



Megan Hess-Homeier

Megan Hess-Homeier spent a year contributing over fifty hours per week of community service through City Year Philadelphia, after graduation from high school in Montana. Meg lived in West Philadelphia during her time in City Year and worked extensively with public middle school students as a math and reading tutor and mentor. In her first year at Penn, Meg continued her work from City Year volunteering as a team leader for the Young Heroes program, which engages youth in community service and awareness projects. Starting the summer after her freshman year, she also worked for the Netter Center for Community Partnerships, first as a volunteer and then as the program coordinator of the Center's College Access and Career Readiness Program (CACR). The CACR program provides high school students at Sayre, West Philadelphia and University City High Schools in West Philadelphia with a comprehensive combination of college access, career readiness, and academic supports. Meg graduates as an Urban Studies major.

CAPSTONE PROJECT

Student Mobility and School Policy

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Elaine Simon, School of Arts & Sciences, Urban Studies

Though modern policy makers push 'school choice' as a method of improving schools, urban districts experience disturbingly high rates of student transfers, with up to 60% turnover in some Philadelphia high schools. Student mobility is the practice of non-promotional school transfers; this thesis examines how administrators and teachers in Philadelphia high schools address student mobility. High rates of student mobility lead to school destabilization and lower test scores for all of the students in the school, even the non-mobile students. District-wide policies have alleviated some of the administrative problems associated with mobility; digitized school records and the district-wide timed curriculum dramatically decrease problems administrators face when enrolling new students and helping students transfer to new schools. Though most school officials spoke about the importance of establishing personal contact with incoming students and maintaining relationships in order to encourage retention, none of the schools visited were instituting comprehensive policies or programs regarding student mobility.