

## YOUTH AND EDUCATION FINDINGS

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### QUANTITATIVE DATA

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Public school enrollment data was collected from the Ohio Department of Education and NEO CANDO, from both the 2000 and 2010 census. Overall enrollment was examined, as well as enrollment broken down by socioeconomic status and race.

From 2000-2010, Cleveland Heights saw a population decrease of almost 4,000 people, while the Noble neighborhood saw a population decrease of almost 2,000 people. This means that the decrease in Noble’s population accounts for almost 50% of the total population decrease of Cleveland Heights. From 2000-2010, Cleveland Heights had a decrease of about 1,400 school aged children in the area, but only about 390 of that decrease came from Noble. In 2010, Noble comprised 27% of Cleveland Height’s population, with school-aged children making up 16% of the total population of Cleveland Heights. School-aged children in Noble make up 31% of the total population of school-aged children in Cleveland Heights, meaning that there is a higher concentration of children in this area. With a significant amount of school-aged children in the area, examining issues that affect youth and education is critical.

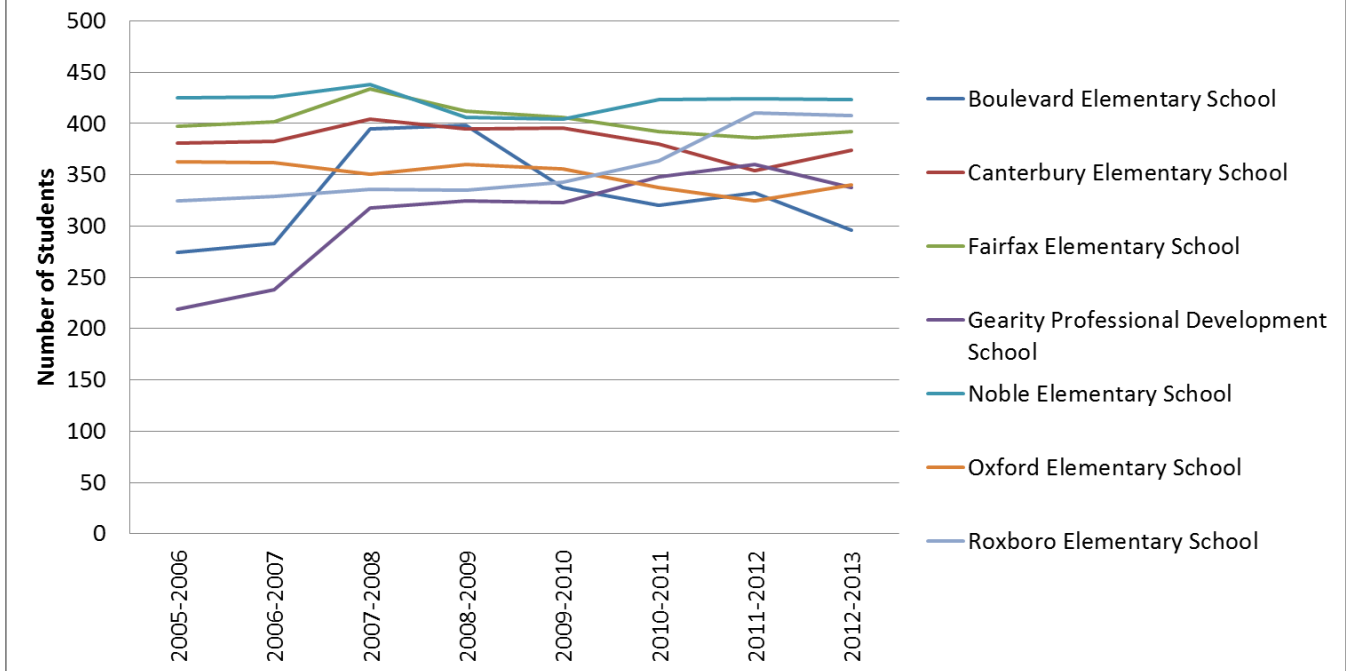
<b>Census Tract</b>	<b>Total population, 2000</b>	<b>Total population, 2010</b>	<b>Population aged 5-17, number and percent, 2000</b>	<b>Population aged 5-17, number and percent, 2010</b>
Cleveland Heights city	50,090	46,121	8,873 (17.7%)	7,470 (16.2%)
Noble Neighborhood	14,202	12,500	2,688 (18.9%)	2,300 (18.4%)

*Source: NEO CANDO system, Center on Urban Poverty and Community Development, MSASS, Case Western Reserve University (<http://neocando.case.edu>).*

### **Enrollment Trends**

The public schools serving and located in the Noble Neighborhood include Noble and Oxford Elementary Schools and Monticello Middle School. Overall, most of the public elementary schools in the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Schools have had steady enrollment the last ten years. However, Gearity Professional Development School has had a significant increase from 2006-2012, but has started to decline slightly the last few years. Boulevard Elementary School also had an increase from 2006-2010, but has declined close to where it was a decade ago. Noble Elementary consistently has the highest enrollment, although Roxboro currently has very similar numbers. Roxboro Middle School has always had higher enrollment than Monticello Middle School, but the two almost intersected during the 2007-2008 school year. Monticello’s enrollment has been steadily decreasing for several years, but did start to rise again in 2012. Enrollment at Cleveland Heights High School, which is the only high school in the district, has been fairly consistent throughout except for a drastic decline (loss of about 400 students) in the 2012-2013 school year. This may be due to Cleveland Heights’ decision not to pursue open enrollment for that year (Wittenberg, 2012). However, after this school year, enrollment increased again to roughly baseline.

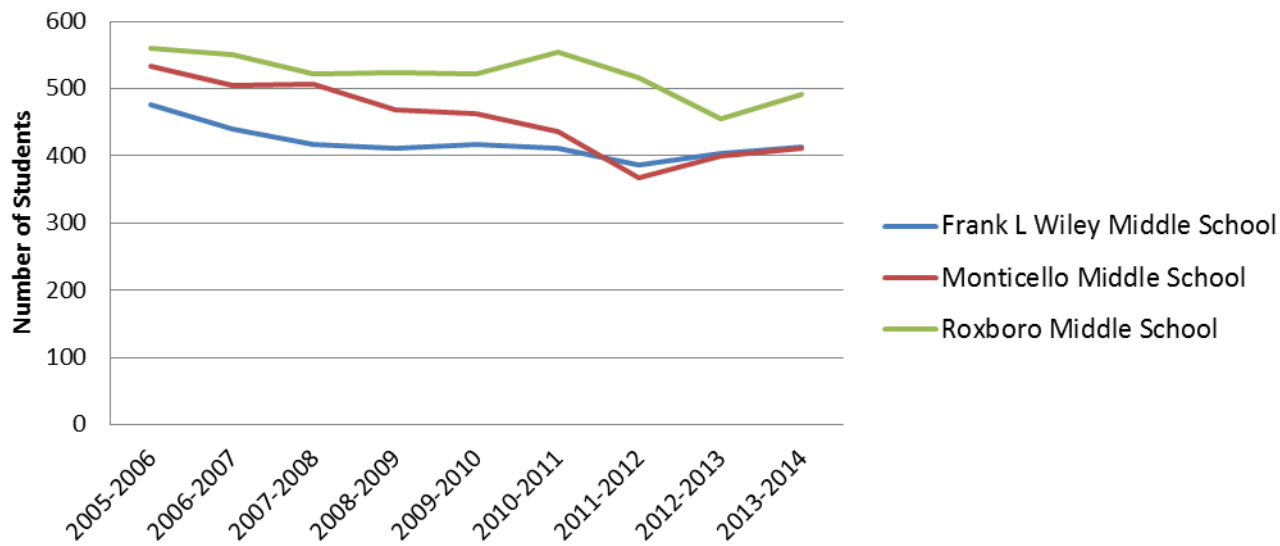
**Cleveland Heights-University Heights  
Elementary School Enrollment Trends (2005-2014)**



SCHOOL NAME	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	% Change 2005-2014
Boulevard Elementary School	274	283	395	398	338	320	332	296	305	11.3%
Canterbury Elementary School	381	383	404	395	396	380	354	374	380	-0.3%
Fairfax Elementary School	397	402	434	412	406	392	386	392	369	-7.1%
Gearity Professional Development School	219	238	318	325	323	348	360	338	321	46.6%
Noble Elementary School	425	426	438	406	404	423	424	423	403	-5.2%
Oxford Elementary School	363	362	351	360	356	338	325	340	330	-9.1%
Roxboro Elementary School	325	329	336	335	343	364	410	408	402	23.7%

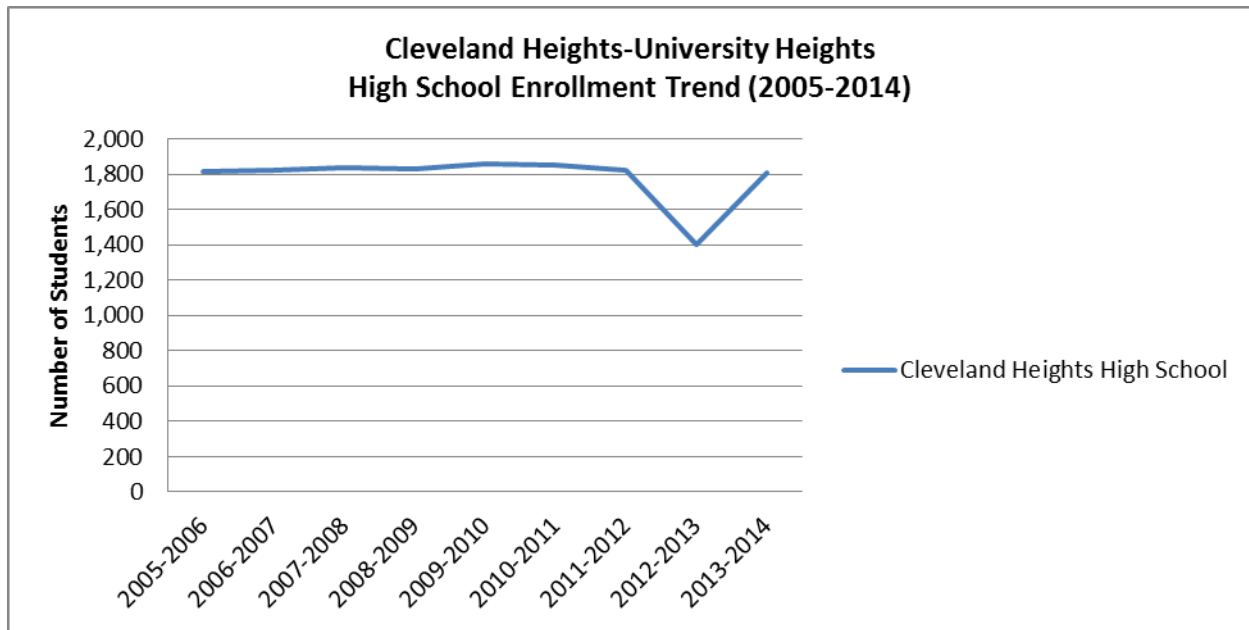
*Note: Data from the Ohio Department of Education website*

### Cleveland Heights-University Heights Middle School Enrollment Trends (2005-2014)



SCHOOL NAME	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	% Change 2005-2014
Frank L Wiley Middle School	476	439	417	412	417	412	387	403	414	-13.0%
Monticello Middle School	534	504	507	468	463	437	367	400	411	-23.0%
Roxboro Middle School	560	550	521	523	521	554	517	456	491	-12.3%

*Note: Data from the Ohio Department of Education website*



SCHOOL NAME	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	% Change 2005-2014
Cleveland Heights High School	1,817	1,823	1,839	1,833	1,860	1,853	1,828	1,400	1,812	-0.3%

*Note: Data from the Ohio Department of Education website*

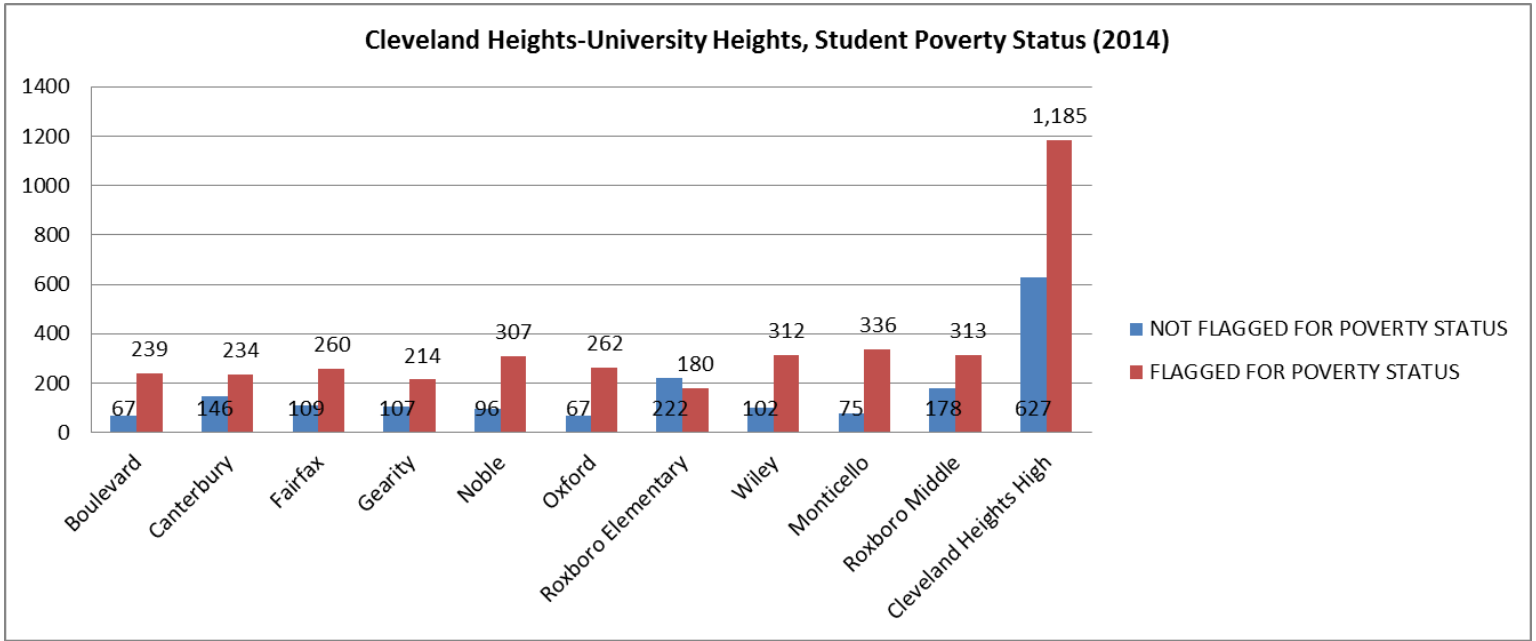
***Student Socio-Economic Status (SES Status)***

The Ohio Department of Education (2014) uses the following benchmarks to indicate that a student is in poverty:

“Percent of Students in Poverty is a measure that indicates student poverty in school districts. This is a student-based indicator that reflects the portion of a district’s student population that meets any of the following conditions. This measure, which is also referred to as the Economic Disadvantage Percentage, consists of:

1. Students who are known to be eligible to receive free or reduced-price lunches; a program through the United States Department of Agriculture (U.S.D.A) National School Lunch Program. Eligibility for free or reduced-price lunch can be determined through a variety of methods including the electronic direct certification process or completion by a parent or guardian of a free and reduced-price lunch application. A student with an approved application on file for a free or reduced-price lunch is qualified to be reported to ODE as economically disadvantaged.
2. Students who have not submitted an application for free or reduced-price lunch or who have not been directly certified as eligible but reside in a household in which a member (e.g. sibling) is known to be eligible for free or reduced-price lunch via an approved application or through direct certification.

3. Students who are known to be recipients of or whose guardians are known to be recipients of public assistance. A source for determining whether a student’s family is receiving public assistance is the Education Monetary Assistance Distribution (EMAD) system.
4. Students whose parents or guardians have completed a Title I student income form and meet the income guidelines specified.”



	Boulevard	Canterbury	Fairfax	Gearity	Noble	Oxford	Roxboro Elementary	Wiley	Monticello	Roxboro Middle	Cleveland Heights High School
NOT FLAGGED FOR POVERTY STATUS	22%	38%	30%	33%	24%	20%	55%	25%	18%	36%	35%
FLAGGED FOR POVERTY STATUS	78%	62%	70%	67%	76%	80%	45%	75%	82%	64%	65%

*Note: Data from the Ohio Department of Education website*

Based off of these charts and accompanying data, with the exception of Roxboro Elementary, the number of students flagged for poverty status surpasses students without this designation. When considering all of the above listed schools, approximately 68% of students in the school district would be flagged for poverty status with Oxford Elementary and Monticello Middle School with rates over 80%, the highest in the district.

### **School Performance**

Each year, the Ohio Department of Education issues “report cards” for each district, as well as each individual school. These report cards are based on national testing policies as a way to measure the schools on various aspects. Many of these aspects revolve around performance on state testing. One of the measures, progress, is measured by how much improvement students in grades 4 - 8 are making in math

and reading throughout the year. The Cleveland Heights-University Heights school district received an **A** in overall progress. However, when broken down by school, the results become much different.

School	Overall Progress Grade
Boulevard Elementary School	F
Canterbury Elementary School	A
Fairfax Elementary School	B
Gearity Professional Development School	F
Monticello Middle School	A
Noble Elementary School	F
Oxford Elementary School	F
Roxboro Elementary School	A
Roxboro Middle School	A

*Note: Data from the Ohio Department of Education website*

In terms of schools in the Noble neighborhood geography, Oxford and Noble Elementary both received F ratings. Though a number of factors contribute to the overall progress grade for a school, the F rating for Oxford and Noble may be correlated with the schools’ decrease in reading, mathematics, and overall testing scores.

A detailed table of value-added school performance data is available in **Appendix D**.

***Public versus Private School***

A common theme from interviews was the notion that a number of students are opting out of a public education from the Cleveland Heights-University Heights School district, instead choosing to pursue a private school option. It is difficult to quantify how many students are going to private school rather than public school in Cleveland Heights, as this is not a number reported via the district’s report card. However, some assumptions can be made about the number of students choosing to opt out of a public education by comparing the number of youth in the city versus the number of students enrolled in the Cleveland Heights-University Heights school system. The following table seeks to provide some preliminary numbers to advance this discussion.

Age Range	Total Number of Youth	Number of Youth Enrolled in Cleveland Heights-University Heights Schools	Percentage of total youth enrolled in Cleveland Heights-University Heights Schools
<b>Elementary School (5 - 10 years)</b>	3,210	2,566	79.9%
<b>Middle School (11 - 13 years)</b>	1,761	1,401	79.6%
<b>High School (14 - 18 years)</b>	3,048	1,860	61.0%

*Note: Total Number of Youth from Census 2010 (100% Counts); enrollment figures from Ohio Department of Education.*

The above table compares total number of youth from select age ranges and compares it to the total number of youth enrolled in elementary school, middle school, and high school. Assigned age ranges for each school level was designated based off of the grade-levels listed on Cleveland Heights-University Heights schools’ websites. Comparing these numbers, approximately 80% of elementary and middle school-aged youth living in Cleveland Heights are enrolled in an elementary or middle school in the district. 61% of high school-aged youth are enrolled in Cleveland Heights High. Although it can only be estimated that 20% of elementary and middle school-age students and 39% of high school-aged students in Cleveland Heights attend private or charter schools or are home-schooled, these numbers begin to illustrate that **a significant portion** of school-aged youth in the city are choosing to opt out of the public schools.

It should be noted that the above numbers and comparison come with limitations. The 2010 census reports numbers based off of age, not grade-level. However, age ranges assigned per grade level may not capture students who are at that grade level but not within the assigned age range. For example, an 11 years elementary school student would have been categorized as in middle school not in elementary school, thus slightly skewing the above numbers. Additionally, Bellefaire School was a part of the Cleveland Heights school district in 2010, with students from fifth to twelfth grade enrolled in programming. Since there are not exact counts of students per grade for Bellefaire in 2010 (just a total count for the entire school), the 84 students attending the school in that year are not reflected in total enrollment counts. Finally, there is no data collected on where students attend private or charter schools, therefore this narrative cannot identify exactly which local private schools students are choosing to attend.

## QUALITATIVE DATA

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### *Main Themes from Interviews*

#### **What are the enrollment trends of different schools in the district?**

Both the population and public school enrollment have been decreasing in the Noble neighborhood. There are currently seven elementary schools in the district, but in weighing cost of repair, renovations, and maintenance costs versus number of students it seems that the District’s plan to close two elementary schools would allow the other five to be renovated more effectively and there would still be plenty of space for all students. This is a district with significant transiency, where many students move in and out of schools and the district itself. Students seem to be leaving public school at the middle and high school levels.

Noble, Oxford, and Boulevard elementary schools have the highest percentages of economically disadvantaged students in the district. While all schools in the district have a majority of African American students, Noble and Oxford's students are more than 90% African American, each school has a handful of white students, and each school has a percentage of refugee and immigrant students (Noble-Bhutanese, Oxford-Central African). In low-income schools, services are expanded to ensure the students' well-being: extra food may be sent home or a child may be given extra warm clothing; community organizations often step in to help with this. The increasing refugee and immigrant populations have also led to the expansion of school and community services; there are more ESL classes and tutoring, translators, a service coordinator, and homework help. Engaging these parents, however, has been difficult and more services are needed for better integration into the community. While these services are provided and essential for a school population with high needs, they often go unseen by the community and are not taken into account on performance indicators such as the state report cards.

### **What are the performance trends of different schools in the district?**

The elementary schools in the Noble neighborhood perform worse than their counterpart schools in the district. Both Roxboro Elementary and Roxboro Middle seem to be the gold standard for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights schools. It is difficult to compare schools even within the district because they are demographically dissimilar with much higher household incomes. Noble and Oxford elementary schools seem especially prone to transience and many students come to these schools from East Cleveland and need support to catch up to the other students. Oxford Elementary School does not have a preschool, which may also mean their students are starting with less preparation. Monticello Middle School has recently turned its performance around; this may be the result of a new principal.

If they can afford to, some parents take their children out of the public school system. This is not an option for many in the Noble neighborhood. Based on the population of the city and Noble neighborhood, there should be a more even distribution of races and incomes within the schools, but it appears that many white students are not attending public schools. This may be a result of poor performance indicators, negative media, perceptions of schools and students, or that many do not know what the schools actually have to offer. It might also be because parents do not want to send their white children to a majority African American school. Good, transparent communication between the school board and the community is very important.

### **What are the views on the Master Facilities Plan and its impact on the community?**

There are mixed views on the district's Master Facilities Plan (MFP) and its impact on the community. While the majority of voters supported the bond that will pay for right-sizing and renovations, another 40% did not. People agree that buildings need repair and renovations, but there is no consensus on how this should best be handled. Cost to taxpayers is a big concern as property taxes in Cleveland Heights are already some of the highest in the state. Several pilot renovations have been completed at Oxford school and students and teachers are responding positively to the changes.

The potential closing of Noble Elementary School, which was signaled by the school board in the planning process, is of concern to the people of the neighborhood as well. Some believe that closing Noble Elementary School will allow resources to be directed to other schools and that there will still be plenty of space for all students at the remaining schools. Closing the school would be difficult for the community because it is a building with a rich history and because students and parents are very happy there. The Noble school community is active and vibrant. Closing the school could also decrease access to the services that the adjacent public library provides to Noble students. Noble residents do not want to see a vacant lot or abandoned building. Conversely, because the community will be asked what to do with the building, this could be a great opportunity to bring new life into that space and draw business into the neighborhood.



### **What community assets are available for school-aged children in the Noble community?**

There are a variety of assets and services available for children and their families in the community:

- Noble Elementary: ESL services, tutoring, summer camps.
- Oxford Elementary: Language classes, International Baccalaureate, ESL services, social work services, summer camps, “necessities store,” community garden.
- Monticello Middle: Cub Scouts, drama clubs, Model UN, Science Olympiad, art, choir, sports.
- Noble Library: Storytimes, Chinese New Year’s, After School Zone (age 11+), movies, teen sleepovers, volunteer activities, math incorporation, tongue twister challenges, etc.
- Community: Recreation Center, Cumberland pool, Forest Hill Church and Noble Presbyterian and other churches, Noble playground, neighborhood gardens, US Together, Reaching Heights.

These services are assets to the community. An increase in collaboration between organizations and between organizations and residents may lead to improvement for the neighborhood as a whole. Service integration may be very beneficial to the community. If Noble Elementary School is closed, the building and land may be a good space for meeting community needs.