

Appendix B

The Baltimore Education Project

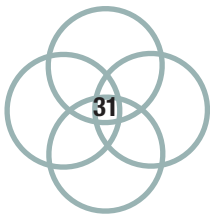
A coalition of organizations, including the Poverty and Race Research Action Council (PRRAC), the ACLU of Maryland, and the BHRC have collaborated to design and implement a new educational intervention targeted to low income families with school-aged children who have recently moved into the Baltimore area suburbs as part of a housing mobility program.¹

An education professional will work with the suburban schools and the staff of Metro Baltimore Quadel (MBQ) to help children make stronger and more rapid connections with their new schools and communities, and help children who are having adjustment difficulties. The goal is to help solidify families' connections to their new community so that they are able to stabilize after their move; remain in the community; and enjoy the long term benefits of living in a safer community with strong schools, rich employment opportunities and good transit, recreation, shopping, and other community amenities. Some key components of the program will include:

A full time Lead Educational Coordinator who will

- * Compile a chart that breaks down the region by school zone, allowing housing counselors, landlord recruiters, and participating families to see how housing choice determines which schools students will attend, thereby giving parents an opportunity to make a more informed choice about their housing options
- * Provide information on schools at the voucher briefing that families attend when they are ready to receive their vouchers, and train families to research school performance, as well as reinforce the availability of the educational counselor as a resource
- * Assist with records transfer and school enrollment, helping families navigate difficulties with enrollment as needed

¹ Thanks to initial funding from the Kreeger Fund, an educational support program for the Baltimore Housing Mobility Program was started in June 2009. Not all program elements listed here are in place, pending additional funding.



- * Provide on-going training on education issues to the 12 housing counselors who currently assist participating families
- * Develop additional questions for both the initial and post-placement needs assessment (grade level, prior school, special education) to enable housing counselors to include an education component in each family's needs assessment and individualized family plan
- * Train housing counselors to recognize students' educational issues as they arise and serve as resource for counselors to help resolve individual problems
- * Serve as a resource for families in transition

Development of relationships with key staff, including principals and guidance counselors, in the suburban districts

- * Work with staff to identify students in the program who may need additional assistance
- * Communicate with schools about unique needs of students making the transition from urban to suburban schools and communities.

Identification and development of resources targeted to mobility program families

- * Create an inventory of key resources available to participating families in their new neighborhoods, such as counseling resources from county departments of mental health, local tutors, and recreation opportunities
- * Provide assistance for participating students who encounter barriers to extra-curricular athletic participation because of "pay-to-play" rules
- * Assist with transportation to support after school sports and extracurricular activities and serve as a liaison with town sports leagues, local churches, and other community activity providers
- * Identify opportunities like college scholarships and awards programs, drivers' education courses; summer and after school job opportunities, and help connect participating families to such resources
- * Develop occasional group field trips and provide transportation to special regional events

Academic support outside of school

- * Raise awareness of Saturday academies and summer programs for participating students who need additional academic support
- * Identify existing summer and academic support programs, tracking deadlines and available scholarships to help mobility program students attend



Communication with families

- * Utilize existing communications tools with mobility families to keep in touch and provide information about educational options
- * Create an education-oriented newsletter to maintain contact with mobility program families

Research and monitoring

- * Track whether students are receiving appropriate services in their new schools
- * Ensure that students in the program are not targeted by schools for inappropriate discipline

School personnel and student training

- * Provide training for teachers and staff on diversity and cultural competency, particularly on the development of culturally responsive curriculum
- * Develop and present program sessions to help students cope with the transition on topics such as conflict resolution, or self-esteem building

