



Connecting Housing and Education:

A Policy, Research, and Practice Agenda for the Bay Area and Beyond.

**The Center for Cities & Schools
University of California, Berkeley**

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I. FORUM BACKGROUND

For several decades, metropolitan areas have experienced changes in residential housing patterns that have had enormous consequences for urban public schools: dramatically reduced student populations, further concentrated poverty inside school walls, and the loss of valuable human and financial resources. Despite this, the intrinsic relationship between housing and education is rarely recognized in research or practice, and existing urban policy structures sustain the division.

In what is often called the “silo planning phenomenon,” redevelopment efforts, particularly in dense, built-out cities, go forward with little consideration for the welfare of neighborhood schools. In turn, educational reforms and new school construction are rarely related to broader urban revitalization activities. As this problem goes largely unacknowledged, government policies often exacerbate the situation. For example, the failure to promote affordable, family-oriented housing in cities has driven away middle-income families, reducing the resources for schools and making it harder to achieve a more balanced and diverse school and city population.

Increasingly, cities, school districts, private and nonprofit developers, school advocates, and local communities are recognizing the potential advantages of collaboration. A growing body of literature outlines the theoretical foundations for building relationships between schools and city planning; and in a few instances, such linkages have been implemented. The Center for Cities & Schools was established at this nexus of problem and possibility.

On April 26, 2006, the forum, “Connecting Housing and Education: Examining the relationship between healthy, vibrant neighborhoods and high quality schools,” brought together a diverse group of 40 leading researchers, policy makers, practitioners, and funders in the areas of education and housing (see Appendix A for the list of participants). The goal of the forum was to bring these parties together for the first time in order to foster discussion, create a more collaborative research agenda, and identify integrated policies and strategies to change the status quo. The ideas serve as a work-in-progress to be further enhanced as stakeholders in the housing and education fields, including forum attendees, begin to implement changes and integrated practices.

II. Forum Overview

This daylong forum was hosted by the Center for Cities & Schools (CC&S), in partnership with Bay Area LISC, and the BEST Collaborative. At the beginning of the forum, all participants introduced themselves and provided a brief overview of their interests and current work at the intersection of housing and education. Each participant was also asked to pose a question s/he had about the intersection of housing and education (see Appendix B for the list of questions). Additionally, there were morning panelists that represented researchers and practitioners, and a luncheon panel that consisted of two elected officials.

First and foremost, the forum reconfirmed the overwhelming interest in and need for the collaboration between the two fields of housing and education. Stakeholders from these fields

were encouraged to learn from each other about key questions and concerns through an open discussion and dialogue. The forum also further established the fact that the infrastructure for such collaboration has yet to be built. Inspired by the forum's panelists, the small and larger group discussions helped to identify specific steps required to shape this infrastructure. While there was a wide range of ideas and interests, the discussions focused on the following main issues which will be addressed further in the following two sections of this report:

1. Research interests and concerns:

- (a) Interdisciplinary Strategies
- (b) Decentralized Education Reform
- (c) Parental Choice

2. Policy and practice issues and concerns:

- (a) Citywide / Metropolitan Policy and Planning:
- (b) Teacher Housing
- (c) Housing / Private Developers
- (d) Neighborhood / Community Development
- (e) Educational Administration
- (f) Funding

III. Speaker Presentations

After participants described their interests, three nationally recognized researchers/policy leaders presented their perspectives on the intersection of education, housing, and community development. Morning panelists included:

- Bruce Fuller, Professor, Education and Public Policy, UC Berkeley & Director of Policy Analysis for California Education (PACE)
- Mary Filardo, Executive Director, 21st Century School Fund
- Chester Hartman, Director of Director of Research, Poverty & Race Research Action Council

Over lunch, local elected officials/political leaders presented their perspective on how this intersection impacts local communities and city policy. Luncheon speakers included:

- Mayor Tom Bates, City of Berkeley
- Supervisor John Gioia, Contra Costa County
- Superintendent Tony Smith, Emery Unified School District (respondent)

Bruce Fuller

Dr. Fuller's work focuses on how public policies aim to penetrate into local organizations – schools and families – to change the behavior or moral commitments of local actors. In his work on decentralizing policy, he shows how school reforms often fail to accomplish these changes, leading him to institutional and political questions around how to construct more effective policies. He pursues these topics in cross-cultural settings, ranging from Latino communities of east Boston to impoverished communities in South Africa. Dr. Fuller explores these topics in his book from Harvard University Press, *Inside Charter Schools: The Paradox of Radical Decentralization*. His other books include *Government Confronts Culture*. His work has appeared in the *Los Angeles Times*, *The Boston Globe*, and *The New York Times*. He co-directs Policy Analysis for California Education (PACE). Dr. Fuller received his Ph.D. from Stanford University in Policy, Organizational Behavior and Institutions.

Dr. Fuller came to the forum interested in how schools can be integrated with housing policies to help to hold on to more diverse types of families while advancing outcomes and achievement. Additionally, he was interested in the fact that American public schools are generally not dedicated to building a sense of community and wants to determine how schools can educate students so that they have stronger convictions about community. At the forum Dr. Fuller introduced two ways of looking at education and schools, and two forms of hopeful reform strategies. He emphasized that the areas which need more research attention are the efficacy of decentralized school reform and parental choice.

There are two, opposing ways to look at school as an institution: the first is an assimilationist view which sees school as a total institution focused on propelling individuals into the labor force and propelling families to pursue their own status and prestige. The second way to look at school is as an anchor for community building which both encourages and requires a more decentralized approach. Dr. Fuller nicknamed the first view the *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* approach in which school serves to encourage individuals to do better and achieve higher outcomes within the school system itself, not in their communities as a whole. Under this model, school is more of a modernizing institution that seeks to create sameness and universality, making diverse groups more and more similar.

One example of an organization working against this notion is The Education Trust in Oakland which works to ensure that all students have the opportunity to enroll in and successfully complete California's college readiness curriculum. As it stands, only the top 12% get into the University of California system which reinforces the notions of status and prestige which are at the heart of the school system. Education policy and school reform initiatives also promote this sort of internal, competitive game of having individual kids get ahead.

Dr. Fuller presented two hopeful lines of reform that may combat this perspective, the first of which is finance reform. It is generally understood that American schooling is organized based on class lines and topography and many seek to resolve this issue through school finance reform. While existing school finance reform has equalized spending among school districts it has not done so within schools. Other concurrent reforms, such as reducing class sizes, can also

exacerbate the problem as they tend to produce jobs in better-off schools, encouraging teachers to leave low-income schools.

The second hopeful school reform, though its underlying ideological currents are complicated, is the notion of “a thousand flowers blossoming.” Over the last 50 years, various new forms of schooling have arisen. Some, such as the small schools movement in Oakland, reflect more communitarian, pro-community goals and seek to build community awareness and strengthen social links between children and adults. Similarly, career academies seek to develop more productive, social, adult-like spaces for young people, and charter schools are an example of trying to move toward more communitarian values as well. The current consolidation of charter schools through which more sophisticated charter schools chains acquire smaller, independent charter schools, has sparked a lot of debate since some believe their goal becomes more about maintaining the organization rather than reaching out to the community.

School choice is also part of this model. In San Francisco, for example, choice plans provide incentives for children to leave their community schools. This is a contentious issue especially for families of color who often do not want their children to leave their local schools. More data should be obtained on how parents perceive this and how that in turn affects mobility.

There is now widespread recognition that parents have a greater affect on their children than schools. There are some efforts to reach out and work with parents, for example, in the pre-school world there are home visiting efforts. More attention should be paid to figure out a way to respect and involve parents more in the education process. However, even if more research is done on this topic, it will be difficult for superintendents and principals to implement because of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act pressures which encourage budget prioritization toward increasing test scores.

Ultimately, tension exists between the top-down reform approach of NCLB and a more decentralized strategy that links schools and students to parents and community-based organizations. There needs to be more research and data on the effectiveness of the decentralized strategy in order to ensure it is taken into consideration by policymakers. Once more data exist, the education field can develop a political strategy for arguing the virtues of the decentralized approach.

Chester Hartman

Chester Hartman, an urban planner and author, is Director of Research at the Poverty & Race Research Action Council (PRRAC) in Washington, DC. Prior to taking his present position, he founded and was President/Executive Director of PRRAC. Before that, he was a Fellow of the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington, and of the Transnational Institute in Amsterdam. He holds a Ph.D. in City and Regional Planning from Harvard and served on the faculty there as well as at Yale, the University of North Carolina, Cornell, the University of California, Berkeley, and Columbia University. He is currently serving as an Adjunct Professor of Sociology at George Washington University. His books include: *Challenges to Equality: Poverty & Race in*

America (2001), *City for Sale: The Transformation of San Francisco* (2002), and *The Right to Housing: Foundation of a New Social Agenda* (2005). Dr. Hartman has written numerous articles for academic and popular journals and newspapers. He is the founder and former Chair of the Planners Network, a national organization of progressive urban and rural planners and community organizers and he serves/has served on numerous Boards, including Editorial Board of the *Journal of Urban Affairs*. He has also been a consultant to numerous public and private agencies.

Dr. Hartman posed a number of policy research and practice questions at the forum. He began by referring to the latest issue of *Negro Education* which focused on the severely under recognized issue of high classroom mobility and the impact it is having on low-income American kids. Certain subpopulations have built-in mobility such as farm workers and the military. Dr. Hartman holds that research should be conducted around the impact of education reforms that affect homeless children and the costs and benefits of programs that require they have transportation to and from school.

While there are various ways of handling student mobility, housing stability is a key solution. Various public policies do exist to address this, for example rent control, eviction control, and affordable housing approaches. Research should be conducted on the communities that have these approaches to see whether such a built-in legal structure in fact leads to greater school stability.

Now that various voucher programs exist and now that certain charter schools going under, there is a need to research the implications of both. More attention should also be paid to the efficacy of government approaches that affect housing such as Hope VI and the indirectly influential earned income tax credit, as they are indicative of corresponding education issues.

Dr. Hartman emphasized that the silo phenomenon is not simply a bureaucratic one. Therefore, it must be examined at the local, state, and national levels. Research should be done on education departments and school boards, similar to research he did previously on the breakdown of housing departments. That is, it is important to know who is generally on appointed school boards in terms of race and class, and how different school boards draw district lines, since both of these notions have implications for school performance. While community schools are intuitively great, they should also be looked at to determine to what extent they are successful and which elements of them are being used best and most often. Universities should also develop curriculum around the area of housing and education to be implemented in planning departments and education schools. Additionally, professional associations and journals should give this area more attention as well.

As Richard Rothstein addresses in *Class and Schools*, low-income students have countless disadvantages in terms of their social background, ability to learn, lack of resources, etc. even before they first enter schools. This carries over in terms of fair housing when, for example, low-income Latino populations in particular exhibit a lack of knowledge about the law and an unwillingness to complain. Education reform should be viewed in this context as well and more research should be done on education reform in the context of integration and mixed income housing as seen in experiments such as Gautreaux, Moving to Opportunity, Hope VI, and in the

post-Katrina cities of both New Orleans and neighboring Huston where so many African American families have relocated.

Finally, the issue of home ownership itself is very important. The federal government has a bifurcated tax system which is setup to benefit homeowners. Dr. Hartman referred to the notion of wealth creation and *Black Wealth, White Wealth: A New Perspective on Racial Inequality* by Melvin Oliver and Thomas Shapiro, and *When Affirmative Action Was White: An Untold History of Racial Inequality in Twentieth-Century America* by Ira Katznelson. There is a difference between the wealth gap and the income gap, and the trigger for the wealth gap is homeownership. More should be researched on education and institutional racism and the white population should come to understand the history of institutional racism and how it impacts the educational system.

Dr. Hartman is involved with the Achievement Gap Initiative, a Harvard University interdisciplinary effort to help understand and narrow the achievement gap. He informed all forum attendees that he will be setting up community forums around the country including in Jackson, Mississippi, Columbus, Ohio and Oakland, California.

Mary Filardo

Mary Filardo is the founder and executive director of the 21st Century School Fund, a non-profit organization dedicated to building the public will and capacity to modernize school buildings so they support quality education and community revitalization in urban neighborhoods. She worked for 25 years in the private sector in building and construction management. During this period she also studied philosophy and mathematics at St. John's College in Annapolis, was selected as a Truman Scholar from the District of Columbia, and completed a Masters degree in public policy and public finance from the University of Maryland. When her children were school-age and enrolled in the District of Columbia Public Schools she worked as a community activist to improve public education and to secure to safe, modern, educationally appropriate schools facilities for the children of the District of Columbia. She founded the 21st Century School Fund in 1994 to provide the District of Columbia and other urban communities leadership, partnerships, innovative solutions, research and analysis of school facility issues. She originated and then successfully managed the Oyster public/private partnership that built the first new public elementary school in the District in 20 years. She has written extensively on school facility issues in the District of Columbia, developed software to support long range facilities master planning and is leading a research, constituency building, and communications collaborative to improve urban school facilities supported by the Ford Foundation.

Ms. Filardo began by telling forum attendees the history of the BEST (Building Educational Success Together) collaborative. The organization started out as a board foundation where grantees, including researchers, advocates, and communications specialists, would meet regularly to discuss working toward education equity and excellence. In order to jumpstart the conversations and encourage participants to begin more collaborative work, Janice Petrovich put out an RFP to the grantees who had participated for the initial four years to determine strategies

that would link up the three areas of advocacy, research and communications, to improve urban public school facilities. In the end, Ms. Petrovich funded two efforts, the 21st Century School Fund and the BEST collaborative. BEST's partners include: the Education Law Center, National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Chicago's Neighborhood Capital Budget Group, New Schools Better Neighborhoods, and the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) and its commissioner, Mark Schneider. Mr. Schneider appreciated the grass roots nature and practicality of BEST and BEST appreciated NCES' rigor.

Ms. Filardo emphasized that 21st Century and BEST do not simply focus on research and advocacy but both actually engage in project development to test social change strategies in the real world. An example of this is the Oyster Bilingual Elementary School in Washington, DC, which was constructed at no cost to taxpayers through an innovative, community-initiated public/private development partnership based on a co-location policy. Ms. Filardo notes that in Washington, DC there are 20,000 charter school students and 50,000 public school students and the public school demographics are approximately 85% African American, 10% Latino and 5% white. She holds that policies should combine innovation, research and advocacy around the notion that urban public school facilities should be the best public school specifically for the students that are in them.

21st Century has sought to understand the relationship between educational quality and the built environment and has found that local knowledge should be brought into all of the decision-making, research and policy development process surrounding schools. It has looked at impact of facilities on learning and determined that there is a lack of understanding as well as strong points of view about school size, even more than class size, as related to built environment. 21st Century has conducted surveys with teachers and principals and results show that facilities in poor condition have a significant effect on teacher retention. Principals also reported that they believed that as leaders they were weakest at community-engagement and managing facilities. 21st Century also looked at the Los Angeles Unified School District to determine how indicators of building quality compared to student achievement. It found that a statistically significant 3% of the variance in student achievement could be explained by the condition of the school. This figure becomes even more powerful when you consider teachers leaving those schools as well.

Billions of dollars are spent nationally on school facilities. McGraw maintains one of the few existing databases on school facilities. It employed 500 reporters to collect facilities information on construction contracts from 1995 to 2004 from school districts and the private sector in order to resell to manufacturers and subcontractors. School construction itself is not 100% of the cost; in New Jersey, for example, audits were just conducted and soft costs (such as zoning work, design, and land acquisitions costs) was 47%.

21st Century, in conjunction with the Urban Institute as funded by The Fannie Mae Foundation, is trying to create a template to look at this investment in terms of student outcomes. It obtained the addresses of all Washington, DC public school students in order to geo-code them and then map them with NCES data, housing data and mortgage data and other census data. It seeks to take these data sets and put them together to understand concepts like the boundary issue and has already found that contrary to popular belief, the median travel distance is .62 miles for Washington, DC public school students and three times that for charter school students. The goal

is to better understand severe and working poverty than free/reduced lunch data alone can explain, and for this model to be used by other regions to determine whether investment is a leading or lagging indicator of smart growth. Ms. Filardo now believes that schools lag and come after smart growth and that housing costs and changes in community are affecting student achievement. Ms. Filardo also addressed the inefficient cost structure and problematic lag time of school facilities construction. Additionally, she suggested that more research efforts be put toward developer fees and determining how they can best be used to improve school quality.

Luncheon Discussion

The luncheon discussion was led by City of Berkeley Mayor Tom Bates and Contra Costa County Supervisor John Gioia.

Tom Bates was sworn in as Mayor of Berkeley in December 2002. He brought a lifetime of public service to the Mayor's office – including four years as an Alameda County Supervisor and two decades as a California legislator representing Berkeley. One of the Mayor's top priorities has been to promote youth and education efforts and create a “kid-friendly” city. He launched “Berkeley Champions for Kids” and Project BUILD. His accomplishments also include innovative new environmental initiatives, a major effort to revitalize downtown Berkeley, a regional approach to ending chronic homelessness, the largest increase in affordable housing in a generation, and a serious effort to create a fair partnership with UC Berkeley. After retiring from the Assembly in 1996, Mayor Bates continued to serve the public. In addition to teaching at UC Berkeley, he volunteered his efforts to work with school officials and parents to provide healthier food choices for Berkeley students, including organic fruits and vegetables. He was instrumental in the adoption of healthier food policies for the Berkeley and Oakland School Districts as well as the City of Berkeley.

John Gioia represents District One (West County) on the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors. He was elected in 1998 and re-elected in 2002, and represents the communities of El Cerrito, Richmond, San Pablo, El Sobrante, Kensington, Montalvin Manor, North Richmond, East Richmond Heights, and Rollingwood. He served as Chair of the Board in 2002 and currently chairs the Board's Finance Committee. He also serves on numerous other regional and county boards and commissions. Mr. Gioia grew up in West Contra Costa County where he graduated from El Cerrito High School and the University of California, Berkeley with a B.A. with highest honors in Political Science and earned his law degree from Boalt Hall School of Law at UC Berkeley. Mr. Gioia practiced business and land use law in San Francisco and Richmond until his election to the Board of Supervisors. Mr. Gioia has worked to build coalitions to address issues challenging our community such as access to healthcare, affordable housing, homelessness, youth gang violence, environmental justice, equal access to public transportation, and quality after-school programs for all children. He is recognized as a leader in regional government cooperation and is a strong advocate for those living with HIV/AIDS and for the residents of West Contra Costa County's diverse communities.

Mayor Bates began the luncheon discussion by addressing the importance of not putting all of the pressure on schools to change the plight of low-income students, especially during times of increased accountability and decreased budgets. He emphasized integrating schools and the regular school day with neighborhoods and students' surrounding environments. He reminded forum attendees that schools are responsible for kids between eight and three o'clock five days a week, while the community and the city are responsible for the rest of the time. Therefore, the entire community should be involved in the lives of students and their families. Mayor Bates put on his agenda to research including education and schools in Berkeley's General Plan, as well as perhaps taking the idea to the State legislature to require of all California cities.

Working Example: The Berkeley Alliance has just received a grant from the Department of Education to research integrating services for students and families throughout the City of Berkeley.

Berkeley represents a unique housing predicament since no one is building in Berkeley because of the lack of space. Therefore, as occurs in many other cities, the housing market forces young families out because of the city's extremely high median home price. Berkeley is seeing a declining enrollment in public schools which only reinforces the need to get people to start talking, planning and thinking about schools and housing together.

Supervisor Gioia began by stating that segregation in schools reflects segregation in neighborhoods. He emphasized the importance of implementation and practice. He stressed that many things are referred to in general plans that do not actually occur. It was recommended that systems of accountability be developed for communities and cities as well as schools and school districts since accountability systems really drive governance decisions.

Current inflexible state and federal funding systems were called into question since they currently serve only to reinforce the silo phenomenon. The Clinton Administration oversaw collaborative grants that required coordination in order for grantees to receive funds. Conversely, block grants by design provide no incentive for agencies to work together. Additionally, while the State of California has the highest NCLB standards, it also has one of the lowest amounts of per pupil funding. Labeling schools as "failing," which is very easy to do under NCLB, is not helping to recruit or retain families.

One of the biggest obstacles to merging housing and education policy and practice is the complexity of existing governance and delivery systems. With so many levels of government – federal, state, county, and city – the difficulty lies in actually getting agencies to work together and garnering the political will, not in creating ideas for collaboration. In this sense, the disconnect between housing and education is a political problem more than policy problem. Supervisor Gioia said Contra Costa County statistics continue to show that lower test scores usually correspond with lower income levels, more social service cases, higher rates of childhood obesity, and lower access to healthcare. This speaks to the fact that more collaboration is needed.

Working Example: Contra Costa County has implemented the Service Integration Team Program in two of its low-income communities. Public health professionals, counselors and employment specialists join together to work with families using a holistic approach.

Land use policies and decisions are often driven by revenues. Often, instead of building affordable housing, cities are looking to maximize sales tax dollars. School impact fees also sound like a great idea but little research has been done to determine whether they work and if not why not. Ideally, mixed-income housing developments would exist in all types of communities. However, it is a fact that many communities do not want affordable housing built because of they fear it will bring crime.

Financial incentives and disincentives always serve as a good motivator. In Contra Costa County, for example, there was a sales tax measure that required communities to build affordable housing and multifamily and mixed-use housing near transit stations. Cities responded by saying that such a request takes away local control. It is hard to balance housing needs. Another solution is to impose financial penalties on cities that do not adopt affordable housing elements in their general plans. Again, simply adopting an idea in a plan does not guarantee any units will ever be built, but requiring units be built generates significant opposition. Walnut Creek has implemented a commercial linkage ordinance which helps to create jobs which in turn help with housing affordability. One way to ensure that stakeholders in all of these areas collaborate is to create a regional agency that takes land use authority away from cities and counties. However, that will only occur as the number and depth of conversations among critical players increases.

At the end of the luncheon discussion, attendees made commitments to the following actions:

- Seek funding for pilot collaborative projects (LISC)
- Document real changes taking place between housing and education (CC&S)
- Create a document with common language that articulates the connections between housing and schools (LISC)
- Continue to have targeted conversations (all)
- Look at model joint use agreements that link housing and schools (Josh Simon)
- Oakland is developing an inclusionary housing ordinance to combat its severe teacher turnover problem. It will include set asides for teachers who commit to remaining with the school district for a minimum of five years and will serve to reward them with equity as they stay on for years six through ten. (Jeff Levin)
- Push for school bonds to include joint-use projects
- Develop a curriculum around these issues
- Help with research surrounding these issues (CC&S)

IV. Research Discussion & Recommendations

Currently, the education and housing fields have different goals and different timelines, and use different language to define both. School facilities and housing developments are largely designed and built in a vacuum with little interaction or communication with other fields of work. More research is undoubtedly required to inform future coordinated practice of the two.

First, it is necessary to determine the existing overlaps of the two policy areas at the local, state, and national levels. Additional research is also needed to better understand family mobility and the reasons parents choose certain schools for their children. This information should then be used to develop policies that will counterbalance existing developer-driven housing practices in isolation of school policy and make the school construction process more inclusionary and integrated.

(a) Interdisciplinary Strategy Discussion and Recommendations

As the apparent interconnectivity of housing and education becomes more widely recognized, the need arises for a more concrete understanding of their relationship as well as data on how they affect one another.

Specific Recommendations:

- Determine a defined, marketable summary of the problems and goals surrounding the integration of the two fields of education and housing at the federal, state, and local levels.
- Delineate the precise connections between schools and affordable housing, such as the learning outcomes associated with students living in affordable housing and students from communities with explicit housing policies
- Continue to research how housing stock influences school construction and map out statewide school construction patterns.
- Construct systems to enable information sharing and collaboration on the national level.
- Examine the impact of homeownership programs on social mobility, relative to utilizing the same financial resources directly for children's education.
- Examine the small and charter schools trends in terms of their implications on students' housing situations.
- Study the effect of education reform on homeless children.
- Examine the relationship between families who receive the earned income tax credit and educational issues.
- Develop a curriculum for universities to teach on the intersection of housing and education.

(b) Decentralized Education Reform Discussion and Recommendations

At the same time that top-down approaches such as No Child Left Behind dominate American education, more community-based decentralized efforts are on the rise as well. Since these

movements exist in opposition of each other, more research is needed to determine the outcomes of the decentralized efforts in order to move them up the political agenda.

Specific Recommendations:

- Determine the efficacy of decentralized education reform
- Document the efficacy of small schools and community schools using multiple measures such as community engagement as well as specific academic outcomes.
- Design public policies that account for differences between communities.
- Develop a political strategy to argue the virtues of the decentralized approach.
- Survey schools boards to document how they break down by race and class and compare this with their education approaches.

(c) Parental Choice Discussion and Recommendations

The role of parental opinion and choice is not well enough understood in terms of how it affects mobility and dictates educational trends.

Working Example: Cambridge, Massachusetts is experimenting with parent centers.

Specific Recommendations:

- Come to a greater understanding of why families make the choices they do regarding housing and schooling and understand why low-income families are increasingly leaving urban areas.
- Study what the definition of “quality” is for low-income families
- Determine how parents can be more involved in the education process

V. Policy and Practice Discussion & Recommendations

(a) Citywide / Metropolitan Discussion and Recommendations

Many Forum attendees identified the lack of communication between Mayors’ offices, city managers, and school districts as a fundamental problem and obstacle. Collaborations between school governments and city governments must occur to ensure information sharing and coordinated policymaking and to maximize existing, often limited resources. Additionally, city and metropolitan -wide strategies are often more easily achievable than statewide initiatives, and can effect a larger population than individual school-level strategies.

Working Example: The City of Emeryville has founded the Center for Community Life.

Specific Recommendations:

- Get mayors more involved with their school districts.
- Explore possible policy to require local city sign-offs on all school plans.

- Research “youth master plans” and get the school board involved with those plans.
- Create incentives to deter the middle class from leaving public schools.
- Facilitate joint-use of housing and school space and joint planning by convening effective conversations between schools and housing development.
- Support future bond money for joint-use purposes.

(b) Teacher Housing Discussion and Recommendations

In addition to student mobility, low teacher retention rates have been also identified as an indicator of both poor school performance and the decline of vibrant neighborhoods. Teacher mobility is largely an affordable housing issue, especially in tight housing markets such as the Bay Area. Notably, all four of the Symposium’s breakout groups independently designated teacher housing as a top priority.

Working Examples: The Cities of San Jose, Richmond and Oakland have begun to implement teacher housing initiatives.

Specific Recommendations:

- Develop a “housing product” for school-attending families and teachers, as well as others.
- Address teacher retention issues in areas where home prices are rising by providing housing as compensation.
- Remedy the teacher housing shortage to decrease turnover rates, such as the City of San Jose has done.
- Obtain an in-depth understanding of housing regulations in order to navigate them better.

(c) Housing / Private Developer Discussion and Recommendations

The current housing development process, including affordable housing, neither encourages collaboration with school districts nor requires that developers consider the education-related needs of communities. While a few affordable housing developers are starting to look at schools as they affect property values, more formalized systems need to be developed and implemented to ensure safe, lasting housing options exist for low-income families with school-age children. A basic point of discussion among nearly all small groups was the school impact fees which traditionally are one-time payments from real estate developers to school districts used to build school capital improvements needed to accommodate new real estate development. School impact fees differ in structure across counties.

Working Example: Josh Simon is seeking to develop a housing product in the City of Emeryville.

Specific Recommendations:

- Explore the possibility of creating policies that require school impact statements and housing statements of all cities.

- Re-think and re-design the school impact fee, e.g., establish a system that awards extra funding points to developers undertaking collaborative action.
- Determine how to make joint-use policies and commercial strips work with schools.

(d) Neighborhood / Community Development Discussion and Recommendations

In order to ensure the lasting convergence of the housing and education fields, models must be built on the local level to serve as examples for larger contexts. For example, neighborhoods must first redefine local planning to encourage greater developer initiative regarding schools to prompt larger municipalities to construct policy that requires such initiative.

Working Example: The City of Los Angeles is attempting to link affordable housing facilities with new school facilities.

Specific Recommendations:

- Support community groups trying to help schools' co-locate programs.
- Use organizing techniques within struggling communities to spark activism around schools/community facilities.
- Take advantage of the fact that the pre-school for all ballot initiative does designate low-income communities as a priority for funding.
- Address crime attributable to individuals from outside of a given community who prey on students at the end of the school day.
- Involve students and parents in coordinated planning efforts.
- Connect community-building efforts in ways that build success for students and communities.
- Incorporate neighborhood information systems into community development policy.
- Understand broader community relationships in connection with built environment.

(e) Education Discussion and Recommendations

Forum attendees discussed significant changes that need to occur within the education field itself to ensure its future alignment and integration with housing. Recommendations were made regarding both facilities and administration.

Specific Recommendations – District Administration:

- Recognize the importance of teacher recruitment and retention in determining a school quality by implementing related policy. This pertains especially for the need for teachers to have a quality of life that encourages them to remain in a community, e.g., decent and affordable housing.
- Encourage the school-based integration of a variety of services provided to children and families.
- Improve data-sharing across municipal boundaries and school district borders to better understand student and family mobility.
- Make schools more family-sensitive by recognizing both the demanding schedules of the typical low-income parent as well as the fact that the level of parental involvement impacts the recruitment of new students via informal community networking.
- Redefine public education using a civic model that requires “bigger” thinking and implies that schools have the potential to transform communities.

- Construct a core curriculum which allows for / accommodates inevitable family relocation.
- Urban public schools should market what is working, rather than focus on what is “broken” and market it’s strengths to the broader community.
- Analyze the mobility impacts of schools’ increased finance and performance accountability.
- MAYBE HERE - Attendees addressed the definition of educational quality and suggested that the term “school” is not currently defined broadly enough to encompass schools’ integration with the neighborhoods and constituencies they serve. This is problematic because it encourages a lack of coordinated policymaking between the areas of housing and education.

Specific Recommendations – School Facilities:

- Develop more comprehensive plans that take into account future school facility funding.
- Encourage redevelopment efforts to consider school facilities.
- Consider the housing impacts for both students and teachers when modernizing older facilities.

(f) Funding Discussion and Recommendations

The public and non-profit funding arenas need to take into account the need for increased collaborative funding. Providing financial incentives for collaboration is often a crucial mechanism for achieving change.

Specific Recommendations:

- Use research, policy and practice to fund programs that address achievement.
- Obtain more funding for research and policy initiatives, as well as the research that will support the need for this, i.e., support funding proposals.
- Market the notion of school as the center of communities to funders.

VI. Future Action Items and Next Steps

As evidence of the far-reaching interconnectivity of housing and education is brought to the fore, all participants brainstormed a wide range of next steps to follow up on after the Forum. The six most immediate action items that emerged from the Forum are:

- The Center for Cities & Schools (CC&S), in collaboration with the Fannie Mae Foundation, will examine existing examples of coordinated policymaking to determine best practices as they relate to different types of schools and neighborhood populations. Fannie Mae Foundation will provide CC&S with a small grant to prepare a white paper on best practice models of connecting education and comprehensive community development.

- CC&S will work with the City of Berkeley and the Berkeley Alliance to assist with designing a plan for citywide systemic change to close the achievement gap. An initial meeting was held in May 2006. (The Alliance is a community-based organization formed by and made up of representatives from The City of Berkeley, The University of California at Berkeley, and The Unified School District of Berkeley to strengthen their collaborative endeavors)
- Berkeley Mayor Tom Bates will connect with State Assembly Member Loni Hancock about the possibility of making education a required component of all California city general plans.
- CC&S and LISC will submit an application for a planning grant to the San Francisco Education Fund to develop strategies for collaboration.
- CC&S will work with the UC Berkeley Graduate School of Education to develop professional development curriculum that links the disciplines of planning and education more explicitly.

Appendix A

Forum Attendees

Stephen Barton – Housing Director, City of Berkeley
Tom Bates – Mayor, City of Berkeley
Jan Breidenbach – Executive Director, Southern California Association of Non-Profit Housing
Allison Brooks – Director, Livable Communities Initiative, East Bay Community Foundation
Mary Filardo – Executive Director, 21st Century School Fund
Stephanie Forbes – Director, Bay Area Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)
Bruce Fuller – Professor of Education and Public Policy, Graduate School of Education, UC Berkeley
John Gioia – Supervisor, Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors
Chester Hartman – Director of Research, Poverty & Race Research Action Council
James Head – Director of Programs, The San Francisco Foundation
Heather Hood – Director of Community Partnership, Institute of Urban and Regional Development, UC Berkeley
Patricia Ison – Director of Resident and Community Services, City of Oakland Housing Authority
Tim Jones – Executive Director, City of Richmond Housing Authority
Mindy Leiterman – Vice President, Policy & Program Development, Local Initiatives Support Corporation
Jeff Levin – Housing Policy and Programs Coordinator, City of Oakland
Ruth Mathis – Teacher, Emery Unified School District
Matthew Keleman – San Francisco Unified School District
Deborah McKoy – Director and Co-Founder, Center for Cities & Schools, UC Berkeley
Kathleen Moore – Director, School Facilities Planning Division, California Department of Education
Nancy Nadel – Councilmember, City of Oakland
Richard Raya – Senior Associate, PolicyLink
Shawn Ropp – Director of Facilities, Design & Construction, San Francisco Unified School District
David Rosenthal – Chairman, Richmond Children’s Foundation
Larry Rosenthal – Executive Director, Berkeley Program on Housing and Urban Policy
Ingrid Seyer-Ochi – Assistant Professor, Graduate School of Education, UC Berkeley
Doug Shoemaker – Deputy Director, Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California
Joshua Simon – Director, Real Estate Department, East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation
Julie Sinai – Senior Aide to Mayor Bates, City of Berkeley
Tony Smith – Superintendent, Emery Unified School District
Rhonnell Sotelo – Senior Program Officer, Stuart Foundation
David Stern – Professor, Graduate School of Education, UC Berkeley
Mike Teitz – Professor Emeritus of City and Regional Planning, UC Berkeley and UC Merced
Howard Traylor – Teacher, Oakland Unified School District
Jeffrey Vincent – Co-Founder, Center for Cities & Schools, UC Berkeley
Chris Walker – Director, Research & Assessment, Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)

Graduate Student Moderators

Heather Kinlaw – Master’s in Public Policy Candidate, UC Berkeley Goldman School of Public Policy
Greta Kirschenbaum – Doctoral Student, Social & Cultural Studies, UC Berkeley Graduate School of Education
Linn Posey – Doctoral Student, Social and Cultural Studies, UC Berkeley Graduate School of Education
Devon Williamson – Master’s in City Planning Candidate, UC Berkeley

Appendix B

Attendees posed the following questions regarding the connection of housing and education:

Research Questions

- How can we share info and collaborate nationally?
- What are the connections between schools and affordable housing? What are the associated learning outcomes of students living in affordable housing?
- What are the implications of downsizing in high schools in terms of students' engagement in community life? Or, what are the implications of the trend toward small schools for connecting schools and housing?
- How do you break the cycle of poverty within the African American population in particular?
- How do we address issues of poverty and community development and their relation to education? Or, where do we find points of convergence between education, social policy, poverty, etc.?
- How do these disconnects affect the achievement gap? How can we collaborate to address this gap?
- How does school quality drive/relate to neighborhood quality?
- What affect do affordable housing programs have on educational outcomes?
- How do we track the impact of affordable housing policies on student achievement? Or, how and where do we collect hard data on the outcomes of intersecting housing and education policies?
- How do we address issues of racism and equity? Why has the law in particular failed to deliver on social change promises?
- How do we do HOPE VI developments differently to address issues faced by families?
- How can we improve schools to prevent the loss of students to private schools?

City Governance & Metropolitan-Wide Questions

- How can we create a better working environment for people and agencies both interested in and already working on these issues?
- How can we ensure that children are put first?
- How do we strategize politically to bring together planning for affordable housing and schools?
- How do we integrate education policies with planning? What can planners do to improve education for all?
- What policies and restrictions do not lend themselves to creative solutions?
- How do we transfer information and coordinate it between agencies?
- What can we do to break down silo structures? What can we do at the local level to break down barriers to bring together housing and schools?

School-Level and Facilities Questions

- How does new facility development fit into this discussion?
- How do school facilities fit into redevelopment?
- How do we modernize older facilities to serve students and teachers?
- How do we develop quality schools that serve students' needs? How does teacher recruitment and retention fit into this?
- How do we address dropouts, narrowed curriculum and overall student engagement at the high school and middle school levels?

Housing Questions

- How do we develop housing that is affordable for families with children?
- To what extent do homeownership programs help lift social mobility, or harm social mobility by soaking up resources that could have gone into children's education?

Neighborhood / Community Development Questions

- How do we relate broader community relationships with built environment to provide services?
- How do we connect community-building efforts in ways that build success for students and communities?
- How do we involve students and parents?
- How do we incorporate neighborhood information systems into community development policy?