

BALTIMORE'S  
PROMISE

2018 Report to the  
**Community**

# Transformational Change.

**That's what we're after at Baltimore's Promise - the kind of significant progress that will dramatically improve the lives of our city's youth from cradle-to-career.**

From the beginning, this group of committed community stakeholders has explored important research, mined critical data and looked for innovative solutions to achieve positive, sustained results. We have focused energy and resources to help build a pathway to opportunity and success for all of Baltimore's children. We are working to ensure our youngest residents have access to quality after-school programs, older youth have positive mentoring connections, and programs supporting the health of pregnant mothers have the resources to serve more families in Baltimore.

Our uniqueness is rooted in the fact that we are comprised of representatives of Baltimore's leading public and private sector institutions, bringing together resources from philanthropy, government, education and business. Now entering its fourth year, Baltimore's Promise continues to thrive and grow.

And we've continued to listen and learn from many voices. Based on feedback and data-sharing from broad, community-level conversations, we are launching innovative pilots to show that when we come together we can change the future for our city's children.

We've learned that it can be difficult to see how different programs and services affect different families, because information about children and families is kept in many different data systems. And so we have spearheaded a project to pull information from these different systems together, to better identify patterns and opportunities to improve policies, services and supports. This **integrated data system (IDS)** will combine data from a range of participating organizations including public systems, service providers and communities

in ways that have never before been possible, while also protecting individual privacy. Our goal is that by 2020, we will have compiled individual data on every young person in Baltimore from birth through age 20, allowing us to optimize the way we allocate resources to our youth and best meet the needs of each person growing up in our community.

We are also launching the **Career Pathways Demonstration Model** - a smart, holistic workforce training strategy that will connect high school graduates to job training and employment while also enhancing coordination between City Schools and the Mayor's Office of Employment Development. Our Baltimore young people have told us they want and need a path to opportunity, through education, skills training and jobs. And research also highlights the importance of helping young people connect to those opportunities by linking our education and workforce systems more closely.

Our 2018 annual report provides more detail about these efforts, while also lifting up the compelling stories of city residents and advocates who illustrate by their lived experiences the reasons why we do what we do - and how it is we know that we're on the right path.

Not surprisingly, some of the data in this report indicate that Baltimore continues to face many tough challenges. But from the stories included here, the overwhelming feeling we come away with is hope.

After reading, we believe you will too.

Yours in partnership,

**Patrick McCarthy**

President & CEO, The Annie E. Casey Foundation  
Co-chair, Baltimore's Promise Board of Directors

**Mark Lerner**

Founding Partner, Chesapeake Partners  
Co-chair, Baltimore's Promise Board of Directors



Mural artist: Tom Chalkey, 2010

# Partnership for Hope.

Over the last few years, our nation has experienced political and social upheaval like I've never seen in my lifetime. Locally, the Baltimore Uprising changed the trajectory of our city's narrative. Neighbors, family and friends marched and rallied. Statues came down; the city's homicide rate went up.

It has been quite a roller coaster.

Through it all, though, Baltimore remains a vibrant city, full of concerned and engaged residents who care about our city's past, present and future. One of the city's biggest challenges - daunting circumstances being constantly lobbed our way - also brings out what's best about Baltimoreans: resilience, grit, intrepidity and imagination.

Still, however, persistent social, economic and racial inequities limit opportunities for too many of the city's children and families. Generations of discrimination and disinvestment have left a mark on the city and its residents, especially in communities of color. Baltimore remains deeply divided by income and by race. In the report we share our organization's recent statement on Race, Equity and Inclusion and how that will guide our efforts in Baltimore.

This year's report to the community highlights the stories behind the data. We aim to bring forward the voice and spirit of individuals, families and communities into the way we share the successes of our city. We also highlight how important it is for organizations such as Baltimore's Promise to expand our thinking around how we engage in research and program development and what best practices exist right here at home that we can all learn from together. Baltimore's Promise works with a wide range of partners to identify solutions and amplify work already happening across our city to overcome systemic

inequalities and improve the lives of all of Baltimore's children.

Working with partners who are passionate about making the city a better place to live, we use data and research grounded in community perspectives and residents' lived experiences to identify and eliminate systems-level barriers. An Integrated Data System will help us do just that - by linking data across agencies, we will be able to understand the complex, interconnected issues facing children and families in Baltimore and design programs that better meet the specific needs of the community.

It's deliberate and slow-moving work, but our goals are achievable. We don't just believe, we know that we can work together to realize our vision in Baltimore:

- **Babies are born healthy**
- **Children enter kindergarten ready to succeed in school**
- **Children and youth achieve at grade level in school**
- **Youth graduate high school prepared for the next step**
- **Youth are career ready**

If the last few roller coaster years - of both trying circumstances and tremendous hope and change - have taught us anything, it's that we're up to any challenge that comes our way. There is no place like Baltimore and no place we would rather partner in the work of eliminating barriers and improving outcomes for generations to come. Thank you for your partnership.

Yours in partnership,

**Julia Baez**

Executive Director, Baltimore's Promise

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...So, it was like, alright man, I'm not gonna let your dream go to waste. **I'm not gonna let it be a dream deferred.**

Corey Witherspoon, Mentor at Seeds of Promise

# Mentoring and High School Success: Youth Voices

As the new Executive Director for Maryland MENTOR, I understand how important it is to be involved in work that is focused on building a generation of young people with the skills, knowledge and understanding to succeed in college, careers and community – not just here in Baltimore or in Maryland, but anywhere in the world. All of our young people in all of our communities deserve positive experiences that recognize their potential. In addition to enriching activities both in and outside of the classroom, students need people and resources that support their physical, social and emotional well-being. As the experiences shared by City Schools seniors Demetrius, Felipe and Brandley show, when students feel safe and supported by caring adults, are interested in what they are learning, and are motivated, academic achievement improves.

The goal of Maryland MENTOR is to increase the quality and quantity of mentoring relationships in Maryland, support programs to improve quality, effectiveness and scale, as well as coalesce stakeholders to expand engagement and investment locally. Leaders from Baltimore's Promise, the philanthropic community and the city of Baltimore led this recent drive to deliver on the promise and necessity to ensure all young people in Maryland have access to quality mentoring relationships. A recent survey of 76 Baltimore mentoring programs found that programs vary in funding levels, quality and size. Given the varied landscape of organizations providing mentoring services, the Baltimore's Promise Mentoring Action Committee, on which I proudly served, recommended a city-wide mentoring strategy to improve both the capacity and the quality of mentoring programs.

Relationships with caring adults are powerful components of serving the whole child, with the potential to change a student's life trajectory. Many of us can recall for the rest of our lives the teacher who believed in us, the mentor that supported us or the coach who pushed us. Thank you to the staff and partners in City Schools for leading your schools and staff in connecting with, supporting, inspiring and challenging students. And thank you to all the mentors like Corey Witherspoon, Community School Coordinators like Hallie Atwater, and teachers like Gary Antoine, Allison Greco and Kelly O'Brien who encourage our students to persist and excel.

Whenever I have the opportunity to talk with a young person about their life and experiences, the young people never fail to teach me new and valuable information – the information we don't see in charts and graphs of data points about our young people. I hope that Demetrius', Felipe's and Brandley's stories give context to the often arduous journey to high school graduation in Baltimore City. I am excited to partner with an organization that is embracing similar ideals and holding equity and the lived experience of our young people as paramount.

In service,

**Sadiq Ali**

Executive Director, Maryland MENTOR

One of the goals of Baltimore's Promise is that all Baltimore City youth graduate from high school prepared for the next step, college or career, without remediation. **As of 2016, only 70.7 percent of Baltimore City Public Schools (City Schools) students graduate within four years, compared to Maryland's 87.6 percent.** Female students exceed this rate, graduating at a rate of 76.6 percent in 2016, compared to 64.3 percent for male students. However, from 2015 to 2016, graduation rates dipped about 1 percentage point for low-income students (67.4 percent to 66.5 percent) and tripled that for English language learners, who saw a 3.5 percentage point decline, from 62.3 percent to 58.8 percent over the same period. While most ethnic subgroups have, on average, seen gains in graduation rates across the last five years, rates for Latinx/Hispanic students in Baltimore are trending downward, sliding from 62.8 percent in 2012 to 60.2 percent in 2016 – a 2.6 percentage point decline.

The data points above are often communicated devoid of context by those who have the privilege of distance from the systemic barriers that many Baltimore City youth face. Baltimore's Promise seeks to better understand high school graduation data by learning from young adults and their lived experiences. Three City Schools seniors who are on track to graduate shared their

experiences about obstacles in the way of graduation and what kept them motivated to persist. And, according to these three students and the caring adults in their lives, mentorship, access to resources and high expectations are the factors that kept them engaged and on the path to graduation.

"It's been a wild, WILD four years! But it's good. I've learned while I was here. They've helped me while I was here - [made] me a better person.

They've actually helped me with what I want to be in life."



That's how Demetrius enthusiastically describes his experience at Renaissance Academy, a Community School in the Upton/Druid Heights neighborhood of West Baltimore. Led by Principal Nikkia Rowe, Renaissance is located in a community where the 2015 median household income was \$17,042, and more than a third (34 percent) of residential properties were vacant or abandoned. As of 2015, the unemployment rate was over 18 percent, and the violent crime rate<sup>1</sup> was 30.3 percent, almost double that of Baltimore City (16.1)<sup>1</sup>. In the midst of these challenges, which include losing a number

Renaissance Academy is the only High School located in the community of zip code 21217 in Historic West Baltimore. [renaissanceacademyhs.org](http://renaissanceacademyhs.org)





Renaissance Academy High School (above). Previous page: Demetrius

of students and alumni to violence, Principal Rowe and her staff are steadfast in serving their students – socially as well as academically – and doing what they can to meet student needs and prepare them to graduate on time. Though their graduation rates (66.7 in 2016) fall behind Baltimore City’s average by 4 percentage points, the significance of their efforts is evident in the accounts of the many students, partners, families and community members whose stories reflect sentiments similar to those of Demetrius.<sup>2</sup>

According to analysis by Johns Hopkins University’s Education Policy Institute (JHU/EPI) for Baltimore’s Promise, the transition into ninth grade is a critical factor in determining high school graduation. On average, students’ grades, attendance, and attitude toward school decline, while their behavioral troubles increase. Urban students and students of color are especially vulnerable; they experience more course failure and absenteeism than students who are neither students of color nor from urban areas.

A senior with plans to study software engineering at college next fall, Demetrius was supported by a village of caring adults, most notably Corey Witherspoon, Demetrius’ mentor through a program at Renaissance called Seeds of Promise. Demetrius credits Mr. Witherspoon with helping him get and stay on track for graduation.

Demetrius began disengaging from school his sophomore year. As he describes it, “I fell off. I just didn’t think I was cut out for school. I was tired of waking up early, and I wasn’t doing work if I did [come].”

A transformative mentoring program supported by funding from Promise Heights and federal resources, Seeds of Promise is aimed at improving the academic and social emotional development of African-American male students. [bit.ly/2F6taYx](http://bit.ly/2F6taYx)



Brandley (left), Antoine (center), and Felipe (right)

“When you meet a youth, you envision them 10 years down the line, and I saw a lot in D,” says Witherspoon. Mr. Witherspoon began calling Demitrius at home regularly and talking to him about his future. “You know, being a nag,” Mr. Witherspoon recalls, chuckling.

With a smile, Demitrius acknowledges the importance of Mr. Witherspoon’s persistence. “Yeah, he helped me out. ‘Cause I didn’t have a father in my life, so he is like my father figure in my life.”

Demitrius’ mother and grandmother also had important roles in his success. After sophomore year, Demitrius’ mom got a new job and could wake him up in the mornings, making sure he left on time. His grandmother double-checked on him during his commute to school, calling when he was supposed to be boarding the train or waiting at the bus stop.

The support of these caring adults were critical to Demitrius’ success in navigating a challenging sophomore year, with only half of

his sophomore class promoted in the 2015-2016 school year. When asked about the challenges he experienced at Renaissance Academy, Demitrius furrows his brow before concluding, “I don’t really know.” Mr. Witherspoon expounds: “See with D and most of my mentees, it’s not that bad. They know they’ve got me to rely on.”

Across town is Patterson High School, located in the Orangeville/East Highlandtown community, which is nearly one third Latinx. As of 2015, this community had a median household income of \$41,538, a vacancy rate of less than 2 percent and a 7.5 percent unemployment rate.<sup>3</sup> The presence of the Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center complicates the interpretation of economic indicators for this community. Even though this community’s median household income is more than double that of Upton/Druid Heights, the violent crime rate of 29.0 per 1,000 residents nearly mirrored that of Upton/Druid Heights at 30.3 per 1,000 residents. Compared



Patterson High School

to Baltimore City, both communities have violent crime rates nearly double the City's rate of 16.1 per 1,000 residents.

Patterson High School has seen consistent growth in their Latinx/Hispanic student population. (Latinx is the gender neutral term often used in lieu of Latino or Latina.) The 2016-2017 school year saw a 7 percent increase in this population compared to the prior year. Citywide, from 2010-2016, there has been an overall downward trend in the four-year graduation rate for Latinx/Hispanic students.<sup>4</sup> Patterson High School is working hard to change that narrative, seeing a 21 percent gain in graduation rates for Latinx/Hispanic students between 2015 and 2016.

For two Latino students, Brandley and Felipe, teachers played significant roles in supporting them on their journey to graduation.

At a small table among the remnants of Homecoming decorations, Brandley carefully detailed how he fell in with the wrong crowd his freshman year and started doing things he would not usually do, such as skipping school, going to class late, and not doing his work. He barely passed his freshman year with low Ds. But in his sophomore year, as the beginning of baseball season approached, with guidance from teachers like Ms. Allison Greco and Mr. Gary Antoine, he was able to turn his grades around. Of their influence, Brandley said, "[Mr. Antoine] impacted my life, Ms. Greco impacted

my life. When baseball started, that's when Mr. Antoine and Ms. Greco came in. I met Ms. Greco the very first day of practice, and she told me that as soon as she laid eyes on me, she knew I had talent, and I was throwing that talent away. So ever since we met, we formed a bond. We went forward, talking about what I want to do for the next year. So, the second half of the school year, I did awesome." Brandley is enrolled in one of several vocational tracks offered at Patterson - Career and Technology Education (CTE) - and is planning to join a Baltimore City Police Department Cadet program and enroll at the Community College of Baltimore County after graduation.

For Felipe, who is enrolled in Patterson's Drafting and Planning track and plans to continue his schooling to become an engineer, Ms. Kelly O'Brien played a key role: "Well, when I first met her... she said that she was going to look out for me, for my grades and stuff. That if something's going on, she would look out for me. And it really did happen because I was slacking off in this subject I was doing. And she told me, 'Look, you gotta focus, you can't get distracted'... and she really helped me out. I was grateful for having that person right there, 'cause I could've been failing all these classes and had to go to night school, so I'm glad I met her."

Child development research suggests that having one or more caring adults in a young person's life increases the likelihood that they will flourish and become productive adults themselves.<sup>5</sup> And for Demitrius, Brandley, and Felipe, this rings true, as caring

adults intervened, providing guidance and high expectations to help them get on track. Mentorship, a critical intervention to preventing high school dropout, is one way to connect youth to caring adults.<sup>6</sup> A growing area of research suggests that structured mentoring programs can be an effective strategy for keeping students in school and on track to graduate, with the effects of mentorship being increased academic achievement and reductions in unexcused absences.<sup>7</sup>

At Renaissance Academy, Mr. Witherspoon takes pride in guiding Demitrius and other Black, male high school scholars. Demitrius lists a fraction of the ways "Spoons" provides support, noting, "[Mr. Witherspoon] helped me out with information on colleges, helped me out on supplies." Mr. Witherspoon's dedication rubbed off on Demitrius, who is using his remaining time at Renaissance to keep his "younger brothers" at the school on track, "like the seniors who were here before me made sure I was on the right track." Mr. Witherspoon, reflecting on his impact, recounts a story of Demitrius noticing a younger student trying to run out of Renaissance. "I see my mentoring expanding outside of my work with D," says Witherspoon, remembering how Demitrius threw his arms around the student's shoulders



Read the issue brief on mentorship: [ed.gov/rschstat/eval/high-school/mentoring.pdf](https://ed.gov/rschstat/eval/high-school/mentoring.pdf)

and convinced him to go back to class. “You just see the peer-to-peer mentoring, something that started from just D and his little crew mentoring the [other students]...And it makes me excited! I see him, and I get all choked up. I act like it’s not a big deal, but in my heart, I’m like ‘Yoooo, go!!!-ly man. I’m seeing it!’”

For Felipe and Brandley, peer-to-peer mentorship presents itself in the way they use their fluency in both Spanish and English to help their peers with everything from explaining sports rules while at practice to translating directions and helping them understand their homework. Speaking of his baseball team, Brandley shared, “We all formed a bond so that if they needed something, come to me, ‘cause you know, I will help you guys to translate whatever... it could be anything that they need help with... Not only just to translate, but so that they could understand what they need to do workwise, and what they need to do on the baseball field.”

From Demetrius, Felipe and Brandley’s stories, it’s clear that the power of strong, trusting relationships between adults and youth has a transformative impact on young people, even in the face of barriers and adversity. As Baltimore strives for improved graduation rates, and helping more young people find careers that are meaningful and sustaining, mentorship opportunities will continue to play an important, if not critical, role.



# Words from the Board



**"Unquestionably, Baltimore is a city on the rise – recognized nationally and internationally as a place to live, heal, learn and do business. It must be our constant and collective determination to continue to move Baltimore forward in ways that extend opportunity and the prospect of advancement to all our citizens, beginning with our youngest. There is no higher priority of my administration than to smooth the path of those who will define our city's future and provide them with the encouragement and resources they deserve and need to succeed."**

– The Honorable Catherine E. Pugh, Mayor, City of Baltimore



**"Only through partnership and collaboration can we truly meet the diverse needs of the people of Baltimore City."**

– Franklyn Baker, United Way of Central Maryland



**"The backbone of Baltimore's business community is the strength of our workforce pipeline. It's encouraging to see so many groups coming together to ensure that tomorrow's workers have what they need to achieve – so, in turn, our businesses have the potential to thrive."**

– Donald C. Fry, President & CEO, Greater Baltimore Committee



Mural artists: Lyle Kissack & MICA CAP, 2004



## Introduction

# Data Scorecard

**B**altimore's Promise tracks key indicators of important milestones on the cradle-to-career continuum. We follow these metrics over time to identify trends and across groups to assess the extent to which gaps in outcomes by race, ethnicity and gender are closing or expanding. Our dashboard offers a snapshot of how Baltimore's children and youth collectively are faring from birth through education and into early stages of their careers. Throughout our report, we add context to these measures with insight revealed through the lived experiences of Baltimore's youth, families and neighbors.

Between 2016 and 2017, measures of some outcomes such as teen pregnancy rates and Kindergarten Readiness Assessments indicated improvement, while metrics in other areas suggest stalled progress. Particularly of note were declining rates of babies born to mothers between 15 and 19 years of age. Teen birth rates fell among all groups, but birth rates among Hispanic girls and young women declined sharply by approximately 34 percent from 109 to 72 births per 1,000. Baltimore's

Promise is working to continue to reduce the rate of teen births in the city through our partnership with B'More for Healthy Babies and the Baltimore City Health Department.

More children in Baltimore City entered kindergarten prepared for school. Results from the 2017 Kindergarten Readiness Assessments indicated that across all groups, more children in Baltimore demonstrated readiness than in 2016, with a notable 7 percentage point increase in the proportion of Hispanic children who were ready for kindergarten. Research suggests that investments in early childhood education including high-quality pre-K programs improve educational outcomes in elementary school and yield long-term economic benefits.<sup>8</sup> Baltimore's Promise is working with partners to coordinate a comprehensive 0-5 year strategy for the city that includes advancing efforts to prepare all of Baltimore's children for success in kindergarten by promoting early reading initiatives, summer programs for young children, and access to quality pre-K for all children in Baltimore.



## We must support and improve the abilities of Baltimore's babies, children and youth to meet the milestones necessary to thrive over their lifetimes. No measure can be improved without a collective, holistic and comprehensive approach.

Among elementary school children, PARCC Assessment results hinted at modest improvements in third grade math and reading, though progress was inconsistent across groups with scores for black and Hispanic students demonstrating less upward movement than white students. Measures of eighth grade math indicated declines in scores for black students, and slight improvement among white students. In eighth grade reading, scores for all students declined, but by a greater percentage among black and Hispanic children. Baltimore City Public Schools are cognizant of challenges facing students from low-income families and communities. To improve achievement in reading and math, the district is implementing diverse initiatives ranging from placing literacy coaches in schools to assembling teams of experts in math pedagogy to work in a learning community with teachers of advanced math courses.

For high school students, PARCC assessment scores of tenth grade reading skills were mixed. Hispanic students' scores improved by 4 percentage points, and white students showed modest gains, while scores for black students declined by 7 percentage points. Results from assessments for Algebra I implied significant declines among all groups of students, while results from the Algebra II

assessments showed modest gains for most students and a more significant improvement of 6 percentage points in the share of Hispanic students who met or exceeded standards. Across academic assessments, City Schools' scores lag behind state averages, but Baltimore City Public Schools is responding through the implementation of the Blueprint for Success, a comprehensive strategy addressing diverse needs of children as they relate to learning through a range of programs including literacy, restorative practices and intensive learning sites. Every new strategy engages all educational stakeholders from school leadership and faculty to students and families.

High school completion is an essential milestone to put students on track to family-sustaining careers, and improving graduation rates is a key objective of Baltimore City Public Schools. Four-year graduation rates remained approximately the same for all groups with the exception of Hispanic students, among whom graduation rates were 8.3 percentage points lower. The uneven progress in improving educational outcomes for Baltimore's children and youth likely results from pervasive racial and ethnic inequities. For example, in 2017, for Baltimore City Public Schools, where 81 percent of students are black, the 4-year graduation rate was approximately 71 percent;



in the state of Maryland, in which 34 percent of students are black, the graduation rate was 17 percentage points higher - around 88 percent. Baltimore's Promise aims to close racial and ethnic gaps in academic achievement by working with schools and partner organizations to identify and promote wraparound support services, out-of-school time opportunities, and mentoring programs.<sup>9</sup>

Outcomes related to post-secondary education and career paths reveal opportunities for investment in Baltimore's youth. The most recent data available, from the cohort graduating in 2014, indicates that rates of college enrollment within 16 months of high school graduation hover around 52 percent overall. College enrollment has increased significantly among Hispanic youth but declined among white and Asian students. The proportion of students completing four-year degrees within six years declined from approximately 27 percent to 24 percent. The five-year trend in the share of the city's "opportunity youth," meaning they have neither enrolled in post-secondary education nor entered the workforce, remains flat around 21 percent. Research conducted at the request of Baltimore's Promise suggests that

more than 25 percent of Baltimore City Public Schools graduates become disconnected after high school.<sup>10</sup> For a graduate who enters the workforce, earnings remain low and have more or less stagnated in the past five years. Baltimore's Promise is working with partners throughout the city to create post-secondary career pathways to well-paying, in-demand careers through initiatives such as our Career Pathways Demonstration Model.

Disparities along the lines of race, ethnicity and socioeconomic status are not unique to Baltimore. In cities across the country where racial and economic segregation persists, opportunities in access to health care, education and employment are inequitable. In Baltimore, progress on measures across the cradle-to-career continuum were mixed for 2017. We must support and improve the abilities of Baltimore's babies, children and youth to meet the milestones necessary to thrive over their lifetimes. No measure can be improved without a collective, holistic and comprehensive approach. With programs like Baltimore City Public Schools' Blueprint for Success, B'More for Healthy Babies, the Summer Funding Collaborative, the Career Pathways Demonstration Model, and many others, there is promise for continued, collective progress.

# Data Scorecard

## Outcome 1: Babies are Born Healthy

	BC					MD 2016	BC Five-Year Trend
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016		
<b>Infant Mortality Rate - All</b> <i>Infant deaths per 1,000 live births</i>	9.7	10.3	10.4	8.4	8.8	6.5	▲
Infant Mortality Rate - Black/African American	12.7	12.5	12.8	9.7	11.3	10.5	▲
Infant Mortality Rate - White	3.3	6.8	7.0	4.4	5.9	4.3	▼
<b>Low Birth Weight - All</b> <i>% of births with infants weighing 5.5 lbs or less</i>	11.8%	11.9%	11.5%	12.3%	11.7%	8.6%	▲
Low Birth Weight - Black/African American	14.7%	14.5%	13.9%	14.7%	14.9%	12.1%	▼
Low Birth Weight - White	6.8%	7.2%	7.2%	8.6%	6.5%	6.6%	▲
<b>Teen Birth Rate - All</b> <i>Live births per 1,000 females aged 15-19</i>	46.9	43.4	41.0	36.2	32.6	15.9	▲
Teen Birth Rate - Black/African American	55.4	51.1	48.0	40.0	36.7	21.0	▲
Teen Birth Rate - Hispanic/Latinx	79.6	65.4	97.5	109.0	71.6	38.9	▲
Teen Birth Rate - White	25.9	23.4	25.1	29.2	24.0	14.2	▲

## Outcome 2: Children Enter Kindergarten Ready to Succeed in School

	BC				MD	BC
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2018	Four-Year Trend
<b>KRA Results - All</b> <i>% of students with a KRA composite score of Demonstrating Readiness</i>	48%	42%	38%	41%	45%	▼
KRA Results - Female	56%	49%	44%	46%	52%	▼
KRA Results - Male	41%	35%	33%	36%	38%	▼
KRA Results - American Indian or Alaska Native	55%	50%	46%	*	*	▼
KRA Results - Asian	41%	48%	37%	38%	55%	▼
KRA Results - Black/African American	49%	42%	38%	40%	39%	▼
KRA Results - Hispanic/Latinx	35%	27%	25%	32%	24%	▼
KRA Results - Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	50%	40%	20%	*	*	▼
KRA Results - White	59%	53%	49%	57%	57%	▼
KRA Results - Two or More Races	54%	55%	41%	52%	51%	▼

\* Results not reported after 2018 due to small sample size.




### Outcome 3: Children and Youth Achieve at Grade Level in School








	BC			MD	BC
	2013	2015	2017	2017	Five-Year Trend
<b>NAEP Math - Grade 4</b> <i>% of students who scored Proficient or above</i>	19.0%	12.0%	14.0%	42.0%	▼
<b>NAEP Math - Grade 8</b>	13.0%	12.0%	11.0%	33.0%	▼
<b>NAEP Reading - Grade 4</b>	14.0%	11.0%	13.0%	40.0%	▼
<b>NAEP Reading - Grade 8</b>	16.0%	13.0%	13.0%	38.0%	—


  


	BC			MD	BC
	2015	2016	2017	2017	Three-Year Trend
<b>PARCC Math - Grade 3</b> <i>% of students who met or exceeded expectations</i>	17.9%	19.1%	19.4%	43.0%	▲
<b>PARCC Math - Grade 8</b>	5.7%	6.2%	4.9%	16.8%	▼
<b>PARCC English/ Language Arts - Grade 3</b>	20.4%	11.9%	13.4%	39.8%	▼
<b>PARCC English/ Language Arts - Grade 8</b>	14.0%	15.0%	14.0%	38.9%	—

## Outcome 4: Youth Graduate from High School Prepared for Next Step without Remediation

	BC			MD	BC
	2015	2016	2017	2017	Three-Year Trend
<b>PARCC English/ Language Arts - Grade 10</b> <i>% of students who met or exceeded expectations</i>	28.2%	17.6%	17.0%	49.3%	
<b>PARCC Algebra I</b>	9.8%	14.3%	11.4%	36.5%	
<b>PARCC Algebra II</b>	6.2%	5.6%	7.3%	27.3%	

	BC					MD	BC
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2017	Five-Year Trend
<b>Four-Year High School Graduation - All</b> <i>% of high school students who graduated within four years of enrollment</i>	68.5%	69.7%	69.5%	70.7%	70.7%	87.7%	
Four-Year HS Grad - Female	75.4%	76.3%	75.6%	76.6%	76.8%	90.9%	
Four-Year HS Grad - Male	61.1%	62.8%	62.9%	64.3%	64.2%	84.6%	
Four-Year HS Grad - Asian	88.3%	82.6%	91.8%	81.8%	83.9%	96.3%	
Four-Year HS Grad - Black/African American	68.3%	69.6%	70.7%	71.1%	72.1%	85.4%	
Four-Year HS Grad - Hispanic/Latinx	61.5%	64.0%	57.5%	60.2%	52.0%	74.0%	
Four-Year HS Grad - White	65.3%	68.2%	65.7%	70.3%	70.1%	92.7%	

	BC					MD	BC
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2016	Five-Year Trend
<b>Five-Year High School Graduation - All</b> <i>% of HS students who graduated within five years of enrollment</i>	71.7%	73.5%	74.9%	74.8%	74.8%	89.5%	

	BC					MD	BC
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2015	Five-Year Trend
<b>College Remediation</b> <i>% of recent HS graduates who needed remediation in college</i>	76.1%	76.6%	74.7%	70.2%	69.6%	51.7%	

## Outcome 5: Youth Earn a Quality Post-Secondary Credential or Receive Training and are Career Ready

	BC					MD	BC
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2014	Five-Year Trend
<b>College Enrollment - All</b> <i>% of high school graduates who enrolled in college within 16 months after high school</i>	56.9%	55.3%	54.0%	52.5%	52.0%	69.8%	▼
College Enrollment - Female	59.7%	60.0%	58.5%	56.8%	56.2%	74.9%	▼
College Enrollment - Male	53.3%	49.1%	48.6%	47.1%	47.0%	64.4%	▼
College Enrollment - American Indian or Alaska Native	-	58.3%	60.0%	87.1%	69.6%	66.8%	▲
College Enrollment - Asian	-	62.5%	62.1%	78.9%	72.5%	84.6%	▲
College Enrollment - Black/African American	-	55.3%	54.3%	51.4%	51.8%	64.3%	▼
College Enrollment - Hispanic/Latinx	-	35.7%	38.6%	31.1%	46.9%	58.7%	▲
College Enrollment - White	-	59.2%	52.7%	60.5%	51.6%	73.9%	▼

	BC					MD	BC
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2010	Five-Year Trend
<b>Degree Completion</b> <i>% of first-time, full-time undergraduates who enrolled in the fall after graduation and completed four-year degrees within six years</i>	28.8%	28.3%	29.8%	27.0%	24.1%	65.5%	▼

	BC					MD	BC
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2016	Five-Year Trend
<b>Opportunity Youth</b> <i>% of youth (18-24) not in school, not working, and no degree beyond HS</i>	21.0%	20.0%	20.0%	22.0%	21.0%	12.0%	—

	BC					MD	BC
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2016	Five-Year Trend
<b>Unemployment Rate: Ages 16 and over</b> <i>% of youth in age ranges not employed</i>	13.7%	13.9%	13.9%	13.1%	11.4%	6.7%	▲
Unemployment Rate: Ages 16 to 19	40.3%	41.0%	38.9%	35.0%	30.8%	21.3%	▲
Unemployment Rate: Ages 20 to 24	21.7%	22.0%	22.5%	22.5%	19.9%	13.1%	▲

	BC					MD	BC
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2016	Five-Year Trend
<b>Median Earnings by Education</b> <i>Estimates among population 25 years and over, in 2016 inflation-adjusted dollars</i>	\$36,322	\$36,840	\$36,513	\$36,986	\$37,109	\$47,351	▲
Less than high school graduate	\$21,612	\$21,467	\$20,652	\$21,141	\$21,359	\$25,215	—
High school graduate or equivalent	\$29,201	\$29,178	\$29,370	\$29,311	\$28,396	\$33,646	▼
Some college or associate's degree	\$35,252	\$35,506	\$33,990	\$32,929	\$33,275	\$41,783	▼
Bachelor's degree	\$50,444	\$50,955	\$49,617	\$49,957	\$50,450	\$60,806	—
Graduate or professional degree	\$62,343	\$62,056	\$62,017	\$62,051	\$62,462	\$81,798	—

	BC					MD	BC
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2016	Five-Year Trend
<b>Gender Differences in Median Earnings by Education</b> <i>Estimates of gender pay gap (median male income minus median female income) - 25 years and older</i>	\$5,089	\$5,120	\$4,890	\$5,226	\$5,509	\$11,870	▼
Less than high school graduate	\$7,417	\$6,645	\$5,611	\$5,631	\$4,107	\$9,761	▲
High school graduate or equivalent	\$3,359	\$4,340	\$4,042	\$3,988	\$4,144	\$11,153	▼
Some college or associate's degree	\$5,350	\$6,106	\$5,538	\$5,964	\$6,715	\$14,158	▼
Bachelor's degree	\$7,483	\$6,934	\$8,596	\$8,207	\$10,240	\$20,150	▼
Graduate or professional degree	\$8,749	\$9,698	\$10,896	\$13,020	\$14,170	\$31,129	▼





Mural artist: Bob Heironimus, 1996

# Words from the Board



**“Every day, I am struck anew by the promise and potential of our students, and the resilience with which they respond to the challenges that surround them in their daily lives. It is our obligation, as educators and community members, to work collectively to provide them with the supports and skills they need to overcome those challenges and succeed. We must focus relentlessly on the needs of the whole child to ensure that our students thrive.”**

– Dr. Sonja B. Santelises, CEO, Baltimore City Public School System



**“The Weinberg Foundation has been privileged to participate in numerous partnerships – between and among funders, nonprofit providers, government leaders, and the community-at-large – that are serving Baltimore in meaningful and powerful ways. These initiatives, including Baltimore’s Promise, promote positive change and demonstrate the value of collaboration and collective impact.”**

– Rachel Garbow Monroe, President & CEO, The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation



**“We are trying to use data and evidence to change systems to improve the lives of all of Baltimore’s citizens. We need to work collaboratively to accomplish that.”**

– Bob Embry, Abell Foundation



Do we even know that we are really interpreting the right story? Or are we aware of the right story behind the data?

Danielle Torain, Consultant

# Lifting Up Community Voices: A New Approach to Research

Associated Black Charities (ABC) is a change-driven organization that advocates and facilitates the creation of healthy and prosperous Maryland communities. As Chief Executive Officer of ABC, I believe that asset-based inquiry and community engagement that honors lived experience is critical to community development and research. I also believe that with the provision of resources and information, or capacity-building, our communities can create and sustain programs and organizations that are best equipped to meet their needs. Alone, data points only give us a snapshot, void of historical context, everyday experiences, and the aspirations of communities that underscore resiliency and progress. Perceptions based solely on these snippets are steeped in racial bias, even if we have the best of intentions.

Participatory research and community development are proving impactful in Baltimore. The Annie E. Casey Foundation's participatory research project, led by Baltimore-based community and youth advocates, utilized a community-tailored research approach to gain insight into the workforce needs and experiences of Baltimore City young people. B-CIITY, or the Baltimore City Intergenerational Initiatives for Trauma and Youth, is the community-created coalition, supported by the Baltimore City Health Department, tasked with directing and distributing the federal ReCAST grant funds to Sandtown-Winchester, Upton/Druid Heights, and PennNorth. True pioneers, the B-CIITY coalition has made Baltimore City the first of all ReCAST Grant recipients to establish a community board in a community-directed process.


As a board member, I look forward to continuing to help guide Baltimore's Promise in its endeavors to become more grounded in community perspectives and use the resources at its disposal and its platform to build capacity and incorporate lived experiences into its work. Amplifying community-led initiatives in Baltimore is one way Baltimore's Promise is working to achieve these goals.

See what we learned from B-CIITY and the participatory research group in our next data story.

In service,

**Diane Bell McKoy**

President and CEO, Associated Black Charities



**E**vidence-based decision-making can always be improved by interpreting the data in the context of the lived experiences of impacted stakeholders. Lived experiences also add needed perspectives to research, program, and policy design. Community members are directly involved with their neighborhood's day-to-day activities and are acutely aware of the assets and challenges of their community. Yet, community members are excluded from the research and design processes of program and policy efforts.

In 2017, Baltimore's Promise adopted a Race Equity and Inclusion statement intended to guide our work and operational practice. In our search for successful examples of decision-making entities that authentically partner with impacted communities and populations - and allow lived experiences to guide research and program design in Baltimore - two initiatives stood out: The Annie E. Casey Foundation's Participatory Research Project and Baltimore City Intergenerational Initiatives for Trauma and Youth, or B-CITY.

A private philanthropy based in Baltimore and working across the country, The Annie E. Casey Foundation makes grants that help federal agencies, states, counties, cities and neighborhoods create more innovative, cost-effective responses to the issues that negatively affect children: poverty, unnecessary disconnection from family, and communities with limited access to opportunity. [aecf.org](http://aecf.org)

## Participatory Research

In 2016, Danielle Torain was a Senior Associate at the Annie E. Casey Foundation (Casey) and an Executive-on-Loan to the Mayor's Office of Economic Development (MOED) in support of the One Baltimore for Jobs (1B4J) initiative. While facilitating check-ins with occupational skills-training providers and reviewing data, Ms. Torain and the 1B4J team found meaningful trends in recruitment, training and retention that suggested unique challenges to serving young people in the workforce arena. Simultaneously, Casey was discussing adding a youth and young adult portfolio and exploring potential investments for a work access subset. However, youth voices were missing from both conversations and were needed to ensure the investment would be impactful.

"You're trying to analyze those trends, but only from the perspective of the practitioner, of the government official. The youth perspective was largely missing. So, do we even know that we are really interpreting the right story? Or are we aware of the right story behind the data?" Ms. Torain says she wondered. "How do we make sure that we're more intentionally reaching out to young people who are struggling with this work access issue to understand from their lens, what would they prioritize? What needs more investment?"

Using resources and support from Casey and partners such as MOED, Ms. Torain facilitated the development of a participatory research



Danielle Torain and other consultants

project that, in her words, would “[put] young people and younger professionals in a position where they could actually help us design an approach to reach young people and have these conversations.” Ms. Torain invited known youth and community advocates Kirsten Allen, Imani Bryan, Dayvon Love, Shawn Burnett, Lamontre Randall, Huey Blake and Dejuan Patterson to lead the project as consultants.

1B4J is a workforce program targeting young black males from distressed neighborhoods, designed by MOED to demonstrate that a workforce system could be built that fused together occupational skills training with key support services. Baltimore’s Promise is working with MOED to implement a career pathways program, modeled after 1B4J, to connect recent Baltimore City’s Public Schools graduates to training, support services, and careers. [moed.baltimorecity.gov/one-baltimore-jobs](http://moed.baltimorecity.gov/one-baltimore-jobs)

According to Tomi Hiers, Director of the Baltimore Civic Site at Casey, hiring young, black experts was unprecedented. “When you think about individuals who are often given opportunities to consult, especially for large organizations like Casey, they almost never look like the young women and men who were hired to lead this participatory research project,” she says. “Tapping young people to have them play a critical role in designing the research, implementing the research, and shaping the recommendations - totally new.”

Also intentional was Ms. Torain’s work to apply an equity lens in the totality of the project, including the resources and support provided to the consultants, from compensation to capacity-building through mentorship and training.

The participatory research project timeline was six months, and in that time the consultants



worked as a team to ground themselves in the local and national historical contexts of workforce development, with a specific consideration of the lasting impact on black youth and workers in Baltimore. Following that deep dive, they designed and implemented research protocols and defined recommendations.

According to Kirsten Allen, one of the consultants, the team set the tone for the project early on and “constantly referred back to their values” to ensure they were always “staying true to intention” - meaning that equity, lived experiences, continuous engagement and centering community needs were at the crux of their work.

Using personal knowledge of and connections within the community, the consultants partnered with local businesses, recreation centers and other community-frequented organizations and businesses that were located nearby workforce development organizations to hold “corner conversations” - the team’s version of focus groups. They stood on corners, personally inviting

passersby who fit their targeted populations to discuss their experiences in accessing work. As incentive, they offered free food. According to Ms. Allen and Ms. Bryan, the team started with a rigid line of questioning but shifted to a more conversational method that focused on themes through a process of reflection and correction.

“Abandoning what we thought we knew is what ended up helping [us] to learn the most,” Ms. Bryan says.

Ultimately, the consultants found that Baltimore City youth are decidedly interested in entrepreneurship, for the betterment of themselves and their communities.

“[They] have seen generations get by and know how to get a job,” Ms. Allen says. “But young people have an overwhelming desire to have a career - they want to be business owners and have careers and come back and provide opportunities for their communities.”

The consultants also found that workforce organizations are not engaging with the



## “Abandoning what we thought we knew is what ended up helping [us] to learn the most.”

- Imani Bryan, Community Advocate

communities in which they are located and, in some cases, purport to serve. Ms. Allen recalls that the vast majority of young people with whom the team spoke were completely unaware of workforce organizations in their communities, even organizations across the street from a given corner conversation.

“Organizations don’t know that they aren’t really reaching people - [a] clear disconnect,” Ms. Allen says. This disconnect, she believes, stems from a flawed definition of success as well as a lack of purposeful engagement: “People [feel] like what they’re doing is working and [are] sticking to that formula and not going outside the box, but what is your definition of success? You make a plan to reach 20 people, and you reach 20 people; but is that really successful if 80 percent of your community or target population are across the street and don’t know you exist? Are you leaving your office?”

In response to the consultants’ findings, Casey is partnering with the Baltimore Algebra Project to pilot an entrepreneurship training program for 14-to-21 year olds. However, the consultants agree that it’s too soon to assess the impact of this new way of engagement on foundation practices or larger systems. Ms. Allen does believe that replication of the participatory research project is possible and potentially empowering for those leading work on the community level in any sector. This is especially true, she says, “if [the work is]

guided and done in the right way - if it’s done in an intentional way, if it’s done in a transparent way.”

Ms. Bryan shares similar sentiments, noting that it’s fine to share findings, but “[it] would be great to advise those with decision-making power to train them on how to replicate.”

The project culminated in a report, “Reshaping Workforce Development in Baltimore,” published by the Annie E. Casey Foundation in November. At the time of writing, the participatory research consultants were determining how they could best re-engage the community to discuss their findings.

The Baltimore Algebra Project works to ensure that all students have access to quality, 21st century education which includes learning and mastering advanced math. “Youth led, youth run,” they recognize the intelligence of Baltimore City youth by paying a living wage to teach math to their peers; training their existing leadership skills; and supporting their vision for a just, more equitable Baltimore and beyond. [baltimorealgebraproject.org](http://baltimorealgebraproject.org)

See the full report: [aecf.org/resources/reshaping-workforce-development-in-baltimore](http://aecf.org/resources/reshaping-workforce-development-in-baltimore)

## B-CIITY

In discussing her work as a participatory research consultant with the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Ms. Allen says, "Provide the resources, and [the community] can find and lift up the solutions themselves."

This advice isn't common practice for a number of reasons, including implicit biases that materialize in grantmaking and reporting requirements that prevent communities from accessing resources directly. As a result, community engagement practices are often concentrated at the beginning of planning or the beginning of implementation rather than throughout the decision-making processes affecting the community at the center of an effort.

When the Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) was awarded the \$5 million federal Resiliency in Communities After Stress and Trauma (ReCAST) grant in fall 2016 to manage on behalf of Baltimore City, the agency assumed that they would employ their typical community engagement strategy.

"Like most big systems do, we went to communities and said, 'Alright, this is what we're going to do,'" Larry Simmons, B-CIITY Program Manager with BCHD, says.

But community members pushed back and successfully secured the opportunity to define trauma on their own terms, central to defining the scope of the ReCAST funding. In under a year, residents in three communities – Sandtown-Winchester, Upton/Druid Heights, and Penn North – collaborated with partners to create a new process to disburse

federal grant funds: a community-run coalition with an 11-person, elected community board. Together, this coalition established community meeting norms, a decision-governing process, and an agreed-upon name – the Baltimore City Intergenerational Initiatives for Trauma and Youth, or B-CIITY. Pioneers in their own right, B-CIITY is now a model for other ReCAST cities, none of which have operational, representative community boards.

"[The community is] committed to things being different," says Candace Chance, one of B-CIITY's community board members.

Born and raised in Penn North, Ms. Chance reveled in the fact that B-CIITY was doing something new, defining the board experience as "sitting in a place of discovery and inquiry" and a "beautiful whirlwind." She also acknowledged the practical challenges in collaboration and honoring everyone's experiences.

"This is a new model and people love the idea behind collaboration and like having it come from the community."

The oldest health department in the country, the Baltimore City Health Department works in collaboration with other city agencies, health care providers, community organizations and funders to empower all Baltimoreans with the knowledge, access, and environment that will enable healthy living. [health.baltimorecity.gov/about](http://health.baltimorecity.gov/about)

Simmons (left) and Chance (right).



When it comes to practice, it's a whole different ball game. Because you have all of these different views and ideas and priorities that are kind of colliding into one space and [it is difficult] to make sense of that for a direction you're going to take," she says.

Reflecting on B-CIITY's evolution, Ms. Chance says, "So it's been chaotic, but I would say at the root of it, it's been based in an awesome opportunity to really change the way things are done."

In addition to working through that chaos to help refine the organization's vision, core values and priorities, the board must award grant funds. B-CIITY is resolute in ensuring those resources are distributed equitably to organizations that are doing the work.

"If we're recasting this money and some of the folks in the coalition have always gotten funding, then this is not a recast," Ms. Chance says. "So now the board is looking at the coalition, asking ourselves, 'Out of the funded partners, who did the work? Who was willing to meet the expectations that we have?'"

B-CIITY also prioritizes organizations with small operating budgets that are ineligible for most grants, as well as the individuals in the community who are, unbeknownst to them, running programs in their homes.

Ms. Chance explains, "There are people in the community who have healing centers in their homes and are making an impact on people's lives in their homes. They don't have a 501(c)3;

The Resiliency in Communities After Stress and Trauma (ReCAST) grant is awarded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, or SAMHSA, to assist high-risk youth and families and promote resilience and equity in communities that have recently faced civil unrest through implementation of evidence-based, violence prevention, and community youth engagement programs, as well as linkages to trauma-informed behavioral health services. Read more about SAMHSA and the ReCAST grant here: [samhsa.gov](https://www.samhsa.gov)



Waverly neighborhood in Baltimore

they don't have all this coverage. For me, those are the types of instances or projects that we want to highlight."

Ms. Chance describes the rationale behind what many would perceive as an unorthodox grantmaking preference: sustainability. "We want to be able to show the community that you can be in your house," she says emphatically, "and doing what's necessary. And that's what's sustainable."

Larry Simmons and his colleagues at BCHD likewise hold sustainability as a critical outcome, working with the board, B-CIITY coalition members and funded projects to build capacity through training and connections to larger systems.

"For example, there is a board member, Ms. Rochelle, and she does these women's dinners on Sundays. But, it's a healing circle. So let's support her, give her some money, so she's not coming out of her pocket every Sunday, and then also provide some evaluation, because this is a program. Once you add some evaluation [data], people can shop it around," Simmons says.

According to Simmons, the team ultimately wants to ensure B-CIITY can continue after their tenure ends.

"We're trying to build capacity in folks so that we're not just like any other program that comes into communities, gets people all riled up, gets what the program needs, and then is gone. Then the community is just as broken as it was before you came."

**“We’re trying to build capacity in folks so that we’re not just like any other program that comes into communities, gets people all riled up, gets what the program needs, and then is gone. Then the community is just as broken as it was before you came.”**

–Larry Simmons, B-CIITY Program Manager,  
Baltimore City Health Department



# Words from the Board



**"The principles of collective impact and public-private partnership were critical to the success of our B'More for Healthy Babies program, which has resulted in a citywide reduction in infant mortality of nearly 40 percent in seven years. Think of the outcomes we could have if we applied this approach to other difficult challenges, and the lasting impact that it could have for our children and families."**

– Dr. Leana Wen, Commissioner of Health, Baltimore City



**"When we work collectively, we can bring more resources to the table, ensuring that Baltimore's youth are getting everything they need to live healthy, successful lives from cradle to career."**

– Shanaysha Sauls, Baltimore Community Foundation



**"The saying 'two heads are better than one' is not just a well-worn proverb; it's how we need to do business every day in Baltimore if we want to realize the promise of this beloved city. Collectively, we achieve more than we would on our own."**

– Jay Perman, President, University of Maryland, Baltimore



**"If Baltimore's Promise wants to help achieve lasting change, we must rally stakeholders to invest in the most effective programs and pursue policies that afford all of Baltimore's families a chance to thrive."**

– Matthew Gallagher, President/CEO, The Goldseker Foundation



LONG LIVE THE ROSE  
THAT GREW FROM CONCRETE

Mural artists: Cindy Garcia, Lyle Kissack & Master of Arts in Community Art, 2006



## Our Commitment to Baltimore

Baltimore's Promise is a citywide collaborative, composed of public, business, community, higher education, nonprofit and philanthropic leaders who have a shared commitment to an ambitious vision: ensuring that all Baltimore City children and youth are safe, healthy and well-educated on their paths from cradle to career. We seek to catalyze and align efforts and resources from across our community to make this vision a reality.

Too many Baltimore City children and youth face significant obstacles to achieving their full potential. Opportunity and paths to success are not equitably available to all of our children. Through generations of collective history in our city—confirmed by bodies of research—we know inequities in opportunity and disparities in outcomes are driven by race, gender, socioeconomic status, culture, disabilities and other societal factors.

In Baltimore, systemic race-based barriers disproportionately affect Black children and youth and those in other communities of color. For Baltimore's Promise to fulfill our mission of ensuring that all children succeed, we must apply an equity lens that allows us to better understand these barriers and the challenges faced by our vulnerable children, youth and the family supporting their pathway. Acknowledging these entrenched structural impediments, Baltimore's Promise must commit to long-term strategies that will create opportunity and foster transformative change across Baltimore City.

A rigorous and sustained focus on eliminating systemic and institutional race-based barriers to opportunity is essential to achieving our objectives from cradle to career. Through this intentional approach, we can better shape targeted strategies that meet specific needs of our vulnerable children and youth while improving conditions and outcomes for all populations we serve, creating new pathways for opportunities for children, youth and families to thrive in Baltimore.



# Snapshots of Our Current Work

Baltimore's Promise, the Mayor's Office, the Baltimore City Health Department, and Baltimore City Public Schools will be working with diverse data stakeholders in the city to create an **Integrated Data System** (IDS) as part of the 2018 IDS Learning Community of Actionable Intelligence for Social Policy. An IDS links data between agencies and programs throughout the city, enabling policy stakeholders to better understand the needs of the community through informed analysis. Using shared data, Baltimore Promise's Data Working Group will work with the community to answer important questions about the needs of Baltimore's children, youth and families.

**Grads2Careers** is a career pathways demonstration model in partnership with Baltimore's Promise, Baltimore City Public Schools and the Mayor's Office of Employment Development (MOED). Based on MOED's One Baltimore for Jobs Initiative, the program was designed to build a pathway between education and workforce for 400-500 City Schools graduates who are not planning to attend college by connecting them to job training and career-track employment. With 10 career tracks offered by our training providers, we are now recruiting high school seniors on track to graduate in June 2019 and will begin to share the results of this initiative.

In 2017, Baltimore's Promise began serving as the administrative backbone for the **Baltimore Summer Funding Collaborative** (SFC), a group of 12 public and private organizations that fund summer enrichment for youth and young adults in Baltimore City. In this role Baltimore's Promise manages the centralized application process, external communications and engagement and the progress of the collaborative to meet shared goals. This year, we released an RFP that yielded 192 applications indicating over \$11 million in requests. The SFC granted \$3.15 million to support 81 programs operating in summer 2018.

In our new report, "**Gaining Traction after High School Graduation**," Baltimore's Promise worked with the Baltimore Education Research Consortium and the Johns Hopkins Institute for Education Policy, in collaboration with the Maryland Longitudinal Data System, to assess outcomes for graduates of Baltimore City Public Schools. Findings included low annual incomes, low rates of degree attainment and gaps in income and degree attainment along the lines of race and gender. Next, Baltimore's Promise and partners will convene a youth-led event to address the findings of the report and develop policy and program responses to improve outcomes for City Schools graduates.

In 2017, Baltimore's Promise received board approval to initiate a **policy and advocacy strategy**, and we engaged advocacy partners and other stakeholders to gain a deeper understanding of local priorities. Through a letter to Governor Hogan and a meeting with the Children's Cabinet, we requested support for the Career Pathways Demonstration Model, Baltimore City Schools (Bridge to Kirwan), B'more for Healthy Babies and the development of an Integrated Data System for Baltimore City. Going forward, Baltimore's Promise will continue our local and state-level advocacy efforts with the goal of securing resources and partnerships to improve outcomes for Baltimore City's youth and young adults.

## Endnotes

- 1** "Upton/Druid Heights Vital Signs," Baltimore Neighborhood Indicators Alliance at the Jacob Frances Institute and University of Baltimore, [bniajfi.org/community/Upton\\_Druid%20Heights/](http://bniajfi.org/community/Upton_Druid%20Heights/).
- 2** "Baltimore City - Renaissance Academy (0433)," 2017 Maryland Report Card, Maryland State Department of Education, 2017, [reportcard.msde.maryland.gov/Entity.aspx?k=300433](http://reportcard.msde.maryland.gov/Entity.aspx?k=300433)
- 3** "Orangeville/East Highlandtown Vital Signs," Baltimore Neighborhood Indicators Alliance at the Jacob Frances Institute and University of Baltimore, [bniajfi.org/community/Orangeville\\_East%20Highlandtown/](http://bniajfi.org/community/Orangeville_East%20Highlandtown/).
- 4** "Canton Vital Signs," Baltimore Neighborhood Indicators Alliance at the Jacob Frances Institute and University of Baltimore, [bniajfi.org/community/Canton/](http://bniajfi.org/community/Canton/).
- 5** See, for example: Bayer, Amanda, Jean Baldwin Grossman, and David L. DuBois. "Using volunteer mentors to improve the academic outcomes of underserved students: the role of relationships." *Journal of Community Psychology* 43, no. 4 (2015): 408-429 and Schwartz, Sarah EO, Christian S. Chan, Jean E. Rhodes, and Peter C. Scales. "Community developmental assets and positive youth development: The role of natural mentors." *Research in Human Development* 10, no. 2 (2013): 141-162.
- 6** According to MENTOR, Mentoring takes place between young persons (i.e., mentees) and older or more experienced persons (i.e., mentors) who are acting in a non-professional helping capacity to provide relationship-based support that benefits one or more areas of the mentee's development. In Baltimore, we see mentorship take shape in a range of ways, including peer-to-peer, compensated, group, etc. (BP Landscape). Learn more about mentorship in Baltimore from Maryland Out of School Time Network (MOST), MENTOR's Maryland affiliate.
- 7** See, for example, Miranda-Chan, Thomas, Veronica Fruiht, Valeska Dubon, and Laura Wray-Lake. "The functions and longitudinal outcomes of adolescents' naturally occurring mentorships." *American journal of community psychology* 57, no. 1-2 (2016): 47-59 and Murphey et al., "Caring Adults: Important for Positive Child Well-Being," Annie E. Casey Foundation Child Trends (December 2013).
- 8** Maryland was designated as one of five states with high quality pre-K programs, in which the effects of pre-K on elementary school educational achievement are significant. Positive effects of shifting from no pre-K programs to universal pre-K programs are particularly substantial in magnitude in communities with majority African-American populations suggesting that access to pre-K can contribute to overcoming longstanding inequities in education. See, for example, Bartik, Timothy J., and Brad Hershbein. 2017. "Returns to Large-Scale Public School Pre-K Programs: Evidence from Within All States." Presented at Federal Reserve System Community Development Research Conference, March 23, 2017.
- 9** Baltimore City Public Schools PARCC Results, 2017" Presentation to Board of Commissioners, August 22, 2017, accessed online at [http://www.baltimorecityschools.org/cms/lib/MD01001351/Centricity/Domain/8783/2017\\_PARCC\\_Results\\_Overview.pdf](http://www.baltimorecityschools.org/cms/lib/MD01001351/Centricity/Domain/8783/2017_PARCC_Results_Overview.pdf)
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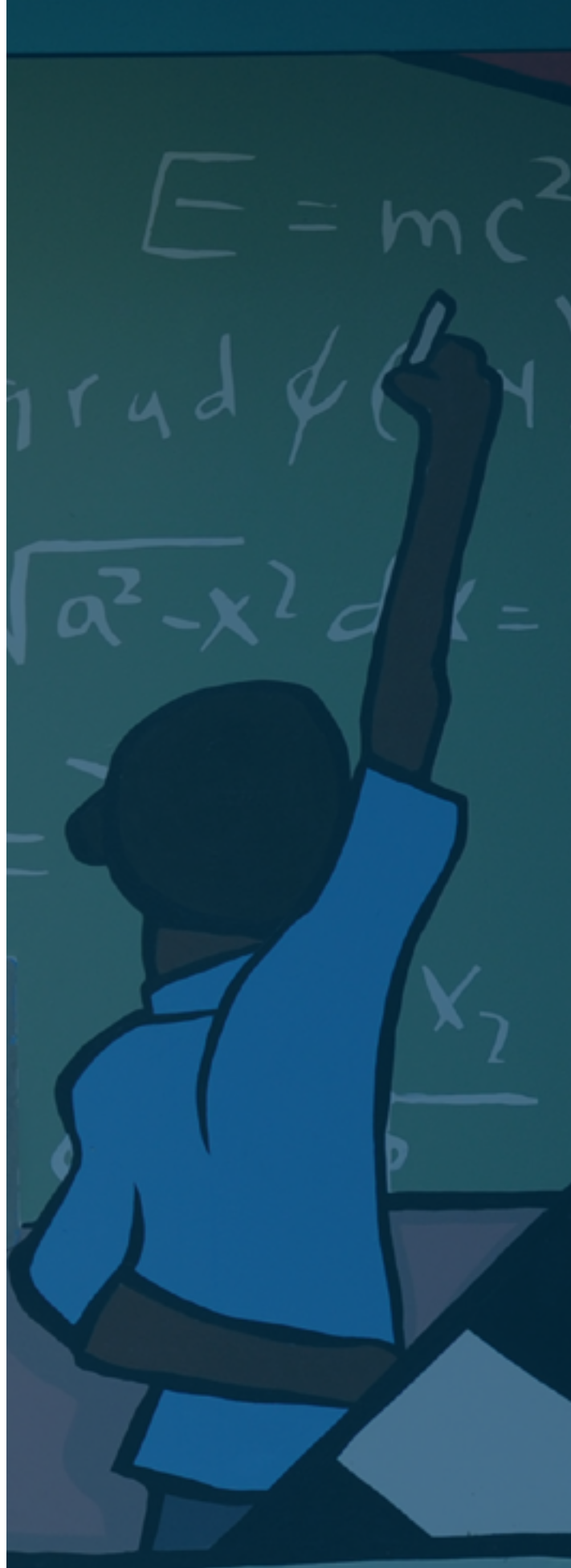
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