EDUCATION ADVOCATES ARE HOUSING ADVOCATES

“One of the most important mechanisms through which housing impacts quality of life is through educational attainment. Safe, affordable, quality housing provides a foundation from which children can engage fully in schooling and set themselves up for success in the future.” - Quoted from OSAH, *The Inextricable Link Between Housing, Education and Racial Equity*

**Stable, affordable housing drives stronger student outcomes.**

“Affordability exacerbates educational risk for low-income students and... providing housing supports for more eligible families would be a key way to improve the mental and physical well-being of children, as well as their academic success, in the short term and long term.” Quoted from Holme, *Growing Up as Rents Rise*

- “Low income children who switch schools frequently due to housing instability or homelessness tend to perform less well in school, have learning disabilities and behavioral problems, and are less likely to graduate from high school (Voight, Shinn, & Nation, 2012). When they grow up, they are also more likely to be employed in jobs with lower earnings and skill requirements (Fischer, 2015).” Quoted from NLIHC, *A Place to Call Home*

- “Students who attend schools with large populations of hypermobile children [due to unstable and unaffordable housing] also suffer academically since more time must be devoted to review and catching up on work (Cunningham & MacDonald, 2012).” Quoted from NLIHC, *A Place to Call Home*

- “Living in poor-quality housing and disadvantaged neighborhoods is associated with lower kindergarten readiness scores (Coulton et. al., 2016).” Quoted from Housing Matters

- “Low-income children in affordable housing score better on cognitive development tests than those in unaffordable housing (Newman & Holupka, 2015). Researchers suggest that is partly because parents with affordable housing can invest more in activities and materials that support their children’s development (Newman & Holupka, 2014). Parents also are able to save more money for their children’s college tuition when they are not rent burdened and are more likely to attend a parent teacher conference (Public and Affordable Housing Research Corporation, 2016).” Quoted from NLIHC, *A Place to Call Home*

**Educators need affordable housing to live in the communities they teach in.**

“Policymakers need to be aware that housing policies impact the composition of the teacher workforce.” Quoted from The National Council on Teacher Quality, *Teacher Salaries, Cost of Rent, and Home Prices*

- A *2023 study from The National Council on Teacher Quality* found that over the last five years, housing prices have risen at a rate that has outpaced *average* teacher salary increases for 73 of the 74 school districts in the 69 metropolitan areas included in the analysis. Housing prices between 2017 and 2022 have increased an average of 47% in the 69 metropolitan areas.
• Teachers may decide to live far from their schools and have multiple-hour commutes, which has been found to lead to higher turnover (National Council on Teacher Quality, 2023).

School Districts Where Housing is Unaffordable for Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School District</th>
<th>1 BR Rent as % of Salary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco Unified School District, CA</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portland Public Schools, OR</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Diego Unified School District, CA</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawai'i Department of Education, HI</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York City Department of Education, NY</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District of Columbia Public Schools, DC</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston Public Schools, MA</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eagle County School District, CO</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montgomery County Public Schools, MD</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairfax County Schools, VA</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles Unified School District, CA</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This chart compares the salaries of beginning teachers with the cost of one-bedroom rentals in their metro areas. Source: Patricia Saenz-Armstrong, National Council on Teacher Quality

• Educators and school employees experiencing rent burdens are more likely to be Black and Hispanic or Latinx. Research shows that students of color, and especially Black students, are more likely to have improved educational outcomes when they are taught by teachers of color and teachers of the same race/ethnicity. Attending to the housing challenges faced by workers of color could help school districts cultivate a more diverse educator workforce (Terner Center, 2022).

• A 2022 report from the National Education Association indicates that housing incentives, including reduced rent, would help to attract and retain teachers in high cost metropolitan areas (National Council on Teacher Quality, 2023).

School data reveal an alarming number of students experiencing homelessness.

“During the 2021-2022 school year, public schools identified 1,205,292 students who experienced homelessness, representing 2.4% of all students enrolled in public schools.” Quoted from National Center for Homeless Education, Student Homelessness in America

• Children of color are overrepresented, accounting for three out of four students who experience homelessness. While Hispanic students account for 28.7% of all students enrolled in public schools, they represented 39.3% of students who experience homelessness. Similarly, Black students account for 14.9% of public school students overall, but 25.4% of students who experience homelessness (National Center for Homeless Education, 2023).

• The largest two subgroups of students who experience homelessness are English learners and children with disabilities (National Center for Homeless Education, 2023).

• Students without a stable place to live face difficulties even getting to school. More than half (52%) are chronically absent, a rate that jumped 20% following the pandemic and is now 22 percentage points higher than other students. Chronic absence, in turn, contributes to a high school graduation rate of just 68% for students experiencing homelessness, 12 percentage points lower than other low-income students (National Center for Homeless Education, 2023). Still, especially for students experiencing homelessness, education is crucial: failing to graduate high school is also the single greatest risk factor for future homelessness (Dworsky & Samuels, 2017).
Exclusionary housing policy drives persistent school segregation.

“At the end of the day, it is housing policies that are a root cause of economic and racial school segregation. Public school choice policies—while positive and necessary—are mostly aimed at addressing an underlying housing problem.” Quoted from The Century Foundation, How Housing Policies Create Unequal Educational Opportunities

- A 2021 Harvard study evaluating the lasting impact of redlining on school funding, diversity and performance found that schools and districts in historically redlined neighborhoods have less district per-pupil total revenues, less diversity, and worse average test scores compared to those located in non-redlined neighborhoods (Lukes, 2021).

- Because school funding largely comes from local property taxes, housing plays a pivotal role in how much schools can spend on students’ education. The highest poverty school districts receive roughly $800 less per pupil in state/local funding than low poverty districts. Receiving that additional $800 per student would allow a school with 500 students to hire at least 3 more teachers. (The Education Trust, 2022). “Educational opportunity is unequal in every state—that is, higher-poverty districts are funded less adequately than lower-poverty districts.” Quoted from The Albert Shanker Institute, The Adequacy and Fairness of State School Finance Systems

Affordable housing options located in economically diverse neighborhoods consistently drive strong student outcomes for all children.

- There is growing research evidence that “diversity makes us smarter.” When students are exposed to other students who are different from themselves, they are also exposed to new ideas and challenges that can lead to improved cognitive skills, including problem solving and critical thinking (The Century Foundation, 2023).

- Attending a diverse school reduces prejudice and stereotypes, and can improve students intellectual self-confidence and leadership skills (The Century Foundation, 2019).

- When a child in a family with low income is able to access affordable housing located in a well-resourced neighborhood, it improves the likelihood of college attendance (Chetty & Hendren, 2015).

- “Students in integrated schools have higher average test scores. On the 2011 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) given to fourth graders in math, for example, low-income students attending more affluent schools scored roughly two years of learning ahead of low-income students in high-poverty schools. Controlling carefully for students’ family background, another study found that students in mixed-income schools showed 30 percent more growth in test scores over their four years in high school than peers with similar socioeconomic backgrounds in schools with concentrated poverty.” Quoted from The Century Foundation, Benefits of Integrated Schools

- In Montgomery County, Maryland, scattered-site public housing gave children in families with low incomes the choice to live in historically well-resourced neighborhoods and thereby attend more well-resourced schools, which drove stronger achievement and significantly reduced gaps. This ground-breaking study showed that affordable housing, in and of itself, can help raise student achievement and can be more effective than some traditional education reforms (Schwartz, 2010).

“School reform cannot succeed without housing reform.”
- Richard Rothstein, Economic Policy Institute

For more information, please visit www.opportunityhome.org