



# Innovating to End Urban Poverty Conference

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## Panel 1: Income I – Human capital Summary

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### *Learning and Earning: Raising Labor Market Skills of Low-Income Adults and Youth*

High-quality career and technical education, and work-based learning

- Preparing students for college and career: teaching academic, technical and sector-based employment skills in contextual and applied settings.
- Sectoral training and career pathways: target training toward specific sectors; make sure training fits jobs in those sectors.
- Models that prepare high school students for both college and careers: Career Academies (small learning communities), High Schools that Work (in the South), Linked Learning (in California), and Apprenticeships.

Reform remediation and financial aid for college

- Embed remediation in work-based training; consider providing performance-based subsidies for community colleges.
- Lack of solid evidence that Pell grants are actually increasing the educational attainment of the poor; consider having performance requirements for students to keep Pell Grants.

Integrate higher education, workforce services, and the job market

- Better integrate higher education and workforce services, making both more responsive to the labor market. Consider performance-based subsidies for community colleges.
- Competitive grants: Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training; Workforce Innovation Funds.

### Educational Innovations to Reduce the Income-Based Achievement Gap

Focus next round of *Early Learning Challenge* grants on measuring early childhood education quality

- Growing income-based achievement gap over past 60 years.
- The achievement gap matters because achievement predicts attainment in graduation from high school and college.
- Receipt of higher education degrees is important for adult earnings, their health, and for civic participation.
- Due to high-quality evidence about preschool, continue to make major investments in Pre-K programs.
- Improve Quality Rating and Improvement Systems, which are like giving report cards to early childhood education providers as a signal to both the provider and to parents about the quality of that center. They provide clear signals about which elements of quality matter and what to focus on.

Prioritize parental education and school choice coaching within *Investing in Innovation* grants

- Help parents navigate the school choice process and overall educational system.
- Fund more pilot programs to influence lower-income parents' involvement, expectations, and actions.

Retool *School Improvement Grants* to turn around lowest performing schools

- Encourage stability in these schools via grants that extend for 5-10 years rather than 1-3 years, drop mandate to choose 1 of 4 turnaround models, and narrow priorities.
- High-poverty schools do not suffer from too little reform. They often suffer from too much reform.

### Discussion

- Importance of developing financial literacy in junior and high schools so that students can become productive in areas like homeownership and quality rental housing by the time they graduate.
- Importance of networking opportunities for children, especially those in poverty, to build connections with others. Many people today get their jobs through people they know; either they get hired by that person or somebody has referred them.
- Apprenticeships happening internationally, but not as much here in the U.S. A challenge of apprenticeships is providing transferable skills, not just ones for a particular employer.
- Implementation is just as important as a program model. The quality of implementation can make or break a program.
- School choice: ensuring quality information, while avoiding marketing tools and sales pitches for a particular program or school.
- Smaller class sizes make sense at the lower grade levels, like in third grade and below. Less certain, however, is whether small class sizes are worth the expense at higher grade levels.
- Timing of evaluation: waiting until programs have been in place for some time already.