much room for savings, any unexpected shift in finances can lead to dramatic life changes. In extreme cases, this may result in homelessness. Children in these families often end up being uprooted and placed into a new social and educational context very frequently.

A number of studies have **linked this volatility to difficulties performing in school**. Whether it is due to disruption of the instructional calendar, stress caused by the move, the challenge of having to meet new friends, loss of routine, or missing out on long-term relationships, there do seem to be adverse effects of high mobility for children of all ages.

Rampant housing instability can effect a whole school. It is not uncommon for some elementary schools in urban areas to have turnover rates above 50% per year, a constant level of change that can impact the ability to teach students and administer the institution. There is evidence to suggest that even students who do have stable housing are impacted by high levels of school instability. While there are many reasons families move to a new home and a new school, **a high frequency of displacement is often a direct result of a lack of affordable housing.**

Effects of Settling for Inadequate Housing

Families may find themselves forgoing even minimal standards for housing quality or size in an attempt to alleviate high housing costs. First, households may move into overcrowded homes with extended family or friends. Overcrowding is defined by HUD as more than one person per room (excepting kitchens and bathrooms), and it has been linked to poor school performance. Perhaps **a crowded and noisy home life can make it hard for a student to complete homework** and get needed sleep.

Second, families may move into lower cost housing that is unsafe. Lead paint may be present, and damp or poorly ventilated conditions could trigger asthma, both of which are linked to trouble with school.

School districts in the planning district reported **280 children homeless in 2013**, which includes in the federal definition those in shelters, doubled up, in motels, or in substandard housing. When the Thomas Jefferson Area Coalition for the Homeless asked indigents, in a separate survey, about the causes of homelessness in our area, **“lack of affordable housing” was by far the most common answer.**

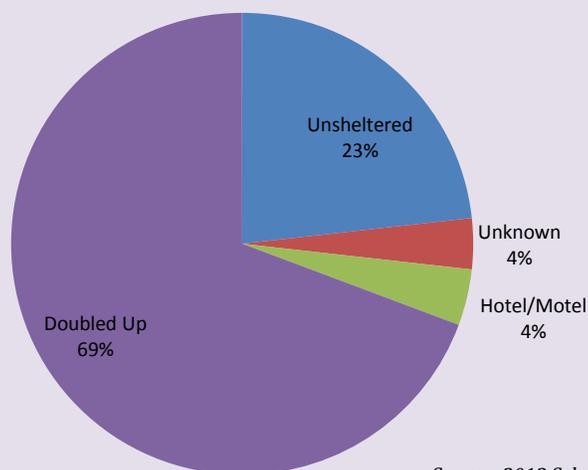
Influence of the Whole Neighborhood

Educational attainment has not only been linked to individual housing quality, but also to the condition of the entire neighborhood. **When low-income households are concentrated into a single area, the difficulties already associated with poverty can be magnified.**

Numerous studies have found that students from struggling neighborhoods tend to struggle themselves, regardless of their own family’s socioeconomic status. This early disadvantage seems to continue throughout life. One study found that for children with similar levels of family income, growing up in a neighborhood where the number of families in poverty was between 20 and 30 percent increased the chance of downward economic mobility—moving down the income ladder relative to their parents—by more than 50 percent compared with children who grew up in neighborhoods with under 10 percent of families in poverty.

The **encouragement of broadly mixed-income neighborhoods**, with housing opportunities available for a range of citizens, not only enhances the quality of life for residents but ensures that children receive a solid educational footing for future success.

Where the region's homeless children live ...



Source: 2013 School Districts in TJPD

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Gearing Up for New Federal Policies

Over the last few years, **the federal government has been actively seeking to integrate its housing and education activities into a coordinated effort.** Once separated and insulated into the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Department of Education (DOE) agencies, new initiatives are broadening the scope of collaboration across these boundaries. Localities that build similar coalitions at the local level may position themselves to take advantage from this paradigm shift, and students could benefit from an education approach that considered the full spectrum of their life situation over the entire course of instruction from cradle to career.

The following are two major new federal initiatives that link education with housing. Both offer grants to localities to support future opportunities of disadvantaged students. Charlottesville's Children Youth and Family Services (CYFS) received a Promise Neighborhoods grant, and the City of Promise initiative is currently underway.



Source: Harlem Children's Zone

Promise Neighborhoods is a federal place-based initiative intended to provide opportunities to neighborhoods with concentrated poverty. The program is based off of the community organization Harlem Children's Zone, which works with children in a specific neighborhood over the entire course of their education and into a career. The program takes a comprehensive view of education that integrates the classroom with the wider environment, including housing. Awards have been granted annually from 2010 through 2012, and the program is expected to continue.



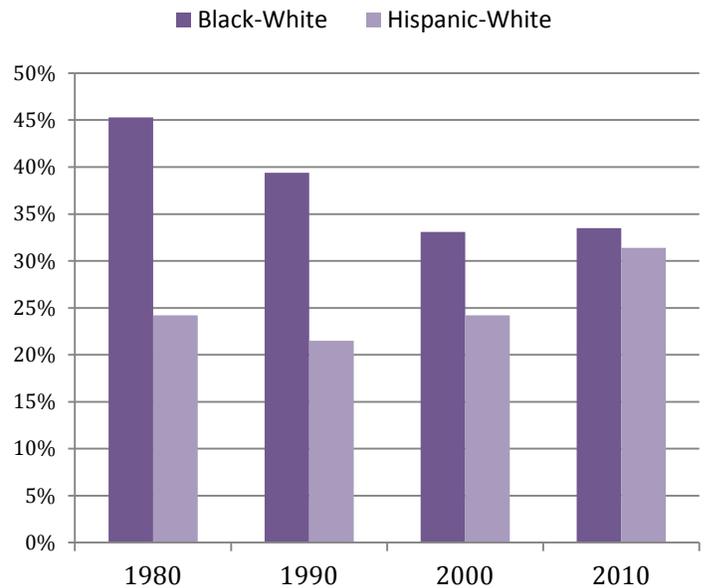
Source: Community Foundations

Choice Neighborhoods is an initiative intended to build upon the successful HOPE VI public housing redevelopment program. Like its predecessor, Choice Neighborhoods seeks to integrate income levels in a community by dispersing subsidized units and incorporating attractive design. What's new is the inclusion of education into the redevelopment process. According to HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan, one of the purposes is to challenge local partners to "link housing interventions more closely with school reform and early childhood innovation."

Trends in Integration

Schools have been divided by race to some extent throughout the region's history, although the racial divide is changing. Blacks and whites have slowly become more integrated with each other since 1980. On the other hand, as the Hispanic population has grown overall, the spatial divide between whites and Hispanics in the region has also grown. Diversity in the classroom is a direct result of diversity of housing choices in the neighborhood it serves. Because race and socioeconomic status are still tightly linked in the community, racial integration is one means for sharing educational opportunity more broadly.

Measurement of Neighborhood Segregation



Source: Index of Dissimilarity from Harvard Diversity Data/U.S. Census

Members of the Coalition

