



OPPORTUNITY STARTS AT HOME COLORADO

Education and Housing

Stable and affordable housing has proven to be a key factor in driving stronger student outcomes. More than 21,400 students in Colorado's public schools experienced homelessness at some point during the 2019-2020 school year which means this is all the more relevant for our state.

- **Children who switch schools frequently due to housing instability or homelessness and those living in publicly supported housing tend to perform at a lower level in school.** They are more likely than the general population to have Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), asthma, speech impairments, learning disabilities, and development delays.
- Children who live in an overcrowded household at any time before age 19 are less likely to graduate from high school.
- Living in poor-quality housing and under-resourced neighborhoods is associated with lower kindergarten readiness.
- **Youth with less than a high school diploma have a 346% higher risk of experiencing homelessness than youth with at least a high school degree.**
- Unstable housing directly impeded academic success, and those who were unstably housed are more likely to be employed in low-wage jobs as adults.

¹ Homeless students | KIDS COUNT Data Center

² Report Describes Educational Needs of Children in Publicly Supported Homes, Proposes Housing-Centered Educational Supports | National Low Income Housing Coalition (nlihc.org)

³ How Does Household Crowding Affect Education Outcomes?

⁴ Poor Kindergarten Readiness Scores Are Linked to Substandard Housing and Neighborhood Conditions

⁵ ChapinHall_VoYC_1-Pager_Final_111517.pdf (voicesofyouthcount.org)

⁶ Voight, A., Shinn, M., & Nation, M. (2012). The Longitudinal Effects of Residential Mobility on the Academic Achievement of Urban Elementary and Middle School Students. *Educational Researcher*, 41(9), 385-392

Housing plays an important role in how much schools can spend on students' education because school funding largely comes from local property taxes. Educational outcomes such as school's test scores are directly associated with higher home values and increased spending on residential investments.

- Near public schools with high standardized test scores, housing costs 2.4 times more than housing near low-scoring public schools.⁷
- Districts and schools currently located in **formerly redlined neighborhoods with poor quality housing have significantly less per-pupil revenues, larger shares of Black and non-white students, less diverse student populations, and lower average test scores** compared with those located in neighborhoods that were not redlined.⁸

Affordable housing options for low-income households with school age children in high-opportunity areas⁹ are essential. This creates economically diverse neighborhoods and schools which drives stronger student outcomes.

- Economically diverse schools are 22 times higher performing than high-poverty schools. Students in mixed-income schools showed 30 percent

more growth in test scores than peers with similar socioeconomic backgrounds in schools with higher poverty over four years of high school.¹⁰

- **Studies have proven repeatedly that affordable housing, in and of itself, can help raise student achievement and can be more effective than some traditional education reforms.**¹¹

Housing is deeply connected with racial disparities in educational outcomes.

- A recent study by the University of California at Berkeley analyzing housing segregation found high levels of residential racial segregation in Denver Metro area. **Minority children raised in racially segregated communities get poorer grades in school, are less likely to go to college, and make less money throughout their working lives** than minority children raised in racially integrated neighborhoods.
- Research shows housing insecurity and homelessness have a particularly strong, statistically significant relationship with college completion rates, persistence, and credit attainment.

⁷ How Housing Can Determine Educational, Health, and Economic Outcomes

⁸ New Research on the Impact of Redlining on Educational Outcomes | National Low Income Housing Coalition (nlihc.org)

⁹ <https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/32821/412648-Benefits-of-Living-in-High-Opportunity-Neighborhoods.PDF>

¹⁰ The Benefits of Socioeconomically and Racially Integrated Schools and Classroom

¹¹ movers_paper2_vinterim.pdf (harvard.edu)

¹² COLUMN: The need for racially integrated housing in Colorado | Opinion | gazette.com

¹³ US: Homelessness, housing insecurity top list of college student stressors as new year begins - World Socialist Web Site (wsws.org)

Educators also experience housing instability.

- Teachers are more likely to rent than own a home, leaving them vulnerable to rent increases and preventing wealth generation.¹⁴
- Teachers who struggle to cover housing costs miss more days of school and report being able to focus less on teaching than more stably housed teachers.¹⁵
- **High housing costs threaten to push teachers and school administrators out of the communities in which they work.**

In Colorado's Eagle, Summit, Park and Pitkin counties, teachers and school administrators increasingly turn to organizations Habitat for Humanity for housing options.¹⁶

Moving Forward

When children are stably housed, they do better in school and achieve more positive outcomes later in life. Policy solutions may include:

- Identifying and tracking housing insecure or homeless students to inform early interventions;
- Investing in housing vouchers for low-income households to access high-opportunity areas, including vouchers tied to specific school districts; and
- Developing quality housing for teachers located near the schools where they work.

Robust investments in affordable housing and consideration of housing in any educational policy are key to helping children access better educational opportunities and disrupting the cycle of poverty.



Opportunity Starts at Home: Colorado

From better health to food security to good education, housing is foundational to every aspect of well-being, building stronger communities, promoting economic growth, and providing opportunities for everyone to thrive.

Our Colorado-based, multi-sector coalition is working in coordination with the National Low-Income Housing Coalition to generate widespread support for local, state, and federal policies that correct long-standing racial inequities and economic injustices that have prevented access to affordable, quality housing for people with low incomes.

Learn more and see coalition partners at www.ColoradoCoalition.org/OSAH

¹⁴ <https://housingmatters.urban.org/research-summary/how-housing-costs-can-affect-teachers-attitudes-and-retention>

¹⁵ Ibid

¹⁶ <https://www.vaildaily.com/news/eagle-valley/desperate-for-affordable-homes-teachers-in-colorados-high-country-turn-to-habitat-for-humanity/>