



MY BROTHER'S KEEPER
Rochester, NY

Blieve.



City of Rochester, NY
Lovely A. Warren, Mayor
Rochester City Council



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THE CITY OF ROCHESTER ACCEPTS THE FOLLOWING MY BROTHER'S KEEPER MILESTONES:



Milestone 2:
All Children Read at Grade
Level by 3rd Grade



Milestone 1:
All Children Enter
School Ready



Milestone 3:
All Youth Graduate
from High School



Milestone 5:
All Youth are Employed



Milestone 6:
All Youth are Safe from
Violence and Crime

“The statistics we see today show our children cannot wait any longer for us to get it right. We need every tool at our disposal to get our children on the right track.

Together, we have the potential to significantly impact what happens to the children in the City of Rochester by making sure that they have access to a quality education, are reading at grade level by 3rd grade and have the resources to help them succeed.”

Sincerely,



Lovely A. Warren
Mayor





President Obama's My Brother's Keeper Challenge

For decades, opportunity has lagged far behind for young boys and men of color, particularly in urban communities nationwide. Looking to address the lack of opportunities for young men of color and to improve their outcomes, President Obama launched the My Brother's Keeper (MBK) initiative in February 2014.

The MBK community challenge encourages local leaders and their respective communities to come together to develop and implement a coherent "cradle-to-college-and-career strategy" for improving the life outcomes of all young people. It uses existing evidence-based and data-driven strategies to develop a long-term and sustainable strategic action plan. It calls on leaders to identify and partner with all community stakeholders in order to assess the local needs and existing assets, determine collective priorities, and set common goals for improvement.

To date, nearly 200 mayors, county executives and tribal leaders across 43 states and the District of Columbia have accepted the MBK Community Challenge. Rochester is proud to accept this challenge and presents this action plan as the groundwork for the improving the lives of young people.

City of Rochester Answers the Challenge

On November 12, 2014, Mayor Lovely Warren convened a "Local Action Summit", bringing together community leaders, clergy, educators and law enforcement to find ways to improve the outcomes for young people and their families, with an emphasis on young males of color. From that summit, several working groups were formed to look at existing programs and determine how to create a sustainable pathway to success for all youth. Based on their findings, the following recommendations were presented for each milestone:

Milestone 1: All Children Enter School Ready

- Fund Programming Gaps Before and After Pre-k
- Encourage Early Health and Developmental Screenings
- Promote Healthy Living and Fitness

Milestone 2: All Children Read at Grade Level by Third Grade

- Empower Parents to take an active role in their child's development
- Ensure the Public's trust in Pre-K programs
- Advocate for Additional Resources

Milestone 3: All Youth Graduate from High School

- Create a Mayor's Mentor Network
- Encourage Private Sector Opportunities for Youth Employment
- Promote Youth Positivity and Educational Messaging

Milestone 5: All Youth are Employed

- Improve Summer Youth Employment
- Prepare Youth for the Workforce
- Increase Internship Opportunities for youth

Milestone 6: All Youth are Safer from Violence and Crime

- Renovate our efforts to prevent youth violence through community engagement, targeted intervention and counseling
- Encourage Law Enforcement and Communities to work together
- Diversity the Public Safety Departments

A Tale of Two Cities

The Rochester of today is far different from the one of just a generation ago. Rochester is a tale of two cities. One city is vibrant, hopeful, and highly livable. The other suffers from escalating poverty and crime, dilapidated housing and unemployment that is higher than during the Great Depression. This divide has produced economic and social consequences, and has fostered staggering racial disparities.

A recent report by the Rochester Area Community Foundation outlined the harsh reality Rochester faces; and the findings are a call to action that cannot go unanswered.



Today, Rochester is:

- The fifth poorest city in the country among the top 75 largest metropolitan areas;
- Ranked third for highest concentration of extremely poor neighborhoods among cities in the top 100 metro areas;
- The poorest public school district in Upstate New York and the poorest urban district in the entire state;
- The second highest city in child poverty in the country, second only to Detroit;
- Home to the lowest graduation rate in the country for Black males at 9% and 10% for Latino males;
- Home to an infant mortality rate, at 13.7 deaths per thousand, that is nearly double the state average of 5 deaths per thousand, and the national average of 6.1 deaths per thousand.

Despite an array of anti-poverty programs and millions of dollars in investments to raise individuals and families out of poverty, the Rochester community still faces a devastating and accelerating racial, social and economic crisis. Racial and ethnic disparities are ever more apparent.

Over the past 5 years (2010-2014), boys and young men between the ages of 14-24 accounted for the following in the City of Rochester:

- 50.2 % of all shooting victims
- 47.3 % of all violent crime arrests
- 35.1 % of all homicide victims
- 39.6 % of all arrests

Rochester's youth are too often ignored, and face many significant challenges and lack opportunities for success. Rochester has developed an evolving action plan to highlight the work that's being done within the community to address the opportunity gaps and disparities, outline current changes and lay the groundwork for future work.

Rochester's Action Plan: Investing in our Youth

In line with this initiative, the City of Rochester has answered the President's call and launched an action plan to measurably improve outcomes for young people and their families, with an emphasis on young males of color. Currently, Rochester is focusing on five of the six recommended goals issued by the White House.

The Warren Administration has initiated several community-wide initiatives to address most of these milestones. Each milestone provides a short list of action items for stakeholders as well as additional city wide efforts that might require additional support, resources and funding.

Rochester has a wide, general array of effective programs, initiatives and strategies in place to address the challenges facing youth, particularly males of color. Rochester's plan would invest in successful programs that would bring major and sustainable changes to the lives of all young boys and men.

This action plan seeks to lay the groundwork to align current and future work taking place across the community under a common framework that will improve and strengthen educational opportunities, pathways to employment and health outcomes so that young people can reach their full potential.

Next Steps

The City plans to focus on improving outcomes for all youth, especially young men of color, by actively engaging the community to enact sustainable change through policy, programs and partnerships. The City of Rochester will focus on a few key areas where investment will have the greatest impact, including the following initiatives: 3-to-3 initiative, Operation Transformation Rochester (OTR), Rochester Police Department Reorganization, Summer of Opportunity Program (SOOP) and Clergy on Patrol.



We will focus on improving the outcomes of all youth, especially young men of color, by actively engaging the community to enact sustainable change through policy, programs and partnerships.

ROCHESTER'S YOUTH AT A GLANCE



ROCHESTER IS RANKED THIRD FOR HIGHEST CONCENTRATION OF EXTREMELY POOR NEIGHBORHOODS among cities in the top 100 metro areas and has the 7th highest rate of child poverty in the nation. More than **65,000** residents of the city of Rochester are considered poor.

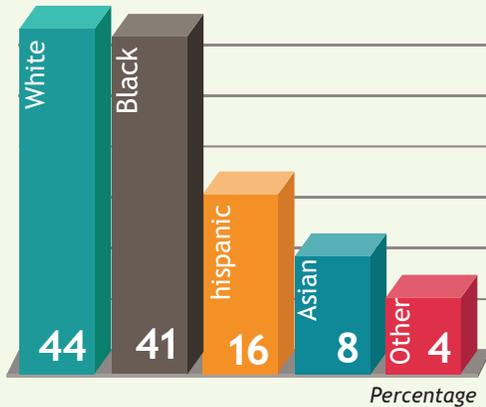
47%

YOUTH IN POVERTY

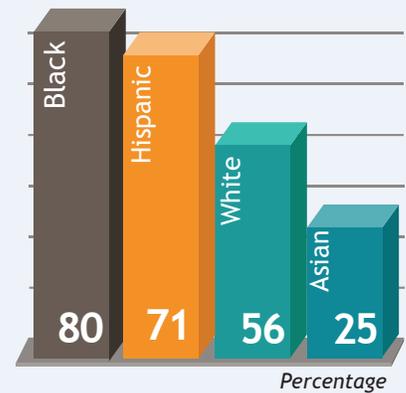


ROCHESTER'S POPULATION

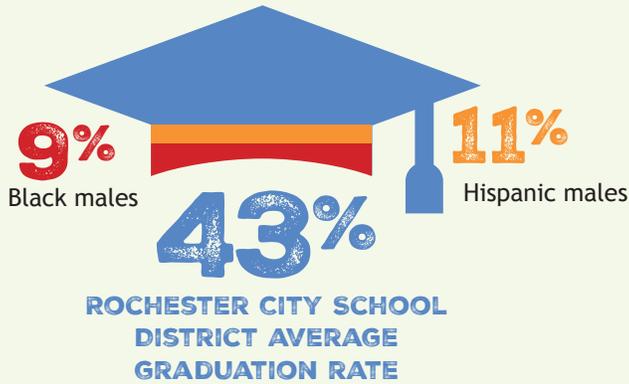
210,565



YOUTH IN SINGLE FEMALE-HEADED HOMES



YOUTH GRADUATION RATE



Children in the Rochester City School District are **CONSIDERED THE POOREST** of New York State's large urban school districts with **83 PERCENT** of students eligible to receive free or reduced-price meals.

650
AVERAGE NUMBER OF JUVENILE ARRESTS PER YEAR

YOUTH VIOLENCE

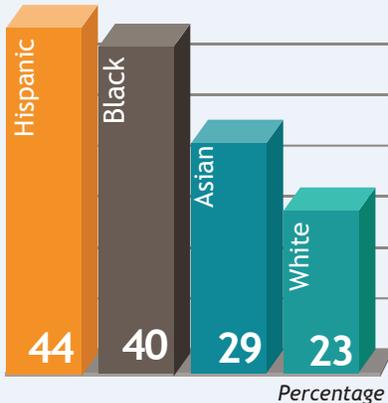
Ages 15-24 year olds account for **50%** of all shooting victims

HOMICIDE VICTIMS BETWEEN AGE OF 14-24

- 5 YEAR-2010-2014: **35.1%**
- 10 YEAR-2005-2014: **39.2%**
- 15 YEAR-2000-2014: **38.1%**

39.6%
5 YEAR PERCENTAGE OF ARRESTS IN THE CITY OF YOUTH AGE 14-24

POVERTY RATES FOR RACIAL GROUPS



CITY HOUSEHOLDS

Approx: **26%** live below the poverty line

\$27,123
City Household Median Income

ACT Rochester, Community Report Card
Monroe Crime Analysis Center (MCAC)

ALL CHILDREN ENTER SCHOOL COGNITIVELY, PHYSICALLY, SOCIALLY AND EMOTIONALLY READY TO LEARN



Current Picture:

Rochester is widely considered to have high quality Pre-K, its programs being rated in the top five percent nationally on the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS-R). Unfortunately many three-year-olds arrive in Pre-K needing significant help. More than 60 percent score below average on the Brigance Early Childhood Screen. Much of this problem is due to the loss of childcare subsidies since 2001, leaving more than 22,000 eligible Rochester children without subsidy assistance and the early learning support it provides.

City of Rochester's MBK Task force Recommendations

Fund Programming Gaps Before and After Pre-K

For the next budget, the City will allocate funds within the Department of Recreation and Youth Services (DRYS) and the Rochester Public Library System to develop programs to stem summer learning loss and develop enrichment programs during the school year to increase literacy skills.

Mayor Warren is committed to working with the Monroe County Executive to advocate for the restoration of childcare subsidies as well as requesting the State to develop a new funding formula for such subsidies.

Encourage Early Health and Developmental Screenings

The City of Rochester supports the School Readiness Collaborative Action Network Project to increase school readiness of three-year-olds. The project will focus on early developmental screening.

The City of Rochester also supports the screening workgroup in their effort to screen three-year-olds, with the aim of identifying developmental delays and intervention where appropriate. The goal is to improve the readiness level of three-year-olds as they start school.

Promote Healthy Living and Fitness

Mayor Warren co-chairs the Healthy Weight Council under the umbrella of the Greater Rochester Health Foundation. The Council has been instrumental in researching innovative ways to limit sugary drink consumption, advance healthy eating as well as physical activity practices in educational settings. Research shows that promoting healthy eating and physical activity in early childhood can break the cycle of adult health issues.

Action Steps:

- 1.** Allocate additional City funds to summer learning loss and enrichment programs.
- 2.** Advocate for the restoration of childcare subsidies.
- 3.** Promote early developmental health screening for young children.
- 4.** As a designated "Let's Move City," encourage more family wellness activities. Partner with the Greater Rochester Health Foundation for the Rochester Family Hike in Rochester's parks and neighborhoods.

ALL CHILDREN READ AT GRADE LEVEL BY 3RD GRADE



Current Picture:

By the end of third grade only 4 percent of the Black and 3 percent of Latino students in the Rochester City School District are proficient in reading and math. It is known that if children are not reading at grade level by third grade, their likelihood graduating decreases significantly, particularly for those living in poverty. It is also known that poor early childhood education and increased dropout rates are contributing factors to the cradle-to-prison pipeline. Mayor Warren recognizes that the importance of childhood education, therefore she established the Early Learning Council in March 2014.

City of Rochester's MBK Task force Recommendations

Empower Parents

The City of Rochester launched "Rochester Families Reads" in October 2014 to encourage parents to read to their children every day. Every quarter, the City provides a free age-appropriate book that parents can pick up at a neighborhood Recreation Center or Library.

Mayor Warren also partnered with Rochester School Board President to provide a map to success resource guide. This booklet is given to every new parent at Rochester-area hospitals.

Ensuring The Public's Trust in Pre-K Programs

The Warren administration has partnered with ROC the Future to develop a quality assessment tool for children that can be given to parents. ROC the Future is a community-wide initiative dedicated to ensuring that all children receive the opportunities and support they need to succeed in school and throughout life. This tool or progress report will aim to answer the question of what a child should know and when. It should also be easily understood by parents and available for distribution at City's recreation centers, libraries and on its website. This toolkit will be given out to parents at the beginning of the school year.

Advocate for Additional Resources

Pathstone provides a tuition savings program in partnership with Monroe Community College. This program has proven to be of benefit to families and the City of Rochester will support and promote the program to Rochester residents.

Action Steps:

1. Ensure parents are aware of programs, especially early development assessment.
2. Advocate and promote existing services with a successful track record of assisting families.

ALL YOUTH GRADUATE FROM HIGH SCHOOL



Current Picture

The City of Rochester does not have direct control over the Rochester City School District (RCSD). Approximately 32,000 students are enrolled in the district with a demographic breakdown of 65 percent Black, 22 percent Hispanic and 11 percent White. Within the RCSD, just two high schools graduate more than 80 percent of their students and the average graduation rate is currently 43 percent.

City of Rochester's MBK Task force Recommendations

Create a Mayor's Mentor Network

The City of Rochester and several agencies provide mentorship programs geared toward helping youth. The Mayor would bring these agencies and organizations together to establish a network in which they can share data and best practices in order to more effectively serve this population. The network will consist of active programs, will be listed on the City's website and the City will actively recruit mentors for these programs.

Encourage Private Sector Opportunities for Youth Employment

In 1987, the RCSD graduation rate was approximately 30 percent and former Rochester Mayor William Johnson, then-President of the Urban League of Rochester, sent a call to action to the local business community. The Wegman family responded with the Wegmans Work-Scholarship Connection currently known as the Hillside Work Scholarship Connection (HWSC). The model consists of one youth advocate supporting 30 students in their efforts to graduate from high school. The student has the opportunity to work at Wegmans and upon completion of high school, they receive a college scholarship. Approximately 95 percent of students in this program graduate from high school and ultimately continue working for Wegmans. This program also benefits the company. Wegmans has grown more diverse and has seen a dramatic reduction in employee turnover.

Promote Youth Positivity and Educational Messaging

There is a tremendous need for more positive imagery portraying the intellectual strength and integrity of black and Hispanic youth. The Warren Administration will seek several avenues to engage and inspire Rochester's youth and ensure they complete high school.

To encourage youth interests in civic planning and community involvement, Mayor Warren and the City's Commissioner of Recreation and Youth Services created a youth advisory council called "Youth Voice, One Vision." The City has recently hosted programs such as FASFA Fest, Lunch with the Mayor, and the #ReachHigher initiative.

Action Steps:

1. Support and increase mentorship opportunities that addresses social, academic and emotional needs of youth.
2. Encourage the local business community to take an active role in the community by embracing the HWSC model.
3. Continue to use innovative means to inspire, engage, educate and celebrate our youth in order to encourage their generation to aim higher.

ALL YOUTH ARE EMPLOYED



Current Picture

Employers are often hesitant to hire youth, especially those ages 14 and 15, due to limited availability and the cost of training. Most youth jobs are available during the summer months but these jobs are highly competitive. Last year, 3000 students applied for the City's summer youth employment program and only one-third received placement.

Programs like Operation Transformation Rochester, RochesterWorks! and Hillside Work-Scholarship Connection offer services for youth employment and serve as liaisons between the employers and youth. However, only youth who are aware of these programs take part, leaving a vast majority of city youth out of the equation.

City of Rochester's MBK Task force Recommendations

Improve Summer Youth Employment

The Summer of Opportunity Program (SOOP) is a City of Rochester summer employment and training program open to youth ages 14-20. The program is designed to connect youth with local employment opportunities and expose participants to the basic skills necessary for career success. Students have the opportunity to interview for summer employment with area employers and community based organizations. The City has partnered with RochesterWorks! in order to find additional youth employment opportunities.

Prepare Youth for the Workforce

The City of Rochester provides youth employment training that prepares high school students for employment through an intensive 20-hour job readiness boot camp. Participants receive employment training and opportunities for unsubsidized, year-round job placement and graduate with a portfolio, resulting in increased employability. The program also provides support to area businesses who invest in youth participants. Graduates have access to an exclusive monthly job fair. An employer/youth advisory council will be created to provide program feedback and advice on employment best practices.

Increase Internship Opportunities for Youth

The Mayor's Office launched a new Internship Program in 2014. Over 100 students were placed in several departments, bureaus and offices throughout the City. Mayor Warren strongly believes that internships are valuable educational experiences that open doors, spark ideas and enrich the skills of students. It was her internship with the New York State Assembly that inspired Mayor Warren to pursue public service.

This year, the City of Rochester received more internship applications than available placements, so the City partnered with the Rochester City School District (RCSD) and Regional-Genesee Transit Authority (RGRTA) to provide additional internship opportunities to area students.

Action Steps:

1. Recruit additional area employers to offer summer employment opportunities to Rochester's youth.
2. Expand internship placement opportunities for area youth in the public and private sectors.

ALL YOUTH REMAIN SAFE FROM VIOLENCE AND CRIME



Current Picture

On a daily basis, many of Rochester’s youth are exposed to unsafe and unhealthy environments that include trauma, violence, domestic disputes, addiction and poverty. These violent experiences can lead to long-lasting physical, mental and emotional harm, whether the child is a direct victim or a witness.

Children who are exposed to “safety” issues are more likely to experience attachment problems, regressive behavior, anxiety, depression and aggression and other conduct problems throughout their formative years.

In 2014, 49 percent of Rochester’s young, Black males under the age of 23 were incarcerated, making it nearly impossible for them to get employment, apply for student loans or return to school.

City of Rochester’s MBK Task force Recommendations

Renovate our Efforts to Prevent Youth Violence through Community Engagement, Targeted Intervention and Counseling

Pathways to Peace is a longstanding City of Rochester crisis intervention and prevention program with a focus on gang and violence awareness. In November 2014, this program underwent an external evaluation to determine its effectiveness in preventing violent youth crimes in the community. As a result, Pathways to Peace will transition from a crisis model to a targeted outreach program in collaboration with schools, health professionals, law enforcement and service providers.

The City of Rochester’s recreation centers and libraries provide an abundance of year-round educational, social, cultural and athletic programs. These locations serve as a safe havens for Rochester youth, although many families aren’t aware of these opportunities and programs.

2015 MILESTONE CALENDAR

January:	February:	March:	April:	May:	June:
Mayor’s Youth Advisory Council: Youth Voice, One Vision Rochester Families Read, Book Drop at Recreation Center or Library	My Brother’s Keeper, White House Convening FASFA Fest: Four sessions of assistance with completing and submitting FAFSA forms, in collaboration with Rochester College Access Network (RCAN)	Operation Transformation Rochester College Tour and Washington, D.C. Capitol Visit Re-launch PAC-TAC, Police and Citizens Together Against Crime Mayor’s Youth Advisory Council: Youth Voice, One Vision OTR Graduation: Employment Readiness and Youth Employment Training Participants	Summer of Opportunity (SOOP) Mock Interviews for summer employment opportunities RPD Reorganization, moved to 5-section neighborhood patrol model 2015 Cities United Convening: Mayors committed to eliminating violence related deaths of African-American Males Rochester Families Read, Book Drop at Recreation Center or Library	#ReachHigher Social Media Campaign: Celebrating the city’s graduating seniors who are continuing on to higher education Mayor’s Youth Advisory Council: Youth Voice, One Vision	City of Rochester Internship Orientation OTR Graduation: Employment Readiness and Youth Employment Training Participants Clergy on Patrol: Summer Launch

Encourage Law Enforcement and Communities to Work Together

Under Mayor Warren’s leadership, the Rochester Police Department has reorganized into a neighborhood based, five-section patrol model. Police officers will return to patrolling neighborhoods with smaller areas of responsibility so they can better engage with residents and business owners.

During the summer of 2014, the City of Rochester launched Clergy on Patrol. Local clergy and police officers walk neighborhoods together with the Mayor to build the bridge between community and law enforcement. Both groups also participate in engaging youth at centers and after school programs.

In April, the City of Rochester announced the re-launch of Police and Citizens Together Against Crime Program (PAC-TAC). PAC-TAC volunteers work with a police officer to walk neighborhoods and interact with citizens and local merchants. Mayor Warren has put a high priority on improving the safety of neighborhoods with citizens and police working together to make a greater impact.

Diversify the Public Safety Departments

In New York State, public safety officers are not required to reside in the city they serve. The City of Rochester has placed additional emphasis on diversifying the Rochester Police Department and the Rochester Fire Department by recruiting qualified women, young adults, people of color and city residents through several avenues of community outreach. It is the Mayor’s objective to have a police department that reflects the community, with cultural understanding of the citizens they serve.

Action Steps:

1. Continue to push to improve relationships between the community and law enforcement.
2. Actively recruit city residents, women and people of color to the Rochester Police Department to increase diversity in the police force.
3. Consistently evaluate crime prevention efforts and ensure access to youth services.

July:	August:	September:	October:	November:	December:
Summer of Opportunity (SOOP) Kick-Off Mayor’s Youth Advisory Council: Youth Voice, One Vision Rochester Families Read, Book Drop at Recreation Center or Library	Clergy on Patrol: community engagement with youth Mayor’s Urban Family Hike with Greater Rochester Health Foundation	Online database of all City of Rochester youth program opportunities Mayor’s Youth Advisory Council: Youth Voice, One Vision OTR Graduation: Employment Readiness and Youth Employment Training Participants	City of Rochester, City-Wide Youth Summit Rochester Families Read, Book Drop at Recreation Center or Library	Mayor’s Youth Advisory Council: Youth Voice, One Vision	OTR Graduation: Employment Readiness and Youth Employment Training Participants City of Rochester, Science & Technology Fair

CITY OF ROCHESTER, MY BROTHER'S KEEPER TASKFORCE

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