



# ALL-AMERICA CITY FINALIST

## ORLANDO

### Community Snapshot

Orlando, Florida, a city best known for Walt Disney World Resort, the Universal Orlando Resort and other theme parks, attracts 51 million tourists a year and is one of the busiest cities for conferences and conventions. While Orlando's attractions are thriving, several city neighborhoods are economically distressed. In Parramore, for example, 98 percent of students qualify for free or reduced lunch, only 5 percent of people have a college degree or more and the high school dropout rate is 39 percent. In Holden Heights, 9 percent of students have limited English proficiency and 50 percent of students fail the state assessment test. In Washington Shores, 95 percent of families are low-income and 87 percent of parents say they have difficulty paying for basic needs. Through the combined efforts of public, non-profit, faith-based, civic and neighborhood organizations, the city aims to improve educational outcomes for youth in these areas.

### Community Solutions Action Plan

Orlando recognizes that it will need support to achieve their goals. To ensure they have the strongest base possible, the city will focus on three key components:

- Supportive Communities—find partners to provide crucial afterschool and summer educational and enrichment services
- Effective Schools—support and assist schools with reading initiatives, afterschool and summer programs and attendance data
- Strong Families—make sure that all eligible families are accessing the full range of available services

### Partnerships

The Orlando Community Solutions Action Plan is the result of more than six years of community mobilization, coordination and planning by more than 50 partners. The effort was led by the Executive Committee, made up of representatives of Heart of Florida United Way, the City of Orlando and Orange County Public Schools. Sub-committees focused on specific topics, including schools, data and evaluation, health and wellness, family economic success/crisis intervention, early learning and the cultural arts.

#### DEMOGRAPHICS

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- 238,300 residents
- 50,043 students
- 23 percent of students live in poverty
- 1 in 3 third graders read at grade level (county school system)
- 79 percent graduation rate
- 76 percent of kindergartners are ready to learn
- 15 percent of students are chronically absent
- No school-sponsored summer programs for children below third grade

#### GOALS

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- Have 72 percent of fourth graders reading at grade level
- Reduce chronic absenteeism to 5 percent
- Increase school preparedness to 88 percent
- Have 85 percent of youth participate in high-quality summer programming

*“Students living in Orlando’s lowest-income neighborhoods need additional educational supports to achieve reading success on par with their Orange County peers.”*