



Tacoma Housing Authority Factsheet

McCarver Elementary

Special Housing Program

For families with students in McCarver Elementary School

December 3, 2013

What is the McCarver program?

Starting in the fall of 2011, Tacoma Housing Authority began providing up to 5 years of rental support to up to 50 previously homeless families who have a child enrolled in kindergarten, 1st, or 2nd grade at McCarver Elementary School. Rental support is very valuable. It helps a family pay the rent on their apartment or house while they are focused on getting the education and training they need to become financially independent. Each year parents are required to pay more of their rent, starting at \$25 a month the first year and increasing 20% of the rent per year until they are able to pay 100% after their fifth year.

Why is THA doing this?

McCarver Elementary has a problem. Most of its students are low income and they move around a lot. Last school year, 97% of the students changed during the school year. A few years ago, it was 179%! Children who change schools so often have a lot of difficulty learning. So much turnover in a class also makes it hard on the other students, and it is very difficult for the teacher to teach when children are constantly coming and going. It appears that much of this turnover is because families have a hard time finding affordable housing. This is where THA can help.

How will learning at McCarver change as a result of this program?

The teachers are very excited about this program. They report that they are able to teach more effectively because they have the same students every day and can get to know them and meet their learning needs. The McCarver staff has begun exploring how to take advantage of the increased student stability to improve instruction. They have decided to implement the Primary Years International Baccalaureate, a schoolwide program that will greatly enrich the learning for all McCarver students. You can learn more about this exciting program at www.ibo.org/pyp.

What do the families have to do?

We require participating families to agree to five conditions:

1. Keep their child enrolled in McCarver;
2. Be very involved with school activities and their child's education;
3. Work on their own career and financial growth;
4. Work with THA staff to accomplish these goals; &
5. Share data on their child's progress in school and the parents' economic development.

How does THA help families to support their child's education and become financially independent?

- We have two full time case workers providing the families with support and resources.
- We have over 30 community partners who are helping to support our families.
- Parents come to monthly parenting meetings sponsored by THA.
- Parents are required to participate in the PTA and other school events.
- Children in the program attend spring break and summer camps to extend their learning opportunities.

We are excited to be working with the McCarver community on this important project!



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