

Berkeley's 2020 Vision: Equity in Education

Our Priorities

Too many young people in Berkeley -- and a disproportionate share of our African American and Latino/a/x children and youth -- lack access to the resources and supports they need to succeed in school. *Berkeley's 2020 Vision's* partners are striving to close this "opportunity gap" by working together to expand and strengthen our work across six priority areas: Kindergarten Readiness, 3rd Grade Reading Proficiency, 8th Grade Math Proficiency, College and Career Readiness, Improved School Attendance and Health, and Community and Family Engagement.

These priorities span the course of a child's early education through high school graduation. Each priority is associated with a critical benchmark, demonstrated by research to link closely with a child's well-being and later academic success:

- **Kindergarten Readiness** closely aligns with future attainment and well-being in school and in life. Starting with prenatal care, early experiences and learning provide children with fundamental skills and foundations for life-long academic and socio-emotional success.¹
- **3rd Grade Reading Proficiency** is the primary predictor of academic success and high school graduation. Children who learn to read by 3rd grade are more likely to complete high school and less likely to experience socio-emotional and behavioral problems. Reading by 3rd grade opens the doors to a world of learning opportunities as the transition begins from "learning to read" to "reading to learn."²
- **8th Grade Math Proficiency** lays the foundation for succeeding in an increasingly collaborative and technical professional world. Students who master basic math are more likely to be successful in advanced math, which is strongly connected to future college enrollment and graduation.³
- **College and Career Readiness** empowers young people to complete high school, equipped to seize positive opportunities to advance in their education and/or career. Higher levels of educational attainment correlate with better health and well-being, and greater economic and career success.⁴
- **Improved School Attendance and Health** are important because children need to be in school to succeed in school. Students who are chronically absent miss out on important learning and can face a steep uphill climb to catch up with their peers. Chronic absences can also be a symptom of other challenges facing children or their families, including health problems (such as asthma), emotional trauma, housing stability, and parental stress.⁵
- **Community and Family Engagement** – including families, schools, government, nonprofits, businesses, academia, the faith community, and beyond – is perhaps the most critical component of fulfilling our shared commitment to the younger generation. Only through our steadfast engagement can *Berkeley's 2020 Vision* ensure that all Berkeley children and youth grow up with equitable opportunities to learn and thrive.

These priorities are inter-related; for example, how well children read in 3rd grade is connected to how prepared they are to start kindergarten and how consistently they attend school.⁶ Measurable indicators aligned with each of these priorities capture how well we as a community are doing at fulfilling our commitment to educational equity for Berkeley children and youth.

¹ <http://www.cfc.ca.gov/>

² Annie E. Casey Foundation, *Early Warning! Why Reading by the End of Third Grade Matters*, 2010.

³ <https://www.childtrends.org/indicators/mathematics-proficiency/>

⁴ Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Commission to Build a Healthier America, *Education Matters for Health*, Sept. 2009.

⁵ <http://www.attendanceworks.org/chronic-absence/the-problem/>

⁶ Annie E. Casey Foundation, *Early Warning Confirmed! A Research Update on Third Grade Reading*, 2013.