

Youth Commission Meeting

Tuesday, November 12, 2019 at 6:30pm

Martin Luther King Jr. Youth Services Center, 1730 Oregon St., Berkeley CA, 510-981 6670

Mission Statement

The Berkeley Youth Commission identifies the needs of youth, reviews and recommends youth services and programs.

Commission Members

<u>District</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>District</u>	<u>Name</u>
Mayor	Maya Ng-Yu	BUSD/Brown	Vacant
Kesarwani	Vacant	BUSD/Leyva-Cutler	Andrea Morales
Davila	Vacant	BUSD/Appel	Vacant
Bartlett	Vacant	BUSD/Student Director	Max Schlosberg
Harrison	Gabriella Lerman	BUSD/Sinai	Daijah Conerly
Hahn	Rachel Alper	BUSD	Mallika Hari
Wengraf	Samuel Kaplan-Pettus	BUSD/Alper	Evie Berg
Robinson	Vacant	BUSD	Auden Friedman
Droste	Vacant	BUSD	Vacant

AGENDA

Preliminary Matters

1. Call to Order (Chair)
2. Roll Call (Secretary)
3. Announcements (Chair)
4. Approval of Agenda (Chair)
5. Approval of Minutes (Chair)
6. Public Comment (Chair)
7. Director's Report

Discussion Items

8. Discussion with Anthony Carrasco, from the Homeless Services Panel of Experts, about Family Homelessness (Carrasco)

Action Items

9. Youth Commission 2020 meeting schedule (Secretary)
10. Adjourn

Commission Information: The Youth Commission packet is available for review at both the Berkeley Main

Library and the Parks Recreation & Waterfront Department Office at 2180 Milvia Street –3rd Floor, during normal business hours. If you have questions, contact Commission Secretary, Ginsi K. Bryant, at 981-6671 or by email [at Gbryant@cityofberkeley.info](mailto:Gbryant@cityofberkeley.info).

ADA Disclaimer: This meeting is being held in a wheelchair accessible location. To request disability-related accommodations to participate in the meeting, including auxiliary aids or services, please contact the Disability Services Specialist at 981-6342 (V) or 981-6345 (TDD) at least three business days before the meeting date. Please refrain from wearing scented products to this meeting.

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Communications Disclaimer: Communications to Berkeley boards, commissions or committees are public record and will become part of the City’s electronic records, which are accessible through the City’s website. **Please note: e-mail addresses, names, addresses, and other contact information are not required, but if included in any communication to a City board, commission or committee, will become part of the public record.** All communications to the Commission should be received at least 10 days before the meeting date. If you do not want your e-mail address or any other contact information to be made public, you may deliver communications via U.S. Postal Service or in person to the secretary of the relevant board, commission or committee. If you do not want your contact information included in the public record, please do not include that information in your communication. Please contact the secretary to the commission or committee for further information.

Youth Commission Regular Meeting Dates January 2019 –December 2019

DATE	TIME	LOCATION
Monday, January 14	6:30pm	1730 Oregon Street, Berkeley
Monday, February 11	6:30pm	1730 Oregon Street, Berkeley
Monday, March 11	6:30pm	1730 Oregon Street, Berkeley
Monday, April 22	6:30pm	1730 Oregon Street, Berkeley
Monday, May 13	6:30pm	1730 Oregon Street, Berkeley
Monday, June 3	6:30pm	1730 Oregon Street, Berkeley
July	Break	
August	Break	
Monday, September 9	6:30pm	1730 Oregon Street, Berkeley
Tuesday, October 15	6:30pm	1730 Oregon Street, Berkeley
Tuesday, November 12	6:30pm	1730 Oregon Street, Berkeley
Monday, December 9	6:30pm	1730 Oregon Street, Berkeley

Youth Commission Meeting

Tuesday, October 15, 2019 at 6:30pm

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Mission Statement

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Robinson	Vacant	BUSD	Auden Friedman
Droste	Vacant	BUSD	Vacant

Draft Minutes

Preliminary Matters

1. Call to Order (Chair) 6:36pm: Ng-Yu, Alper, Kaplan-Pettus, Schlosberg, Hari and Friedman. Excuse Absent: Morales and Berg. Absent: Lerman and Conerly
2. Roll Call (Secretary)
3. Announcements (Chair)
4. Approval of Agenda (Chair) M/S/Ng-Yu/Friedman: Aye's: Alper, Kaplan-Pettus, Schlosberg, Hari, Ng-Yu and Friedman. Noe's: None. Abstain: None. Excuse Absent: Morales and Berg. Absent: Lerman and Conerly
5. Approval of Minutes (Chair) M/S/Ng-Yu/Alper: Aye's: Kaplan-Pettus, Schlosberg, Hari, Alper, Ng-Yu and Friedman. Noe's: None. Abstain: None. Excuse Absent: Morales and Berg. Absent: Lerman and Conerly
6. Public Comment (Chair)
7. Director's Report

Discussion Items

8. Berkeley Aquatics Update on Investigating Berkeley Swim Lessons and the Willard Pool (Lerman)
9. Gender Neutral Bathrooms Update (Chair)
10. BHS Environmental Initiative Update (Berg, Kaplan-Pettus, Hari)

Action Items

15. Approval of Data Collection Letter to the Berkeley Unified School District School Board
 M/S/Ng-Yu/Alper: Aye's: Kaplan-Pettus, Schlosberg, Hari, Alper, Ng-Yu and Friedman. Noe's: None.
 Abstain: None. Excuse Absent: Morales and Berg. Absent: Lerman and Conerly

16. Adjourn

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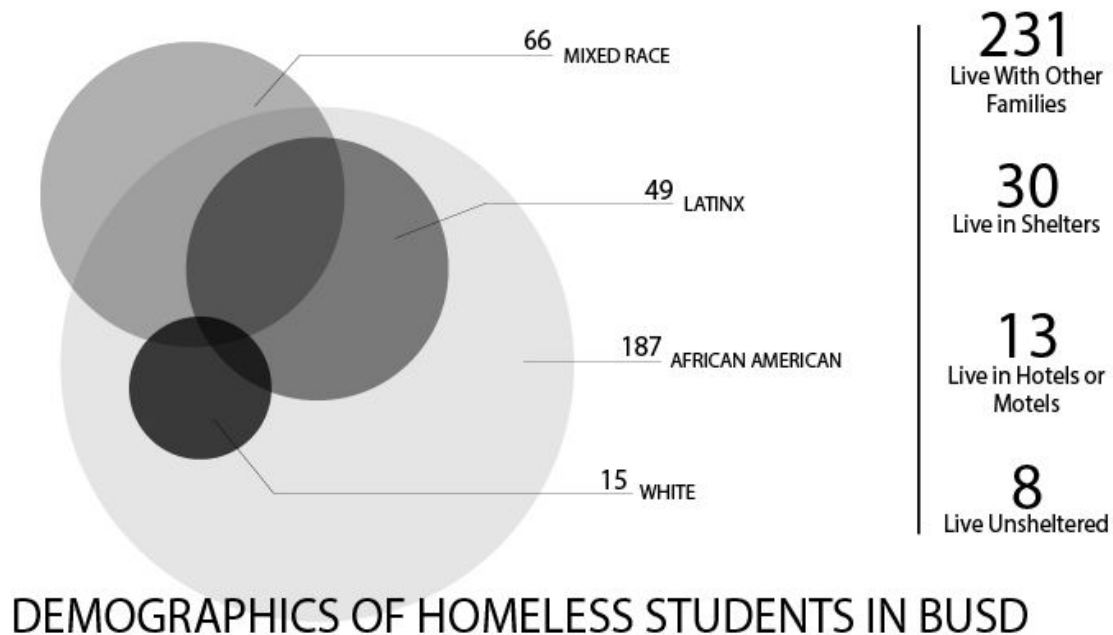
3 Arguments Against Ending Family Homelessness

And How they Illustrate Why we Need to Act Now More than Ever

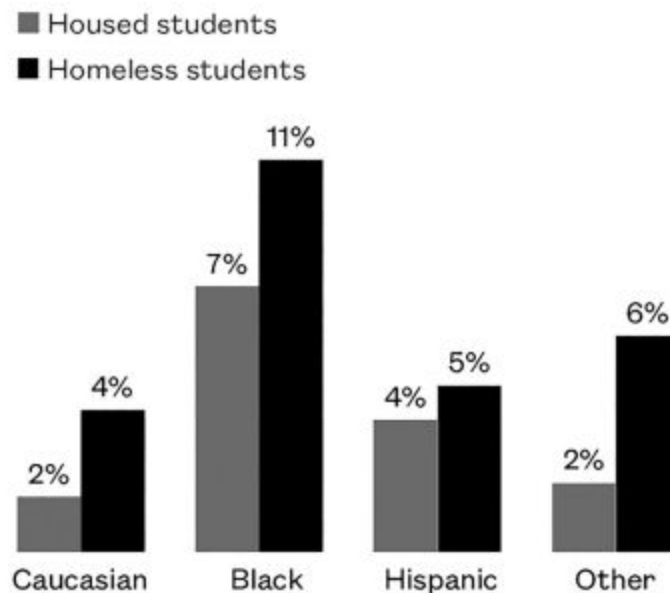
- 1) *There are more homeless individuals. With the greatest number there is the greatest need.*

There's no arguing with the numbers -- there are more individuals experiencing homelessness compared to families. Berkeley is unlike most American cities in that the homeless family population is relatively small. While in the average American city, homeless families comprise 30% of the population, in Berkeley families compose between 5%-10%. Nationally, families are the fast-growing homeless subpopulation (Bassuk et al. 2014). In Berkeley, this is not the case.

Family homelessness in Berkeley is dissimilar to national trends in another important respect -- racial and ethnic demographics. The typical homeless family in America is a single mother with two children -- three quarters of homeless families are families of color (Nunez and Fox 1999). In Berkeley, this is not the case. In Berkeley, 97% of homeless families are families of color (Berkeley Unified School District 2017).



One problem with the “greatest number equals greatest need argument” is that vulnerability is not appropriately considered. Homeless children (especially homeless children of color) are profoundly vulnerable. In the Seattle Unified School District, homeless children of color are the most frequently suspended and expelled compared to every other demographic (Institute for Children, Poverty and Homelessness 2017).



% Suspended or expelled by race and housing status, 2015–2016

On average, less than one out of four homeless children are expected to graduate high school (National Center on Family Homelessness 2012). It should then come as no surprise that the most reliable predictor of whether one will experience homelessness as an adult is whether one has experienced homelessness as a child. The “greatest need” argument neglects the greatest need to come.

At the end of the day, a shelter is not a home -- no child deserves to grow up homeless. The pain and trauma of childhood homelessness is too profound to be put into words.

Homeless families are not small potatoes, they are an achievable target. We have the money to house them all, let's house them all.

2) *If we provide housing to all the families in shelters, “doubled-up” families¹ will enter shelters.*

The notion that a multitude of “doubled-up” families will flood Berkeley’s newly vacated shelter system is overstated. If the bulk of “doubled-up” living situations are manageable and otherwise suitable for long term stay, there won’t be much of an issue at all with increased shelter enrollment. Nothing prevents the city from continuing to deny shelter to families who otherwise have suitable long term housing situations.

In the case that a “doubled-up” family does not have a suitable housing situation, shelter ought to be available -- especially in situations related to domestic violence or child abuse. The provision of service is the point, not the problem. Any family that needs shelter needs shelter. They are leaving living situations that are unfit for long term habitation. They may be fleeing abuse, violence, pain, and trauma. Helping these families is not the city’s burden, it’s the city’s job.

The homeless families of Berkeley are Berkeley. They did not move here for the weather. They are not from Tucson, Arizona or Spokane, Washington. Raising their children in a homeless shelter is not a lifestyle. They cannot pick up their school-age children and “migrate.” They were born here in Berkeley, they were raised here in Berkeley, and now they can no longer afford to live here in Berkeley.

3) *Families are politically valuable to the movement for housing justice. Ending family homelessness will take wind out of our sails.*

Even in a day when family homelessness is no more, many vulnerable groups will still be in need -- many of whom even luke-warm housing advocates deeply care about such as veterans, teachers, people who are differently abled, and seniors to name a few. Ending family homelessness wouldn’t be the end of the housing justice movement, it would be a new beginning.

¹ The City of Berkeley does not count families who are “doubled up” i.e. living with friends or relatives due to economic hardship or in otherwise unsuitable living situations, in a number of cases related to domestic violence/abuse. In accordance with the McKinney-Vento Act of 1978, the Department of Education and the Berkeley Unified School District do count “doubled-up” families.

The people of Berkeley need something to believe in. Too many for too long have seen conditions worsen despite increased public investment. We need to regain the trust of Berkeley voters by being bold and doing something innovative and impactful.

**Transformative change is more than possible, it's within our grasp
-- now is the time to lead.**

Work Cited

Bassuk, E. L., C. J. DeCandia, C. A. Beach, and F. Berman. 2014. *America's Youngest Outcasts: A Report Card on Child Homelessness*. Waltham, MA: The National Center on Family Homelessness.

Institute for Children, Poverty and Homelessness. 2017. *The Seattle Atlas on Student Homelessness*. New York: Institute for Children, Poverty and Homelessness

The National Center on Family Homelessness. 2012. *The Cost of Homelessness*. Washington, DC: American Institutes for Research.

Family Homelessness in Berkeley

Our Situation and the Path Forward

In the 2019 Point-In-Time Count¹, 19 homeless² families with a total of 38 children were identified.

*“The PIT count is a one-night count and necessarily misses anyone who, let’s say, lost their housing the day after the count. Over the course of a year, we estimate that on average in Berkeley, the number of people experiencing homelessness over the course of a year is likely 2x the nightly count. For families, however, this “multiplier” is likely to be larger, given that families are less likely to experience long spells of homelessness and less likely to be chronically homeless. We can assume, then, that the multiplier is 3. This implies that **over the course of a year, we actually have up to 19 x 3 = 57 homeless families in Berkeley** -- incidentally, I ran a roster at our only family shelter for the past year, which saw exactly 57 families”*

*-- Peter Radu,
Homeless Services Coordinator
Health, Housing & Community Services Department of the City of Berkeley*

According to both the 2017 and 2019 PIT Count, the average homeless family in Berkeley has 2 children. Given that over a given year, roughly 57 families experience homelessness, the data suggests that **over the course of a year, we actually have up to 57 x 2 = 114 homeless children annually in Berkeley.**

In summary, in a given year, our best estimates reveal **57 homeless families with 114 children**³.

Too many Berkeley families are homeless.

¹ The PIT Count does not count families who are “doubled up” i.e. living with friends or relatives due to economic hardship or in otherwise unsuitable living situations, in a number of cases related to domestic violence/abuse. In accordance with the McKinney-Vento Act of 1978, the Department of Education and the Berkeley Unified School District do count “doubled-up” families.

² Lacking consistent nighttime residence i.e. streets, cars, motels, shelter, or “doubled-up.”

³ Less than one out of four homeless children are expected to graduate high school (National Center on Family Homelessness 2012).

No family should experience the intense pain, difficulty, and trauma of homelessness.

According to the Department of Housing and Urban Development, permanent housing subsidies are the “*most effective intervention to assure housing stability for families experiencing homelessness*” (Family Options Study 2019⁴).

How much would it cost to provide a permanent housing subsidy to every homeless family?

1. The current FMR for a 2 bedroom apartment in Berkeley is \$2,338.
2. Assuming 57 households with 12 months of rent per year at this level, comes out to ~\$1,599,192 per year in rental costs.
3. Families may be asked to pay some portion of their income in rent, so assuming that the average homeless family is living on around 30% AMI -- a generous assumption -- they would pay around \$500 in rent a month -- a contribution of \$342,000 a year.

That drops the cost to \$1,257,192 without accounting for the costs of services and administration.

A new city staff tasked with administering 53 subsidies would roughly cost \$180k annually given salary and benefits. Given that an ideal staff to subsidy ratio would be closer to 20 subsidies per 1 staff, *3 new staff would be needed*. This would cost \$540,000 roughly bringing the total cost to a little less than 2 million dollars.

Cost of permanently housing every homeless family: **2 million dollars annually**.

⁴ The Family Options Study is a multi-site random assignment experiment designed to study the impact of various housing and services interventions for homeless families. HUD launched the *Family Options Study* in 2008 in response to Congressional direction and with the goal of learning more about the effects of different housing and services interventions for homeless families.

Document Reference

Please see below in red. Thank you,

Peter Radu
Homeless Services Coordinator
City of Berkeley
Health, Housing & Community Services Department
2180 Milvia Street, 2nd Floor, Berkeley, CA 94704
Desk: 510-981-5435

From: Anthony Carrasco [mailto:anthonycarrasco@berkeley.edu]
Sent: Wednesday, September 11, 2019 12:25 AM
To: Radu, Peter <pradu@cityofberkeley.info>
Subject: Homeless Families

Hi Peter,

I hope this message finds you well. I have a question. As you are aware the Panel has recommended \$500,000 in permanent housing subsidies to the homeless families identified in the PIT count — the 19 households with 38 children. Is this amount enough to house every family this year? **Likely no, for two important reasons:**

- The current FMR for a 2 bedroom apartment in Berkeley is \$2,338. Assuming 19 households with 12 months of rent per year at this level, that comes out to ~\$533k per year on rent alone. Now, families may be asked to pay some portion of their income in rent. Let's assume, for the sake of argument, that the average homeless family is living at just around 30% AMI (would be a generous assumption) and that they are paying around \$500 in rent a month. That drops the cost to about \$420k. In either scenario, there is little room to pay for supportive services, let alone the admin expenses associated with subsidy administration, which can add up (housing inspections alone are a big time suck). Our Shelter Plus Care team is at capacity right now administering 53 new Shelter Plus Care grants beginning October 1...
- Second, as I've explained, you need to understand that the PIT count is a one-night count and necessarily misses anyone who, let's say, lost their housing the day after the count. Over the course of a year, we estimate that on average in Berkeley, the number of people experiencing homelessness in Berkeley over the course of a year is likely 2x the nightly count. For families, however, this "multiplier" is likely to be larger, given that families are less likely to experience long spells of homelessness and less likely to be chronically homeless. Assume, then, that the multiplier is 3. This implies that over the course of a year, we actually have up to $19 * 3 = 57$ homeless families. (Incidentally, I ran a roster at our only family shelter for the past year, which saw exactly 57 families. For most of that year, it had 18 beds. Assuming on average 0% unsheltered families, which we know from our PIT count in 2019, one could argue that this roughly corroborates a guesstimated multiplier of 3). Assuming 30% AMI and the FMR as above, this puts our cost at \$1.3M—and nothing in there for services and admin.

If not, more money is necessary to get these children out of shelter life (an unacceptably traumatic place for a child — not having birthday parties at home or friends over after school). If \$500,000 is perhaps too much money on the other hand, perhaps council ought to advised to allocate less. You're take on how much this would all end up costing us pretty important so the sooner you can fill me in the better. Thanks in advance for your help Peter.

I would once again encourage you to think about what Katharine explained at the last meeting about attempts to end family homelessness in other communities. I am less expert than Katharine, but as she explained, there can actually be perverse incentives created—families are more likely to couch surf or double up so they can avoid literal homelessness, but they may be incentivized to leave that situation and try to enter a shelter, say, if they know it would make them eligible for a voucher. Along these lines, very few, if any, communities nationally have seen success in setting goals to end family homelessness. I'm not saying we shouldn't take the issue on; my point is simply that it will require far more in the way of leadership (importantly, from the County as well as the City) and resources than a one-time allocation of \$500,000.

2020 Commission Meeting Dates

Name of Commission: Youth Commission

Commission Secretary: Ginsi K. Bryant

2020 Meeting Dates

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January 2020	Monday 1/13/20	6:30pm
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September 2020	Monday 9/14/20	6:30pm
October 2020	Tuesday 10/13/20	6:30pm
November 2020	Monday 11/9/20	6:30pm
December 2020	Monday 12/14/20	6:30pm

commission@cityofberkeley.info
City Clerk Department