



## Overview and Frequently Asked Questions

### What is the Berkshire Compact for Education?

- The Berkshire Compact for Education is a group of regional civic, education, and business leaders who seek to ensure the well-being of each individual and the strength of our economy and community by raising the educational access, aspirations, and attainment of *all* Berkshire County residents (mission statement).
- The Compact was formed in 2005 by MCLA in concert with a highly engaged coalition of community partners including the K12 schools, college leaders, and local businesses/organizations.
- The Compact has raised awareness, advanced access, raised local expectations, connected people and programs, inspired alignment of effort, and led to new programming that continues to advance the charge. The Compact also supported the launch of the currently active Berkshire County Education Task Force.

### What is the current theory of action?

The Compact for Education's **Theory of Action** is that if we increase the number of residents who hold a qualified certificate, associate's degree, bachelor's degree or higher, then we will sustain and grow the regional economy and improve individual indicators of well-being. This is supported by key data points that suggest:

- The Berkshires (30%) lags behind the state (37%) in residents with a BA or higher.
- Degrees/educational attainment increases earnings (decreases unemployment).
- 50% of a city's economic success is linked to educational attainment.
- 70% of jobs in MA will require a college degree or credential.

### What specific activities serve as evidence of impact?

- Berkshires Goes to College (Grade 6 visits) - 1200 public Grade 6 students representing 19 schools visited one of the county's four colleges. This program is sponsored by the Berkshire United Way.
- Berkshire County Grade 3 visits - 450 Grade 3 students representing nine schools visited either Berkshire Community College (200 students) or Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts (250 students).
- Career fairs - 900 Grade 8 students representing seven schools participated in the MCLA Career Fair. This program is sponsored by Guardian Life.
- Reach Out for Education - Episodes filmed and aired on PCTV (channel 17) and throughout the county.
- STEM activities (fairs, programming, library, etc.)
- Passport for Education distributed and used by students and educators across the Berkshires.
- Dual Enrollment - Almost 200 students participating in programs sponsored by MCLA and BCC.
- Degree Completion, new programs/degrees, certificate programs, and new industry-to-education connections.

### How is the Compact funded?

A very modest budget is supported by grants through the Berkshire United Way, Guardian Life, and the MCLA Foundation.

### How can someone get involved?

We welcome and encourage all participation in the full network or subcommittees. For more information, contact:

**Project Assistant:** Tracey Garlington: [tracey.garlington@mcla.edu](mailto:tracey.garlington@mcla.edu)

**Project Coordinator:** Sue Doucette: [susetta.doucette@mcla.edu](mailto:susetta.doucette@mcla.edu)

**Project Lead:** Denise Richardello: [denise.richardello@mcla.edu](mailto:denise.richardello@mcla.edu)

## What is the Compact currently working on?

The Compact is currently organized into six subcommittees, supported by a steering/advisory committee. The full network assembles twice a year to review progress and refine goals. The subcommittees include:

- Early Childhood Impact Council (Birth to Grade 3)
  - **Goal:** Focus on birth to grade 3 so that children are socially, physically, emotionally and cognitively ready for kindergarten and demonstrate reading proficiency by end of grade 3.
  - **Activities:** Support/strengthen families to better support their children.
  - **Partners:** Early childhood providers, Berkshire United Way
  - **Contact:** Doug McNally: [d.mcnally@mcla.edu](mailto:d.mcnally@mcla.edu) & Stephanie Adornetto: [sadornetto@berkshireunitedway.org](mailto:sadornetto@berkshireunitedway.org).
  
- Grades 3-12:
  - **Goal:** Ensure that ALL students have a trusted adult to help guide them to success. In doing so, we will guarantee that students graduate from high school with skills, knowledge, dispositions and aspirations to successfully enter post-secondary education and the workforce.
  - **Activities:** Establish a mentor program for grade 8 students who need additional support.
  - **Partners:** Berkshire County Regional Employment Board, Berkshire County public schools, colleges, Berkshire United Way, family centers
  - **Contact:** John Moyer: [moyer1034@roadrunner.com](mailto:moyer1034@roadrunner.com) & Josh Mendel: [j.mendel@mcla.edu](mailto:j.mendel@mcla.edu)
  
- Workforce Development:
  - **Goal:** Build school-to-work pathways to stem the outward migration of talent, and support workforce development/training programs aligned with emerging needs and industries while positioning new and incumbent workers.
  - **Activities:** Provide a trained and connected workforce to meet the county's needs by advancing internships.
  - **Partners:** Post-secondary partners, employers, Berkshire County Regional Employment Board, businesses
  - **Contact:** Charles Kaminski [ckaminsk@berkshirecc.edu](mailto:ckaminsk@berkshirecc.edu) & Barbara Chaput [barbara.chaput@mcla.edu](mailto:barbara.chaput@mcla.edu)
  
- Professional Development:
  - **Goal:** Create, coordinate and promote high quality professional development for Berkshire County public school districts through efficient economies of scale that broaden opportunities, reduce redundancy and lower costs. Currently managing November countywide Professional Development day.
  - **Activities:** Provide high quality Professional Development opportunities for Berkshire County school districts.
  - **Partners:** Public school districts, institutions of higher learning, early childhood providers, community and cultural organizations and other existing countywide networks.
  - **Contact:** William Ballen: [williamballen270@hotmail.com](mailto:williamballen270@hotmail.com)
  
- Career Development and Exploration:
  - **Goal:** Provide all youth in the K-12 educational system with necessary career readiness and personal-social development to equip them with the required skills and knowledge to ensure their post-secondary and career success.
  - **Activities:** Strengthen and expand the public school districts existing career readiness models through the BCREB's Connecting Activities initiative
  - **Partners:** public school districts, Berkshire County Regional Employment Board, Berkshire business community, community based organizations, post-secondary partners
  - **Contact:** Heather Williams: [youth@berkshirereb.org](mailto:youth@berkshirereb.org) & Sue Doucette: [susetta.doucette@mcla.edu](mailto:susetta.doucette@mcla.edu)
  
- Out-of-School Time:
  - **Goal:** Facilitate a network of out-of-school time providers who support student experiences beyond school hours (after school, evening, weekends, & summer).
  - **Activities:** Mapping current efforts, gap analysis, identification of redundancies and new programs to reach wider/target audiences.
  - **Partners:** Berkshire Museum, IS183, Mass MOCA, Public Schools – 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning, etc.
  - **Contact:** Craig Langlois: [clanglois@berkshiremuseum.org](mailto:clanglois@berkshiremuseum.org) & Lucy Castaldo: [lucie@is183.org](mailto:lucie@is183.org)