



MY BROTHER'S KEEPER

ALBUQUERQUE

LOCAL ACTION PLAN • JUNE 2016

INTRODUCTORY LETTER

The My Brother's Keeper Community Challenge was launched in January 2014, calling on the communities across the nation to address the many barriers faced by young men of color and ensure that every young person has an equal opportunity to achieve their dreams. I was very glad to accept this presidential challenge on behalf of the City of Albuquerque.

Over the last year and a half, we've partnered with many community stakeholders, including local youth, to develop a focused and achievable action plan. This report outlines the work we plan to do and how we will evaluate our progress going forward.

I'm proud to be a part of this national effort and excited about what Albuquerque can accomplish - but the fact is, we can't do it alone. One of the core aspects of this initiative is to bring people together, using both public and private resources, to best address the challenges that young men face in our city. The more we collaborate - across different levels of government, non-profit organizations, businesses, and youth and community leaders - the more progress we can make and the brighter the future will be for young people in our city.

Our goal is for Albuquerque to be a place of equal opportunity, where hard work and performance are justly rewarded. We will not allow our children, our next generation of innovators and leaders, to slip through the cracks. We're all in this together, because when all of our young people succeed, Albuquerque succeeds.

Thanks in advance for being a part of this important work.



Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rich Berry".

MAYOR RICHARD J. BERRY

THANK YOU

ALBUQUERQUE MY BROTHER'S KEEPER PLANNING PARTNERS

There were several important participants in Albuquerque's MBK planning process, including individuals on the advisory council, hundreds of young men from the community, private organizations, and government agencies who provided invaluable feedback and advice. We hope to maintain the support of these participants and to expand this collaborative network during implementation.

The City of Albuquerque would like to thank the following individuals and organizations for their work and feedback to develop the MBK action plan:

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Mission: Graduate

UNM Office of Diversity and Inclusion

- Men of Color Initiative

New Mexico Forum for Youth in Community

Albuquerque Public Schools

New Mexico State Office of African American Affairs

UNM Center for Education Policy and Research

Youth from more than ten schools and programs who attended the Youth Action Summit: Albuquerque, Cibola, Eldorado, Highland, Manzano, Volcano Vista, and West Mesa High Schools. The Atrisco Heritage Academy, Job Corps, and the Robert F. Kennedy Charter High School.

W.K. Kellogg Foundation

Southwest Organizing Project

Families United for Education

New Mexico Youth Alliance

Juvenile Detention Alternatives Program,

Youth Services Center, Bernalillo County

Beyond Poetry LLC



Photo courtesy of Sandia National Laboratories, Albuquerque, NM, MBK Day at the Labs

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INTRODUCTION

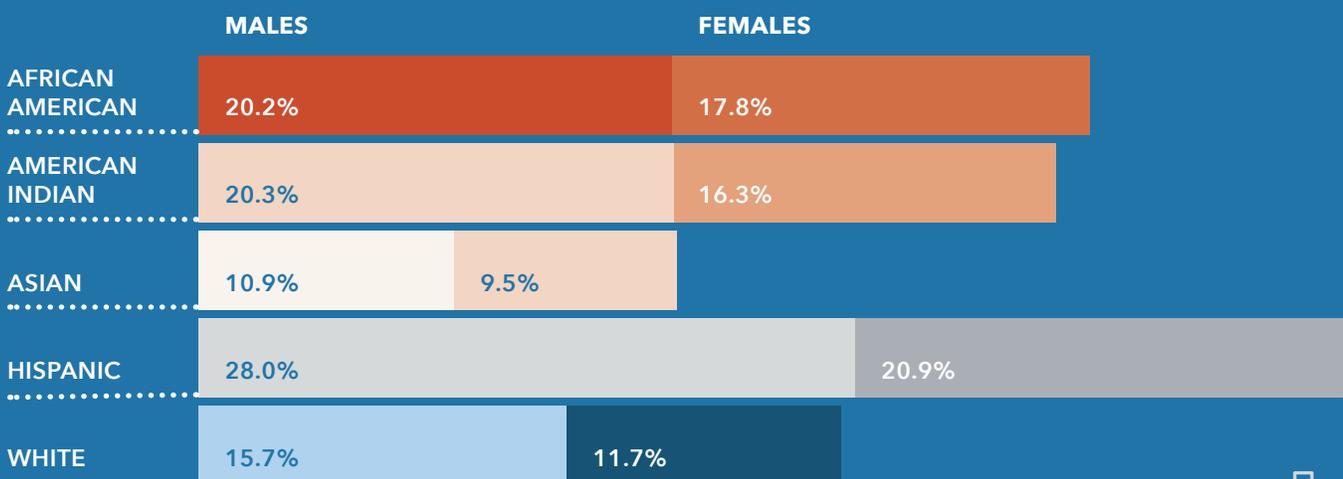
America faces a persistent problem, one that allows young boys and men of color (YMOC) to experience significant barriers to opportunity that prevent them from reaching their potential and fully contributing to their communities and the economy. These barriers exist in a similar way in Albuquerque and are demonstrated by disparities in outcomes in education, the criminal justice system, and employment. These are missed opportunities not only for young men, but the impact is felt by entire communities and the well-being of Albuquerque as a whole.

For example, educational outcomes play a crucial role in determining the lifetime career opportunities available to young people. By 2018, 60% of jobs will require post-secondary education, and it is well known that higher education levels lead to higher earnings for individuals⁽¹⁾. So, while more than 80 percent of all high school students in the country now graduate from high school, the dropout rates are highest among Hispanic, Native American, and Black males, respectively, when compared to whites of both genders (see Figure 1 below)⁽²⁾.

We want boys and young men of color in Albuquerque to truly participate and successfully leverage educational and career opportunities, but there are several challenges that must be addressed in order to achieve more equitable outcomes. One example is the disproportionately high habitual truancy rate among high school students of color in Albuquerque Public Schools (see Figure 2). Among young men of color, the

disparities are even greater, as Native Americans have a truancy rate of 55.4%, African Americans 48.8%, and Hispanics 44.5%, compared to 25.9% for White males⁽³⁾. Research has demonstrated a strong association between truancy and likelihood of dropout from high school. Therefore, it is critical that we work to create conditions to ensure a better educational experience for all⁽⁴⁾⁽⁵⁾.

FIGURE 1. PERCENTAGE OF 18-24 YEAR OLDS IN THE UNITED STATES WHO DID NOT COMPLETE HIGH SCHOOL, 2014



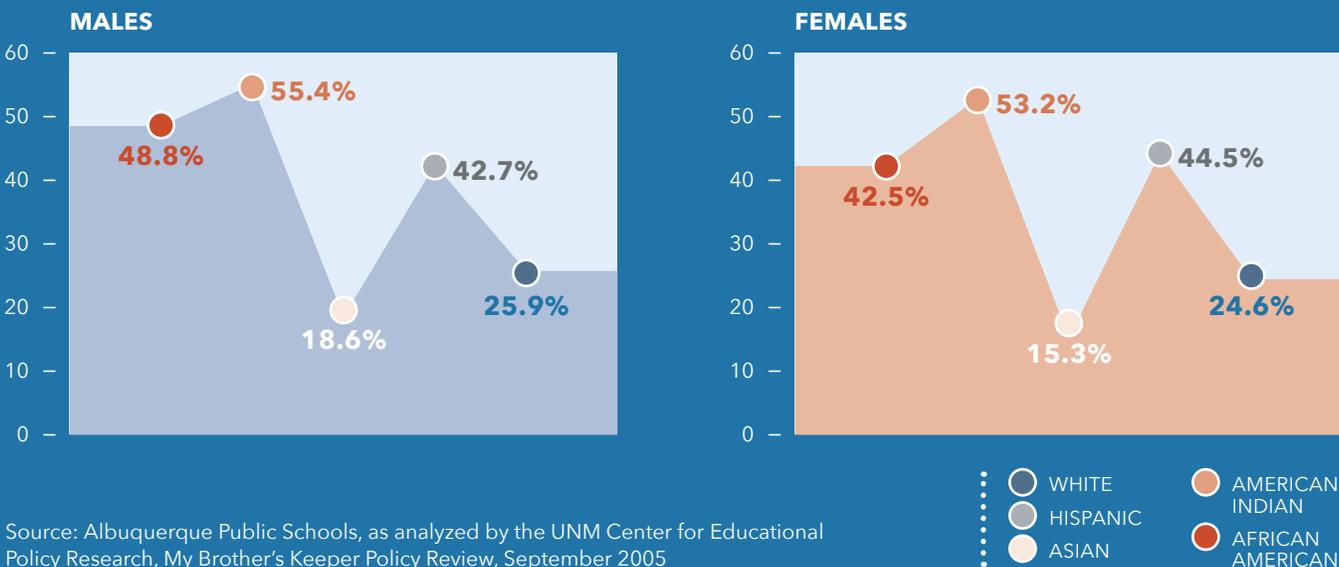
Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, US Department of Labor, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, reported by U.S. Department of Education.





Photo courtesy of Sandia National Laboratories, Albuquerque, NM, MBK Day at the Labs

FIGURE 2. APS HIGH SCHOOL HABITUAL TRUANCY, 2014: % OF APS STUDENTS WITH 10 OR MORE UNEXCUSED ABSENCES



Source: Albuquerque Public Schools, as analyzed by the UNM Center for Educational Policy Research, My Brother's Keeper Policy Review, September 2005

MBK BACKGROUND

On February 27, 2014, President Barack Obama launched My Brother's Keeper (MBK), a new initiative aimed at addressing disparities among boys and young men of color that impede their opportunities to succeed⁽⁶⁾. In the fall of 2014, the President issued a challenge to cities, towns, counties, and tribal nations across the country to publicly join this effort and commit to action locally. Additionally, the President made it clear that any commitment and planning process by local elected leaders should not be done in isolation. It should include community partners in the process, such

as nonprofit organizations, faith leaders, business leaders, and youth.

The ultimate purpose of the local MBK planning effort is to create a coherent cradle-to-college-and-career strategy (i.e. action plan) to improve the life outcomes of all young people to ensure that they can reach their full potential. The plan may include recommendations that fall within six milestones, but it need not be comprehensive. More importantly, each city should prioritize the recommendations that have the collective will and adequate resources to implement effectively.

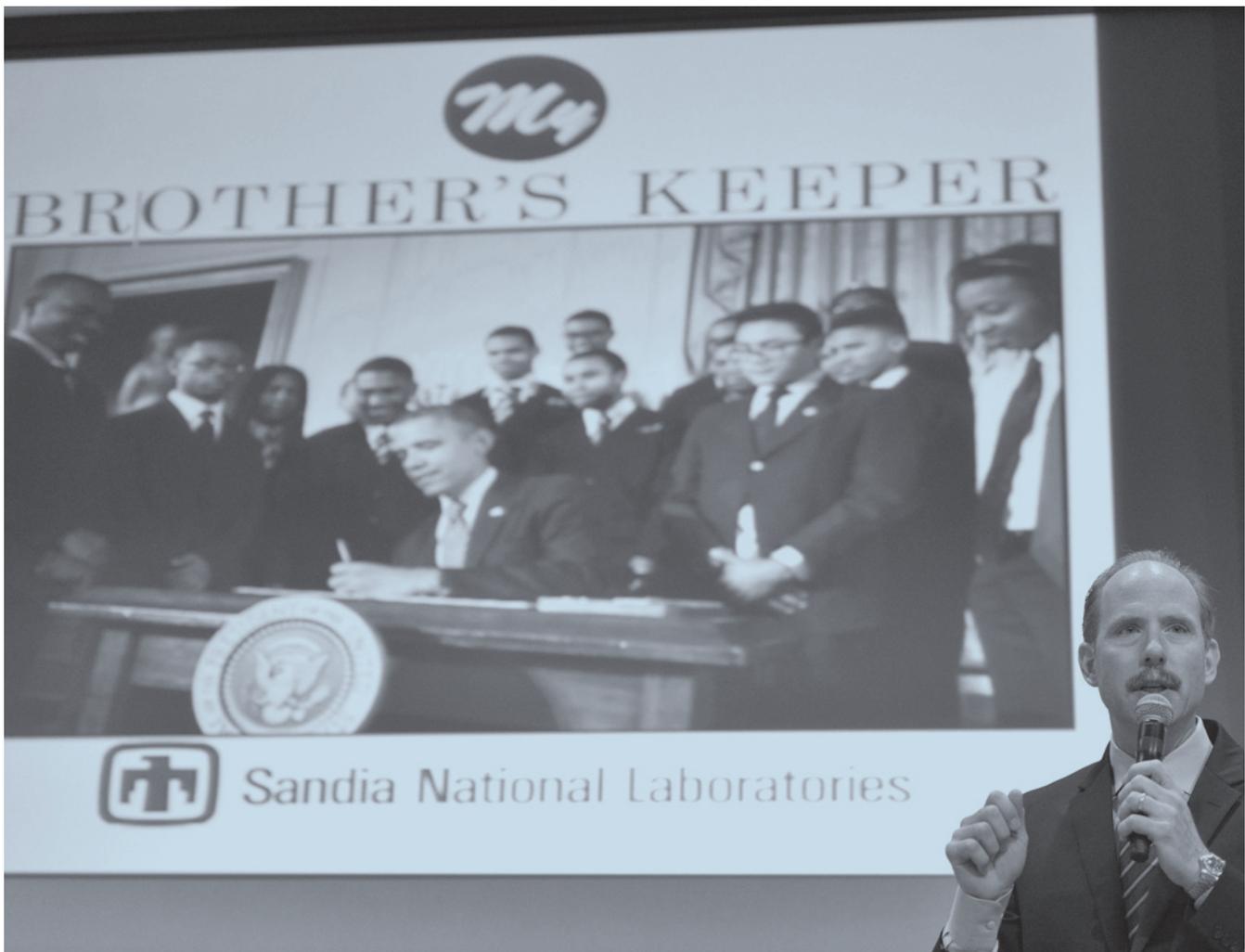


Photo courtesy of Sandia National Laboratories, Albuquerque, NM, MBK Day at the Labs

MY BROTHER'S KEEPER FOCUSES ON SIX MILESTONES



MILESTONE 1:

Getting a Healthy Start and Entering School Ready to Learn

All children should have a healthy start and enter school ready - cognitively, physically, socially, and emotionally.



MILESTONE 2:

Reading at Grade Level by Third Grade

All children should be reading at grade level by age 8 - the age at which reading to learn becomes essential.



MILESTONE 3:

Graduating from High School Ready for College and Career

All youth should receive a quality high school education and graduate with the skills and tools needed to advance to postsecondary education or training.



MILESTONE 4:

Completing Postsecondary Education or Training

Every American should have the option to attend postsecondary education and receive the education and training needed for the quality jobs of today and tomorrow.



MILESTONE 5:

Successfully Entering the Workforce

Anyone who wants a job should be able to get a job that allows them to support themselves and their families.



MILESTONE 6:

Keeping Kids on Track and Giving Them Second Chances

All youth and young adults should be safe from violent crime; and individuals who are confined should receive the education, training, and treatment they need for a second chance.

The City of Albuquerque answered the MBK challenge and began an extensive community engagement and planning process to identify disparities, develop recommendations, and expand partnerships to address these challenges. This effort honed in on two key issue areas that impact life trajectories for YMOC:

1

CAREER
EXPLORATION

2

SCHOOL
DISCIPLINE

When exploring recommendations through the planning process, the city prioritized ideas to which youth wanted to give attention; the city and community had the support and resources to pursue; and were evidence-based, whenever possible. The recommendations resulting from this comprehensive process align with five of the six priority MBK milestones: **1, 3, 4, 5 and 6.**

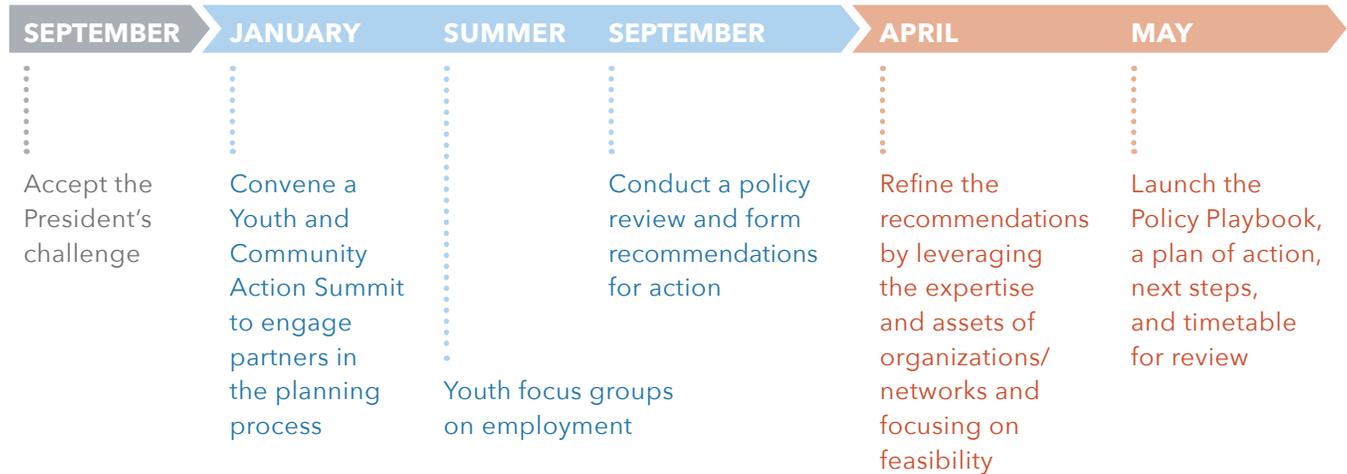
ALBUQUERQUE MBK PLANNING PROCESS

Albuquerque Mayor Richard Berry accepted the MBK challenge in September of 2014 and with community feedback soon adopted a planning framework to create an MBK action plan:

PROCESS TIMELINE

2014 2015

2016





YOUTH AND COMMUNITY ACTION SUMMIT

In January 2015, Mayor Berry collaborated with community partners to facilitate a summit, with over two hundred young men of color and more than one hundred other community members in attendance from throughout the city, in order to engage in a dialogue to generate policy and programmatic recommendations to address the relevant local MBK milestones.

The effort provided an opportunity for young men of color to be change agents in their community, and they spoke openly about the challenges they face within public and private systems and suggested solutions to address these challenges. The summit recommendations were compiled in a report, prepared by the New Mexico Forum for Youth in Community, which provided the core ideas to inform the policy review and focus groups to occur later in the process⁽⁷⁾.

MBK POLICY REVIEW

As a follow-up to the Youth Summit, the City of Albuquerque commissioned the University of New Mexico Center for Educational Policy Research (UNM CEPR) to conduct a policy review and analysis of local career exploration and school discipline policies and programs that impact young men of color⁽⁸⁾. Additionally, representatives from the Youth Advisory Council were convened twice to offer additional guidance, which resulted in seven public policy recommendations aimed at improving outcomes for YMOC in order to close the educational opportunity gaps.

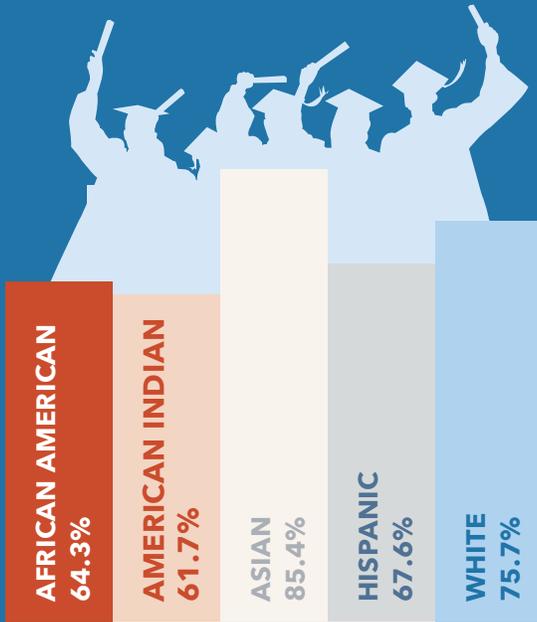
YOUTH FOCUS GROUPS

The City of Albuquerque contracted with a local non-government organization to conduct seven youth focus groups, with 62 students, in high schools across the Albuquerque Public Schools district. The focus groups engaged youth in discussions around youth underemployment and were linked to the local MBK priority area of career exploration. More specifically, the focus groups elicited information about barriers to employment, needed job skills, and ideas to better connect youth and employers.

THE CHALLENGE IN ALBUQUERQUE

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

APS 4-YEAR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATE, BY RACE/ETHNICITY, 2014: % OF STUDENTS TO GRADUATE WITHIN FOUR YEARS



APS 4-YEAR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATE, BY GENDER, 2014: % OF STUDENTS TO GRADUATE WITHIN FOUR YEARS

64.8%

MALES

73.9%

FEMALES

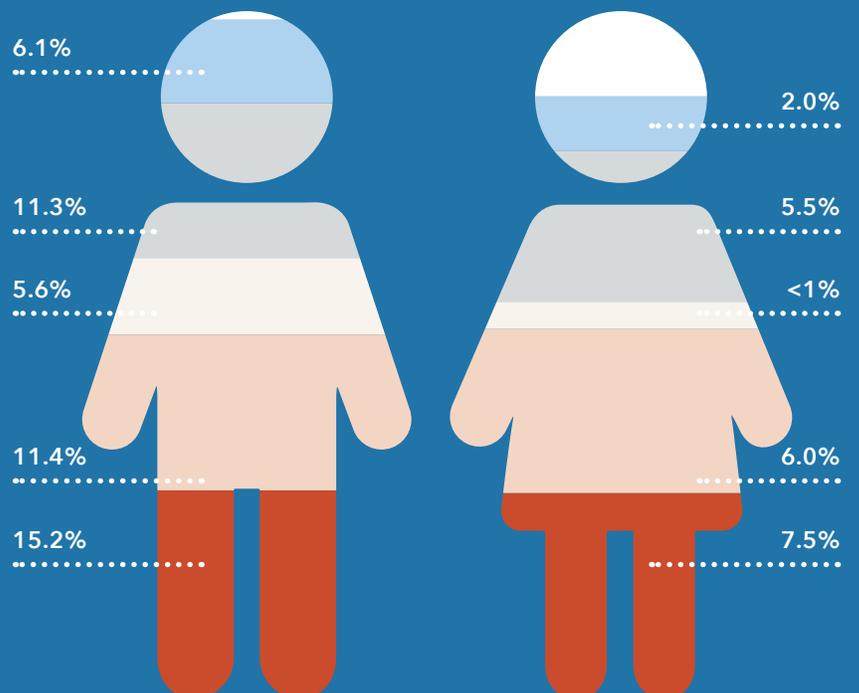
Source: Albuquerque Public Schools, as analyzed by the UNM Center for Educational Policy Research, My Brother's Keeper Policy Review, September 2015⁽⁹⁾

HIGH SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS

APS HIGH SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS, 2014: % OF STUDENTS WITH ONE OR MORE OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS

Source: Albuquerque Public Schools, as analyzed by the UNM Center for Educational Policy Research, My Brother's Keeper Policy Review, September 2015⁽¹⁰⁾

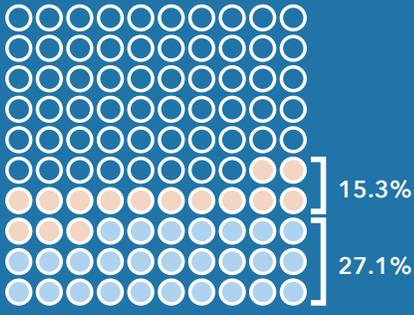
- WHITE
- HISPANIC
- ASIAN
- AMERICAN INDIAN
- AFRICAN AMERICAN



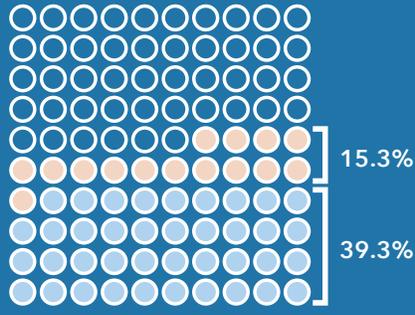
*Note: APS High School Graduation rate and Youth Unemployment rates are not disaggregated by gender within race/ethnicity. This data challenge is described in the report along with a recommendation that important measures be disaggregated to show outcomes among young men of color.

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT RATE BY AGE GROUP, 2010-2014

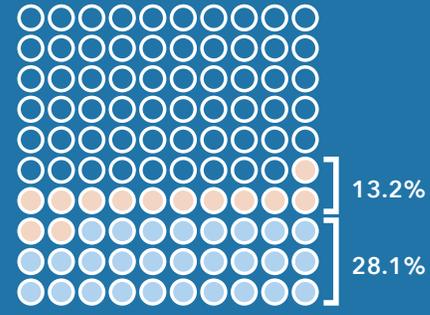
UNITED STATES



NEW MEXICO



ALBUQUERQUE



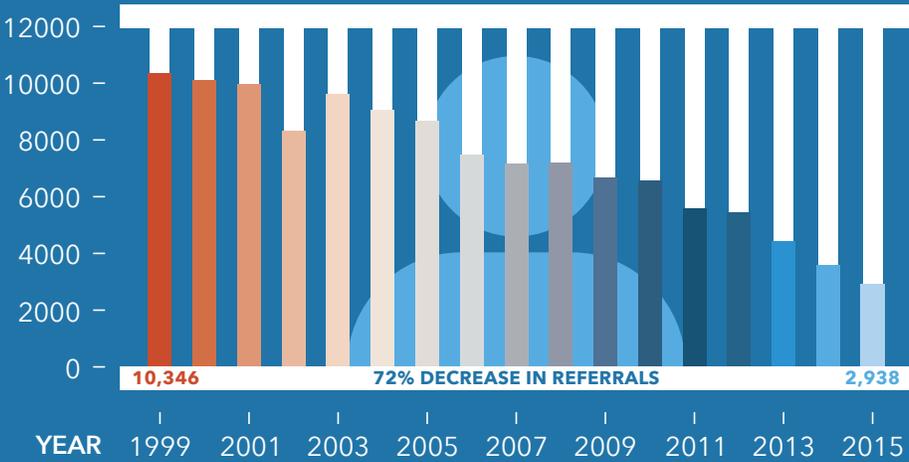
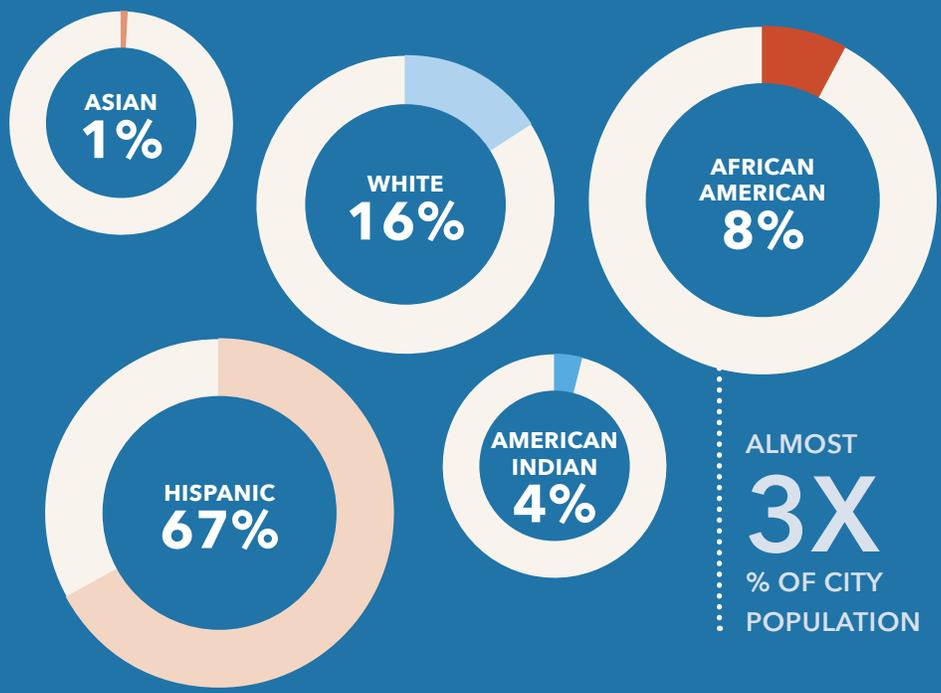
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates⁽¹¹⁾

JUVENILE DETENTION

African American youth are overrepresented in county detention by almost three times their city population rate. Hispanic youth are also overrepresented as well.

PERCENTAGE OF YOUTH IN BERNALILLO COUNTY DETENTION BY RACE

Source: JDAI Bernalillo County data via OJJDP. Puzanchera, C., Sladky, A. and Kang, W. (2015). "Easy Access to Juvenile Populations: 1990-2014." Online. Available: <http://www.ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/ezapop>⁽¹²⁾



72% IN JUVENILE JUSTICE REFERRALS FROM 1999 TO 2015

*Note: The challenge is to continue the trend of a 72% reduction in the Juvenile Crime Rate over the last 16 years.

Source: JDAI Bernalillo County data via OJJDP. Puzanchera, C., Sladky, A. and Kang, W. (2015). "Easy Access to Juvenile Populations: 1990-2014." Online. Available: <http://www.ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/ezapop>⁽¹³⁾

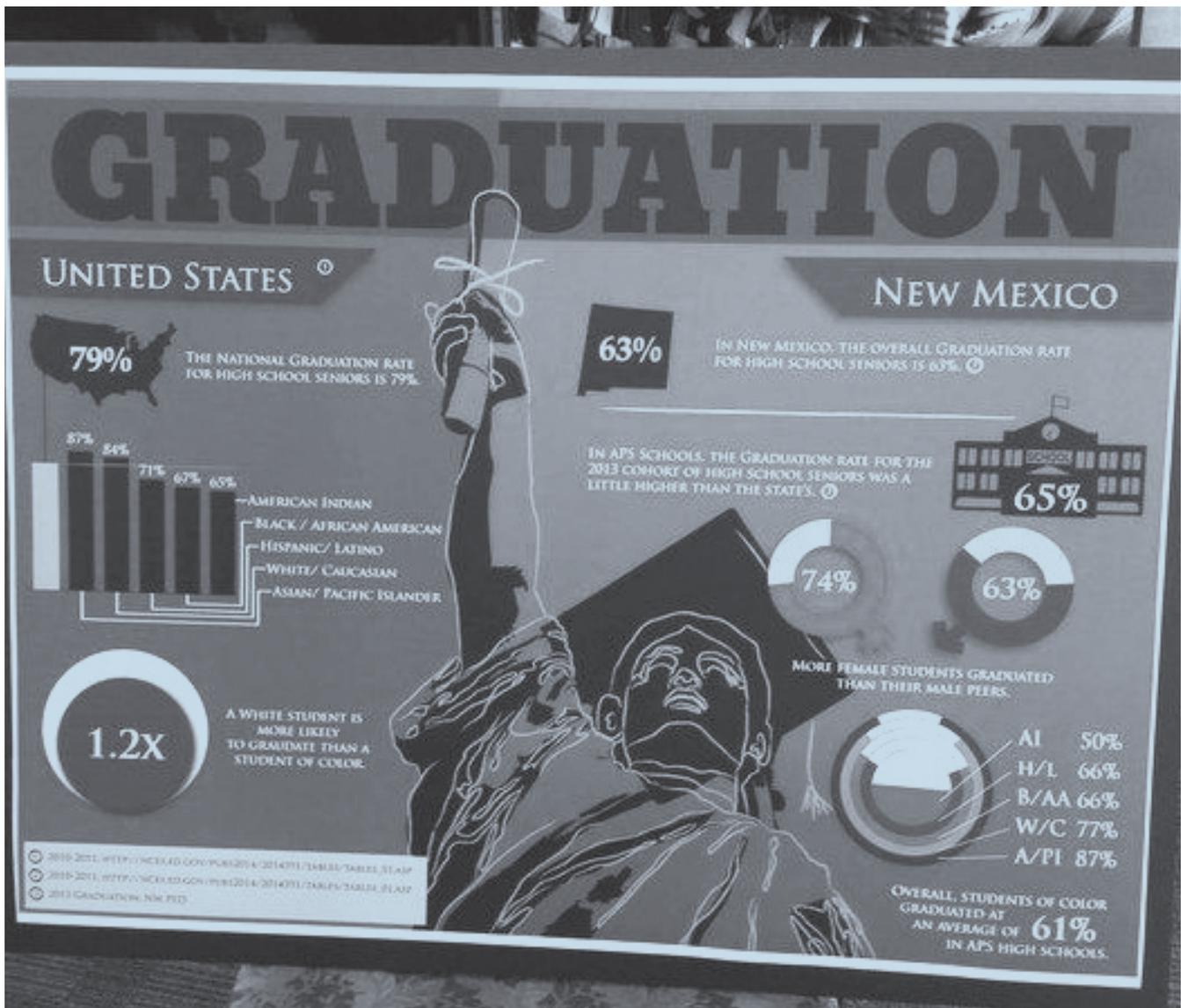
GUIDING PRINCIPLES

An important part of the MBK planning process was to engage partners to better understand the local ecosphere of key programs and services that are relevant to the priorities of the plan. This included an asset mapping of existing programs and services in the areas of school discipline, justice, and career exploration.

What emerged from this research is that multiple organizations are doing important local work in these sectors. However, many of these programs

and services could be more relevant to MBK by focusing a lens on how young men of color could succeed in the environments surrounding them.

Therefore, the plan includes a number of newer programs and activities, but it also focuses on the tools, skills and approaches to apply to our existing priority reform initiatives, until we know what works in addressing the often recalcitrant and generational challenges that result in inequalities.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

There are three guiding principles that serve as important values and should be adhered to during the planning and implementation of the plan's core recommendations and strategies. These principles enhance knowledge and understanding of the challenges, allow for important feedback, and aid in monitoring progress and measuring effectiveness. They are:

1

YOUTH AND COMMUNITY VOICE AND EMPOWERMENT

- Include youth and community members in solutions
- Promote ethnic and racial awareness, knowledge, and justice

Young men of color must have a role in this process, and we should also include their families and members of the community in the continuous shaping and implementation of solutions.

Also, this work will be far more effective when community stakeholders, including city staff, are educated about the history and existing challenges of disparate outcomes faced by communities of color.

2

DATA REPORTING

- Disaggregate data on key youth indicators by gender within each racial and ethnic group.

While data should ideally be made publicly available—and sometimes is—for sectors such as education, workforce, and justice, it is rarely available in a format to allow for a better understanding of the disparities among young men of color. Disaggregating these data by race/ethnicity, sex, and age group allows the scope and magnitude of the challenges to be better understood and addressed by the plan before it is put into effect. Additionally, it allows for the effectiveness of the strategies, in reducing the disparity gaps, to be monitored over time.

3

COLLECTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE COMMITMENT

- Establish truly collaborative MBK partnerships

The effectiveness and the sustainability of the MBK plan depends upon the collective impact of the work of public, private and community partnerships.

- For example, partners can better work together to monitor, adopt, and scale up promising and evidence-based practices when they are successfully piloted in the community.
- Public and private organizations should examine how existing resources can be leveraged to achieve the MBK goals.
- It is important to gain the backing of private non-profit organizations, community members, and youth advocates. However, it is also important to build support among business leaders and philanthropies to support evidence-based practices.
- How can we create new connections? For example, would it be helpful to connect local law enforcement and school resource officers to improve outcomes of inequitable discipline practices?

CORE RECOMMENDATIONS

1

CAREER EXPLORATION

- Improve career exploration opportunities
- Students apply learning in a community or workplace setting for credit
- Assess the job skills of youth to match the needs of employers

There are multiple public and private partners that are working to provide career exploration opportunities for youth. For example, through its Employment Network, Mission: Graduate has recently identified over 30,000 career exploration opportunities for youth in central New Mexico. The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions has also recently expanded career exploration through youth internships.

In summer 2016, Mission: Graduate, in partnership with the City of Albuquerque (CABQ), will expand its Launch to Learn program to engage middle and high school youth in career exploration opportunities, using a digital badge system to highlight earned career exploration skills and competencies. The Launch Me web-based platform will allow young men of color to build foundational employment skills, develop employment profiles, and connect to employers seeking youth employees.

Additionally, this summer, Albuquerque Public Schools, CABQ, and Mission: Graduate are launching an innovative career exploration pilot summer credit recovery program. Grades in core subject areas, such as math, are key predictors of high school completion. For example, when students fail Algebra I in 9th grade, the likelihood that they drop out of school increases significantly⁽¹⁴⁾. To address this issue, YMOC in Albuquerque will be able to recover Algebra I credit

by participating in a project-based course focused on automotive trades. Students will be able to apply classroom concepts in a real-world learning lab. It is also an opportunity for these young men to fulfill their school core subject requirements in math.

Skills-based hiring practices match the talent needs of employers with the skills of job seekers. TalentABQ is an existing collaborative initiative between Innovate+ Educate, the City of Albuquerque, NM Department of Workforce Solutions, and Central NM Community College that has established an extensive network of local employers and community partners that can be linked to job candidates who may not always be accessed through traditional job hiring practices. It also provides free courses to help job candidates to improve their workplace skills and prepare for the skills assessment. This initiative, while available to all local residents, can work with partners to provide targeted outreach to increase participation by young men of color⁽¹⁵⁾.

THE CAREER EXPLORATION CORE RECOMMENDATION IS MOST ALIGNED WITH:



MBK MILESTONE 3

Graduating from
High School
Ready for College
and Career



MBK MILESTONE 4

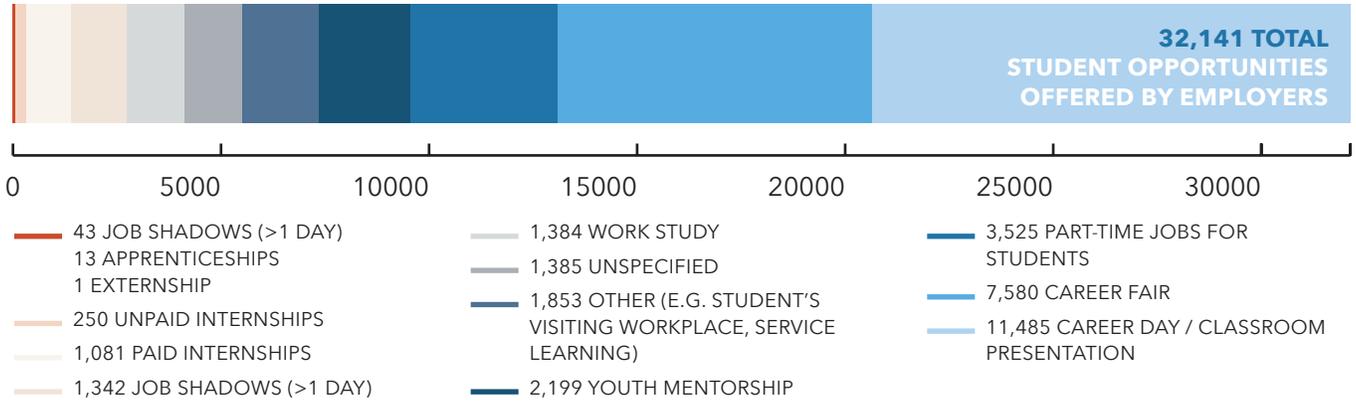
Completing
Postsecondary
Education
or Training



MBK MILESTONE 5

Successfully
Entering
the Workforce

CAREER EXPLORATION TYPES IDENTIFIED (SO FAR)



Source: Mission: Graduate, career exploration mapping⁽¹⁶⁾.

The Talent ABQ Initiative helps to bridge the opportunity and hiring gap of job seekers while also increasing the likelihood that an employer will hire a candidate who will thrive and be successful on the job.

2 SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

- Enact restorative justice techniques in schools
- Fair disciplinary practices to understand students, not punish
- School safety and discipline policy that focused on student engagement and positive behavior support
- Discipline code promoting healing, restoration, and accountability. Restrict use of punitive and exclusionary measures.
- End Zero Tolerance policies
- Provide physical, mental, and social health resources

There has been a deep concern expressed by community partners about disciplinary practices that are not equitable along race and gender groups and that harsh practices may funnel children out of school and into the juvenile and criminal justice system. National and local data supports the fact that male students of color experience disproportionately higher rates of harsh discipline⁽¹⁷⁾. These strict school discipline practices can include "Zero Tolerance" policies of mandatory enforcement through suspension, expulsion, or arrest of students.

APS can strive to have a model school discipline policy by monitoring its system wide disciplinary data for disparities by race and sex; ensuring standardized enforcement of its policies; exploring alternate policies such as administrative interventions

(e.g. detention); restorative practices, or therapeutic responses; and working closely with parents and community stakeholders to develop evidence-based systemic solutions that reduce disparities.

THE SCHOOL DISCIPLINE CORE RECOMMENDATION IS ALIGNED WITH:

MBK MILESTONE 3
 Graduating from High School Ready for College and Career

3

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Create community service opportunities for students, families, businesses and organizations
- Activities and programs inclusive of community members
- Create pathways to jobs/careers for students and families
- Empower student clubs to reach into communities
- Provide or connect to physical and mental health care services and social support services in the schools or community
- Utilize Family Resource Centers and AmeriCorps VISTA volunteers to work with parents to seek mediation with respect to disciplinary actions
- Build capacity of community members as leaders
- Increase mentoring opportunities

Community schools are an important model to organize and coordinate resources to serve the holistic needs of a student and family members, principally with supportive health, mental health, or social services, and it provides an avenue to link community needs with the school system. This often involves the coordination of funding from several levels of government and private organizations. The community schools model provides a support system that can be helpful to improving social determinants that impact educational outcomes of many young men of color. This model was bolstered by the State passage of the 2013 Community Schools Act, but it still requires robust implementation. Implementing the community schools model provides a means to gain feedback and support from the community and implement reforms that can help realize MBK goals.

As a requirement of Title I Family Engagement funding, APS must convene annually to meet with parents regarding its family engagement policy and consider any recommended revisions. When parents are involved in their child's school and engaged in their educational experience, there is a positive impact upon multiple educational outcomes of that student. APS should continue their efforts to seek improvements to family engagement by exploring new evidence based practices to involve families and communities in their schools and improve equity in student performance.

THE FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CORE RECOMMENDATION IS MOST ALIGNED WITH:



MBK MILESTONE 1

Getting a Healthy Start
and Entering School
Ready to Learn



MBK MILESTONE 3

Graduating from
High School Ready for
College and Career

4

JUSTICE: SEEK ALTERNATIVE PRACTICES TO HELP YOUNG MEN TAKE RESPONSIBILITY, REASSESS, AND REFORM

- Restorative justice practices in schools and communities
- Address restorative justice efforts through collaborative city and county projects

Restorative justice practices acknowledges how that behavior affected and harmed others, enables offenders to make amends whenever possible, and supports the offender to make changes to avoid such behavior in the future.

Too often, young men of color are victims of violence or interact with the juvenile and criminal justice systems in a way that adversely impacts their life trajectory. Even though juvenile crime has decreased by 72% in Albuquerque over the last sixteen years, YMOC are disproportionately represented in all correctional settings.

Juvenile courts, justice systems, and even schools often respond to youth crime that prioritizes punishment without addressing the needs of individual crime victims, the community, and juvenile offenders. Restorative justice practices acknowledges how that behavior affected and harmed others, enables offenders to make amends whenever possible, and supports the offender to make changes to avoid such behavior in the future⁽¹⁸⁾. Restorative practices to school discipline follow a similar methodology of collaborative problem solving—that has a growing body of evidence demonstrating effectiveness—with an

aim to keep students in school and to reduce the disproportionately high suspension rate of young men of color⁽¹⁹⁾.

In Albuquerque, there is a need for different levels of government to regularly meet to share data to better understand the nature of the problems and collaborate in developing solutions. An emphasis should be placed on reducing unnecessary interactions between youth and the juvenile justice system and for those incarcerated improving their chances of successful reentry into the community, workforce, or reengagement with the educational system.

The City of Albuquerque pledges to work with partners to develop focused and coordinated strategies to address disparities among young men of color. Partners may include state, county, and local law enforcement, corrections systems, court systems, and even school systems.

THE JUSTICE CORE RECOMMENDATION IS MOST ALIGNED WITH:



MBK MILESTONE 6

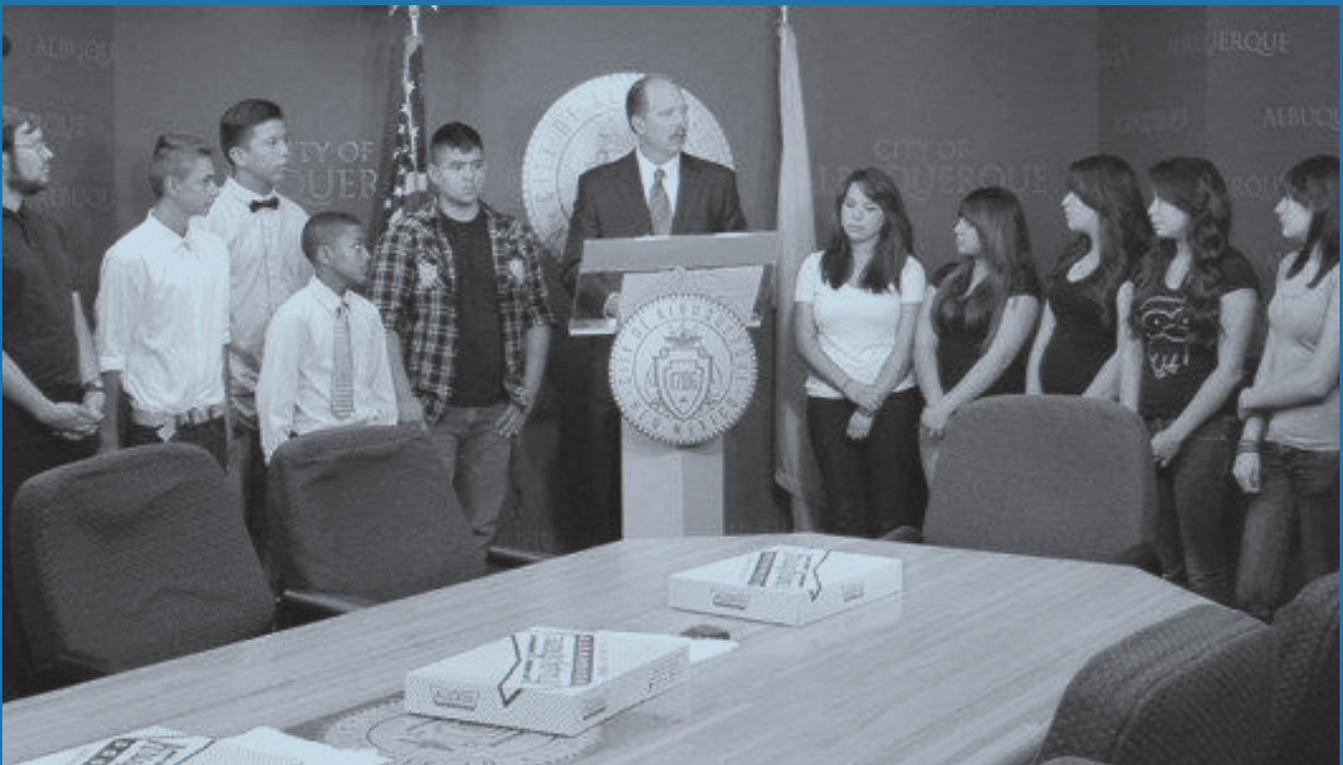
Keeping Kids on Track and
Giving Them Second Chances

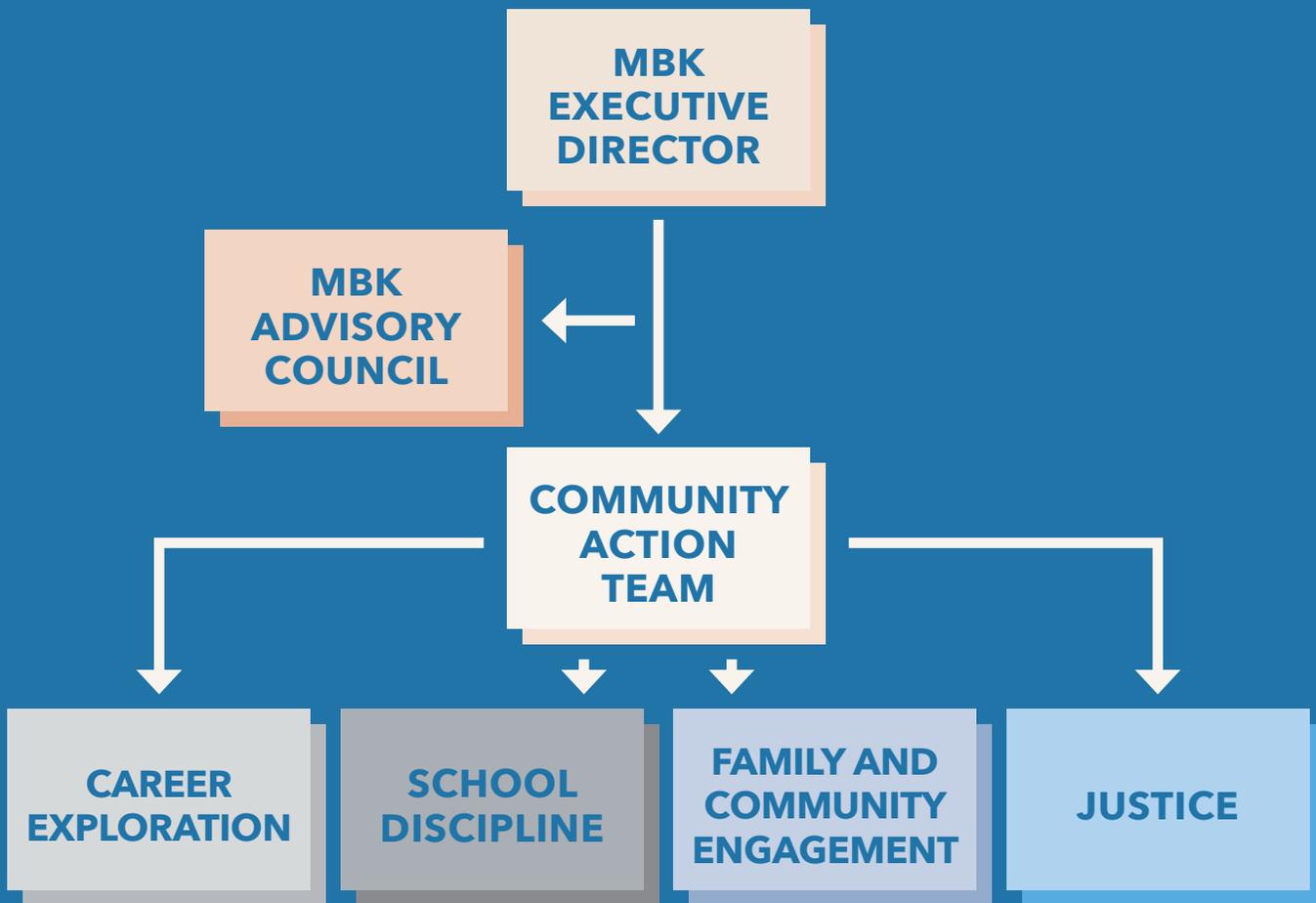
GOVERNANCE AND IMPLEMENTATION

It is important to have a dedicated and sustained capacity to oversee the coordinated implementation of several programs and services, monitor progress, and serve as a facilitator and point of engagement for youth and other community stakeholders. Therefore, the Mayor has designated a Director of the My Brother's Keeper Initiative to spearhead the partnership and track its advancement. An annual report of MBK progress will be issued each year.

Since the fundamental success of the MBK action plan is built on public-private collaboration, it makes sense that the community has an important role in its governance. A governance structure with multiple levels of management, accountability, and advisory roles also contributes to a more sustainable model to keep the MBK initiative on track.

- The MBK Advisory Council will continue to provide strategic advice and support for the initiative, including implementation, recommendations for additional actions, and reviews of each annual report.
- Community “Action Teams” have been created to facilitate implementation of each recommendation. Action team members will be comprised of community stakeholders who can lend topic area expertise or perspective to planning, monitoring, and implementation. Also, a team leader or co-leaders will be designated to coordinate the group’s work and report progress to the MBK Director.





*Youth will be given representation on the Advisory Council and Action Teams

LEADERSHIP: COMMUNITY ACTION TEAM

CAREER EXPLORATION	SCHOOL DISCIPLINE	FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	JUSTICE: Seek alternative practices to help young men take responsibility, reassess, and reform
Co-Leaders: Dr. Frank Mirabal, Director of Collective Impact, CABQ and Dr. Angelo Gonzales, Executive Director, Mission: Graduate	Co-Leaders: Katarina Sandoval, Associate Superintendent for Equity, Albuquerque Public Schools and an organization to be named.	Co-Leaders: Albuquerque Public Schools and Families United for Education	Co-Leaders: Gerri Bachicha, JDAI, Bernalillo County and Gabriel Campos, Office of Diversity and Human Rights, City of Albuquerque

CONCLUSION

The work to create an MBK Action Plan is an important milestone, but it is only a first step. It is vital to that the local co-anchors of the initiative continue to engage and empower youth in the ongoing implementation work, as well as establish a mechanism to distribute the plan and involve other stakeholders in its implementation, such as community members, government agencies, policy makers, and private organizations.

Furthermore, there are several opportunities to collaborate on additional data collection and information gathering, as we are still understanding the complicated causes of inequities. Additionally, there are communities who can be better included in ongoing work, such as Native American, LBGT, and justice-involved youth. Finally, there will need to be opportunities made available for community members to volunteer their time, and that takes resources and planning to organize in a meaningful way. The good news is that during the planning process, it became apparent that there are many individuals and organizations in the Albuquerque community who want to help create better opportunities and equality for young men of color. For the future of our city, this is the best news of all.

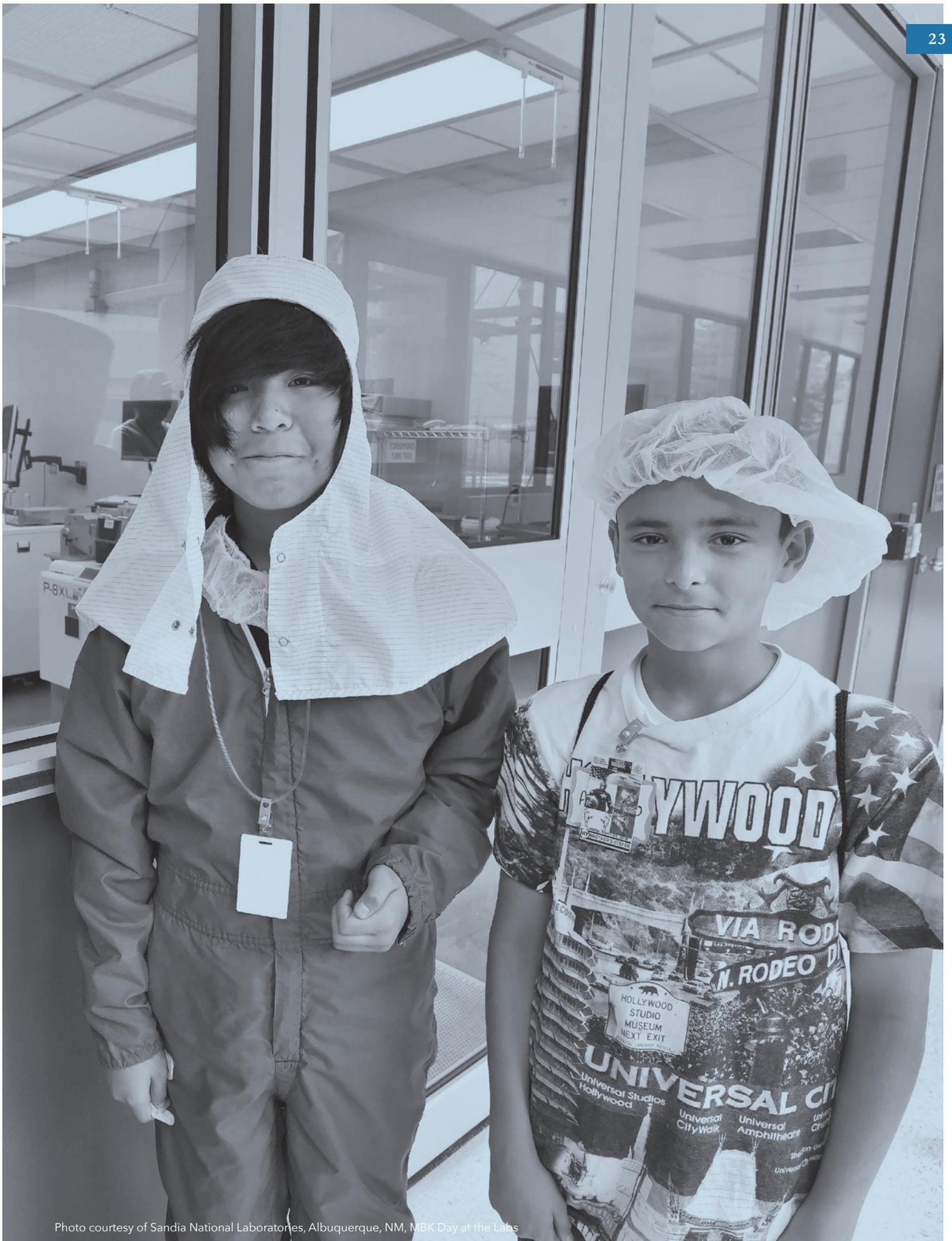


Photo courtesy of Sandia National Laboratories, Albuquerque, NM, MBK Day at the Labs

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