

**Strengthening Schools
and Communities Through
Affordable Housing**

Thinking Beyond “Teacher Villages” to Promote Shared Prosperity

MAY 2026

 **Enterprise**[®]





About this resource

This brief was made possible through the generous support of Ballmer Group and reflects the work of Enterprise Community Partners — in partnership with StriveTogether — to support housing and education partners around the country seeking to advance upward mobility for children and families. We thank the many communities and partners whose commitment and cross-sector collaboration have helped deepen our understanding of this work. For additional resources to support these types of partnerships, see our [Advancing Mobility from Poverty toolkit](#).

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Introduction

The affordable housing crisis felt throughout communities across the country has had major implications for the housing sector, as well as for proximal systems such as healthcare, education, and workforce development. The education sector — school districts in particular — has been called upon to address housing challenges for staff. Rising housing costs and housing instability create staff recruitment and retention challenges, while also fueling student absenteeism, enrollment volatility, and frequent transfers. Together, these factors further strain educators as the social and emotional effects of housing insecurity show up in the classroom. Building on school districts’ desire to enable their workforce to access proximate, stable, and quality affordable housing, this brief discusses what school districts bring to the table to expand access to affordable housing for the wider educational ecosystem.

The intersection between housing and education

Home and school are two of the most important communities for children, providing foundations for future success that underpin many aspects of upward mobility. Housing and education have a profound effect on children’s sense of safety, stability, and connection with others. When individuals and families have housing that is stable, well-connected, and affordable they can save money, access needed resources, improve their health, remain rooted in community, and even build wealth and attain equity through homeownership or entrepreneurial pursuits.

A growing body of evidence shows the vital link between children’s success in school and the housing bundle¹, i.e., the five housing attributes that advocates say are essential to upward mobility: housing quality, housing affordability, housing stability, neighborhood context, and housing that builds assets and wealth. Students living in unaffordable, unstable, or inadequate housing often experience high levels of chronic stress and anxiety, are prone to absence due to illness or injury, and tend to switch schools frequently — all of which can lead to detrimental impacts on academic achievement and educational attainment.^{2,3} Often called “churn” by school districts, frequent student transfers in and out of schools are associated with lower levels of academic achievement for both the transferring and non-transferring students.⁴

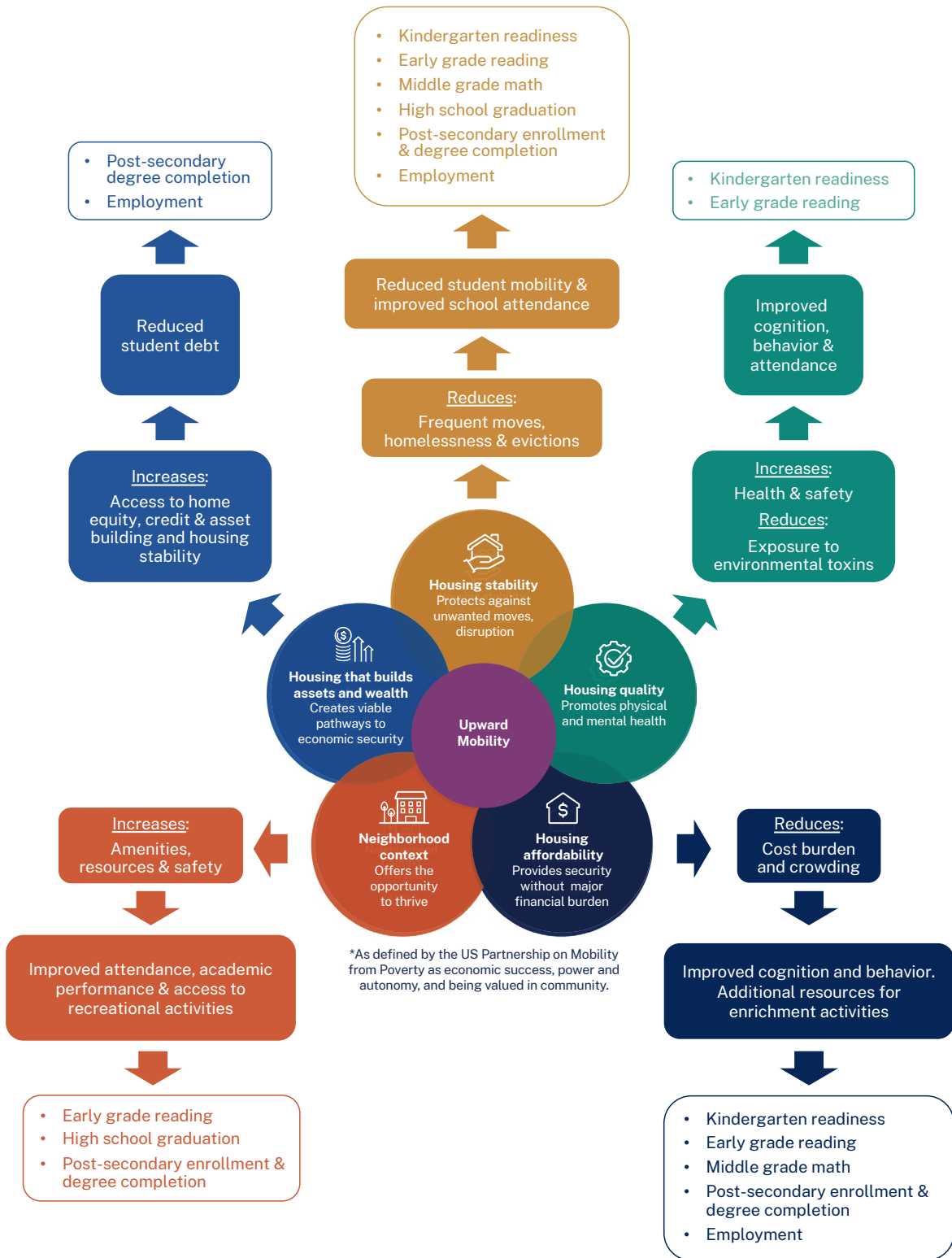
¹ Ramakrishnan, K., Champion, E., Gallagher, M., & Fudge, K. (2021, January). Why Housing Matters for Upward Mobility. Urban Institute. <https://www.urban.org/research/publication/why-housing-matters-upward-mobility-evidence-and-indicators-practitioners-and-policy-makers>

² Metzger, M. W., Fowler, P. J., & Swanstrom, T. (2016). Hypermobility and Educational Outcomes: The Case of St. Louis. *Urban Education*, 53(6), 774–805. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085916682571>

³ Cunningham, M., & MacDonald, G. (2012). *Housing as a Platform for Improving Education Outcomes among Low-Income Children*. Urban Institute. <https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/25331/412554-Housing-as-a-Platform-for-Improving-Education-Outcomes-among-Low-Income-Children.PDF>

⁴ South, S. J., Haynie, D. L., & Bose, S. (2007). Student mobility and school dropout. *Social Science Research*, 36(1), 68–94. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssresearch.2005.10.001>

The graphic below illustrates evidence-based pathways between housing indicators and educational outcomes identified in the cradle-to-career approach.⁵ This framework maps the education and employment milestones that predict positive economic outcomes.



⁵ Cradle-to-Career Outcomes - StriveTogether. (2025, September 30). StriveTogether. <https://www.strivetgether.org/what-we-do/cradle-to-career-outcomes/>

In addition to negative academic outcomes, housing challenges among students can present as behavior or attention issues, creating ripple effects in the teaching and learning environment.⁶ For educators, supporting students facing learning challenges related to unmet housing needs can be demanding, requiring additional time and resources that reduce their capacity to focus on the rest of the class. This imbalance not only affects overall classroom dynamics, but it can also erode teachers' job satisfaction and effectiveness. Over time, the emotional and professional strain weigh more heavily on their decision to leave the profession than their own challenges with housing affordability, such as long commutes and/or financial strain.

One thing is clear: the overlapping and compounding impacts housing challenges have on students, teachers, and staff within school communities negatively affect the climate and effectiveness of the entire educational environment.

The “teacher villages” solution

Local housing markets are increasingly unaffordable, educators' wages⁷ are stagnating, and professional strain is expanding — all of which make it more challenging to recruit and retain teachers and other school staff.⁸ In response, some school districts have begun providing “teacher villages,” i.e., housing reserved for teachers, as a way to position themselves as employers of choice.

In fact, it has become such a widespread effort that a niche teacher village real estate industry has sprung up. Examples include [RBH Group, LLC](#), which has developed teacher villages in four states, and [Education Housing Partners, Inc.](#), a California-based real estate company that has created over two dozen educator housing projects in California.

While these initiatives can provide needed relief, they also raise equity concerns. Teachers face real

barriers to finding and securing affordable homes, but unlike people in many other professions with the same challenges, they are often singled out for special support. This dynamic implies that some workers are more “deserving” than others, when in reality there is a deeper issue: the broader housing ecosystem is fundamentally broken because it only works for the highest income earners.

Teacher villages may help some educators, but they are only one solution. Other approaches — such as increased pay, flexible rent or mortgage assistance, or general affordable housing — may align more closely with the needs and preferences of the broader education workforce. Broad-based solutions also provide opportunities to uplift entire neighborhoods, creating positive impacts not only for school staff, but also for students, families, and the wider community.

Using a lens of shared prosperity to meet the moment

Proponents of shared prosperity subscribe to the notion that an economy or society is only as healthy as its least advantaged citizens. In order for a community to progress and advance, inequality among members of a population must shrink rather than grow over time. Upward mobility from poverty benefits single individuals and families and also promotes widespread economic growth in communities.

As integral community institutions, school districts are positioned to be key drivers and beneficiaries of efforts to address housing challenges in the cities and towns they serve. Removing housing-related barriers to learning has benefits that extend well beyond students and their families. Working conditions for faculty and staff improve as behavioral issues, student mobility, and chronic stress decline, and there is greater likelihood of healthy school culture and climate.

⁶ Metzger, M. W., Fowler, P. J., & Swanstrom, T. (2016). Hypermobility and Educational Outcomes: The Case of St. Louis. *Urban Education*, 53(6), 774–805. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085916682571>

⁷ Allegretto, S. (2023). *Teacher pay penalty still looms large: Trends in teacher wages and compensation through 2022*. (n.d.). Economic Policy Institute. <https://www.epi.org/publication/teacher-pay-in-2022/#epi-toc-1>

⁸ Nezaj, J. (2024). *With teachers, the law of supply and demand isn't working*. ADP Research. <https://www.adpresearch.com/occupational-spotlight-teachers-2024-03/>



What school districts bring to the table beyond education

The public education system is charged with enormous responsibility, yet it often lacks the resources and capacity to meet the non-academic needs that shape student outcomes. Although addressing broader social and community challenges is outside schools' traditional purview, schools have much to offer that can be leveraged in partnership with the broader community to help advance solutions.

Awareness and insight into housing needs

School districts are uniquely positioned to see firsthand the housing affordability challenges of their various members. The education ecosystem naturally includes teachers, support staff, and students and their families, providing valuable place-based insight into the challenges and needs of these groups. Additionally, the physical location of schools often leads to engagement with individuals who are not directly connected to the school, widening their impact — such as through community programming or other services.

School districts routinely collect and report data for a variety of purposes. Under the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, schools are responsible for identifying and making provisions for students experiencing homelessness, defined as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.⁹ The U.S. Department of Education recommends administering a housing questionnaire to all families enrolling children in the district. Data from such a

questionnaire provides information about the local housing landscape that informs housing interventions within the community. As the stewards of this data, school districts can work with housing partners to intentionally target their interventions to families with unmet housing needs.

In addition, by comparing salary information with local housing data, districts can assess the extent of housing affordability challenges confronting their workforce. A key factor in this analysis is that pay scales tend to differ significantly between certified staff (e.g., teachers, administrators, counselors) and classified staff (e.g., paraprofessionals, food service, transportation workers). Understanding these differences is crucial for determining the most effective types of housing support. This comparative analysis allows school districts to pinpoint specific affordability gaps and collaborate with partner organizations to remove housing challenges as a barrier to recruiting and retaining staff.

⁹ McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youths Program. (2016, March 17). Federal Register. <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2016/03/17/2016-06073/mckinney-vento-education-for-homeless-children-and-youths-program>



Civic Influencer Gaby Chavez provides public comment to the Thornton City Council in support of ballot measures to increase funding for local school district

Civic engagement and influence

School districts hold significant influence within their communities. With their deep connections to students, families, and the educator workforce, they can effectively communicate the critical and urgent need for housing interventions that support positive educational outcomes and community stability. Their role as trusted institutions enables them to elevate awareness, garner support, and advocate for policies and partnerships that support the expansion of affordable housing in their communities.

One way school districts can leverage this influence is by participating in efforts that promote affordable housing development. Research shows how exclusionary zoning¹⁰ limits access to educational opportunities, prompting calls for more inclusive policies that enable lower-income families to live in high-performing school districts.¹¹ However, many families face financial, logistical, or personal barriers to relocating across district boundaries. Districts can instead improve educational opportunities by supporting affordable housing initiatives that address substandard and inadequate housing conditions in low-income neighborhoods. By supporting these efforts, school districts can directly contribute to more equitable educational environments.

Additionally, school districts can lead communication campaigns that dispel misinformation about the impacts of affordable housing on school resources. One concern that frequently arises when creating or expanding affordable housing is that increased enrollment will strain school resources. However, research has shown that this is rarely the case.¹² In fact, many schools that have faced declining enrollments in recent years — resulting in staff reductions, program cuts, and underutilized facilities — would benefit from additional students and the state and local dollars that follow them into the district. By addressing these concerns with evidence, school districts can play an important role in shifting public perception and increasing support for affordable housing initiatives.

School districts can also be key beneficiaries of advocacy efforts. For example, the [Rocky Mountain Partnership](#) offers a Civic Influencers program that empowers youth to advocate for various community needs. In one instance, these civic influencers helped pass a local school ballot measure that increases property taxes and is expected to raise \$17.7 million annually for the district.¹³ This effort demonstrates how school districts can benefit from collaborative civic engagement that strengthens both the education system and the broader community.

¹⁰ “Exclusionary zoning” refers to policies regarding land use — such as minimum residential lot sizes and restrictions or prohibitions on multi-family housing — that limit or prevent development of affordable housing.

¹¹ Potter, H., & Edwards, A. (2023, December 14). *When People Think of Housing, They Think Schools — and Vice Versa*. The Century Foundation. <https://tcf.org/content/commentary/when-people-think-of-housing-they-think-schools-and-vice-versa/>

¹² Reardon, T., & Philbrick, S. (2017). *The Waning Influence of Housing Production on Public School Enrollment in Massachusetts*. Metropolitan Area Planning Council. https://www.mapc.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/MAPC_HousingEnrollment_Final.pdf

¹³ *Rocky Mountain Partnership Wins on a Ballot Measure by Centering Youth*. (2024, February 14). Strive Together. <https://www.strivetogether.org/our-impact/case-studies/rocky-mountain-partnership-wins-on-a-ballot-measure-by-centering-youth/>

Partnerships and support

School districts can partner with local organizations to address equity issues and offer customized solutions that address their workforce needs and strengthen the stability and well-being of the broader community. For example, the nation's student population is becoming increasingly diverse, while the teacher population remains disproportionately white and female — and studies show that a representative educator workforce is associated with improved student outcomes.¹⁴

Recruitment and retention challenges are especially pronounced for educators who identify as Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), who face systemic barriers to inclusion in entering and advancing in education careers and disparities in housing access and affordability. Organizations like [UrbanEd Academy](#) in San Francisco, California, and [Teachers Like Me](#) in Kansas City, Missouri, work with districts to address housing affordability challenges and offer professional development opportunities that help to attract and retain a diverse and talented workforce.

Housing and education partnerships also can provide workforce benefits to youth, like vocational learning opportunities for students interested in pursuing the trades. In Iowa, for example, the Iowa City Community School recently reintroduced its [Student Build Program](#) in partnership with the city and The Housing Fellowship, a local nonprofit housing developer. Through this program, students from three schools in the district gain hands-on construction experience — from reading blueprints to operating heavy machinery — while actually building affordable housing units for their community.

The global program [YouthBuild](#) offers similar vocational education programs for young people who have not been successful in traditional high school programs, or who are at risk of disengagement after graduation. Students earn their GED or high school diploma in addition to

gaining hands-on skills development in the trades and providing much-needed housing for the community. And in Oakland, California, construction trainees with the [Youth Employment Partnership](#) rehabilitate homes owned by the Oakland Community Land Trust, a local provider of affordable housing.

Lastly, given the diversity of individuals they serve, school districts can be a powerful convener of key stakeholders who may or may not traditionally participate in the affordable housing industry — but who bring vital resources and influence to advancing the conversation about housing solutions. These relationships and networks among local individuals and agencies often prove to be highly impactful assets.



Youth Empowerment Partnership

¹⁴ Gershenson, S., Hart, C. M.D., Hyman, J., Lindsay, C. A., & Papageorge, N. W. (2022). The Long-Run Impacts of Same-Race Teachers. *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*, 14(4), 300-342. <https://doi.org/10.1257/pol.20190573>



Developing and repurposing real estate assets for shared prosperity

School districts have a unique opportunity to increase the affordable housing supply within their communities. There are numerous examples of school districts across the country working with developer partners to create housing that is affordable to individuals and families of their workforce, either through partnerships with third-party landowners, or by leveraging their own real estate holdings.

How the Fair Housing Act Impacts Educator Housing

Enacted in 1968 to implement key provisions of the Civil Rights Act,¹⁵ the Fair Housing Act¹⁶ prohibits discrimination based on disability, family status, ethnicity, race, national origin, religion, and sex, and requires that all housing units are marketed, rented or sold to the general public through a process that does not target, preclude, or cause a “disparate” impact on members of any of the listed protected classes.¹⁷

With very few exceptions, all properties are covered by these protections and the sellers, landlords, and real estate brokers associated with them must adhere to this prohibition when marketing to and selecting a purchaser or tenant from a pool of applicants. These protections against disparate impact also apply to marketing and selecting occupants of developments intended for a specific occupation, like teachers.

In addition, properties financed with federal funds further protect against longstanding discriminatory practices by using a waitlist and lottery system to randomly select tenants from a pool of eligible applicants. This means that federal funding is not compatible with developments intended exclusively for a specific occupation.

At the time of publication, evolving jurisprudence and federal administration priorities have caused uncertainty in future enforcement of the Fair Housing Act.

¹⁵ Civil Rights Act of 1968. § 7, 42 U.S.C. § 2000e et seq (1964). <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/COMPS-343/pdf/COMPS-343.pdf>

¹⁶ Fair Housing Act, Sec. 801. [42 U.S.C. 3601] (1968). <https://www.justice.gov/crt/fair-housing-act-1>

¹⁷ Fair Housing Act, Sec. 804. [42 U.S.C. 3604] (1968). <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/42/3604>

Local preferences

Designed to complement the Fair Housing Act’s public use requirement and the heightened protections against bias attached to federal funding, local housing preferences prioritize how housing created with federal funds is used. These preferences are intended to do one thing: prioritize eligible applicants on waitlists who are randomly selected for occupancy through a lottery system. Preferences do not affect eligibility or override the lottery.

For example, a jurisdiction may create an “educator preference” for a federally funded property. If there are more available units than educators on the waitlist, the balance of the units are leased to non-educator applicants. Jurisdictions may also adopt more than one preference to meet different local needs. When this happens, the preferences are ranked by relative need, which can further contribute to a healthy mix of residents within a housing development. Ultimately, an educator preference ensures that educators are intentionally included, but not exclusively housed, in these communities.

One federal funding tool that frequently relies on local preferences is the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC). LIHTC is the most widely used financing tool for the production and preservation of affordable rental housing. In addition to requiring use of a lottery system to select eligible applicants, LIHTC regulations also include a “public use” clause to reinforce the Fair Housing Act prohibition against targeting units for occupation by a particular population.

The examples that follow all use federal funding to provide affordable housing. Most of them also rely on the use of local preferences to create targeted, but not exclusive, housing opportunities to support education-related affordability challenges.

Collaboration to create affordable housing on non-district-owned land

Complementing their ability to advocate and influence, school districts are well-positioned to work collaboratively with others to advance affordable housing. With the help of local preferences, school districts can contribute to targeted housing interventions that serve disproportionately affected populations without being involved in the development of housing.

For example, the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) partnered with an affordable housing developer to create Sun Valley Apartments, a 26-unit service-enriched community for families experiencing homelessness with children enrolled in LAUSD schools. A significant portion of the Sun Valley Apartments continue to serve this target population – thanks to local preferences. To support the families’ specific needs and aspirations, the partnership also provides access to youth-focused programming such as tutoring and summer camps.¹⁸

In 2024, the Rochester Housing Authority (RHA) in Rochester, NY introduced a similar preference for its Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program. The new preference applies to families with children enrolled in the Rochester City School District who also meet the McKinney Vento Act’s definition of homelessness. These preferences prioritize families for vouchers, which can be used to help subsidize their rent in any housing unit in the community.

¹⁸ Seshadri, M. (2024, March 25). LAUSD, partners provide 25 affordable housing units for district families. *EdSource*. <https://edsources.org/2024/lausd-partners-provide-25-affordable-housing-units-for-district-families/708391>

Educator-Only Housing: The Missed Opportunity?

Some school districts leverage their vacant and surplus land to create housing opportunities exclusively for educators. This approach is possible in states that permit employers to offer workforce housing on land they own.

Still subject to the Fair Housing Act, these employers are prohibited from discriminating against protected classes when selecting tenants. Further, if any federal funds are used, the developments become subject to the public use and lottery system limitations identified above and cannot be restricted to house their workforce. However, an amendment to LIHTC's public use clause makes an exception for "literary and artistic use".¹⁹ Some jurisdictions have interpreted this exception to include housing for educators, leading to the development of many educator-only LIHTC properties. Building on this interpretation, California enacted the Teacher Housing Act of 2016,²⁰ giving school districts and LIHTC developers clear authority to reserve housing units built on district-owned land specifically for educators.

These mechanisms together directly address the housing challenges that educators experience. However, because they are limited to teachers, they do not help other school staff or community members who also struggle with housing, highlighting a missed opportunity to support the community's broader education ecosystem.

Leveraging surplus vacant land and school facilities to create affordable housing

School districts interested in becoming more involved in the development or ownership of affordable housing can leverage their own real estate assets. By choosing to repurpose their surplus real estate to support broader community housing goals — rather than create housing exclusively for teachers — school districts possess a uniquely powerful opportunity to contribute to their community's shared prosperity while enhancing the entire education ecosystem.

School district properties, including land, schools, or administrative buildings, are often located in neighborhoods that are well-connected to downtowns. By converting these centrally located parcels into affordable housing, school districts can help deter

urban sprawl and promote equitable transit-oriented development, benefiting the entire region, especially people in the school ecosystem who are cost-burdened by both housing and transportation expenses.

In addition, in wealthy communities that often lack extensive public transit systems, a school district's decision to use their property to build even a small number of affordable housing units can contribute to the community's shared prosperity. The San Diego Unified School District (SDUSD) partnered with a developer to build a mixed-income, mixed-use development on SDUSD property through a Joint Occupancy Agreement in a sought-after section of San Diego known as Miramar. Joint operating agreements allow school districts to lease their property to outside entities, as long as the resulting building can also be used for the district's own educational purposes.²¹

¹⁹ Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008, 122 Stat. 2654 - Public Law No. 110-289 (2008). <https://www.congress.gov/bill/110th-congress/house-bill/3221/text>

²⁰ Teacher Housing Act of 2016. https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201520160SB1413

²¹ 2009 California Education Code - Section 17515-17526 :: Article 8. :: Joint Occupancy. (n.d.). Justia Law. <https://law.justia.com/codes/california/2009/edc/17515-17526.html#:~:text=Justia%20U.S.%20Law%20U.S.%20Codes%20and%20Statutes%20California,school%20district%20may%20enter%20into%20leases%20and%20agreements>



The new Miramar development consists of 242 market-rate units, 22 affordable units, 2,000 square feet of retail, and as the joint district use, a 4,000-square-foot science, technology, engineering, arts, and math (STEAM) enrichment facility for all K-12 students in the San Diego school district. Affordable housing is rarely built in Miramar, which makes these 22 affordable homes a significant contribution.

To prioritize SDUSD educators for those 22 units, the developers created two separate waitlists: a preference pool for district educators and one for the general public. Owners used a lottery to determine the selection rank for each applicant in their respective pool. They then processed all applicants in the preference pool ahead of applications from the general public.²² This prioritized housing for educators but also included opportunities for other people in the community.

School districts also have an opportunity to repurpose their facilities when declining enrollment or the demand for modern facilities leads to school closures that leave older — sometimes historic — buildings vacant. Although converting a school into housing is costly, it is generally less costly than new construction and can help address unmet affordable housing needs. Financing tools such as LIHTC — and if the building is historic, Historic Tax Credits — can offer critical resources to reduce the cost of adaptive reuse.

When combined with local preferences, these financing tools allow school districts to contribute to equitable community planning. Former school buildings also bring unique design advantages: spacious rooms, high ceilings, large windows, and architectural features that are often available only to wealthy homebuyers.

Southbridge Public Schools in Massachusetts chose to use its historic school asset to promote shared prosperity by converting Mary E. Wells School into Residences at Wells School, a 62-unit mixed-income housing development for seniors.

The Residences set aside most of its units for low- and moderate-income households, including eight units that are deeply subsidized at or below 30% of the Area Median Income. The adaptive reuse of Mary E. Wells School took advantage of the school's architectural assets to provide high-quality housing, and desirable amenities close to downtown, expanding access to thoughtful design and community connection.

²² U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2024, January 23). Former Massachusetts High School converted to affordable housing for seniors. *PD&R Edge*. <https://archives.huduser.gov/portal/pdredge/pdr-edge-inpractice-012324.html>



Wiley H. Bates Residences

The **Bryant School Apartments** in Hornell, New York, is another example of how adaptive reuse can create an impactful development for an entire community. Like the prior examples, the Bryant School Apartments are in a walkable neighborhood, adjacent to transit and less than a mile from the city's growing downtown, providing its 39 households earning no more than 60% of the Area Median Income access to numerous amenities. "The Bryant School Apartments are an excellent investment in Hornell," said Steuben County Legislative Chair Kelly Fitzpatrick. "It has given life to an otherwise unused building, and in giving it life, it has revitalized an entire neighborhood. It is a welcome addition to our county."²³

Due to their larger ground floor spaces (e.g., gymnasiums, cafeterias, and auditoriums), schools also often offer outdoor venues and commercial, medical, or community spaces that pair well with residential use. One example is **Riverview at Clendenin School**, in West Virginia, a long-abandoned school repurposed into a mixed-use building that offers affordable housing for seniors and an expanded health clinic run by Cabin Creek

Health Systems, which helps residents age in place. The clinic also provides stable and career-building jobs and serves people in three counties. This single project has helped energize the economy and spirit of this small rural town.

In Annapolis, Maryland, the former Wiley H. Bates High School was redeveloped to honor its cultural and historical significance within the community. Wiley H. Bates was the only high school in the county available to African American students from the time it was built in 1933 until desegregation in 1966. It was later used as an integrated middle school until its closure in 1981. **Wiley H. Bates Heritage Park** provides 71 affordable apartments to low-income seniors, houses the Annapolis Senior Activity Center; the Bates Boys and Girls Club; a museum honoring the former schools' faculty, students, and namesake; and has an outdoor courtyard open to the public. Thoughtful use of space and elements that highlight the building's heritage restored the property as a center of the community for years to come.

²³ Governor Hochul Unveils Transformation of Former Elementary School into 39 Affordable, Sustainable Apartments in Hornell. [Press release]. <https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-hochul-unveils-transformation-former-elementary-school-39-affordable-sustainable>



Summary

The nationwide affordable housing crisis is straining schools and communities. Rising housing costs and stagnant wages affect both educators and families, leading to teacher shortages, student instability, and workforce challenges. Some school districts have responded by developing “teacher villages,” but these solutions only address part of the problem.

As this brief illustrates, school districts can be both key drivers and beneficiaries of housing solutions. They bring critical assets to bear, including awareness and insight into housing needs, civic engagement and influence, partnerships, and even real estate assets. By effectively leveraging these strengths, school districts can play a pivotal role in expanding access to stable, affordable housing — improving teacher retention, student outcomes, and overall community well-being.



About Enterprise Community Partners

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