

Capital City



BROTHER'S KEEPER

Frequently Asked Questions

1. I have seen a building with a My Brother's Keeper banner on it near the intersection of Prospect and Pennington Avenue. How is the Capital City My Brother's Keeper initiative affiliated with that organization?

- a. The Capital City My Brother's Keeper initiative is not affiliated with the owners of that building. It is our understanding that this is the name of the church operating in that building. The My Brother's Keeper refers exclusively to the challenge issued by President Obama.

2. What is My Brother's Keeper?

- a. In February 2014, President Obama launched the My Brother's Keeper initiative to address persistent opportunity gaps faced by boys and young men of color and ensure that all young people can reach their full potential. My Brother's Keeper seeks to bring together leaders, organizations, and people in communities around the country to work to improve the life outcomes of young people in America. This is about doing what is smart for our youth, our economic future, and our entire community.

3. Is there funding associated with the Capital City My Brother's Keeper initiative?

- a. The federal, state, and city governments have not made additional funds available to support My Brother's Keeper. Private foundations and businesses have pledged financial support to the activities of My Brother's Keeper in other communities, but that in no way guarantees funding. The more promise and success our initiative shows the more likely it is to be supported financially.

This initiative is a call for communities to come together in support of best policy and program practices. We are asking for the lending of your time and skills to support the My Brother's Keeper goals.

4. What are the issues that CC-My Brother's Keeper will be focusing on and why are these being emphasized over others?

- a. There are a wide variety of issues that affect youth development and cause long-term achievement gaps. Unfortunately, the City of Trenton is not able to fully address all needs in all areas. Through research and community feedback, Mayor Jackson determined that literacy rates of third graders, chronic absenteeism in our schools, and employability of young men aged 16 – 25, particularly those in re – entry, were three overarching problems facing Trenton’s youth. Addressing the needs of the community in these areas is a progressive action that prevents future problems, rather than reactive to current problems. Although what you offer may not neatly fit into one of those three categories, it still affects their performance outcomes. We encourage you to think broadly about how what you are offering can improve outcomes in literacy, chronic absenteeism, and employability.

5. Why is My Brother’s Keeper focused on young men of color?

- a. President Obama has identified young men of color as demographic groups that face particular challenges when it comes to achievement. Both nationally and in Trenton, young Black and Hispanic men have lower literacy rates, are chronically absent at higher rates, are incarcerated at higher rates, and have higher unemployment levels compared to other demographic groups. These racial and ethnic groups also compose the vast majority of Trenton’s non-white population. This is not true of all communities, and where applicable, a community has shifted the focus, such as Native American tribes focusing on the achievement of young Native American men. All people benefit from an effort to increase the achievement of young Black and Hispanic men. No person will be denied benefit from My Brother’s Keeper because of their gender, race, or ethnic background.

6. What are the next steps of our local Capital City - My Brother’s Keeper?

Step One – Accept Challenge.

The Honorable Eric Jackson accepts the My Brother’s Keeper Challenge on behalf of the City of Trenton. This effort will require a coalition of partners with an ownership stake in the strategy, and a sense of empowerment to help lead the effort. **December 16th, 2015**

Step Two: Convene a ‘Local Action Summit’ to Build an MBK Community.

This effort will require a coalition of partners with an ownership stake in the strategy, and a sense of empowerment to help lead the effort. **Within 45 days** of accepting the President’s Challenge, we must host a Local Action Summit with key stakeholders to assess needs and assets, determine priorities, and set concrete goals. **January 27, 2016.**

STEP Three: Conduct a Policy Review and Form Recommendations for Action.

Following the Local Action Summit, direct a working group of pertinent government stakeholders to scour existing local policies, programs, and practices in search of ways to introduce or expand on existing efforts to better serve the needs of the community’s youth. The working group should assess the impact of both existing and proposed programs. **Within 120 days** of accepting the President’s Challenge, this body should produce a

report with recommendations for action on our selected areas of focus (from Step 1), standards for tracking and sharing data across public agencies and community partners, and structural recommendations for institutionalizing the effort until goals are reached.

STEP Four: Launch a Plan of Action, Next Steps and a Timetable for Review

Within 180 days of accepting the President’s Challenge, we are to convene key partners to publicly launch a plan of action for accomplishing selected goals based off the results of your policy review. It should include a protocol for tracking data, benchmarks and timelines for review to ensure the transparent assessment of progress towards goals, and the open examination and retooling of ineffective strategies. Include a blueprint for resourcing your efforts which outlines plans to use or redirect existing resources, new public or private sector commitments, and specific areas where additional commitments, investment, or partnership could help your community reach its MBK goals and help potential new partners target their involvement.

7. How can I help the My Brother’s Keeper initiative?

Mayor Jackson and the Trenton community are still trying to figure out what the specific actions of the Capital City My Brother’s Keeper will be. There will be a focus on literacy rates of third graders, chronic absenteeism in our schools, and employability of young men aged 16 – 25, particularly those in re – entry.

At this time, Mayor Jackson asks that you spread awareness of My Brother’s Keeper in Trenton, and that you attend the January 27th summit. At this summit, we will be asking people to publically dedicate resources to one of the three areas and envision how Trenton can become a city where young Black and Hispanic men attend school, are literate, and are employable. It is imperative that the young Black and Hispanic men who this effort seeks to benefit be present and participate in the summit, as this effort will not be successful without them. Spreading the word and dedicating financial, time, or skill resources are the best ways to help the My Brother’s Keeper initiative.

8. Who can I contact to learn more about My Brother’s Keeper?

All **press inquiries** should be directed to:

Michael Walker, City of Trenton, Public Information Officer

Email: mwalker@trentonnj.org, Office: 609-989-3033

All **other inquiries** should be directed to:

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