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How Building Schools Can Create Good Local Jobs Right Now.

Building a new school can benefit a community in more ways than one. Sure, there's the value of a new educational institution where students can take classes and graduate with their diplomas, but why wait years for that spanking new building to pay off?

Schools matter, but so does having a job. There is a high correlation between educational attainment and family income. Families in which parents are part of the workforce are more likely to send their children to college than families in which parents are unemployed. Instead of celebrating construction of a new school only for what it will offer students over the long term, we should also see it as an opportunity for underemployed family members to improve their children's schooling through the result of their own employment.

Some construction jobs pay above local averages, presenting opportunities to uplift an entire community. For example, in New Orleans, the median hourly wage is $16.36 per hour; some construction jobs pay more than $20 per hour. Instead of waiting for years for a new construction to pay off, it's time urban planners and education officials focus on investing in the community from the moment the first brick is laid.

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The Brookings Institute

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