

My Brother's Keeper Orlando Local Action Plan

Background

In 2012, the City of Orlando began a comprehensive review of data documenting strengths and opportunities, barriers, and challenges facing youth including Black Boys and Young Men (BBYM). With data in hand, we launched a year long conversation with neighborhood leaders, youth, schools, civic groups, businesses, faith leaders, police officers, funding partners and non-profits, resulting in this Local Action Plan to achieve critical goals for BBYM. Our work is guided by President Obama's My Brother's Keeper Community Challenge, Cities United, and the National League of Cities and PolicyLink as part of NLC's "Leadership to Promote Black Male Achievement" initiative.

MBK Orlando aims to ensure that all young people in our community are positioned to succeed. It addresses the multitude of challenges that place Orlando's Black Boys and Young Men (BBYM) at educational, economic and social disadvantage compared with other children, youth and young adults.



Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer, flanked by City leaders and members of MBK Orlando Youth Advisory Council. November 2014.

The Challenge

The chart below presents data demonstrating challenges faced by Orlando's BBYM.

All Orlando	Black Orlando
86.7% of all Orlando residents aged 25+ are high school graduates or higher.	77.9% of Black Orlando residents aged 25+ are high school graduates or higher.
33.8% of OCPS students are White; 30.4% of In-School suspensions, 17.3% of Out-of-School Suspensions, and 21.5% of Expulsions are White students	28% of OCPS students are Black; 47.1% of In-School suspensions, 52% of Out-of-School Suspensions, and 45.9% of Expulsions are Black students
Graduation Rates of <i>White</i> Students, by High School	Graduation Rates of <i>Black</i> Students, by High School
<i>White</i> , Lake Nona HS: 95%	<i>Black</i> , Lake Nona HS: 80%
<i>White</i> , Jones HS: N/A (no White students)	<i>Black</i> , Jones HS: 80-84%
<i>White</i> , Edgewater HS: 85-89%	<i>Black</i> , Edgewater HS: 65-69%
<i>White</i> , Colonial HS: 85-89%	<i>Black</i> , Colonial HS: 75-79%
<i>White</i> , Boone HS: 90%	<i>Black</i> , Boone HS: 75-79%
31.9% of all Orlando residents aged 25+ have Bachelor Degrees or higher.	16% of Black Orlando residents aged 25+ have Bachelor Degrees or higher.
Total 2012 Orlando Juvenile Arrests: 1,541	Arrests, Black Male Juveniles: 829 (53.8% of all 2012 juvenile arrests)

Outcomes

President Obama's My Brother's Keeper initiative focuses on six milestones: Getting a Healthy Start and Entering School Ready to Learn; Reading at Grade Level by Third Grade; Graduating from High School Ready for College and Career; Successfully Entering the Workforce; and Keeping Kids on Track and Giving Them Second Chances.

Over the coming ten years, MBK Orlando aims to align its goals with the national initiative and "move the needle" on academic and crime data impacting Orlando's BBYM to achieve the following outcomes:

- Increase the percentage of BBYM graduating high school.
 - As a sub-strategy, increase the percentage of BBYM who "enter school ready to learn" and read at grade level by 3rd grade.
- Increase the percentage of BBYM aged 25+ who achieve Associate's degrees or higher.
- Reduce the number of BBYM juvenile arrests and the proportion of all arrests that are BBYM.

MBK Orlando will be built upon the City's robust programming for youth including:

- Successful replication of Harlem Children's Zone's cradle-to-career model in Orlando's most disadvantaged neighborhood (Parramore);
- Partnership with Orange County Public Schools including operation of 21st Century Community Learning Centers at Title I middle schools;
- Deployment of AmeriCorps members to schools and after school sites to impact student academic performance;
- Evidence-informed transformation of after school and summer programs at targeted City recreation centers to impact juvenile crime and academic performance of children residing in the surrounding neighborhoods;
- Partnership with local mentoring organizations to connect BBYM with positive adult role models.

Youth voice will be fully engaged via a My Brother's Keeper Youth Advisory Board comprised of Black Boys and Young Men. Youth will identify key issues they face and helping implement policies and programs they believe will make a difference in their lives and the lives of their brethren.

Goals for Year One:

Goal #1: Connect BBYM with positive adult role models.

Committed adults, steadfast in their support of young people's success, are the key element of dropout recovery..... the teachers, mentors, counselors, coaches, and others who commit themselves with passion to direct involvement in the lives of young people and who make themselves available around the clock.... repeatedly, in the face of seemingly overwhelming contrary forces, they simply refuse to give up on young people. They search

relentlessly for more effective ways to reach and teach even the least promising and most recalcitrant. Such concern and persistence can help trump many of life's adversities. - "Whatever It Takes: How Twelve Communities Are Reconnecting Out-of-School Youth," American Youth Policy Forum, 2006.

Orlando will expand mentoring opportunities for BBYM by supporting local mentoring organizations and encouraging City staff to mentor BBYM. Partners include NAACP Orlando, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Young Fathers of Central Florida, 412 Ministry, Young Men of Promise, and Experience Church, among others. Through collaborative training and a collective impact structure, mentoring organizations will support achievement of Goals 2, 3, and 4 – improving academic performance, expanding access to jobs, and reducing juvenile crime – among their mentees.

Mentoring Goal, Year One: 150 BBYM will participate in the MBK Orlando mentoring program.

Goal #2: Improve academic performance of BBYM, from cradle-to-college.

Orlando's work will include:

- *Increase the percentage of children who test as "Ready to Learn" and "Reading at Grade Level" by 3rd grade.* Sub-strategies include:
 - *Increase the percentage of children who test as "Ready to Learn" in Orlando's most disadvantaged neighborhood (Parramore).* In partnership with the Early Learning Coalition of Orange County, Orlando will operate a Grade Level Reading Initiative in Parramore. As part of the work, the Early Learning Coalition will implement an intensive parenting education program (Parramore Kidz Zone Baby Institute) focused on brain development and positive discipline aimed at helping parents of young children be their child's first teacher. In addition, the City will work to increase the percentage Parramore children ages birth to 5 who attend high quality early learning programs.
 - *Prevent Summer Learning Loss.* Research shows that low income children typically lose more than two months of reading achievement over the summer and, when this pattern continues through elementary school, fall more than 2 ½ years behind their more affluent peers by the end of 5th grade. Orlando will partner with Orange County Public Schools to deploy teachers to City recreation centers attended by an estimated 2,500 low income children daily throughout the summer.
- *Increase the percentage of youth who graduate high school ready for college and career.* Sub-strategies include:
 - *Wrap-Around Academic Support.* Orlando will operate a "Student Advocate Model" in Parramore, evidence for which was developed by the Everyone Graduates Center at Johns Hopkins University, where researchers documented the most treacherous time for young African-American men is from ages 11 to 21. Student Advocates will work with youth from Kindergarten through College, keeping them on track toward high school graduation and through post-secondary studies.

- *21st Century Community Learning Centers.* Orlando will operate 21st Century Community Learning Centers at all Title I middle schools. These sites will employ teachers after school and throughout the summer to extend learning into after school hours, helping struggling students catch up. Orlando will pursue grant funding to expand the program to serve elementary school students enrolled in after school programs at targeted City recreation centers.
- *AmeriCorps.* The Corporation for National and Community Service has awarded several grants to the City of Orlando, including a Mayor/Governor grant and, more recently, an Operation AmeriCorps grant. As a result, Orlando will deploy 100 AmeriCorps members to school and neighborhood sites, including Jones, Boone, Edgewater, Lake Nona and Colonial High Schools. Members will offer academic and social support to 3,000 youth, of whom an estimated 35% will be BBYM, during the school day, after school and in the summer time. Operation AmeriCorps will focus on 11th and 12th graders, with the ultimate goal of high school graduation and successful entrance into a post-secondary pathway (college, trade school, military, employment or national service).
- *Academic Enrichment Programs.* Orlando will engage BBYM in cultural, historical, environmental, technological, arts and STEM enrichments programs at community centers, middle schools, and partner sites throughout the City.
- *College Access.* Orlando will scale up the college access program it has piloted in Parramore, wherein youth participate in college tours and receive application and financial aid assistance, scholarships, and care packages. This includes an Individual Development Account (IDA) pilot, wherein youth employees deposit a portion of their earnings into special bank accounts, with savings matched by donors to support their post-secondary education expenses.

Education Goal, Year One: 2,500 BBYM will participate in MBK Orlando Academic Support and Enrichment Programs.

Goal #3: *Expand employment opportunities for BBYM.* MBK Orlando will implement a youth employment initiative to include 1) employment of BBYM ages 14-24, by the City, in jobs as counselors, childcare workers, office clerks, athletic coaches, teaching assistants and more; and 2) implementation of a “Ban the Box” initiative in the City’s employment process.

Employment Goal, Year One: 200 BBYM will be employed via MBK Orlando’s Youth Employment Program.

Goal #4: *Reduce disproportional representation of BBYM in the justice system* by a) scaling up youth development programs; and b) building trust between BBYM and Orlando police officers. Based upon the evidenced-based Positive Youth Development framework, MBK Orlando will offer robust youth development programming to adolescent and young adult BBYM at targeted City recreation centers and partner organizations (including all middle schools in the City). BBYM adolescents and young adults will be enrolled and regularly engaged in supervised, pro-social activities including after school programs, sports teams and enrichment programs. In addition, Orlando will build trust between BBYM and police officers, by engaging youth at community forums and crime prevention activities and operating a variety of “Cops &

Kids” programs (hyperlinks provided), including a [Cops & Kids Dragon boating program](#), a Cops & Kids fishing program, and a [Cops & Kids Midnight Basketball program](#) at a City recreation center located in Orlando’s highest crime neighborhood, and engaging youth attending City recreation centers and middle school programs.

Juvenile Justice Goal, Year One: 1,000 BBYM will be engaged in MBK Orlando Positive Youth Development and Cops & Kids Activities.

Partnerships, Funding, and Administration

MBK Orlando partners include:

- Orange County Public Schools, including the OCPS Office of Minority Achievement
- Orlando Police Department
- Early Learning Coalition of Orange County
- Professional sports team including the Orlando Magic and Orlando City Soccer Club
- NAACP Orlando
- Omega Psi Phi Fraternity
- Young Fathers of Central Florida
- 412 Ministry
- Young Men of Promise
- The Experience Christian Center
- Hope Church
- African-American Chamber of Commerce

MBK Orlando funders include:

- City of Orlando
- Heart of Florida United Way
- State of Florida, Department of Education
 - 21st Century Community Learning Centers
 - Florida Children’s Initiatives
 - Funding allocated to the Early Learning Coalition of Orange County
- Corporation for National and Community Service
 - Operation AmeriCorps
 - Mayor/Governor’s Initiative
 - VISTA Summer Associates
- Orlando Magic
- Bank of America (Summer Youth Employment Program)
- Orange County Public Schools, Title I funding

The City of Orlando and its sister partner non-profit organization, the Orlando Community & Youth Trust, Inc., will continue to seek federal, state, foundation and philanthropic funding to scale up and sustain MBK Orlando.

Administration

MBK Orlando will be administered via existing staff of the City of Orlando’s Families, Parks and Recreation Department. Funding will be sought to enable the hiring of

dedicated staff to manage the initiative and enhance the Department's grant writing, grant administration and data management and reporting capabilities to facilitate the leveraging of additional funds.

Summary and Conclusion

This local action plan was developed via comprehensive data review, two years of technical assistance, and robust conversation with youth and community stakeholders. Over the next ten years, it aims to “*move the needle*” on academic and crime data to achieve the following outcomes:

- Increase the percentage of BBYM graduating City high schools.
- Increase the percentage of Orlando BBYM aged 25+ who achieve Associate's degrees or higher.
- Reduce the number of BBYM juvenile arrests and the proportion of Orlando arrests that are BBYM.

Specific Year One goals include:

1. Connect 150 BBYM with positive adult role models through an MBK Orlando mentoring program.
2. Engage 2,500 BBYM in MBK Orlando Academic Support and Enrichment Programs.
3. Employ 200 BBYM via MBK Orlando Youth Employment Program.
4. Engage 1,000 BBYM in MBK Orlando Positive Youth Development and Cops & Kids Activities.