



TACOMA HOUSING AUTHORITY

**TACOMA HOUSING AUTHORITY'S
EFFORT TO ENROLL ITS STUDENTS
IN WASHINGTON STATE'S
COLLEGE BOUND SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM
DURING
SCHOOL YEARS 2008-09 THROUGH 2012-13:**

**An Assessment of a Public Housing Authority's Ability to
Promote Education**

Revised May 27, 2014

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY.....	1
2.	TACOMA HOUSING AUTHORITY’S EDUCATION PROJECT	3
3.	THE WASHINGTON STATE COLLEGE BOUND SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM	5
3.1	What Does the College Bound Scholarship Pay For?.....	5
3.2	Who Is Eligible for the College Bound Scholarship?	5
4.	THA’s EFFORTS TO ENROLL STUDENTS IN THE COLLEGE BOUND SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM	7
4.1	Goals and Results	7
4.2	How THA Promoted Enrollment in the CBS Program Among its Students ..	9
5.	ONGOING CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE	12
5.1	Data Sharing Challenges and Some Solutions	12
5.2	College Preparation	13
5.3	Recommendations for 2012-2013 and Beyond	13
6.	CONCLUSION	14
APPENDIX A:	College Bound Scholarship Resources	
APPENDIX B:	THA Letter To Families, December 15, 2009	

1. INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

In 2008, the Washington State Legislature created the College Bound Scholarship (CBS) program. The CBS program promises low-income Washington State students that if they graduate from a Washington state high school, meet other requirements and gain admission to a college or technical school then the state will make it financially possible for them to afford tuition. Notably, it will do this with grants, not loans.

This promise is very valuable. College or technical degrees are proving more necessary for a person's ability to prosper. Education also has its own value for a well-equipped and meaningful adulthood. Yet post-secondary education is often unaffordable to low-income students. Many students incur crippling debt levels to attend college. The CBS gives students and their families a reasonable hope that post-secondary schooling is affordable, and therefore possible. Perhaps for this reason, in the Tacoma School District, 90% of CBS enrolled students graduate from high school. This rate is significantly higher than the graduation rate for the district as a whole, for low-income students, and even for non-low-income students.

To qualify for the CBS, students must graduate from high school with at least a 2.0 cumulative grade point average, be financially eligible, and have no felonies on their record. Importantly, they and their parents must also sign up for the CBS program by the end of their eighth (8th) grade. Seventh and eighth graders are eligible to sign up in either year. In other words, students and their parents must do this bit of paperwork correctly and on time to benefit from this valuable promise of college tuition. At the beginning of the program, nearly half of Washington State's children were missing this valuable opportunity simply because they failed to sign up.

The Tacoma Housing Authority (THA) has resolved to help enroll as many as possible of the eligible students whose families participate in its housing programs. Doing so is an important part of THA's general efforts to help the children its houses succeed in school. These efforts are part of THA's ongoing Education Project, funded in large part by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

This report assesses THA's enrollment efforts from school year 2008-2009 through 2012-2013. This report also considers how THA can continue to support this effort based on the results to date. This report begins by explaining why THA undertakes this effort.

THA's enrollment efforts were part of an energetic and effective citywide collaboration – The Tacoma College Support Network (TCSN). TCSN is led by the Tacoma Public School (TPS) district and the College Success Foundation, and over 40 community partners, including THA. A key priority of TCSN has been to enroll all eligible students in the CBS. Because of those efforts, the City of Tacoma has had the state's highest enrollment rate since the inception of the scholarship.

THA's efforts focused on the families living in its properties or receiving its rental assistance. THA is well situated to help these families with the CBS paperwork, in several ways. Paperwork is what THA already does with these families every year. It has simply added the CBS paperwork to these encounters. Also, THA has other

occasions when it engages families for discussions that can easily include the importance of signing up for the CBS program. Finally, THA has some influence arising from its role as landlord, property manager, provider of housing assistance, and provider of human services. Its influence can be especially available since its staff speak the various non-English languages of its customer families.

The estimated results of THA’s efforts in collaboration with our partners over these three years have been quite positive. In 2008-2009 eighty-three percent (83%) of THA’s students enrolled, and in 2009-2010 approximately ninety-one percent (91%) enrolled. Since the end of school year 2011-2012, enrollments have been at 100% for THA and the district overall. The following table shows these data for the five years since these efforts began and compares it to statewide enrollment rates for the same years. Due to student movement in and out of school districts, it will never be possible to achieve exactly 100% enrollment, but current results indicate that nearly all eligible students in THA programs and Tacoma schools are signing up for the CBS scholarship.

Students Enrolled in the Washington State College Bound Scholarship Program by the End of Eighth Grade*					
	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Washington State	55%	68%	75%	77%	81%
Tacoma Public Schools	77%	90%	Approx. 100%	Approx. 100%	Approx. 100%
THA	83%	91%	Approx. 100%	Approx. 100%	Approx. 100%

**Washington Student Achievement Council (as of August 26, 2013)
(all percentages are estimates.)*

THA cannot tell whether its families enrolled in response to THA’s efforts, the efforts of other city partners, or a combination of the two. However, since the enrollment rate for THA families exceeded the district as a whole for the first two years of the effort, THA’s efforts may have been determinative for many families.

This enrollment effort is part of THA’s Education Project. That project seeks to find out if and how a public housing authority can so spend its housing dollars in a way that gets two other things done: improve school outcomes for the children whose families participate in its housing programs, and improve the outcomes for the schools serving its neighborhoods.

The positive results of THA’s CBS enrollment efforts fortify the view that THA, and other public housing authorities, can have a positive influence on school outcomes at relatively little effort and expense.

2. TACOMA HOUSING AUTHORITY'S EDUCATION PROJECT

The school success of the children that THA houses is an important part of the strategic goals THA has chosen for its work. THA's vision statement imagines a future where "everyone has an affordable, safe and nurturing home, where neighborhoods are attractive places to live, work, attend school, shop and play, and where everyone has the support they need to succeed as parents, **students**, wage earners and neighbors." THA Vision Statement (February 27, 2013)(emphasis added). THA's strategic objectives state that, "Its supportive services will help people succeed as tenants, parents, **students**, wage earners and builders of assets who can live without assistance. It will focus this assistance to meet the greatest need." THA Strategic Objectives (February 27, 2013) (emphasis added).

This focus on education is part of THA's overall view of its housing and service programs. THA wants its housing to be a transforming experience for families so they can prosper and become less reliant on the assistance. THA wants this especially for the children it houses. For this reason, the educational outcomes of these children are part of the performance measures THA will use to assess its own performance.

THA's focus on education serves three purposes. **First**, school success is part of the transformation THA seeks to encourage among the families it serves, and their children. School success increases the chance that the children's lives will be self-sufficient and meaningful. Also, educational outcomes are a useful proxy for other important outcomes that are harder to measure. For example, THA helps parents improve their parenting skills, overcome domestic violence, and address drug or alcohol affliction. These efforts are important, but measuring their effect is hard. Their effect, however, can show in the improving school outcomes for children in those households. A family is likely doing fairly well on these other metrics if its children are reading on grade level.

Second, THA develops real estate. The financial and social success of its developments requires successful neighborhood schools.

Third, public schools need the community's assistance. The effects of deep poverty follow children to the schoolhouse door and present challenges the schools need help to address. THA seeks to do its part.

In summary, THA's Education Project is an experiment to find out if and how a public housing authority can so spend its housing dollars to get two other things done:

- improve school outcomes for the children whose families participate in its housing programs;
- improve the outcomes for the schools serving its neighborhoods. seeks to find it out out and incorporate it into THA's operations.

THA began this effort surmising that it can have a positive influence in these ways. This surmise arises from two facts. **First**, except for the school district and the state Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), THA serves more low-income

children than anyone in the city. **Second**, in serving them and their families, THA touches deeply into their lives. THA is their landlord. THA manages very detailed and highly regulated programs that provide their rental assistance. THA delivers supportive services. This involvement offers chances and choices to promote school success.

The results of this experiment should be interesting to other public housing authorities and school districts.

THA's Education Project has the following elements:

- *Community Expectations of School Success*
One way to get improved school outcomes from children is to expect them and to let children know about the expectations. The community has a role in stating these expectations. Any such effort may be more effective when addressed to families who share a positive, community interest. THA's residential communities can serve this purpose. THA will seek ways to assert the expectation, for example, that "All Salishan children shall read at grade level." Our Free Books Program, through which we distribute hundreds of free books to our residents each year, is a part of this initiative.
- *Community Facilities*
THA's housing communities have meeting spaces and facilities useful to stage education programs such as Head Start programs, computer labs and classes. These facilities provide a good chance to provide services to a targeted community within walking distance. THA makes these facilities available to the school district and other educational organizations.
- *Link Housing and School Effort*
THA can link its housing assistance to educational services provided by the school district and others. THA can target its housing resources on families whom the school district or other educational organizations identify as being in circumstances where the housing assistance would determine a child's school success or the success of a school. If housing can leverage effective educational services and good school outcomes, it is a very good use of a housing dollar.
- *Coordinated Supportive Services*
THA provides significant human services. It seeks to effectively link these efforts with those of the school district and others educational partners.

In devising and implementing its Education Project, THA is fortunate to have the Tacoma Public School District as a partner. TPS has welcomed THA's collaboration. The district's excellent capacity for data and analysis is for program design and evaluation. Most importantly TPS's inspiring and strong leadership – the School Board, the Superintendent, and the school based principals and staff – has helped THA envision and realize how a public housing authority can help to promote school outcomes.

To learn more about THA's Education Project, go to www.tacomahousing.org/education

3. THE WASHINGTON STATE COLLEGE BOUND SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

In 2008, the Washington State Legislature created the Washington College Bound Scholarship Program (CBS). CBS is a state-wide program that guarantees free college or technical school tuition at public institution rates to low income Washington State students who meet certain requirements. The legislature created the CBS program to encourage the students and their families to believe that college is financially possible for them despite their low-income. The program seeks to do this by making tuition affordable.

3.1 What Does the College Bound Scholarship Pay For?

The amount of the College Bound Scholarship is based on the tuition (at public college rates) not covered by other state financial aid, plus a small book allowance. A student can use the scholarship at a Washington public community, technical, or four-year college, an approved, accredited independent private college or university, or at a public or private career school. It is renewable for up to four years.

3.2 Who Is Eligible for the College Bound Scholarship?

The following criteria determine which students are eligible for the CBS program:

- *Low-Income or Otherwise in Need*
The student or his family must meet any of the following indications of financial need at the time of enrollment and upon graduation from high school:
 - ~ income of the family must be under income limits;
 - ~ student is eligible for or receives free or reduced price lunch;
 - ~ student's family receives TANF benefits;
 - ~ student is in foster care.
- *Graduate from a Washington State high school or home school*
The student must graduate from a Washington State high school or home school.
- *Grade Point Average*
The student must graduate from high school or home school with a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.0.
- *Be a Good Citizen and Stay out of Trouble*
The student must show good citizenship and not commit any felony.
- *Apply for Financial Aid*
The student must submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) during their senior year of high school.

- *Gain Admittance to an Eligible College*
The student must gain admittance to a Washington public community, technical, or four-year college, an approved public or private university, college, community college, technical school or private career school.
- *Enroll in the CBS!*
There is an important additional requirement. Students and their parents must fill out, sign and file an application for the CBS program before the end of the 8th grade school year. Each year, seventh and eighth graders are eligible to do this. The purpose of this enrollment requirement by the 8th grade is to get the student and the family thinking early that college is possible and to encourage them to prepare by doing well in school.

Yet, at the beginning of the program nearly half of the state's children were disqualified from the scholarship assistance simply because they had failed to sign up.

4. THA’s EFFORTS TO ENROLL STUDENTS IN THE COLLEGE BOUND SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

4.1 Goals and Results

In any year, approximately six hundred (600) 7th and 8th graders live in housing that the THA owns or that their families rent on the private rental market with help from THA’s rental assistance programs. THA seeks to have all of them enrolled in the CBS Program by the end of their eighth grade school year. Additional students live in homes their families own at New Salishan, THA’s largest community. THA include them in the enrollment effort. However, THA does not know their number and for that reason could not include them in the count of results.

4.1.1 Enrollment Rates

The chart below shows the estimated enrollment rates for students in THA housing and housing programs for 2009-2010 through 2011-2012. The chart also compares those rates with the estimated rates within the Tacoma Public School district and within Washington State. This information is derived from data provided by the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC). These numbers are estimates because of the difficulty in getting aggregate data from the state that is compiled from information that is confidential for each individual student. The next section discusses these data challenges in more detail.

The estimated results show that THA’s enrollment rates are consistently higher than the school district’s and significantly higher than the state-wide population of students. THA and the district now are at approximately 100% with the state not far behind.

Students Enrolled in the Washington State College Bound Scholarship Program by the End of Eighth Grade*					
	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Washington State	55%	68%	75%	77%	81%
Tacoma Public Schools	77%	90%	Approx. 100%	Approx. 100%	Approx. 100%
THA	83%	91%	Approx. 100%	Approx. 100%	Approx. 100%

**Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC)(as of August 26, 2013)
(all percentages are estimates.)*

Based upon these quite positive results, WSAC has recognized THA as a leader in the state in promoting and supporting the College Bound Scholarship Program.

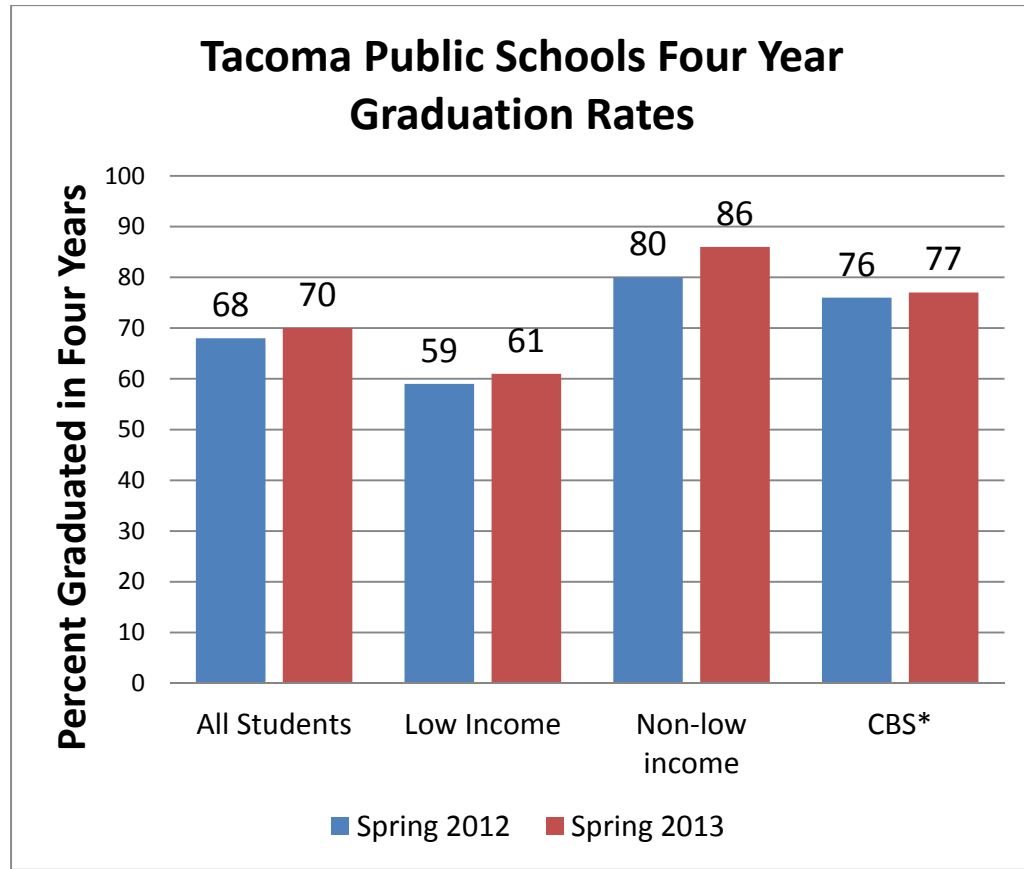
These numbers are estimates. Exact counts of enrolled students are not possible due to students who do not permit the release of their name, students who sign up but are no longer eligible at the time the data are released, and student movement within the district's and THA's population. However, WSAC, TPS, and THA agree that these estimates are as close as we can come to the actual count.

THA cannot tell whether its families enrolled in response to THA's efforts or in response to efforts of other city partners, especially given the very high rate at which Tacoma students now sign up. However, since the enrollment rate for THA families significantly exceeded those for the city in the first two years, THA's efforts may have been determinative for many families in both years. WSAC and our other partners in Tacoma have offered the view that THA's efforts were a critical part of the success the City has achieved.

4.1.2 *Graduation Rates*

In February of 2013, TPS released a report showing the graduation rates of the class of 2012, the first graduating class of College Bound Scholars. At that time TPS reported a graduation rate of 90% for College Bound Scholars. Subsequently TPS revised that statistic to 76% "when updated records indicated approximately 100 students that registered in other districts transferred to the TPS cohort" (TPS Department of Research and Evaluation). The original finding of 90% supports the conclusion that students who sign up for the scholarship while in Tacoma schools and remain in Tacoma's schools are more likely to graduate than new students who have signed up in other districts.

The following chart shows the graduation rate for students who signed up for the College Bound Scholarship for the classes of 2012 and 2013. The data show a substantially higher graduation rate for low income students who signed up for the scholarship compared to those who did not.



While the 2013 graduation rate for low income students in general was nine percent lower than all students in the district, the rate for low income students who signed up for the scholarship exceeded the total district average by 7%, and exceeded the rate for non-low income students by 16%. This is most likely due to multiple factors including the motivational factor of knowing the student can pay for college, the intensive support provided by TPS and the TCSN partners focused on these students, and a greater likelihood of signing up by students who were more engaged in their learning. This last factor will become less significant as the classes in which greater numbers are signed up begin to graduate.

4.2 How THA Promoted Enrollment in the CBS Program Among its Students

THA’s efforts to encourage CBS enrollment were part of an impressive, larger community effort led by TPS and others organizations. Those efforts included the following:

- Community Efforts*

THA’s students had the advantage of concerted community enrollment efforts that have been most energetic in the state. The Tacoma Public School district led these efforts. It built a partnership with the College Success Foundation and over 30 other organizations to create the Tacoma College Support Network (TCSN). This network became the key leadership group for the CBS program in Tacoma. Its leaders meet

monthly to develop strategies to maximize the sign-ups. (Appendix B lists Network members.) This community effort mobilizes schools, administrators, and counselors to assure that students have the information and opportunities to sign up.

Every spring from 2008 through 2012, TPS, the College Success Foundation, TCSN, and others staged the *Tacoma is College Bound* event. Hundreds of eligible students and their families attended. It provided a very good chance to receive answers to all questions about the CBS and to sign up on the spot. Translators, entertainment, and food were provided. (Other communities are now staging similar events.)

In spring of 2012, THA participated with the College Success Foundation and other community partners in *College Bound Saturday* at the University of Washington-Tacoma. This event focused on supporting students already signed up and their parents to assure the students will be eligible for the scholarship upon graduation. Over 200 students and parents attended. *College Bound Saturday* occurred again in Spring, 2013.

- *THA In-house Support for CBS Applications*
In addition, THA supported CBS enrollment through several in-house efforts. Most importantly, THA added the CBS enrollment paperwork to the paperwork that THA must process each year with the families participating in its housing programs. Throughout the year, THA's Leasing and Occupancy Specialists provided CBS applications and information on the scholarship as they met with families for the annual review that THA conducts for housing purposes. In this way, families could sign up for the CBS when they conducted their normal business with THA. [This aspect of the effort may become less significant since THA is reducing the amount and frequency of the paperwork it asks of families who participate in its housing programs.]
- *THA Letter to Its Families and Other Offers of Information*
In 2008 and 2009, THA consulted its data on the family composition and ages of family members of all families living in its properties or participating in its rental assistance programs. As part of its administration of those properties and program, THA collects this data. Using this information, THA sent a letter to every family that might have a 7th or 8th grader. THA sent letters and applications translated into the language that households had identified as their primary language. Appendix B is a copy of the English version of the 2009 letter. The letter enclosed a brochure from the state with detailed information about the CBS and a CBS application. The letter and the brochure explained that to apply for the CBS the family must fill out the application and return it to the student's school counselor. THA also sent letters to all families living in the single family homes of New Salishan. THA did not have any data indicating if those families had students of the appropriate age or income,

but THA sent the letter just in case the family included such students. THA purposefully overestimated the number of families with 7th or 8th graders to avoid missing anyone.

In addition, THA made CBS brochures and applications available at its housing sites and offices. THA's community newsletters ran several articles on the scholarship, and its AmeriCorps volunteer at THA community computer labs helped students to sign up online.

- *Direct and Personal Contact with Families*
In the spring of 2009, THA arranged with TPS and Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for an exchange of data that allowed THA to determine which of its families had not yet enrolled in the CBS. THA representatives then visited those families. For this purpose it contracted with Ms. Colleen Philbrook, a very experienced educational advisor and advocate who had worked as a College Preparatory Advisor for the College Success Foundation. (She now leads the efforts of TPS to serve homeless students.) She has extensive expertise in effectively advising students and families about college and college preparation. THA's multi-lingual staff was at Ms. Philbrook's disposal for home visits to families. THA case workers also contacted families and facilitated the collection of forms. Ms. Philbrook and the THA caseworkers conducted home visits with 54 households at New Salishan.

5. ONGOING CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

5.1 Data Sharing Challenges and Some Solutions

THA's direct contact with families who have not yet signed up for the CBS program was probably the most effective technique to spur enrollment among families who were resistant to other efforts. However, two challenges make it hard to identify which students have not yet signed up for the scholarship.

- Federal housing rules prevent THA from identifying individual families to the school district or WSAC and asking whether their students have enrolled in the CBS. To do this, THA would need the written permission of the individual families. In lieu of this permission, THA and TPS agreed on a limited exchange of data. THA shared only the addresses of families living in its public housing communities, although not the names of the families or the students. TPS then matched these addresses with those in its data base of students of the appropriate grades. This is time consuming. Also, accurate data can be difficult to get because of differences in how addresses are written. In addition, THA cannot release the addresses of Section 8 voucher families because, unlike public housing units, these addresses are not public information.
- Similarly, education rules prevent the TPS District and WSAC from sharing identifying family information with THA unless the parents check a box on the back of the sign up form allowing WSAC to do so. Many parents do not check the box. Therefore, the list of enrolled students WSAC provides to THA under represents the number of students who have signed up. This makes it inefficient for THA to contact all THA families that do not appear on the list.

Techniques to resolve the data sharing challenges:

- To resolve the confidentiality issue, THA is asking its assisted families for written permission, using a form for this purpose, to allow THA to give and receive limited data with the TPS and WSAC. HUD has approved this release as long as it is clear to the families that such a release is voluntary and a refusal to grant permission does not affect a family's housing assistance. As of the date of this report THA has permissions covering over 1,000 Section 8 students. This number will continue to grow. At some point, it should allow THA to send TPS a more complete list of THA's students in the eligible age range and allow TPS to tell THA with increasing accuracy which THA students have signed up for the scholarship.

5.2 College Preparation

THA realizes that enrolling in the CBS is only one step toward college or post graduate schooling or training. A student must also do well in school and take the appropriate classes that would prepare him or her for college. Helping a family and a student prepare in these and other ways must be the focus of other efforts. To promote this preparation, THA is planning or collaborating with other initiatives, such as:

- *THA's Scholars Incentives Program (pending)*. This program, funded in part by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, will be available to every THA student who enrolls in the CBS. It will match them with a counselor to devise an individualized plan to take the student through high school graduation and acceptance into a post-secondary program. The plan will set milestones along the way, e.g, a certain grade point average, attendance, discipline, taking the PSAT, taking the SAT, filling out the FAFSA, applying to a post-secondary program, getting accepted. Upon attaining each milestone, the program student will earn a modest cash payment, plus a deposit into an individual development account (IDA) in his or her name. The balance in that IDA will grow as he or she meets each milestone. He or she will have access to the balance if and when he or she completes the plan. The balance would then be available for educational purposes.
- Community events such as *College Bound Saturday*, the 2010 Race and Pedagogy Youth Summit, and the broad college bound efforts of the Tacoma College Support Network.

5.3 Recommendations for Next Steps

The City of Tacoma's excellent citywide success in enrolling approximately 100% of eligible students in the CBS means that THA's efforts can now take a role more subordinate to the efforts of the School District.

- THA will continue to embed the CBS paperwork into its own paperwork that it must do with the families who participate in its housing programs. However, THA has redesigned its housing programs to reduce the extent and frequency of this paperwork.
- Its staff, in annual and other periodic contacts with families, will continue to urge them to sign up for the CBS.
- THA will continue to make CBS information available at its housing sites, computer labs, and offices and in its various newsletters.
- THA's AmeriCorps staff at its community computer labs will continue to help students sign up online.

- THA's Manager of Educational Programs will continue to serve on the event planning committee of the Tacoma College Support Network. For example, he was instrumental in gaining a \$10,000 grant in 2010 for this group to support college bound students. This grant was renewed for 2011-2012 and some funds remain for work in 2012-2013.
- THA will continue to participate in community planning and events such as *College Bound Saturday*.
- In addition THA will continue to encourage families to provide the data releases described in section 5.1 above. Should enrollment in TPS fall below 100% in future years, THA will analyze these results and respond to patterns in the data.

6. CONCLUSION

The results from THA's enrollment program from 2008 through 2013 suggest that it is very worthwhile. The effectiveness of the School District's excellent enrollment efforts will allow THA to reduce its own efforts. This is convenient since THA's redesign of its housing programs has reduced the extent and frequency of its own paperwork contacts with families. THA has other contributions to make to the enrollment effort, which remain worthwhile. THA should monitor the continuing enrollment rates of its 8th graders. If those rates decline, THA should bolster its efforts.

This work is an important part of THA's Education Project, which in turn serves its strategic mission of helping the children it houses succeed in school. In this way, and others, THA seeks to do its part in helping all children do well in school.

The purpose of THA's Education Project is to find out if and how a public housing authority can influence educational outcomes in a positive way and otherwise effectively support worthwhile educational goals. The CBS enrollment success strongly suggests that THA can be influential in those ways and at relatively little expense and effort. In particular, it was easy to add the CBS paperwork to the paperwork THA already processes with families. This success encourages THA to pursue the other elements of its Education Project.

THA is grateful for the leadership of the Tacoma School District and the other members of the Tacoma College Support Network. Appendix A lists the member organizations. The efforts of these fine organizations have distinguished Tacoma among all other Washington State communities in the highest percentage of students enrolled in the College Bound Scholarship Program.

APPENDIX A: COLLEGE BOUND SCHOLARSHIP RESOURCES


- **How Can Families Get More Information about the College Bound Scholarship?**
The most up-to-date information is always at the website of WSAC.
www.wsac.wa.gov/PayingForCollege/FinancialAid/OpportunityPathways/CollegeBound
- **Membership of the Tacoma College Support Network**
 - Adelante Media Group
 - Allen Renaissance
 - Associated Ministries of Tacoma Pierce County
 - Bates Technical College
 - Black Education Strategy Roundtable
 - Centro Latino
 - College Success Foundation
 - Department of Social and Health Services
 - Evergreen State College Tacoma
 - Executive Council for a Greater Tacoma
 - Foster Enterprise
 - Girl Scouts of Western Washington
 - Gonyea Boys and Girls Club
 - Greater Tacoma Community Foundation
 - Higher Education Coordinating Board
 - Metropolitan Development Council
 - Northwest Leadership Foundation / Act Six and Proyecto Mole
 - Pacific Lutheran University
 - Palmer Scholars
 - Peace Community Center
 - Pierce College
 - Pierce County AIDS Foundation
 - Resources for Education and Career Help (REACH) Tacoma
 - Seattle Pacific University
 - Stand for Children
 - Tacoma 360
 - Tacoma Community College
 - Tacoma Housing Authority
 - Tacoma Public Schools
 - Tacoma Sunrise Rotary
 - Tacoma Urban League
 - United Way of Pierce County
 - University of Puget Sound
 - University of Washington Tacoma
 - WashBoard.org
 - Washington College Access Network
 - Workforce Central
 - YMCA of Pierce County and Kitsap Counties



TACOMA HOUSING AUTHORITY

Michael Mirra
Executive Director

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

——
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Janis Flauding, Vice Chair
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Dr. Arthur C. Banks

December 15, 2009

Dear Friends:

I write to tell you about a state of Washington program to help eligible low-income families pay for college. It is exciting. It is valuable. To qualify, however, the student and his or her parent or guardian must sign up during seventh or eighth grade and before the deadline. The deadline is June 30th during eighth grade. The Tacoma Housing Authority wants to help you sign up so you do not miss this important chance for your children.

The program is called the College Bound Scholarship Program. It will help pay tuition at public and private colleges in Washington, including community or technical colleges. I enclose a brochure that describes how to qualify.

I also enclose an application. If you have a student in the 7th or 8th grade, we ask that you:

- Complete the application
- Make sure a parent or guardian signs it.
- Make sure your student signs it
- Make sure that you return the signed application to Tacoma Public Schools using the enclosed stamped envelope or by taking it to your school's counselor.

You can get more applications and more information at www.wsac.wa.gov/PreparingForCollege/CollegeBound. You can even sign up there on line.

Please remember: 8th graders must sign up by the end of this school year to be in the program.

We look forward to the day when your child will go to college!

Cordially,

TACOMA HOUSING AUTHORITY

Michael Mirra
Executive Director