MBK
Pittsburgh-Allegheny County

MY BROTHER'S KEEPER:

Allegheny County and City of Pittsburgh's plan for addressing opportunity gaps for boys and young men of color.
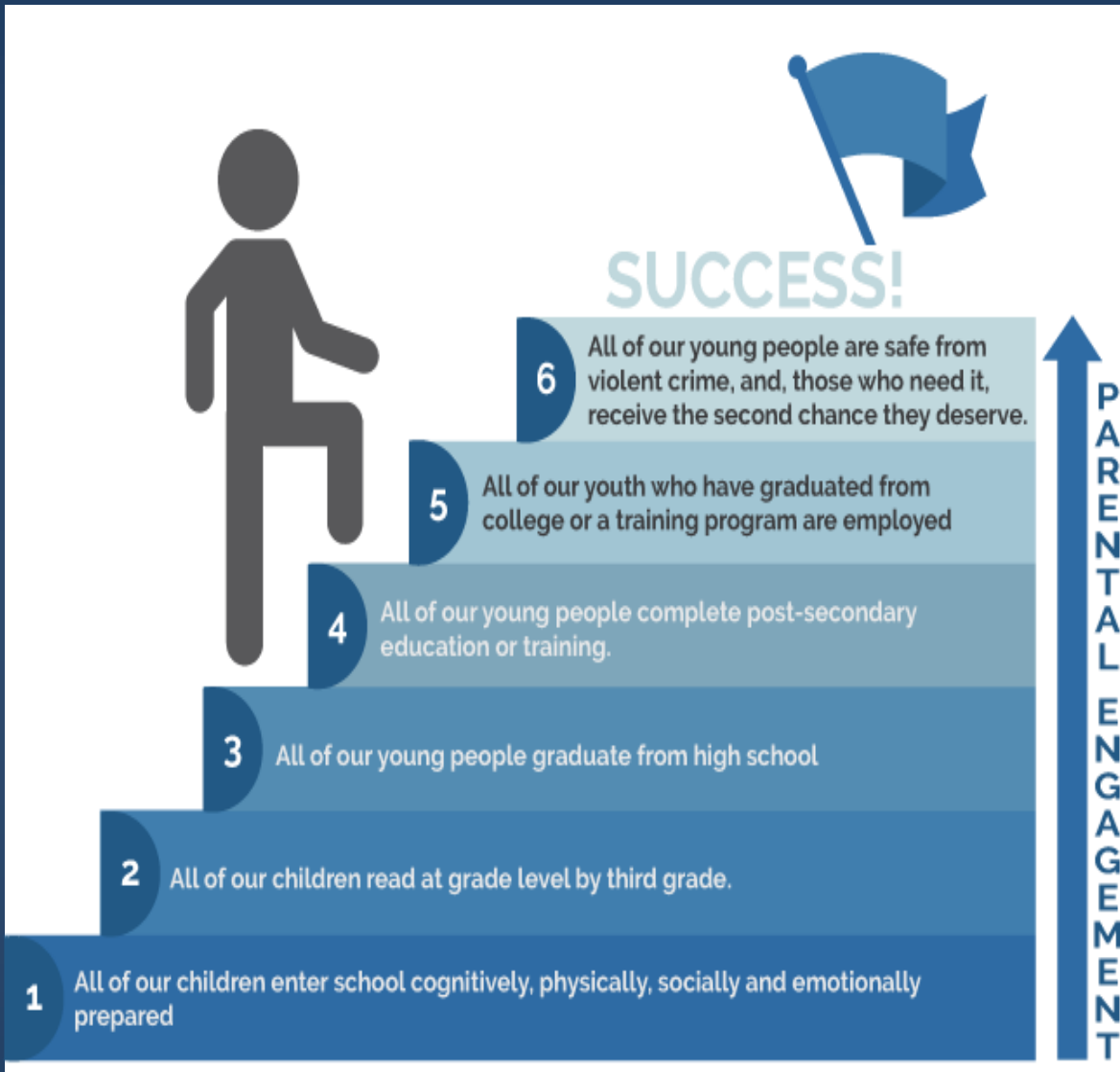
Overview

"If America stands for anything, it stands for the idea of opportunity for everybody; the notion that no matter who you are, or where you came from, or the circumstances into which into which you were born, if you work hard, if you take responsibility, then you can make it in this country…" – President Barack Obama, February 27, 2014.

In September 2014, President Barack Obama issued a directive to cities, counties, and communities across the nation, to become "MBK Communities," wherein elected officials work with local partners to forge long-term and strategic programs to improve the livelihood and development of all young people, with a strong focus on young men and boys of color.

The City of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County officials, along with community leadership, have embraced the President's call to action and are dedicated to creating a more equitable community where all residents are able to benefit from the growth and improvements made over the last decade. Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania has been named "The Most Livable City" several times in the last five years; however, for 25% of the City's population, livability is a distant concept from which they are excluded.

Armed with this renewed commitment and a solid foundation for launching the local My Brother's Keeper Initiative, the City and County hosted an "MBK" summit on October 31, 2014 at the Community College of Allegheny County (CCAC), with over one hundred leaders from ten sectors including: service and community centers; healthcare; faith-based; philanthropy; education; government; corporate; law enforcement; workforce; and advocacy.

After reviewing the six milestones proposed by the White House, community leaders determined that the milestones could best be addressed by engaging the broad spectrum of community members to set specific objectives to prove hope and opportunity.

SUCCESS!

6 All of our young people are safe from violent crime, and, those who need it, receive the second chance they deserve.

5 All of our youth who have graduated from college or a training program are employed

4 All of our young people complete post-secondary education or training.

3 All of our young people graduate from high school

2 All of our children read at grade level by third grade.

1 All of our children enter school cognitively, physically, socially and emotionally prepared

PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT

Methodology

After reviewing demographic, social, economic and crime data as well as numerous community and academic reports, a sixteen (16) member committee, with representatives from academia, the clergy, community groups, police, city and county government and local school systems, was created and charged with drafting a "MBK Playbook" that outlines effective strategies to support the success of young men of color and effective and efficient means to implement the strategies.

"Supporting the Success of Young Men of Color"

Methodology

To accomplish this, the following activities occurred.

1. Establishment of **Guiding Principles** to ensure hope and opportunity
2. Determination of a **"Livability Index"** by a review of data that measures the "**What Youth See, Hear and Feel in Their Neighborhood**" with respect to the socio-economic environment, support systems, police- community interactions and education.
3. Embrace of the six MBK goals.
4. Identification of **"Considerations"** identified in research related to each goal
5. Review of current community initiatives entitled **"Current Keepers"** congruent to each goal.
6. Development of specific community objectives that commit to **"Keeping Hope and Opportunity"**
7. Creation of a managing process to ensure achievement of objectives by designating a **Lead** entity (non-profits, federal, county and city government , and community and economic development groups).
8. **Promotion of the " 7 Expanded Learning Pipeline Practices"** to sustain the initiative in neighborhood zones and communities.
9. Hosting of three (3) **Deliberative Forums** that engaged 227 members of the community to provide feedback to the identified goals and objectives.
10. Launch "**MBK Playbook**" to the greater community.
11. Call to Action by Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald and City of Pittsburgh Mayor William Peduto.

Guiding Principles

"Brother" means all young men of color are my brothers.

"Keeper" means that we:

a. Inspire Minds

b. Access Resources

c. Model success

d. Facilitate opportunities

e. Recognize all have value by affirming their life experiences are pow-
    erful and productive and essential to crafting solutions to which they
    are accountable

"Life Experiences are Powerful and Productive"

Creation of a "Livability Index"

The premise of the "livability index" was the determination that data must be coupled with experiences that reflect what our young men of color see, hear and feel within their respective neighborhoods and communities. Historically, plans are developed from a city-wide and/or county-wide perspective; however, it was the consensus of the group that while issues may present themselves to the community as a whole, the neighborhood alliances and relationships must be respected. As such, it was agreed that the focus of analysis should occur within the context of the six (6) police zones within the city (Refer to Appendix 2 for map of zones) and communities (Refer to Appendix 1 for Map of Communities) Therefore, data related to socio-economic, education, support systems and police and community interactions were reviewed in sample police zones within the City to attain a profile of the level of "livability" of young men of color (Refer to pages 8-9). As neighborhoods and communities embrace this challenge, data for their respective area will be reviewed to produce a profile.

To enhance the understanding of the issues facing young men of color, the Summit promoted the opportunity for key city and county leaders to hear the concerns and opportunities from local youth. In fact, the importance of youth voices rose to the forefront of the conversations through the development of a Youth Narrative by Youth Ambassadors of the Homewood Children's Village, Bridge to College program. The Ambassadors surveyed their peers and provided a narrative from their perspective around improving outcomes for our young men of color. The thoughts of the youth have helped to inform a number of recommendations. Specific language from the narrative can be found throughout the plan.

What Young Men of Color See, Hear and Feel in Their Neighborhood

Socio-Economic and Health Factors

◊ Total population

◊ African American population

◊ Population of youth under the age of 5

◊ Population of youth age 16-25

◊ Percentage of households with income less than $20,000

◊ Public assets

◊ Public art

◊ Ball fields; greenspace; play-grounds

◊ Major employers

◊ Participation rates in women, in-fant and children (WIC) program

◊ Immunization Rates

Support Systems

◊ Non-profits located within the zone

◊ Quality programs appropriate for replication

What Young Men of Color See, Hear and Feel in Their Neighborhood

Education Factors

◊ Availability of quality early childhood programs (3-4 Star ratings) as determined by the Pennsylvania Keystone Stars program

◊ Rate of absenteeism in schools

◊ Rate of suspensions in schools

◊ Third grade reading levels of schools serving a majority of African American youth

◊ Level of achievement on Pennsylvania State Keystone exams for Algebra 1

◊ Level of care perceived by students as determined by community survey

◊ Environmental conditions surrounding neighborhood schools

Police Interactions

◊ Relationship of police and community

◊ Incidence of crime for neighborhood within a calendar year related to crimes of Homicide, Rape, Robbery, Aggravated Assault, Burglary, and frequency of Motor Vehicle Theft, Weapons violations, Drug Violations, and Family Violence
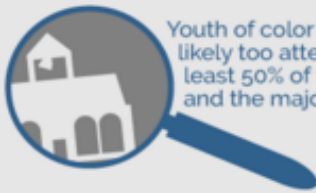
MBK
Pittsburgh - Allegheny County
STORIES & DATA

YOUTH

Pittsburgh youth concsidered "low-income"
20,000 [1]

More youth of color lack health insurance in Allegheny County than non-youth of color [2]

Youth of color in Pittsburgh are more likely too attend a school where at least 50% of the students are black and the majority of them are poor [3]

How many youth are on waiting lists for mentoring programs in the region?
1,000 [5]

59% of youth are not proficient in reading by the 11th grade [4]

74% [6]

6.4% Pre-school aged youth are enrolled in high quality childcare facilities [7]

Youth of color suspended in Kindergarten

FACTS

Homicide victims that are men of color:
77% [8]

29% of high school students need help with finishing school [9]

29% of high school students need exposure to non college but equally viable paths to careers

1) PPS, 2015
2) Department of Health, 2012
3) University of Pittsburgh ,2014
4) A + Schools, 2015
5) Mentoring Partnership, 2015
6) Department of Human Services, 2015
7) PAEYC, 2014
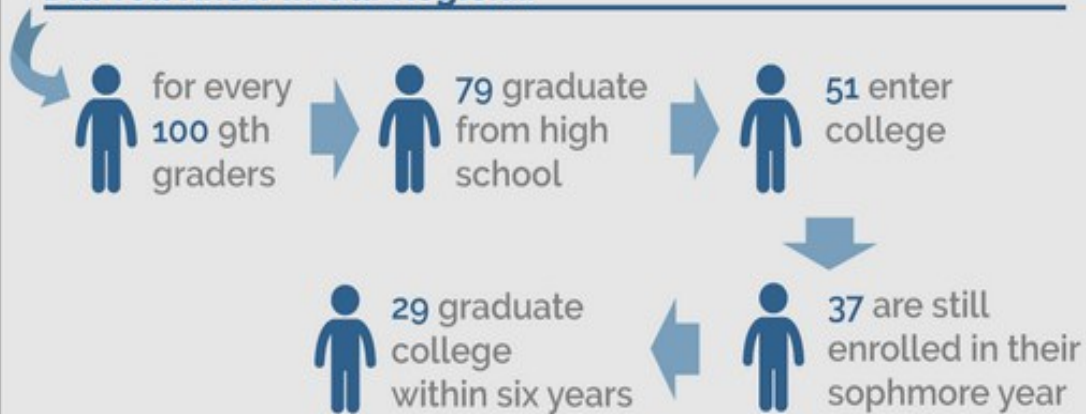8) City of Pittsburgh, 2015
9) TIRWIB, 2015

Number of black males in Allegheny County ages 0-24

32,385[10]

30% men of color ages 25-34 are not in the labor force

All high school students need[11] opportunities to explore careers and build work readiness

Did You Know In Our Region...

for every **100** 9th graders

79 graduate from high school

51 enter college

29 graduate college within six years

37 are still enrolled in their sophmore year

Nonprofit Impact

2,000 Community-Based nonprofits[12]

14.3 nonprofits for every **10,000** residents

13 Higher education institutions

$9 Billion in economic impact

10) Department of Health, 2014
11) TIRWIB, 2015
12) Forbes Funds, 2014

Sustaining "My Brother's Keeper"

To sustain the initiative, the Committee advocates the embrace of the "Homewood Birth-to-College Expanded Learning Pipeline" model (Expanded Learning Pipeline©) being implemented by the Bible Center, Higher Achievement, Homewood Children's Village and the Pittsburgh Association for the Education of the Young Child.

The "Expanded Learning Pipeline©" model involves agreement to engage in seven key practices (7 ELP Practices©) of a:

1. Common message/language

2. Coordinated transition practices

3. Shared data platform and accountability

4. Collaborative meetings

5. Common planning times

6. Common recruitment and marketing

7. Shared parent education and engagement

Therefore, once a community commits to the "My Brother' Keeper" initiative, it is critical that in addition to their decision to focus their neighborhood or community's energies on the achievement of the six (6) MBK goals, the neighborhood zone/community should establish an organizational structure consistent with the 7 Expanded Learning Pipeline Practices (7 ELP Practices) to sustain the program. (Tharp-Gilliam, Etheridge-Smith, W., & Wallace, C. , January 29, 2015.)

Goal 1

All of our children enter school cognitively, physically, socially and emotionally prepared.

Considerations

◊ **Early Childhood Education:** Research, both longitudinal and current, indicates that participation in quality preschool programs yields both academic and economic benefits for our communities. In fact, a recent report by the United States Department of Education entitled "A Matter of Equity: Preschool in America," (U.S. Department of Education, 2015) revealed that:

- "Children who participate in high-quality preschool programs have better health, social-emotional, and cognitive outcomes than those who do not participate."

- "Participating in quality early learning can boost children's educational attainment and earnings later in life."

- "Children who attend high-quality preschool programs are less likely to utilize   special education services or be retained in their grade, and are more likely to   graduate from high school, go on to college, and succeed in their careers than those who have not attended high-quality preschool programs."

- "Expanding early learning – including high-quality preschool – provides society with a return on investment of $8.60 for every $1 spent."

Considerations

◊ Although it is recognized that numerous qualified preschool programs are available (including Federally funded programs such as Early Head Start, Head Start States supported Pre-K Counts), for the purpose of this initiative, focus was given to the availability of quality preschool as defined by those entities that have been designated as three or four star facilities by the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Keystone Stars programs. Of the 224 regulated providers involved in the Keystone Stars programs, only 30 providers in the City of Pittsburgh are rated as High Quality Stars 3 or 4 (out of a possible 4) which translates into only 6.4% or 969 children being served in quality settings .

◊ **Need for Play:** Complementing the value of quality preschool experiences is the fact that play is a critical element in the developmental process. In fact, Fred Rogers proclaimed that "Play is often talked about as if it were a relief from serious learning. But for children, play is serious learning. Play is really the work of childhood." Because of this, the availability of playgrounds and green space is essential to both physical and cognitive development.

◊ **Health and Wellness:** The county's Live Well Allegheny campaign, led by Dr. Karen Hacker espoused the belief that it is essential for all members of our community to have a "comprehensive, innovative strategy on wellness that embraces a broad concept of living well to include physical health, mental wellness, personal and community safety, prevention and preparedness." In embracing this, Superintendent of the Pittsburgh Public Schools Dr. Linda Lane noted that "While the academic achievement of our students is a priority, we know that the underlying health and wellness of students is equally important to their success" (County of Allegheny, January 21, 2014).

Considerations

From the County perspective, 98 of 358 or 12.4% of the providers enrolled in the Keystone Stars program are rated quality providers. Due to the fact that the State only provides data by school district rather than by municipality, further review with respect to each community can not occur. (PAEYC, 2014)

◊ In the United Health Foundation release of its state health ratings, Pennsylvania fell to 29th in the nation, from a ranking of 26th last year in overall health. Perhaps more worrisome is an increase in the rate of obesity in the Commonwealth which rose from 28.6% to 29%, exceeding the national average. That equates to nearly three million adults in the state who are obese. In Allegheny County, according to the 2009-2010 Allegheny County Health Survey (ACHS), 62% of adults were overweight or obese." Of particular concern is the level of childhood obesity that results in life-long challenges. (Allegheny County, January, 21, 2014)

◊ The American Academy of Pediatrics indicates that vaccinations have reduced the number of infections from vaccine-preventable diseases by more than 90%. In fact, before the discovery of the HiB vaccine (Haemophilus influenzae type b) which is the leading cause of bacterial meningitis among children under five (5)years old, that disease took the lives of approximately 20,000 per year as compared to only 100 cases last year. While immunizations are critical to today's children, the long term effects of eradicating deadly diseases for future generations in our communities must be recognized. One cannot dispute that the polio vaccine discovered by the celebrated Pittsburgh scientist Jonas Salk has had innumerable benefits. Therefore, ensuring that children are immunized should be a high priority for communities.

Considerations

◊ Social determinants, including poverty, have been consistently linked to adverse birth and early childhood outcomes. The Woman, Infant, and Children (WIC) program administered by the Federal government via the Allegheny County Health Department provides mothers a "nutritional risk" with supplemental foods, health care referrals, breast-feeding support, and nutritional education. With this support, research shows improved birth and early childhood outcomes. Unfortunately, mothers on Medicaid without WIC experience infant mortality rates (IRM) at three times the rate of mothers having both Medicaid and WIC. Despite these outcomes, approximately 30% of mothers enrolled in Medicaid do not take advantage of this program. Therefore, the need for expanded WIC enrollment for our most vulnerable communities cannot be understated.

◊ In a joint statement issued in "Technology and Interactive Media as Tools in Early Childhood Programs by Serving Children from Birth through Age 8" by the National Association for the Education of Young Children and the Fred Rogers Center for Early Learning and Children's Media at Saint Vincent College (NAEYC, 2012), it was observed that "when the integration of technology and interactive media in early childhood programs is built upon solid foundations and early child-hood professionals are aware of both the challenges and the opportu-nities, educators are positioned to improve quality by intentionally lev-eraging the potential of technology and media for the benefit of every child." However, it can not be understated that there is conflicting re-search in the use of technology with our early learners and therefore the application of this medium must occur only after "due diligence." This is critical so as not to diminish the emphasis on play and the ac-quisition of fine and gross motor skills which is essential to develop-ment.

Current "Keepers"

◊ **Early Childhood Education:** Mayor William Peduto issued an Executive Order to create a Blue Ribbon Panel on Early Education with the task of exploring the impact of current City policies on young children in August of 2014. The Child Care Subcommittee, which was created as a recommendation of the Blue Ribbon Panel, is led by members of City Council. The purpose of this sub-committee is to examine and better understand the needs of Childcare providers in City Neighborhoods. Additionally, The Pittsburgh Association for the Education of Young Children (PAEYC) is a strong advocate supporting high-quality care and education for young children from birth until age nine across 10 counties in Southwestern Pennsylvania. (PAEYC, 2015)

◊ **Family Support Center:** To enhance developmental levels, Allegheny County provides services via 25 Family Support Centers in Allegheny County that receive county funding through the Department of Human Services. The scope of services for this program that serves primarily families with children ages birth to five years include six (6) core services of child development support, goal planning, health insurance support, medical support, parenting education, and prenatal care. Optional services include, but are not limited to, after school, career-readiness training, counseling, child care, housing assistance, literacy programs, parenting support groups, substance abuse support, and Visiting nurse. (Appendix 4)

◊ **Grow Up Great:** PNC Financial Services Group offers financial support to local philanthropies which promote and advance early childhood education and initiatives, and those which equip young children for school. (PNC, 2015)

Current "Keepers"

◊ **Playful Pittsburgh Collaborative:** Recognizing that play is a crucial aspect of everyone's life, the Playful Pittsburgh Collaborative sponsored "The Ultimate Play Day" which was an opportunity for the Pittsburgh community to come together in a centralized location to engage in and learn about play. The day coincided with the meeting of the national board of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

◊ **Children's Museum:** The Children's Museum of Pittsburgh provides innovative museum experiences that inspire joy, creativity and curiosity… The Museum's "play with real stuff" design philosophy promotes an organizational commitment to the use of authentic materials and processes in its exhibits and programs." Due to this innovative design, over 320,000 families are served annually at the museum and in the community. (Children's Museum, 2015)

◊ **Message from Me:** "Message from Me" enables young children to better communicate with parents about their daytime activities at child care centers through the use of digital cameras, microphones, email, phone messaging and other technologies. This program is a collaboration between the CREATE Lab, the Children's School of Carnegie Mellon University, and the Pittsburgh Association for the Education of Young Children.

◊ **Promised Beginnings:** Promised Beginnings offers mentoring and tutoring sessions directed by the Department of Public Safety to teach parents effective strategies, and to increase kindergarten readiness.

Current "Keepers"

◊ **Live Well Allegheny:** Allegheny County's Live Well Allegheny was launched by the County Executive in January 2014 as a comprehensive, innovative strategy on wellness that embraces a broad concept of living well to include physical health, mental wellness, personal and community safety, among others. In April 2014, the City of Pittsburgh became the first Live Well Allegheny community when Live Well Pittsburgh was launched by Mayor Peduto. That summer, Live Well Pittsburgh began its "Healthy Together" campaign to ensure that all children in the City of Pittsburgh are properly fed, healthy and insured.

◊ **GrubUp**: A program of Live Well Pittsburgh expands the hunger safety net in the city by providing healthy meals to youth weekdays during the summer.

◊ **The Fred Rogers Company:** Since 1971, the Fred Rogers Company has promoted the philosophy and values of Fred Rogers and his belief that we must all ask the simple but powerful question of "Won't you be my neighbor?" The legacy continues today with "Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood" which promotes social and emotional learning, imparts Fred Rogers' values to a new generation of children and families, and ranks among the top children's broadcast programs. (Fred Rogers, 2015)

Keeping Hope and Opportunity

◊ Continue the focus of early childhood education including play and literacy by :

- Increasing the number of children that attend quality preschools as determined by Pennsylvania's Keystone Stars rating system.
  - Lead: Pittsburgh Association for the Education of Young Children (PAEYC)

- Supporting parental engagement in early childhood centers through the expansion of the use of the "Message from Me" application.
  - Lead: Pittsburgh Association for the Education of Young Children (PAEYC) and Carnegie Mellon University CREATE Lab

◊ Support healthy initiatives by:

- Expanding enrollment in Women Infant and Children (WIC) programs.
  - Lead: Allegheny County Department of Health

- Ensuring all children are immunized.
  - Lead: Allegheny County Department of Health

- Expanding healthy meals to children involved in after-school programs.
  - Lead: City of Pittsburgh, Department of Parks and Recreation

"Everybody deserves an education."

-youth voice

Goal 2

All of our children read at grade level by third grade.

Considerations

The Pittsburgh Public Schools released the plan entitled "Whole Child, Whole Community" that identified strategies that ensures all children are successful. One key element of the plan was the emphasis on ensuring that each student attains proficiency by the third grade as they cited research that concluded that "reading proficiency by the third grade is the most important predictor of high school graduation and career success. It was also noted that approximately only 20% of low income students achieve this milestone. To facilitate the achievement of this objective, the Pittsburgh Public Schools committed to providing teachers with the " skills to teach beginning reading, ensure instructional materials are aligned to PA Common Core, and develop curriculum that ensures increased time on reading and strong emphasis on foundational reading skills (phonics/ fluency). " They also indicated that students in grades K-2 will experience texts that are more complex, culturally relevant, and rich in vocabulary across both nonfiction and fiction to nurture their love of reading.

"Attendance is an important marker for how well students do in school. As a general rule, chronic absenteeism tends to erode academic achievement. Chronic absence (missing 10 percent of school days) in kindergarten is associated with lower academic performance in 1st grade. By 6th grade, chronic absence is a clear predictor of drop-out….Chronic absence in the early grades and beyond can affect all students when teachers must spend time reviewing concepts for children who missed the lesson in the first place. And it can cost schools money when state funding is linked to attendance." (Allegheny County, Department of Human Services (2013))

Considerations

Of most importance is the fact that academic achievement, especially in reading and math, is significantly compromised when children are chronically absent (Allegheny County Department of Human Services, October 2014). Additionally, in a report issued by the Allegheny County Department of Human Services entitled School Attendance and Academic Achievement in the Pittsburgh Public Schools, the data indicated that "The pattern is clear when evaluating the future achievement of students who have poor attendance in kindergarten. For example, fewer than half of the students who missed at least 10 percent of kindergarten days earned scores of proficient or higher on the third grade Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) reading test, compared to 74 percent of third grade students who had attended kindergarten more often. " it was also cited that " Students with involvement in the human services system were at particular risk of having high absenteeism rates, accounting for 58 percent of students who missed at least 20 percent of school days. Students who were active in the mental health and/or child welfare systems, and/or who were receiving public benefits, were the most likely to miss at least 10 percent of school days. (Allegheny County Department of Human Services, June 2013)

Research shows that children from families with incomes below the poverty line face significant obstacles in achieving literacy. The National Center for Education Statistics reports that nearly two-thirds of low-income American families do not own a single book for their children." It is critical that programs form a continuum of literacy support that follows these children from birth into their teens. (Reading is FUNdamental (2015))

Current "Keepers"

- **Data Sharing Partnerships:** In 2009, after a complex, lengthy and collaborative process, DHS signed the first of 18 MOUs that established formal data-sharing partnerships with school districts in Allegheny County with the goal of improving educational and other outcomes for children and youth served by both systems. DHS analyzes data about each district's students to identify those involved in human services, what services they are involved in, and the comparison between their outcomes and those of their non-human service involved peers. The analysis is presented to the school district and other relevant systems, and together the partners design, implement and evaluate strategies to address challenges that have been identified at every level (child-specific, school- or service-specific, and system-wide).

- **School Attendance Initiative:** The 'Be There' initiative is a collaboration of the United Way and its partners, A+ Schools, Allegheny Department of Human Services, Allegheny Intermediate Unit, Congress of Neighboring Communities (CONNECT), Pittsburgh Promise, Pittsburgh Public Schools and the University of Pittsburgh Office of Child Development. It is designed to mobilize the community to support attendance in schools across Allegheny County. Since its launch in 2013, the program has attracted more than 1000 volunteers in 22 school districts engaging over 13,000 students.

- **Neighborhood Learning Alliance "Reading Warriors":** As a means to fulfill the Pittsburgh Public Schools goal to have all children read at grade level, high school youth are trained in reading skills that they employ when reading to young children.

Current "Keepers"

- **The Allegheny County Summer Food Service Program (SFSP):** Uses a holistic approach by coupling educational and athletic enrichment in order to maximize participation of 3800 children in its summer food program that involves 175,000 nutritious breakfasts and lunches at 110 sites. In 2015, Allegheny County distributed 4,000 age-appropriate books to children in the program.

- **Reading Is FUNdamental (RIF) Pittsburgh:** Provides children with the resources, motivation, and opportunities to develop a life-long love of reading by offering consistent, high-quality "pushed-in" literacy and educational programming for more than 21,000 economically disadvantaged children in Pittsburgh community placing 86,000 self-selected books into the hands of the children that need them the most.

- **Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh:** Contributes to the educational attainment, economic development, and cultural enrichment of the region through delivery of critical services such as early learning programs for children, job search assistance and computer and Internet access. In 2014, over 170,000 children were served in more than 7,700 programs offered by the library system

Keeping Hope and Opportunity

◊ Through the process of data sharing,

- Offering independent evaluation to assist schools and agencies to increase school attendance.
    - Lead: Allegheny County Department of Human Services

◊ By the mobilization of community partners,

- Implementing the "Be There" program in all 43 school districts in Allegheny County.
    - Lead: United Way of Allegheny County

◊ To highlight the importance of literacy,

- Increasing the distribution of age-appropriate books to children at 110 summer food site locations.
    - Lead: Allegheny County Department of Human Services

- Increasing use of Children's Books in print and online for children from kindergarten through third grade.
    - Lead: Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh

"We need to get the word out about the great programs that we already have and any great ones that will be made in the future. The programs help students focus on things that they like to do and can help them with their school work too. They can bring up new things that students might not have known before."

-youth voice

Goal 3

All of our young people graduate from high school.

Considerations

◊ National studies suggest that students who miss 10 percent or more of the school year are at far greater risk of doing poorly in school in terms of grades, literacy and math assessments, and of not graduating on time, than students with good attendance." (Allegheny County Department of Human services, October, 2014)

◊ Recent studies have illustrated the significant learning gap in achievement of black students as compared to white students in the Pittsburgh Public Schools with respect to ratings of proficient/advanced. Upon review, 43% of black students achieved this rating as compared to 70% of white students in reading; math scores recorded 51% for black students and 78% for white students.

◊ A recent report by the Allegheny County Department of Human Services ,"Data Brief: Addressing School Absenteeism," noted that 23 percent of all students in the Pittsburgh Public Schools "missed at least 10 percent of 180 school days during the 2011–2012 school year. Missing that many days significantly reduces the chances of a student earning a 2.5 grade point average (GPA), which is a particularly important threshold in the city public schools." (Allegheny County Department of Human Services, October, 2014).

After school programs are one of the key ways of keeping children off the streets." - youth voice

Considerations

◊   Compounding the issue is the fact that there is a 43% chronic absenteeism rate in high schools and a rate of 31% in 6-12 schools. Additionally, the study noted that students report their perception of being "cared for" was only 60% in high schools and 71% in middle schools (A+ Schools 2014 Report to the Community).

◊   A number of systemic barriers have contributed to youth of color being more likely to be suspended from school and involved in the criminal justice system (Miller 2007). Mentoring creates those examples. Quality mentoring matches strengthens outcomes. A recent study of mentoring's effect on higher risk youth suggests that those youth in quality matches reported fewer depressive symptoms, greater acceptance by their peers, more positive beliefs about their ability to succeed in school, and better grades in school (Herrera et al, 2013).

◊   A Search Institute evaluation of the National Service-Learning Initiative and the Generator Schools Project concluded that students who were most at risk or more disengaged from school when they got involved in service-learning saw positive changes during the time of their involvement. By the end, they were more likely to believe they were contributing to the community; Be less bored than in traditional classrooms; Be engaged in academic tasks and general learning; and Be more accepting of diversity (Blyth, Saito, & Berkas, 1997).

Considerations

◊ The Allegheny County Department of Human Services received a competitive federal grant to support the recruitment and engagement of foster families. The local focus is to increase a representative network of foster families willing to serve teens so youth are placed in a family setting, reducing the use of congregate care. Of the 216 teenagers (age 13-17) that were removed in 2014, 90% had a placement in congregate care. Representative families will reflect the race, culture and community where teens are removed from to maintain stability, particularly school stability.
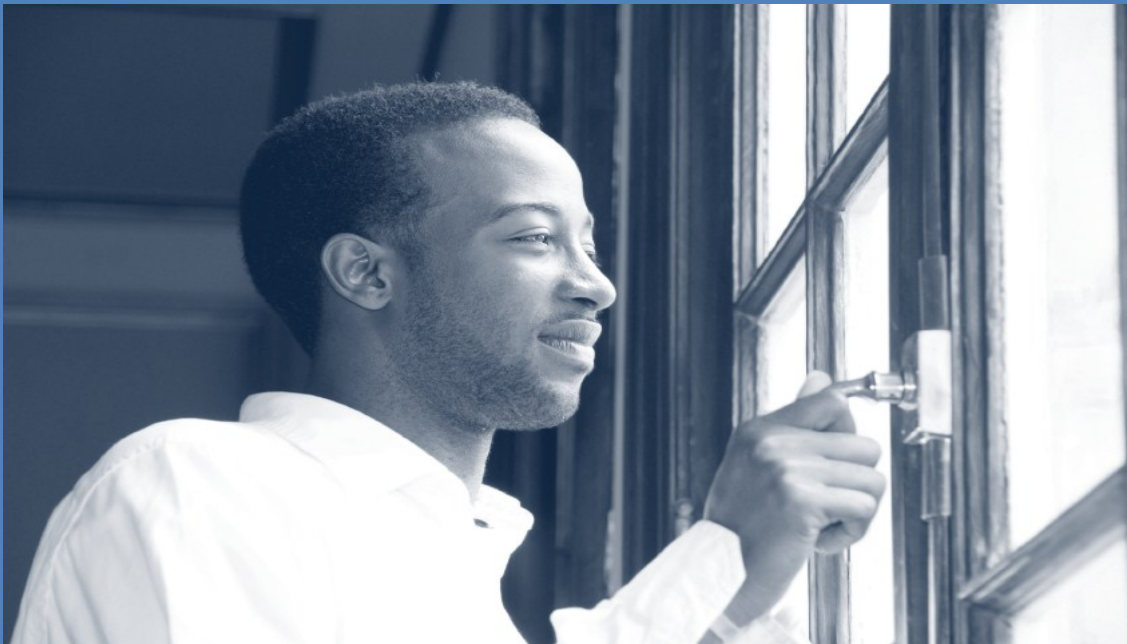
Current "Keepers"

◊ Opportunities for Youth (out-of-school and in-school):

- **Mentor 2.0:** Pairs college-educated volunteers with high school students using a unique combination of technology and curriculum. The program empowers volunteers to be an effective support to students in high school and beyond. (Big Brothers, 2015).

- **Mentors of Color for Young Men of Color:** The Mentoring Partnership of Southwestern Pennsylvania helps children by delivering resources to mentoring programs throughout our region. This intermediary promotes the importance of quality mentoring; presents best practices and research; and delivers training, technical assistance and professional development for the staff and volunteers of local programs (Mentoring Partnership, 2015). In an effort to increase mentors for young men of color, connecting organizations that serve young men of color is critical.

- **Adonai Center**: The Center creates and implements innovative human capital development solutions to facilitate the social, educational and economic conditions of black and economically disadvantaged young men ages 14-24 Adonai Center 2015.

Current "Keepers"

- **We Promise Program of Pittsburgh Public Schools:** The program supports   African-American male high-school students by providing the resources they need to ensure they are prepared and eligible to receive a scholarship from The Pittsburgh Promise®. To be eligible for a Promise scholarship, students must graduate with a 2.5 GPA and 90% attendance. The program has an advisory committee consisting of 12 African American males who serve as Lead Mentors at each of the Pittsburgh Public high schools (Pittsburgh Public Schools, 2015).

- **The Black Male Leadership Development Institute (BMLDI):** A program sponsored by the Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh and Robert Morris University serving eighty (80) African American high school males each year. The free program begins with a 7-day residential session on the campus of Robert Morris University and continues one Saturday per month throughout the school year. The young men are exposed to activities designed to increase their educational and leadership opportunities and challenging curriculum that will enhance their self-awareness and world view. The institute is staffed by a faculty consisting of African American male leaders from the region whose diverse backgrounds span the range from the pulpit to the boardroom.

Current "Keepers"

- **BMe Community:** A growing network of all races and genders committed to building better communities across the U.S. BMe is built upon Black fathers, coaches, businessmen and students who lead by example to strengthen neighborhoods, mentor young people, and create businesses. BMe Pittsburgh was launched in 2014 with support from The Heinz Endowments to grow the network and asset-based values throughout Pittsburgh.

- **The 100 Black Men of Western PA, Inc:** Seeks to serve as a beacon of leadership by utilizing our diverse talents to create environments where our children are motivated to achieve, and to empower our people to become self-sufficient shareholders in the economic and social fabric of the communities we serve. Mentoring is the cornerstone of what the organization brings to the community by guiding youth in life experiences, fostering positive self-perception and self-respect. The cultural program gives an African Paradigm that enables people of African Descent to find dignity, and self worth in their legacy and soujourn. Mentoring encourages excellence in education, and the pursuit of positive life-long goals.

Current "Keepers"

◊ **Higher Achievement:** This holistic college preparatory afterschool and summer program's primary goal is to close the opportunity gap for middle school youth in at-risk communities. Using an innovative model of "a rigorous year-round learning environment, caring role models, and a culture of high expectations" has resulted in, on average, 95 percent of scholars completing this program graduating high school on time. Higher Achievement is one of only 2% of organizations to have strong results from a third-party randomized trial. The program currently is administered in the Homewood and Hill District communities in the City of Pittsburgh.

◊ **The Bridge to College /Homewood Children's Village:** Bridge-to-College is a collection of year-round programs, partnerships, initiatives, and strategies that prepare high school aged youth for success after high school graduation. The program encourages a college-going culture, supports students in their efforts to achieve meaningful and promising postsecondary outcomes, and empowers youth to become agents of community change and transformation. Some of the key activities include soft skill development (e.g., self-efficacy, financial literacy), academic enrichment, college/career readiness, college tours, STEAM projects, and community service. This work is made possible through the collaboration with numerous community partners including Bible Center Church, Grow Pittsburgh, Higher Achievement, and the YMCA Lighthouse Project among many others.

◊ **Allegheny Partners for Out-of-School Time (APOST)** : A partnership of funders, intermediaries and providers dedicated to building a quality Out-of-School Time (OST) System focused on " healthy successful development of young people as they progress through their school years, graduate from high school and enter into adulthood." (APOST, 2015)

Current "Keepers"

◊ **Remake Learning Council:** A blue ribbon commission of thought leaders from education, government, business and civic sectors committed to committed to advancing learning innovation in Pre-K to 12 so that students will successfully compete in a global economy. Examples of "remaking learning" is evident in projects such as The LABS at Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, Digital Multi-Media and Gaming Center in the Sto-Rox School district, The Together Project: Technology and Literacy in Wilkinsburg and the Mandarian Chinese Teleconferencing program in the Steel Valley School district.
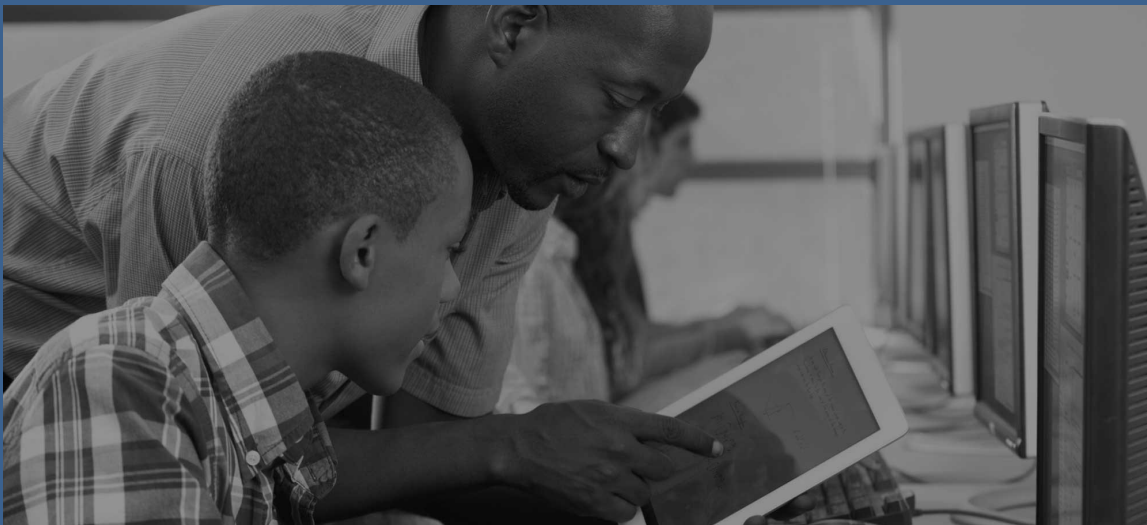
Keeping Hope and Opportunity

◊ Support programs that engage and inspire students by:

- Expanding youth input and empowering youth "voice" by forming teams and training youth to lead initiatives such as Students in Action Teams, Black Student Unions and other student-driven efforts.
  - Leads: Pittsburgh Federation of Teachers, Great Public Schools, and The Jefferson Awards Foundation

- Increasing the number of youth that feel "cared for" by recruiting more mentors of color for our young men of color.
  - Lead: Pittsburgh Keepers of the Community Collaborative; BMe Pittsburgh and Mentoring Partnership of Southwestern Pennsylvania

- Recruiting foster families for teens, particularly teens of color, in the communities where they live to reduce congregate care and ensure neighborhood and school stability.
  - Lead: Allegheny County Department of Human Services

"I didn't **care too** much about school until I was **motivated by** people **like Heinz fellows,** my **mentors,** some **teachers** and **friends."**

-youth voice

Goal 4

All of our young people complete post-secondary education or training.

Considerations

◊ A RAND Study entitled "How Taxpayers Benefit When Students Attain Higher Levels of Education" indicated that:

   ◊ "More Highly Educated People Contribute More in Taxes

   ◊ Those with More Education Draw Less from Social Support Programs

   ◊ More Highly Educated People Are Less Likely to Incur Incarceration Costs

   ◊ Raising Students' Levels of Education Yields Net Benefits to the Public Budget (Rand, 2009)"

   Given this, it is clear that graduation from high school and subsequent enrollment in post-secondary college or training yielded both social and economic benefits." (RAND, 2009)

◊ Although the disparity of graduation rates of African American students as compared to white students remains at 12%, the Pittsburgh Promise in its 2014 annual report observed that the racial achievement gap "has dropped by nearly 50% over the past five years. In 2009, the gap was 21% (78% white to 57% African American) as compared to 2014 rates of 77% for white students as compared to 65% for black students (Pittsburgh Promise, 2014). Therefore, the focus on increasing graduation rates is essential.

Considerations

◊ Connectivity is an integral part of the 21st Century and affordable access to internet   service has become as essential as any utility. A reported 62% of Americans find that Internet-based tasks are an integral part of their job. Over 23% of households do not have internet access, according to the US Census Bureau. There are also notable disparities between certain demographic groups - residents with low income, minorities and unemployed residents have less internet access relative to others. It should be noted that n Pittsburgh, where nearly 13% of households do not have home access to a computer, providing a variety of access points is key to addressing these individuals. (Pittsburgh Innovation Roadmap, 2015).

Current "Keepers"

◊ **Pittsburgh Innovation Roadmap:** Based on the philosophy that " Inclusive Innovation provides equitable access to products and services by leveraging new technologies, ideas, personnel and inventions to meet new challenges and higher standards," the City of Pittsburgh has developed a six pronged approach to fulfilling that mission. One of the primary areas of focus is to address the digital divide by increasing digital literacy in underserved populations, working with communities to expand internet access, and Promoting STEAM and Maker Programming (Pittsburgh Innovation Roadmap, 2015)

◊ **The Pittsburgh Promise:** The A goal of the Pittsburgh Promise is to help Pittsburgh Public School students attain a post-secondary degree, diploma, or certificate. To be eligible for the Promise, which awards up to $30,000 towards post-secondary education, youth have to attend Pittsburgh Public Schools, earned a 2.5 Grade Point Average (GPA), and demonstrate a sufficient attendance record. To do this, the Promise is committing to raise $250   million dollars to ensure that all youth get this opportunity ($176 million has been raised to date). The Promise partners closely with the Pittsburgh schools and works with business leaders to continue the effort.

Current "Keepers"

◊ **The Pittsburgh Council on Higher Education (PCHE):** The Council is committed to seeking ways to ensure more boys and men of color have access to higher education opportunities. PCHE is a consortium of ten colleges and universities that will partner and collaborate on these efforts by identifying ways to align with President Obama's "My Brother's Keeper" initiative and the city of Pittsburgh's identified goals. PCHE will do this by interfacing with the My Brother's Keeper (MBK) advisory committee, the committee's individual members, by sharing its internal programs, commitment statements and strategies, and by promoting best practices amongst higher education institutions."

◊ **CCAC Men of Merit Initiative:** The Community College of Allegheny County Men of Merit Initiative or MMI is a student program that focuses on increasing the retention, campus/community engagement and academic success of male students of color. The program is a collaborative effort with the Achieving the Dream National Reform Network. The program is comprised of biweekly meetings to help mentors provide support and endow students with critical insight on how to persevere, overcome barriers and achieve academic and life success as African-American males in the 21st century.

Keeping Hope and Opportunity

◊ Provide financial and social support to increase completion of post-secondary education and training by:

- Increasing the percentage of students that receive the Promise Scholarship.
    - Lead: Pittsburgh Promise

◊ Create a support system for students of color in college that increases their ability to afford, be admitted and graduate:

- Engaging in community focus groups with young boys and men of color to identify perception, needs and ideas regarding higher education preparedness, supports, access and success. Preferably in pre-K - 12 setting.
- Focusing specifically on high school counselors on supporting, advocating and preparing young boys and men of color to successfully access and graduate from higher education institutions.
- Educating parents and students about the benefits of a college degree via outreach and workshops in the community and within a pre-K – 12 environment.
    - Lead: Pittsburgh Council on Higher Education

◊ Expand internet access by:

- Developing a spatial analysis and mapping of free wifi hotspots.
- Increasing public wireless internet accessibility in communities through public locations.
    - Lead: Pittsburgh Roadmap for Inclusive Innovation

"Bridge to College also helped me keep some money in my pocket."

-youth voice

Goal 5

All of our youth who have graduated from college or a training program are employed.

Considerations

◊ "In the next few years, there will be a large number of employees in our region beginning to leave the work-force for retirement, and we should be preparing to fill those gaps," said County Executive Rich Fitzgerald. Additionally, Mayor Bill Peduto of the City of Pittsburgh observed "By work-ing together on this vitally important effort, we are poised to spread opportunities to youth around the region. We will not only be increas-ing the number of jobs, and helping build bridges toward future ca-reers, but building the citizens of tomorrow."

◊ Despite the economic vitality of the region, in which approximately 25,000 workers are needed to support our local economy, the Pitts-burgh metropolitan region has the lowest percentage of African Amer-ican, Hispanic and Asian workers.

◊ The City of Pittsburgh has nearly 20,000 economically disadvantaged youth who could be eligible for federally funded youth employment services, yet the past Summer Employment initiatives in the region have only been able to serve less than 3% of that population in prior years due to funding restrictions.

Considerations

◊ Additionally, in June 2014, Pittsburgh Public Schools reported 30% of their students fail to graduate and never acquire the necessary work preparation skills to enter the workforce. In 2014, the City of Pittsburgh's crime rates were four to five times higher for males and four times higher for females, during the summer months of June to August as compared to the month of May. The youth unemployment rate has fluctuated from 2013 to 2014, but in July 2014 3.4 million (14.3%) of our nation's youth 16-24 years of age remain unemployed . Furthermore, the unemployment rate for black teenagers is 24.8%, while the rate for all teenagers is 20.2% - evidenced in the increased frustration of the City's youth in finding employment. As of July 2014, 20.1 million (51.9%) of youth ages 14-19 were employed nationally. (Opportunity Nation, 2014). Moreover, it has taken over a decade to regain approximately the same employment rating as July 2000.

◊ The Title 2, Article 3 of the Code of the City of Pittsburgh was amended to require "financial institutions seeking to become City depositories to make a commitment to community reinvestment and responsible banking ". This ordinance can be a catalyst for action to address the community need.

Current "Keepers"

◊ **Summer Youth Employment Opportunities:** Through Learn and Earn, Pittsburgh's Summer Youth Employment program, the City of Pittsburgh, Allegheny County, and the Three Rivers Workforce Investment Board are hoping to connect 2,000 youth to jobs and opportunity in the region. The program is being redesigned to change how the city and approaches employment for youth ages 14-21. It is through Learn and Earn that the City of Pittsburgh expects to ensure that all youth have equitable access to job skills while supporting students' academic aspirations and providing a safe place for students during the summer months. With the support of public dollars and local foundations , the City, the County and the Three Rivers Workforce Investment Board are making a $4.1 million investment in expanding summer youth employment, quadrupling the investment from 2014. The Learn and Earn program is working with the Jerome Bettis Foundation to engage the corporate community in hiring 100 youth this summer.

◊ **Youth Internship Program:** In May of 2015, the City of Pittsburgh launched a centralized city-wide internship program with the hopes of giving youth an opportunity to solve municipal problems. "Education and work experience are the perfect tandem for developing the future leaders of our city and our nation," said Mayor Peduto. "Our goals are to provide students with meaningful projects to enhance their skills in their field of study and give these young minds an opportunity to learn about city government."

Current "Keepers"

◊ **The Bank On Greater Pittsburgh (BOGP):** an initiative that "involves partnerships among local government officials, financial institutions and community based organizations to develop pathways to access basic, free or low-cost financial institution transaction accounts and financial education.

◊ **The Sprout Fund/Digital Badges:** "Pittsburgh City of Learning is based upon the belief that no one institution can prepare our young people for their futures. It takes all of the city's resources, its citizens, its community-based organizations, its schools, its places of worships, its agencies, and its cultural institutions coming together and supporting young people of all ages in exploring their interests, developing their talents, and charting their pathways into the future....Digital badges showcase learning no matter where it happens, inside or outside the classroom. Badges safely store in-depth information about skills and competencies, including where the learning took place, what skills were achieved, examples of creative work, and more."

◊ **Manchester Bidwell Corporation:** Offers arts courses for youth who are at-risk, career training for adults in transition, urban agriculture, and jazz music within a culture of respect. Together, these elements create a community-based center where nearly 20,000 people annually access hope and the tools to build a better future. The Manchester Bidwell educational model has been successfully replicated in eight U.S. cities, and a new center will open in Akko, Israel in 2016.

Current "Keepers"

◊ **Community College of Allegheny County (CCAC):** The Pittsburgh region currently has seven career and technology centers that serve roughly 280 youth and is actively pursuing expansion of computer programming training in all high schools. The Community College of Allegheny County (CCAC) facilitates the access to job opportunities in the growing IT sector by offering stackable micro-credentials.

◊ **Connecting Urban Entrepreneurs (CUE):** A collaborative effort among several organizations in Pittsburgh to help entrepreneurs take their online presence to the next level. The Carnegie Library, the City of Pittsburgh, Google, the Center for Women's Entrepreneurship, Urban Innovation21,Davis Consulting Solutions and many more have teamed up to offer the program. CUE started the "Digital Upgrade" program for local businesses who have not yet maximized the use of their technological resources such as websites, social media, and video to reach their potential customers. At the end of the program, participating business owners will have an online presence that shines and connects them with new customers.

◊ **The A. Philip Randolf Institute's "Breaking the Chains of Poverty" program:** Crafted in 2009, this pre-apprenticeship program in partnership with United Steelworkers, the Housing Authority of the City of Pittsburgh and GTECH Strategies has trained 360 youth in skills related to building, construction, and the energy sector. The program has achieved a black male participation rate of 64% and a 67% black male graduation rate.

Current "Keepers"

◊ **TechHire and Three Rivers Workforce Investment Board:** Currently, Pittsburgh is piloting several youth-serving and one adult-serving accelerated training programs that will provide training to over 500 individuals by the end of 2016 as a means to achieve parity between the proportions of people of color in the city and that of the IT workforce. Funding has been secured to financially support trial periods of employment for job seekers with severe barriers to employment. In addition, the 3 Rivers Workforce Investment Board is supporting over 400 youth jobs within STEM fields this summer and is allocating $1 million toward creating IT and technology career pathways for disadvantaged youth.
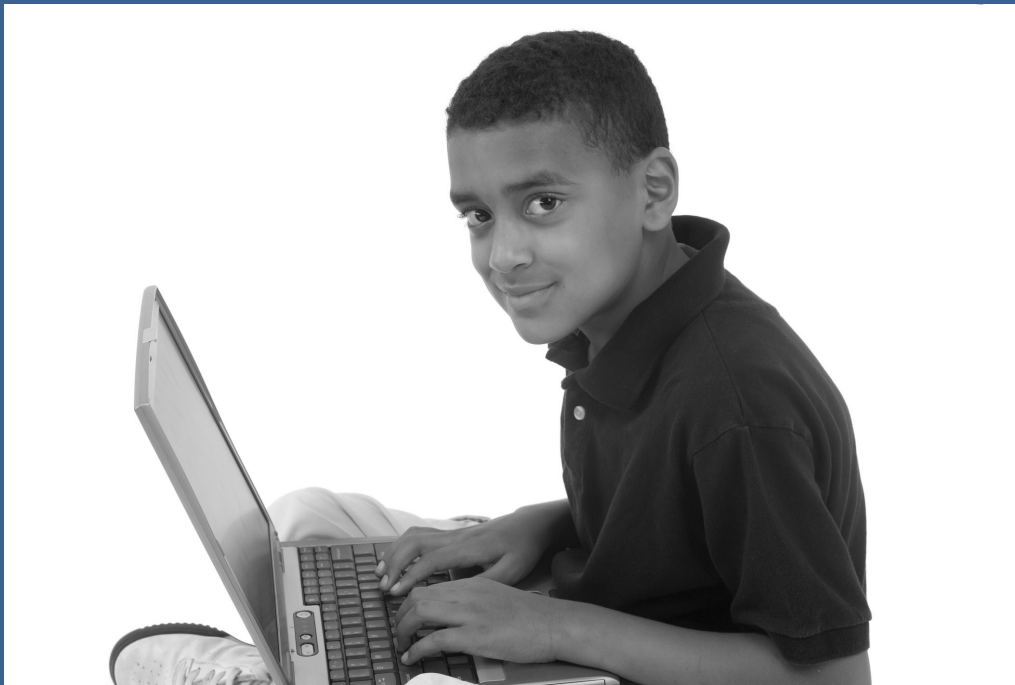
Keeping Hope and Opportunity

◊ Encourage private and non-profit investment in workforce development by:

- Expanding the number of youth served by the Lean and Earn Summer Youth Employment Program especially in jobs related to Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM).

  - Lead: City of Pittsburgh, County of Allegheny and Three Rivers Workforce Investment Board (TRWIB)

◊ Increase the financial status and standard of living by:

- Expanding opportunities to be financially literate involving understanding of the banking and mortgage systems.

  - Lead: Neighborhood Allies

◊ Respond to the workforce needs by:

- Establishing strong linkages with Career and Technical Certification programs and post-secondary institutions to align workforce development programming with career pathways and labor market demand.

  - Lead : Three Rivers Workforce Investment Board and the Tech Hire initiative

- Increasing the number of youth acquiring "digital badges" in competencies related to the local economy.

  - Lead: The Sprout Fund

Keeping Hope and Opportunity

◊ Promote small businesses by:

- Identifying, promoting and filling the gaps of local E-commerce tutoring and mentorships aimed at small business owners.
  - Lead: Pittsburgh Roadmap for Inclusive Innovation

- Supporting existing small-business mentorship programs to connect established companies with smaller businesses, newer businesses, or even potential clients to provide guidance when starting a new venture.
  - Lead: Pittsburgh Roadmap for Inclusive Innovation

- Implementing the responsible banking initiative by incentivizing banks to invest in low-income communities by only depositing City funds in those financial institutions.
  - Lead: City of Pittsburgh

"We could find a way to **punish** the students without turning them into **criminals**. When students get **expelled** or sent to juvenile **detention** centers they aren't in school and **don't** have anything to do. Sometimes **punishing** them like this can cause **juveniles** to get into even more trouble."

-youth voice

Goal 6

All of our young people are safe from violent crime, and, those who need it, receive the second chance they deserve.

Considerations

◊ Overall, the Pittsburgh Regional Quality of Life survey, a joint report by Pittsburgh Today and the University Center for Social and Urban Research of the University of Pittsburgh revealed that "When asked to rate the region as a place to live in terms of overall quality of life, a total of 81% rated it as either 'good' (29%), 'very good", (38%), or 'excellent' (14%). African American residents rated both their neighborhoods and the broader region less positively in terms of overall quality of life. However, African Americans did not report lower overall life satisfaction or happiness." (Pittsburgh Regional Quality of Life Survey, July, 2012)

◊ From an economic perspective, the survey revealed that the "overall view of the prospects for the local economy were generally more positive than those for the nation as a whole…Despite their significantly greater difficulties paying for housing and other basic necessities, African American residents tended to be more optimistic about the national and regional economy as well as their own personal economic prospects" (County of Allegheny, Public Health Commission, December, 2014).

Considerations

◊ From a public safety perspective, the survey indicated that "Rates of property (15%) and violent crime victimization (2%) reported in the survey were similar to recent national benchmarks (though slightly higher)....Males and younger residents were more likely to report being property crime victims, while African Americans and City of Pittsburgh residents were more likely to report being violent crime victims. In general, residents of the region feel safe in their neighborhoods and believe that the police do a good job in providing protection. African Americans, younger residents, and those with lower incomes tended to report feeling less safe and rated police protection less positively." (County of Allegheny, Public Health Commission, December, 2014).

Editor's Note: It should be noted that data related to perceptions may have changed since the survey was conducted.

◊ While the overall perceptions of the general public were positive, the challenging crime statistics confirm the accuracy of the perception of our youth and African American community especially in specific neighborhoods and communities in our county. Disturbingly, County data (Department of Human Services, 2013) shows that "the density of homicides that occurred from 2005 through 2011 in Allegheny County... [were highest in] hot-spots within the City of Pittsburgh ...as well as clusters outside of the city...[that] includes Braddock, Clairton, Duquesne, Clairton, Homestead, McKeesport and North Braddock. In reviewing the homicides occurring from January 1 through June 5 2014, additional areas experiencing this issue were the neighborhoods of Knoxville and Larimer in the City of Pittsburgh and other communities such as McKees Rocks, Penn Hills and Wilkinsburg" (County of Allegheny, Public Health Commission, December, 2014).

Considerations

◊ From a racial review, the county reported that eighty-six percent (86%) of those murdered in Pittsburgh during the years 2000 through 2012 were African American and eight-five percent (85%) were male. (Allegheny County, Department of Human Services, October 2013) As alarming is the fact that the effect on their cumulative life expectancy is severe. The Allegheny County Health Department found that African-American males lost a total of 2,467 years of cumulative potential life, due to death. (Allegheny County, Department of Health, 2012) When the Allegheny County Health Department's Office of Epidemiology and Biostatistics examined disparities related to age-adjusted mortality across race and education, it was revealed that both race and education played a major role in mortality rates. (Ajang, 2005)

◊ Unfortunately, approximately 26% of American children will be exposed to a traumatic event before the age of four. Defined as "witnessing or experiencing physical or sexual abuse, violence in families and communities, loss of a loved one, etc." (CDC's Adverse Childhood Experiences study (2011) the implications are life-long resulting in a wide array of medical and mental health issues related to victimization. In fact, the CDC study found the annual financial burden to society of childhood abuse and trauma is estimated to be $103 billion. From a violence/aggression perspective, the report noted that children exposed to trauma were more apt to be aggressive and present oppositional behaviors therefore requiring more intense interventions in the earliest years of development. Specifically, traumatic events overwhelm the nervous system with real or perceived danger that forces youth to adapt and cope.

Considerations

Although many youth adapt well because they have supportive relation-
ships and good adaptive skills, the youth that do not adapt well defend
themselves aggressively and perceive ordinary actions as threats and
may use substances to regulate a nervous system that is over-aroused
and overly triggered. Also, our youth of color are more exposed to com-
munity violence and threats of violence, live in families with higher rates
of domestic violence, infant mortality, child neglect and abuse, and food
insecurity. Their neighborhoods have higher crime rates and are patrolled
heavily by police. Because of these challenges, the Trauma Informed
Care model is the appropriate mechanism to address specific types of
over-whelming events and circumstances with specific treatments. A
trauma lens means that in every initiative, response and service, youth are
approached as capable, competent experts of their experience who are
responding in healthy ways to school, community and family conditions
they did not create. The process involves understanding "what happened"
to them rather than asking "what's wrong." Through this model, efforts
need to be directed to change the conditions that make and trigger their
perceptions of danger rather than "help" them tolerate danger as if it is
normal. Most importantly, the trauma informed approach is not an aspect
of services but instead is a process embedded in all aspects of interac-
tions with youth.

"Police should come into the schools and speak. There should be pro-
grams where the police speak to the students." - youth voice

Current "Keepers"

◊ **A Community-Oriented Police Department:** The City received a grant of $1.875 million from the United States Department of Justice grant to hire 15 new community-oriented police officers in 2014. And in 2015, Pittsburgh was chosen as one of four cities to receive "high-powered technical, research and training assistance designed to enhance procedural justice, reduce bias and support reconciliation" from the Department of Justice. The National Initiative will highlight three areas that hold great promise for concrete, rapid progress: implicit bias, procedural justice, and reconciliation. The pilot sites were chosen for the demonstrated willingness and capacity of their stakeholders to engage in the research, intervention, and evaluation process, as well as for factors such as jurisdictions size, ethnic and religious composition, and population density, and not because they represent particularly problematic communities. The hope is that this initiative will inform ways to improve efforts between the police and the community. (National Initiative for Restoring Community Trust and Justice, 2015).

◊ **Ban the Box:** Effective January 1, 2015, Allegheny County has removed a question regarding prior convictions from its employment application. The "Ban The Box" initiative was announced by County Executive Rich Fitzgerald as a means to broaden the applicant pool for county positions and also provide opportunity for individuals with criminal histories to be considered for appropriate county employment .(County of Allegheny, November, 2014)

Current "Keepers"

◊ **Workforce Opportunities for Formerly Incarcerated Persons:** Allegheny County Jail Collaborative' s Reentry Programs are using funding from the federal Second Chance Act grant (Department of Justice) for programming to reduce recidivism including at the Allegheny County Jail. Efforts include:

   ◊ <u>New Century Careers:</u> A machining program located at the Allegheny County Jail and at the organization's South Side/City location

   ◊ <u>Trade Institute of Pittsburgh</u>: Masonry training for clients that are in alternative housing and after release from the jail.

   ◊ <u>Community Kitchen:</u> Culinary arts program located in the Uptown neighborhood in the City of Pittsburgh

◊ **Amachi Pittsburgh:** Works with the youth of incarcerated parents to ensure that the youth have an opportunity to succeed.

◊ **Restorative Justice:** The Pittsburgh Public Schools District was chosen by the Department of Justice to implement Restorative Justice policies in 22 Pittsburgh Public Schools. The International Institute for Restorative Practices will train teachers on techniques that will improve learning and reduce suspensions.

◊ **Conflict Resolution:** The Black Political Empowerment Project (BPEP) works with local community organizations and school districts to teach youth the importance of violence prevention. The organization facilitates workshops on a number of topics including steps to take if a youth is stopped by an officer.

Current "Keepers"

◊ **Community Engagement:** The U. S. Attorney's office has implemented numerous strategies to address issues of violence involving:

- Prosecution: Target chronic violent offenders and focus on community impact prosecutions.

- Prevention: Mentoring program , outreach to schools especially with cybercrime issues, safe neighborhoods initiatives and development of police-community trust.

- Reentry: Programs that ensure successful reintegration into society.

Additionally, the U. S. Attorney convened a community engagement project to improve police and community relations. The basis is the "Perez Principles" former Deputy Attorney General and now U.S. Secretary of Labor) of reducing crime and increasing public safety, ensuring policing respects the law and the Constitution and ensuring and enhancing respect for and from law enforcement .

◊ **Allegheny County Department of Human Services, Office of Children Youth and Families (CYF):** Recognizing the core concepts of trauma, the Department of Human Services is integrating trauma informed care into behavioral health and child welfare services and the response to secondary trauma by staff. To facilitate this, a trauma training institute in behavioral health has been formed that has trained county staff and trained more than seventy (70) psychotherapists practicing in contracted agencies. Additional training occurred with nine (9) contracted agency staff providing in-home psychotherapy in trauma informed Cognitive Behavioral Therapy that reach children and families in mental health and child welfare services. To enhance this, a train-the-trainer trauma-informed training was conducted for more the twenty (20) trainers that committed to educating other staff in child welfare services and other program offices of the department.

Current "Keepers"

◊ **The Allegheny County Jail Collaborative:** A partnership of county agencies, the Courts, and community organizations, has established services and supports for offenders, including the Reentry program. The Reentry Program, which was started through The Second Chance Act, targets medium-high risk offenders who are serving a county sentence at the Allegheny County Jail. It uses validated screening and assessment instruments to identify risk/need and then develops an individualized service plan with each participant and the case manager who will support their reentry from pre-release to months after release, in coordination with probation. The plan outlines the services each participant will receive both in the jail and post-release, including CBT, pre-GED, GED, and pre-apprenticeship education, drug and alcohol treatment, job readiness preparation, mentoring, and an employment assessment and post-release job placement. Many of these services are also available for offenders outside of the Reentry Program at Probation's Day Reporting Centers.

◊ **AR3:** AR3 partners with YouthPlaces, a nonprofit established in 1997 to help teens in high-risk, underserved communities get after-school programming. The AR3 summer basketball league uses this strategy to engage youth in experiences that will result in unity, forgiveness and healing.

◊ **Sankofa Leadership Institute:** Supports the leadership development of men working with African American youth at the introductory, intermediate or intensive level (long-term, immersive) on any scale. The Leadership Institute acts as a clearinghouse for information related to leadership development including guiding principles, best practices and systems that will improve the capacities, relationships, energy levels, and effectiveness.

Current "Keepers"

◊ **Youth Opportunities Development (Y.O.D.):** As a means to address the roots causes of violence in communities, this organization implements a five-pronged model designed to ensure peaceful, prosperous communities through community outreach, school-based Services, after-school Programming, mentoring, youth leadership, and consulting/ training services.

◊ **Allies for Children:** Committed to serving alliances and serving as a "bold voice for policy and practice changes that improve the wellbeing of all children and youth in Allegheny County, especially those with the greatest need." One example is a comprehensive crossing guard study that observed that the lack of safe routes to and from school poses a roadblock for many students. To accomplish this, they advocated for "Better deployment strategies, improved connections to the Department of Public Safety and increased professional development opportunities could enable crossing guards to play an even more vital role in the safety and wellbeing of children and youth and improve school attendance. (Allies for Children, 2015)

◊ **Corporate Equity & Inclusion Roundtable:** The Roundtable representing the corporate community and community organizations committed to the mission "to develop and implement strategies to overcome the diversity and inclusion challenges within the corporate sector in Pittsburgh and Southwestern Pennsylvania, by facilitating collaboration with key partners from educational institutions, community organizations, workforce development agencies and professional organizations collectively working toward a common goal of branding the region with a strong and meaningful commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion." (CEIR, June 22, 2015)

Keeping Hope and Opportunity

◊ Create a more positive relationship between police and community by:

- Tapping the talents of Faith-based communities to engage with Violence Prevention programs.

  - Lead: Iron Cross Community Ministries, Freedom Indeed and Rodman Street Missionary Baptist Church in collaboration with the Office of the State Representative (Representative Ed Gainey, PA 24th legislative district)

- Creating a youth advisory council that develops proactive strategies that reflects the priorities of youth.

  - Lead: City of Pittsburgh, Bureau of Police

- Hosting quarterly conversations with local leaders and youth as a means to build trust and community healing.

  - Lead: Department of Justice, Office of the U. S. Attorney

- Establishing a Public Safety Academy to ensure that youth are acquainted with careers in Public Safety.

  - Lead: Department of Public Safety and Pittsburgh Public Schools

- Increasing the numbers of police of color in the police force.

  - Lead: City of Pittsburgh, Bureau of Police and Allegheny County

Keeping Hope and Opportunity

◊ Engaging stakeholders to implement the plan crafted by the National Initiative for Restoring Community Trust and Justice

- Lead: City of Pittsburgh, Bureau of Police

◊ Ensure safe routes to school and safe places when students are not in school by:

- Identifying safe routes with crossing guards trained to serve as "keepers".

    Lead: Allies for Children and City of Pittsburgh

◊ Adopt a trauma informed care approach by:

- Implementing a three-pronged process which includes training six hundred (600) staff in the child welfare program office, developing a response for staff that experience secondary trauma and actively encourage one hundred forty-eight (148) contracted agencies to develop and integrate trauma principles into their services and staff supports.

    Lead: Allegheny County Department of Human Services, Office of Children, Youth and Families

Keeping Hope and Opportunity

◊ Promote the attitude that a young man of color can have a second chance by:

- Increasing the numbers of employers that hire ex-offenders

  Lead: City of Pittsburgh in collaboration with Youth Opportunities Development

- Increasing the participation in the jail collaborative and reentry services for men of color involved in the criminal justice system.

  Lead: Allegheny County Jail Collaborative

- Securing commitments from the corporate community to develop policies that foster the hiring and retention of young men of color and provide a "second chance" for those that need it by instituting a "ban the box" policy in the workplace.

  Lead: Corporate Equity & Inclusion Roundtable (CEIR)

"There is a lot of adversity that people have to go through no matter where you're at. Changing the setting always helps, but your drive and motivation to do what you have to do will ultimately decide whether or not you can succeed. That's what I believe."

-youth voice

MBK Timeline

October 2015
Launch of Local Action Plan

September 2015
Hosted 3 MBK Deliberative Forums to engage public on proposed actions

June - July 2015
City of Pittsburgh hired Youth equity & Access Associate

April 2015
First MBK Newsletter & MBK YouTube Channel
Pittsburgh joins Cities United

March 2015
Identification of livability index indicators

February 20, 2015
Establishment of MBK Committee

October 31, 2014
Over 130 leaders convened for our Local Action Summit

October 4, 2014
Survey of community members to determine the areas of concern

September 20, 2014
City of Pittsburgh & Allegheny County accept President's Challenge

Summary of Goals 1 - 2

Goal 1: All of our children enter school cognitively, physically, socially and emotionally prepared.

Continue the focus of early childhood including play and literacy by:

- Increasing the number of children that attend quality preschools as determined by Pennsylvania's Keystone Stars rating system.

- Supporting parental engagement in early childhood centers through the expansion of the use of the "Message from Me" application.

Support healthy initiatives by:

- Expanding enrollment in Women Infant and Children (WIC) programs .

- Ensuring all children are immunized.

- Expanding healthy meals to children involved in after school programs.

Goal 2: All of our children read at grade level by third grade.

Through the process of data sharing,

- Offering independent evaluation to assist schools and agencies to increase school attendance.

By the mobilization of community partners,

- Implementing the "Be There" program in all 43 school districts in Allegheny County.

To highlight the importance of literacy,

- Increasing the distribution of age-appropriate books to children at 110 summer food site locations

- Increasing use of Children's Books in print and online for children from kindergarten through third grade.
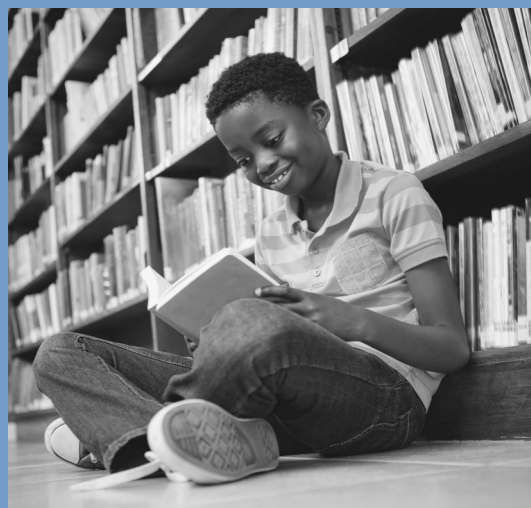
Summary of Goals 3 - 4

Goal 3: All of our young people graduate from high school.

Support programs that engage and inspire students by:

- Expanding youth input and empowering youth "voice" by forming teams and training youth to lead initiatives such as Students in Action Teams, Black Student Unions and other student-driven efforts.

- Increasing the number of youth that feel "cared for" by recruiting more mentors of color for our young men of color.

- Recruiting foster families for teens, particularly teens of color, in the communities where they live to reduce congregate care and ensure neighborhood and school stability.

Goal 4: All of our young people complete post-secondary education or training.

Provide financial and social support to increase completion of post-secondary education and training by:

- Increasing the percentage of students that receive the Promise Scholarship

Create a support system for students of color in college that increases their ability to afford, be admitted and graduate.:

- Engaging in community focus groups with young boys and men of color to identify perception, needs and ideas regarding higher education preparedness, supports, access and success. Preferably in pre-K - 12 setting.

- Focusing specifically on high school counselors on supporting, advocating and preparing young boys and men of color to successfully access and graduate from higher education institutions.

- Educating parents and students about the benefits of a college degree via outreach and workshops in the community and within a pre-K – 12 environment.

Expand internet access by:

- Developing a spatial analysis and mapping of free wifi hotspots.

- Increasing public wireless internet accessibility in communities through public locations

Summary of Goal 5

Goal 5: All of our youth who have graduated from college or a training program are employed.

Encourage private and non-profit investment in workforce development by:

- Expanding the number of youth served by the Learn and Earn Summer Youth Employment Program especially in jobs related to Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM)

Increase the financial status and standard of living by:

- Expanding opportunities to be financially literate involving understanding of the banking and mortgage systems.

Respond to the workforce needs of the region by:

- Establishing strong linkages with Career and Technical Certification programs and post-secondary institutions to align workforce development programming with career pathways and labor market demand.

- Increasing the number of youth acquiring "digital badges" in competencies related to the local economy.

Promote small businesses by:

- Identifying, promoting and filling the gaps of local E-commerce tutoring and mentorships aimed at small business owners.

- Supporting existing small-business mentorship programs to connect established companies with smaller businesses, newer businesses, or even potential clients to provide guidance when starting a new venture.

- Implementing the responsible banking initiative by incentivizing banks to invest in low-income communities by only depositing City funds in those financial institutions.

Summary of Goal 6

Goal 6: All of our young people are safe from violent crime, and, those who need it, receive the second chance they deserve.

Create a more positive relationship between police and community by:

- Tapping the talents of Faith-based communities to engage with Violence Prevention programs.

- Creating a youth advisory council that develops proactive strategies that reflects the priorities of youth

- Hosting quarterly conversations with local leaders and youth as a means to build trust and community healing

- Establishing a Public Safety Academy to ensure that youth are acquainted with careers in Public Safety.

- Increasing the numbers of police of color in the police force

- Engaging stakeholders to implement the plan crafted by the National Initiative for Restoring Community Trust and Justice.

Ensure safe routes to school and safe places when students are not in school by:

- Identifying safe routes with crossing guards trained to serve as "keepers".

Adopt a trauma informed care approach by:

- Implementing a three-pronged process which includes training six hundred (600) staff in the child welfare program office, developing a response for staff that experience secondary trauma and actively encourage one hundred forty-eight (148) contracted agencies to develop and integrate trauma principles into their services and staff supports.

Promote the attitude that a young man of color can have a second chance by:

- Increasing the numbers of employers that hire ex-offenders

- Increasing the participation in jail collaborative and reentry services for men of color involved in the criminal justice system.

- Securing commitments from the corporate community to develop policies that foster the hiring and retention of young men of color and provide a "second chance" for those that need it by instituting a "ban the box" policy in the workplace.

My Brother's Keeper Committee Members

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Karen Abrams, Manager of Community and Diversity Affairs, Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh

James Brown, Director of Youth Development, Homewood Brushton YMCA

Rev. Darryl T. Canady, Pastor, Rodman Street Missionary Baptist Church

Kevin Carter, Founder and Executive Director, Adonai Center for Black Males

Erin Dalton, Deputy Director, Allegheny County Department of Human Services

The Honorable Ed Gainey, PA House of Representatives, 24th Legislative District

Commander Eric Holmes, Pittsburgh Police

Rev. Cornell Jones, Freedom Indeed, LLC, Iron Cross Community Ministries

Walter Lewis, Program Manager, Homewood Children's Village

Michael Quigley, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Robert Morris University

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Mary Esther Van Shura, Ed. D.: Office of Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald

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Sharnay Hearn, Director, Hill House Association

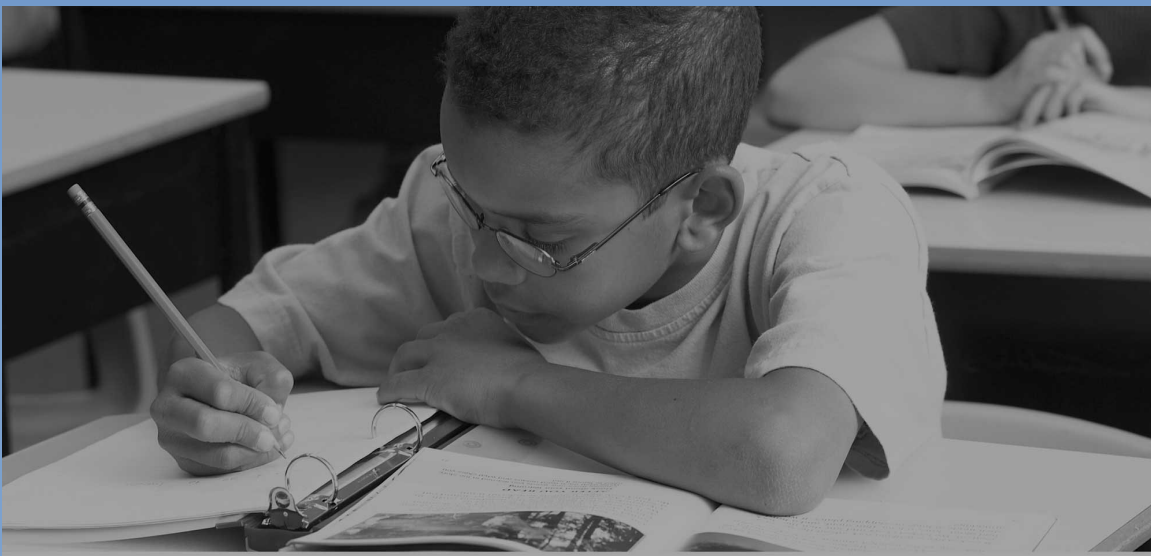Allegheny County Housing Authority

Art of Democracy

City of Pittsburgh, Office of Community Affairs

Community College of Allegheny County

City of Pittsburgh, Department of Innovation and Performance 's Web Team

The Kingsley Association

Neighborhood Allies

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Appendix

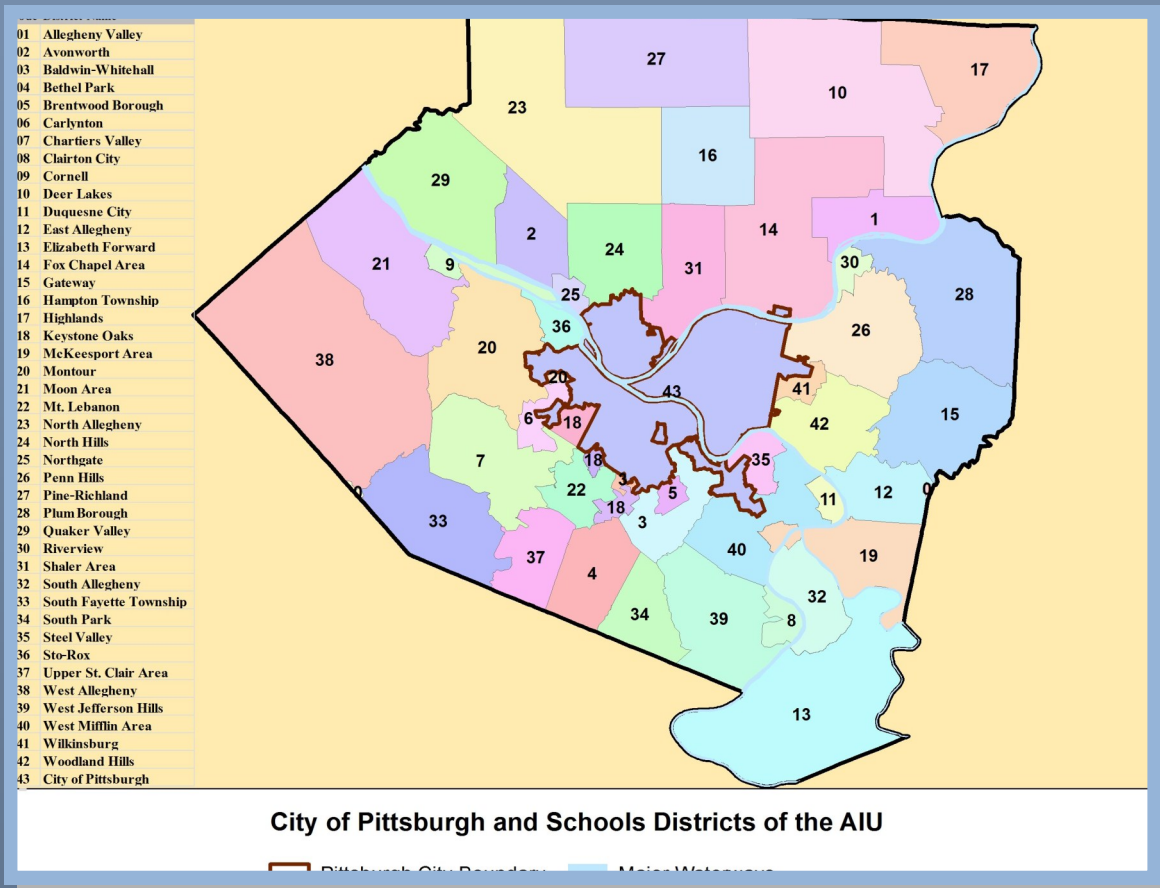# Allegheny County Municipalities, including City of Pittsburgh

City of Pittsburgh Police Zones

School Districts

In

Allegheny County

01	Allegheny Valley
02	Avonworth
03	Baldwin-Whitehall
04	Bethel Park
05	Brentwood Borough
06	Carlynton
07	Chartiers Valley
08	Clairton City
09	Cornell
10	Deer Lakes
11	Duquesne City
12	East Allegheny
13	Elizabeth Forward
14	Fox Chapel Area
15	Gateway
16	Hampton Township
17	Highlands
18	Keystone Oaks
19	McKeesport Area
20	Montour
21	Moon Area
22	Mt. Lebanon
23	North Allegheny
24	North Hills
25	Northgate
26	Penn Hills
27	Pine-Richland
28	Plum Borough
29	Quaker Valley
30	Riverview
31	Shaler Area
32	South Allegheny
33	South Fayette Township
34	South Park
35	Steel Valley
36	Sto-Rox
37	Upper St. Clair Area
38	West Allegheny
39	West Jefferson Hills
40	West Mifflin Area
41	Wilkinsburg
42	Woodland Hills
43	City of Pittsburgh

City of Pittsburgh and Schools Districts of the AIU

MY BROTHER'S KEEPER

Allegheny County
City of Pittsburgh
2015