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**HUD, GREATSCHOOLS TEAM UP TO GIVE PUBLIC HOUSING, VOUCHER FAMILIES TOOLS TO MAKE INFORMED SCHOOL CHOICES**

*Partnership links housing assistance with educational opportunities*

WASHINGTON – U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) Assistant Secretary Sandra B. Henriquez announced today that HUD is joining forces with [GreatSchools](http://www.greatschools.org/), a national non-profit educational resource for parents. The intent of this new partnership is to give parents living in public housing or who receive HUD [Housing Choice Voucher](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/public_indian_housing/programs/hcv/about) rental assistance greater access to local school information that will help them make more informed decisions about where to send their children to school.

“Every parent wants the best for their kids and the partnership we launch today will give families in our rental assistance programs the tools they need to find the very best educational opportunities for their children,” said Henriquez. “When a parent chooses a home, they also choose the teachers, parents and resources in their neighborhood school. This partnership uses housing as a platform for educational opportunity by providing parents with greater access to critical school information that will help put their kids on the path to success.”

“Education has always been the most assured path to opportunity and realizing the American Dream,” said Jim Shelton, assistant deputy secretary for Innovation and Improvement at the U.S. Department of Education. “We are proud to support this important partnership between HUD and GreatSchools to ensure that all families have access to the information and resources they need to find quality schools.”

“Choosing schools is one of the most important decisions parents make, and the opportunities for parents to choose among different schools continue to increase,” said Bill Jackson, CEO and founder of GreatSchools. “We are thrilled to partner with HUD to provide millions of American families with access to easy-to-understand information about schools in their communities. Together, HUD and GreatSchools can help many families discover and attend schools of their choice, which can make a real difference for their children’s futures.”

Based in San Francisco, GreatSchools is a national non-profit organization that supports parents through a wide variety of web-based resources available at [www.greatschools.org](http://www.greatschools.org). The

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organization’s flagship offering is a database of school performance information for more than 200,000 public, private and charter schools across the U.S. The user-friendly website also has information about how parents can help their children achieve success in PreK-12, including subject-area worksheets, homework help and college preparation.

GreatSchools and HUD are joining to give parents living in public housing or who receive rental assistance through HUD’s Housing Choice Voucher Program the tools to make informed

educational choices for their children and become even more involved in their children’s education. For example, GreatSchools will provide housing authorities informational materials, including a [video tutorial](http://www.greatschools.org/find-a-school/5208-greatschools-tutorial-video.gs?cpn=b2hvc9), tailored to housing authorities and parents. GreatSchools has also developed a factsheet outlining the essential steps to choosing the right school. HUD will encourage housing authorities’ executive directors to offer these resources to parents and include a portal to GreatSchools on their agency website.

In a letter this month, HUD Assistant Secretary Henriquez asked the nation’s 3,200 public housing authorities to support the partnership by making the GreatSchools website and supplemental materials about local schools easily accessible to HUD-assisted families with school-aged children. Providing these materials when families first obtain a voucher or during their annual recertification would give them timely access to information about schools, test scores and extracurricular activities in any community they live or choose to live. Information can also be shared in resident newsletters or at resident meetings.

The HUD-GreatSchools partnership is part of HUD’s greater commitment to using housing assistance to improve educational outcomes of low-income families. HUD’s [Choice Neighborhoods Program](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/public_indian_housing/programs/ph/cn), which awarded communities $65 million this year to transform distressed HUD-assisted housing into sustainable, mixed-income neighborhoods, extends the neighborhood transformation efforts beyond public housing to link housing intervention with education. Successful grantees were required to include in their applications plans to develop quality early childhood education programs. Congress recently showed bipartisan support for the Choice program with a $120 million appropriation for Fiscal Year 2012.

Earlier this year, HUD also awarded five public housing authorities a combined $15 million from HUD's [Capital Fund Education and Training Community Facilities Program](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/public_indian_housing/programs/ph/capfund/cfcf) to create early childhood education and adult training facilities for public housing residents.

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*HUD’s mission is to create strong, sustainable, inclusive communities and quality affordable homes for all. HUD is working to strengthen the housing market to bolster the economy and protect consumers; meet the need for quality affordable rental homes: utilize housing as a platform for improving quality of life; build inclusive and sustainable communities free from discrimination; and  transform the way HUD does business. More information about HUD and its programs is available on the Internet at* [*www.hud.gov*](http://www.hud.gov) *and* [*http://espanol.hud.gov*](http://espanol.hud.gov)*.  You can also follow HUD on twitter* [*@HUDnews*](http://twitter.com/#!/HUDNews)*, on facebook at* [*www.facebook.com/HUD*](http://www.facebook.com/HUD)*, or sign up for news alerts on* [*HUD’s News Listserv*](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/subscribe/signup&listname=HUD%20News&list=HUD-NEWS-L)

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*GreatSchools is a national non-profit that inspires and guides parents to be effective champions of their children’s education at home and in their communities. Our work combines the reach of digital media with the power of in-person coaching and community building to help parents get the skills and resources they need to guide their children to educational success. Founded in 1998, GreatSchools reaches more than 37 million people each year—including roughly 40% of American families with school-age children. More information about GreatSchools is available at* [*www.greatschools.org*](http://www.greatschools.org)*. You can also follow us on twitter* [*@greatschools*](http://twitter.com/#!/greatschools)*, on facebook at* [*www.facebook.com/greatschools*](http://www.facebook.com/greatschools)*, or sign up for our free newsletters at* [*www.greatschools.org/newsletters/*](http://www.greatschools.org/newsletters/)*.*