



## **THA FACTSHEET**

# **McCarver Elementary Special Housing Program**

*For families with students in McCarver Elementary School*

November 14, 2011

*This is a description of a project that the Tacoma Housing Authority (THA) began in the spring of 2011. We are currently in the beginning of implementation.*

### **What is the McCarver project?**

Starting in the fall of 2011, THA will provide at most five years of rental support to up to 50 families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and who have a child enrolled in grades kindergarten, 1 or 2 at McCarver Elementary School. This housing support is very valuable. It helps a family pay the rent on their apartment or house. THA will pay almost all of the family's rent for the first year and then the family will pay 20% more each year for five years. On average, a voucher is worth over \$500 per month for a low-income family.

### **Why is THA doing this?**

McCarver Elementary has a problem. Its students move around a lot. In 2010, 120% of the students changed. A few years ago, it was 170%! Children who change so much learn less. So much turnover in a class also makes it hard on the other students. And it makes it hard for the teacher to teach children who are coming and going. It appears that much of this turnover happens because families have a hard time finding affordable housing. This is where THA can help.

### **What other support will THA provide?**

THA has two caseworkers who will work directly with the families to assure they are meeting their goals and responsibilities. THA will coordinate services with community partners to provide classes, training, and social services.

### **Does the McCarver staff think this is a good idea?**

Yes! We have met with them. They are very excited about this opportunity for McCarver.

### **What do the participating families have to do?**

We require participating families to agree to these conditions:

1. Keep their child enrolled in McCarver;
2. Be very involved with their child's education;
3. Work on their own job and financial growth; and
4. Work with THA staff to accomplish these goals.

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

McCarver staff has begun exploring how to take advantage of the increased family stability to improve the instruction in the classroom. They are working with the school district to receive training and to investigate a schoolwide program which will greatly enrich the learning for all students at McCarver.

### **How will THA know if this is working?**

Each participating family has completed a Family Success Plan with specific goals and timelines for their educational and economic progress. The caseworkers will be monitoring the progress on each of these goals. THA also has a data sharing agreement in place with Tacoma Public Schools which will enable us to track the progress of the students in the program.

**We look forward to working with the McCarver community on this important project!**



*For more information contact:*

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