

# Helpful Talking Points regarding Promise Neighborhoods:

## 1. Strong interest in the Promise Neighborhoods program.

- To date Promise Neighborhoods has received **over 800 applications from communities in 48 states, the District of Columbia, America Samoa, and Puerto Rico**
- The US Department of Education has awarded 58 grants (this includes all planning and implementation grants) in the last three fiscal years
- A total of **48 communities** have received funding (either planning or implementation grants) **spanning 23 states and the District of Columbia**
- 12 communities are now implementing their Promise Neighborhood plans with grants ranging from 3-5 years
- This large number of applications shows the real interest and excitement surrounding the program.

## 2. Experiences of poor children and communities and how Promise Neighborhoods can address these issues.

- Millions of Americans, including more than 8.5 million children, live in neighborhoods of concentrated poverty, places disconnected from opportunity and it costs the U.S. approximately and it costs the U.S. approximately 500 billion dollars in yearly costs (nearly 4% of GDP)<sup>i</sup>
- The average middle-class child enters 1st grade with 1,000-1,700 hours of one-on-one picture-book reading; a child from a low-income family averages 25 hours.<sup>ii</sup>
- By 4th grade only 17% of poor children score at or above proficient in reading and 22% on math on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).<sup>iii</sup> *You can insert local or state test scores here as available.*
- Following years of frustration and failure, students drop out of school at alarming rates: more than 500,000 dropped out of grades 9-12 in 2005.<sup>iv</sup>
- Health: Compared to high-income children, low-income children are more than 1.5 times as likely to miss 10 or more school days a year due to illness or injury; are more than twice as likely not to have seen a doctor for two years or to have delayed medical care due to cost; and are almost three times as likely to be uninsured and to have no regular site for health care. <sup>v</sup> They also have higher rates of asthma, <sup>vi</sup> hospital admissions, disability days, and death rates. <sup>vii</sup>

- The Promise Neighborhoods program is focused on results and public/private partnerships to allow children, families and communities to succeed.
- A strong and vibrant America requires children who are educated, healthy, and leave school ready to succeed in college and the workforce.
- The Promise Neighborhoods initiative is inspired by the success of the Harlem Children's Zone and enables communities to design and implement a comprehensive pipeline of educational and community supports to make certain that all children reach their full potential.
- Promise Neighborhoods focus on the whole child and whole community, using data and a relentless focus on results to identify what works to help children succeed in the classroom and beyond.
- The first cohorts of implementation grantees in both rural and urban settings are currently hard at work. Grantees have been able to leverage public and private sector support, and have coordinated services and resources of local nonprofits, schools, health centers, universities, and other neighborhood partners to wrap children in education, health, and social supports from the cradle to college to career.

**3. Promise Neighborhoods is an important part of the solution to improving outcomes for poor children because it focuses on:**

- creating a comprehensive pipeline of educational and community supports to expand opportunity for poor children
- requiring that a nonprofit or university with deep ties to the community lead the project and that at least one school be a main partner
- targeting all types of communities - urban, suburban, rural, and tribal communities with high levels of academic and neighborhood distress
- requiring the coordination of both private and public money through a matching requirement – leveraging both federal, local and philanthropic dollars

*For more details on the Promise Neighborhoods program, please go to <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/promiseneighborhoods/index.html>*

#### **4. Full funding is needed for the Promise Neighborhoods program at least \$100 million and consideration of the full \$300 million included in the FY 2015 budget.**

- The President requested \$100 million for Promise Neighborhoods as part of the standard budget also requested an additional \$200 million for Promise Neighborhoods as part of the new Opportunity, Growth and Security Initiative for a total \$300 million in support of the Promise Neighborhoods Program.
- Promise Neighborhoods was funded at \$60 million in FY2012, a sum that was held level in FY2013 and FY2014 but was subject to a 5% cut as a result of sequestration. While the continued support of Promise Neighborhoods is greatly appreciated, this level funding is not sufficient to allow for additional new awards.
- Due to the incredible interest shown by different types of communities throughout the nation, and the need to address the issues of academic achievement and community supports in low-income communities full funding at the President's request of \$300 million for FY2015 is needed.
- Funding Promise Neighborhoods at this level will enable communities to continue to scale up the good work already in progress in underserved rural, tribal and urban communities as well as allowing the work to expand to additional high poverty communities.

i Harry Holzer, Diane Whitmore Schanzenbach, Greg J. Duncan, and Jens Ludwig. *The Economic Costs of Poverty: Subsequent Effects of Children Growing Up Poor*. (Washington D.C.: The Center for American Progress, 2007).

ii Marilyn Jager Adams. 1990. *Beginning to read: thinking and learning about print*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press

iii Children's Defense Fund. *The State of America's Children 2005*. (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 2005.)

iv National Center for Education Statistics. December 2007. "Numbers and Rates of Public High School Drop-Outs 2004-2005."

v *The State of America's Children 2005*. Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund.

vi Nicholas, SW, Hutchinson, VE, Ortiz, B, Klihr-Beall, Jean-Louis, B, Shoemaker, K, Singleton, C, Credell, J, and Northridge, M. 2005. "Reducing Childhood Asthma Through Community-Based Service Delivery – New York City, 2001-2004, Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report."

Washington, DC: Center on Disease Control Vol. 54, No. 1.

vii Wood, David. 2001. "Effect of Child and Family Poverty on Health in the United States, Pediatrics." Elk Grove Village, Illinois: American Academy of Pediatrics Vol. 112:711-717.