

GROWING COMMUNITY SCHOOLS:
**THE ROLE OF
CROSS-BOUNDARY
LEADERSHIP**

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Coalition for Community Schools

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About the Coalition for Community Schools

An alliance of more than 170 national, state and local organizations, the Coalition for Community Schools includes representatives from community development and community building; education; family support and human services; government; health and mental health services; policy, training and advocacy; philanthropy; school facilities planning and youth development organizations; and local, state and national networks of community schools.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Leaders in our nation's schools and communities are working together across the boundaries of education, government, and public, private and community-based agencies to create community schools. The 11 communities profiled in this report illustrate how cross-boundary leadership helps community schools move from pilot projects to large-scale, community-wide education reform strategies.

Consider these success stories in the 11 communities:

- In 2002, the Chicago Campaign to Expand Community Schools set a goal to establish 100 new community schools by 2007. There are now 102 community schools in Chicago, IL.
- Multnomah County, OR, which includes the city of Portland, expanded rapidly from eight pilot schools to 51 (of 150) schools in eight districts.
- In Nebraska, 40 percent of Lincoln's elementary and middle schools are now comprehensive Community Learning Centers.
- The Tukwila Community School Collaboration serves all five schools in Tukwila, WA.
- The Local Investment Commission is working in 75 schools in Jackson County, MO, which includes Kansas City, Independence and several other school districts.
- Evansville, IN, is taking a community-wide approach through what they call a "big table" that includes representatives from the school districts and 70 community agencies and organizations.
- St. Paul, MN, has taken the experiences from its three Achievement Plus Community Schools and is applying them throughout the district.

Leaders for community schools put development of students' physical, social, emotional, moral and civic competencies, as well as academic achievement, high on their agenda. As education analyst Paul Barton reminds us, "We ignore family, community and the economy at our peril in education reform." Cross-boundary leaders understand that educating young people to high standards

means connecting children and families to sources of opportunity and support in their own communities. It means welcoming the rich diversity in language, culture and outlook that changing student populations bring to schools, and refusing to evade the challenges posed by race, equity and poverty issues.

Making the best use of all their community assets, these leaders are scaling up their efforts to create substantial numbers of community schools as quickly as possible, following a powerful vision with a clear focus on results. The approach of these leaders reflects the ideas articulated by Malcolm Gladwell in his 2000 bestseller, *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference*: "When a handful of the right influential people become advocates for an idea, additional supporters will follow."

In these communities, eventually a "tipping point" is reached, when the conditions for learning created in community schools are no longer viewed as being beyond the scope of what schools can do. Instead, community schools are accepted as the norm across whole jurisdictions—they become recognized as what all citizens should *expect* in 21st century schools.

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY SCHOOL?

A community school is both a place and a set of partnerships between the school and other community resources. In these schools, an integrated focus on academics *and* family support, health and social services, and youth and community development leads to improved student learning, stronger families and healthier communities. Community schools are open to everyone—all day, including evenings and weekends. Community-based organizations or public institutions often work as lead agencies in community schools, helping to mobilize community assets and support student success.

LEADERSHIP AT ALL LEVELS

Advocates for community schools include collaborative leaders at many levels, including practitioners, managers and community members as well as executives.

- **Community Leaders** are school, local government, civic, corporate and agency leaders whose shared vision and policy commitments say to their constituencies, “We can do this.” Typically these leaders organize groups that reflect the unique culture and context of their communities. Often these are cross-boundary entities without formal legal standing; sometimes they are nonprofit organizations. Their power and influence comes not from their legal authority but from the clout, commitment and diversity of the leaders at the table.
- **Leaders on the Ground** are practitioners and community members at school sites who know local issues and have the skills to build relationships and connect residents to resources and opportunities. They include principals, parents, teachers and community members as well as community school coordinators. These school coordinators are hired by community-based organizations or schools to help mobilize and integrate community assets into the life of the school and lessen management demands on principals. Other leaders on the ground work in planning groups that bring together a variety of partners to provide site-level management. Members often include school staff, parents and residents, as well as representatives of public and private organizations, neighborhood associations, faith-based institutions and local businesses.
- **Leaders in the Middle** are the organizational managers whose ability to build an infrastructure across institutions and organizations keeps the community school initiative focused. These leaders connect community and school policies and practices, promote the idea of community schools within their organizations and foster alliances among partner institutions. They build infrastructure by focusing on financing, technical assistance and professional development, outcomes and public engagement.

STRATEGIES FOR SCALING UP AND SUSTAINING COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

The experiences of leaders in these 11 sites point to four strategies for keeping community schools on track and growing:

- **Develop diverse financing.** Money for community school initiatives comes from many different sources. Leaders and partners allocate resources from their organizations, refocus federal, state and local funding streams, redirect existing programs and services, reach out to private funders and develop new sources of support. They strive to fund their entire vision, not just one program. Communities that have depended on a single source of funding have faced the greatest challenges. The most common funding sources include local government and school budgets, federal 21st Century Community Learning Centers monies and private philanthropy. Many other sources of funding are used as well.
- **Change policy and practice through technical assistance and professional development.** Creating the conditions for learning in community schools requires changes in the attitudes of stakeholders and in the policies and practices of partner organizations. School leadership must make the transition from top-down, isolated styles to productive collaboration among all participants. Technical assistance to solve implementation and operation problems and professional development to strengthen staff knowledge and skills are key. These essentials should be an ongoing part of every community school initiative—planned for and provided *before* implementation difficulties occur.
- **Collect evidence of student and family success.** The success of community schools rests heavily on their ability to improve a range of important results that contribute to young people’s development—intellectual, physical, social, emotional, civic and moral. Cross-boundary leaders collect and use data that shows how community schools foster students’ academic achievement. Successful cross-boundary leaders use both measurable data and real-life stories to illustrate the effectiveness and value of community schools.
- **Build broad-based public support.** Partnerships may flourish on school grounds but unless the public learns about the work of community schools they are not likely to appreciate their value—or support them. Especially in communities where very high percentages of voters do not have children in public schools, leaders at all levels must use every opportunity to talk about the vision and accomplishments of community schools.

RESULTS FOR COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Community school initiatives show positive results across a range of indicators including academic performance, attendance, parent involvement, student motivation and connection, and teacher attitudes, among others. For example:

- In Chicago, **81 percent** of community schools are showing improvement in academic achievement versus **74 percent** of regular public schools.
- In Evansville, attendance increased from **94.5 percent** in 1999-2000 to **96.2 percent** in 2002-2003.
- In Kansas City, **75 percent** of teachers believed that the program made a difference in the school.
- In Lincoln, teachers report that **75 percent** of students participating in Community Learning Centers improved their participation in class.
- In Long Beach, **90 percent** of parents indicated that their child's behavior had improved, **83 percent** that their grades had improved and **88 percent** that their child was completing homework more often.
- In St. Paul, from 2002-2005, the number of students testing above proficiency in math and reading rose an average of **43 percent** in one school and **36 percent** in another.
- In San Francisco, **90 percent** of participants in Beacon Center activities said they felt supported by both peers and adults and **80 percent** reported a strong sense of belonging.
- In Tukwila, the district mobility rate in 2004 was **22.9 percent** compared to **5.2 percent** for participants in the community school's extended-day programs.

LESSONS FOR LEADERS

Despite their differences, the leaders in these 11 initiatives demonstrate a remarkably similar—and effective—set of core attitudes and behaviors. Here are some lessons from the experience of these cross-boundary leaders in community schools:

- **Step out and scale up.** Provide bold, immediate leadership to meet community challenges.
- **Open doors.** Nurture and expand networks of community responsibility.
- **Build multilevel leadership.** Connect community-wide visionaries to practical leaders in the community and at school sites.
- **Build an infrastructure to support change within and across systems.** Think systemically and embed the vision.
- **Fund for the log haul.** It's a marathon, not a sprint.
- **Focus on results.** Use data and stories.
- **Engage the community.** Share, listen and respond.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Coalition for Community School's mission is to mobilize the assets of schools, families and communities to create a united movement for community schools. Community schools strengthen schools, families and communities to improve student learning.

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Martin J. Blank, Staff Director

Coalition for Community Schools

William S. Woodside

The Coalition for Community Schools and its home organization, the Institute for Educational Leadership, are honored to dedicate this report to William S. Woodside, the visionary corporate leader who chaired the IEL Board of Directors from 1987 to 1995. As a CEO, he transformed American Can Company into Primerica, a major financial services institution. As an IEL board member, he shaped IEL's work to include the development and support of leaders for education.

Bill himself was a leader for education. He knew that the business community needed an educated work force and that an effective public education system was vital to American democracy. He served as chair of the Education Committee of the Partnership for New York City, and as a member of the Advisory Committee of the National Center on Education and the Economy.

Bill had a special concern for low-income and minority children and their families. He was one of the few corporate leaders in the late 1980s willing to stand up for these children by testifying before Congress in support of increased federal funding for Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and for the Special Supplemental Nutritional Program for Women, Infants and Children. He exercised the same kind of leadership before the New York state legislature.

He also was a keynote speaker on minority family issues before the U. S. Conference of Mayors, National Governors Association, Education Commission of the States, and The Conference Board, among other organizations.

Bill would have applauded the vision of the cross-boundary leaders for community schools whose work is chronicled in this report. In a speech to the American Association of School Administrators in 1987 he said, "My experience is that the longer an organization waits, the greater the risk that events will take control." He knew then that school leaders had to move aggressively toward reform and could not ignore such demographic changes as rising immigration and variations in family life. That is just what the leaders featured in this report are doing: moving aggressively to build partnerships in their communities to support student success.

The education innovator John W. Gardner said, "Leaders unwilling to seek mutually workable arrangements with systems external to their own are not serving the long-term institutional interests of their constituents." Bill Woodside knew this and acted on it. The new brand of cross-boundary leaders profiled in this report are following in his footsteps.

We are privileged to have known Bill and to have had him as a leader at IEL.

Elizabeth Hale
President
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This report explains and celebrates the work of leaders who are moving across the traditional boundaries that separate schools from communities to expand opportunities for young people, strengthen families and make communities more livable places. These boundary-crossing leaders for community schools come from all sectors and all levels of the community. They see the community school as an essential vehicle for improving schools and the communities that surround those schools.

In their work these leaders demonstrate that partnership is a dynamic process that pulls together the whole community—schools, local government, community-based organizations, cultural and arts organizations, families, business, faith-based organizations and more—to take responsibility for their young people and their families.

The Coalition is grateful to the Stuart Foundation for their support in the preparation of this report and for the assistance they provide to community schools. We are also grateful to the 11 communities featured in this report, as well as the leaders in each of these communities who shared their time and their experiences. We trust that their efforts will serve as inspiration and example to others. The Coalition and the leaders in these communities stand ready to assist other communities taking a similar path.

Coalition for Community Schools



Ira Harkavy, Chair



Lisa Villarreal, Vice Chair



Marty Blank, Staff Director

INTRODUCTION: **NEW WAYS OF LEADING**

“What we need...is something new: networks of responsibility drawn from all segments, coming together to create a wholeness that incorporates diversity. The participants are at home with change and exhibit a measure of shared values, a sense of mutual obligation and trust. Above all, they have a sense of responsibility for the future.”

John Gardner, The Changing Nature of Leadership¹

Across the country, school and community leaders are forging innovative working relationships toward a common goal: creating community schools. These leaders believe that educating all young people to their fullest potential is a moral imperative that is not being fulfilled. To better serve the complex needs of our diverse American families, entire communities must share responsibility for what and how our children learn. From all sectors of our society, leaders who believe in the concept of community schools are joining forces to create educational systems that work for all students and families.

What are community schools and how are they different from traditional public schools? In short, community schools provide school and community resources under one roof. Offering several major advantages over schools that act alone, community schools:

- Bring in additional resources for the school and reduce demands on school staff
- Provide learning opportunities that develop academic, health, civic, social and emotional competencies
- Offer students, their families and community residents a common place to interact and build social capital

Creating and sustaining community schools requires leaders from schools, businesses, government and local organizations to collaborate in untraditional ways. Public-policy experts Neal Peirce and Curtis Johnson refer to this kind of collaborative leadership as “boundary crossing.”² Boundary crossers understand that networks of responsibility—not traditional models of isolated leadership—are needed to solve 21st century challenges, including those facing our schools. They share an ability to “break through the barriers that divide and diminish our communities” and they have the imagination and determination to build new public systems.

This report looks at how cross-boundary leaders in 11 American communities envision, manage, sustain and expand the services, supports, opportunities and academic standards at community schools. They seek out stakeholders from throughout the community and identify new ways to enlighten all citizens about their community schools, regardless of whether those citizens have school-age children. In a number of these communities, community school initiatives are moving toward what journalist Malcolm Gladwell calls the “tipping point”³—a critical mass of support for the idea of community schools not as isolated educational experiments but as essential vehicles for educating the community’s young people to their fullest potential.

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS—A SHARED VISION

A community school is a place for learning that is supported by a set of partnerships between the school and the community. In a community school, an integrated focus on academics *and* family support, health and social services, and youth and community development leads to improved student learning, stronger families and healthier communities.

Community schools are open to everyone far beyond the hours of a regular school day—ideally, before and after school, on evenings and weekends.

Research shows that community schools make a difference for students and families in these important ways⁶:

- Student learning improves
- Students' families become more involved in their learning
- Students' communities become more supportive of schools and families

Using public schools as hubs, community schools knit together inventive, enduring relationships among many partners who contribute expertise and resources for effective learning environments. These partners include health and social service agencies, family support groups, youth development organizations, institutions of higher education, community organizations, and business, civic and faith-based groups.

Community schools reflect local needs and resources, so no two community schools are alike. Families, youth and residents join with educators and community partners to formulate goals for students and families, identify the community's needs and assets, and design, implement and evaluate activities. These varied voices help ensure that community schools meet local needs and show measurable progress.

Community school partnerships also bring community-based learning to the core curriculum. Studying the history, culture, economy and challenges of their communities helps students improve academically—in reading, math and science—and become better citizens. As young people engage in real-world problem-solving, they become valuable resources to their communities.

Parents and community residents not only support their children's learning but they also develop their own knowledge and skills. Literacy classes, adult and parent education, employment training, family support services and leadership development are part of the community school vision.

Over time, community school partnerships create positive learning conditions for every child and provide enhanced social cohesion, community identity and civic engagement. Community schools share these valuable traits:

- The school has a core instructional program with qualified teachers, a challenging curriculum, and high standards and expectations for students
- Students are motivated and engaged in learning—both in school and in community settings, during and after school
- The basic physical, mental and emotional health needs of young people and their families are recognized and addressed
- There is mutual respect and effective collaboration among parents, families and school staff
- Community engagement helps promote a school climate that is safe, supportive and respectful and that connects students to a broader learning community

Cross-boundary leadership lies at the heart of the community school. Because community schools develop students' physical, social, emotional, moral and civic competencies as well as their academic abilities, leaders from many different organizations must work together. These leaders agree with education analyst Paul Barton's observation that "we ignore family, community and the economy at our peril in education reform."⁴ They understand that preparing young people to succeed means connecting children and families to sources of opportunity and support in their own communities. It also means welcoming the rich diversity in language, culture and outlook that changing student populations bring to schools, and refusing to evade the challenges posed by race, equity and poverty issues. And it means emphasizing academic quality and accountability for results.

Most important, cross-boundary leaders are committed to increasing the number of children whose lives can be improved through community schools *right now*. These leaders are not afraid to provide bold direction and rapidly expand their initiatives even when conditions seem less than favorable. Indeed, a major lesson discussed in this report is the importance of broadening community school initiatives so that entire communities, not just individual schools, are transformed. The growing number of community schools in the sites reviewed in this report—102 in Chicago, IL; 51 in Multnomah County, OR; 19 in Lincoln, NE; among others—suggests that major changes throughout entire districts can alter the way communities think about schools and learning.

Community schools are important not only for educational reform but also for their impact on the community's economic, social and environmental well-being. Community schools have begun to create what Harvard University's Mark H. Moore has termed "public value"⁵—conditions that exceed conventional expectations and that are better for a greater number of citizens. In other words, the new networks of relationships that drive community schools are not only helping schools to meet their educational mission but they are also contributing to wider outcomes such as full youth development, social cohesion, positive community identity and civic engagement.

To learn how cross-boundary leadership is shaping community schools, the Coalition for Community Schools, with the assistance of Collaborative Communications Group, gathered information about community school strategies and leadership in a variety of sites: Chicago, IL; Cincinnati, OH; Evansville, IN; Kansas City, MO; Lincoln, NE; Long Beach, CA; Multnomah County, OR; St. Paul, MN; San Francisco, CA; South San Francisco, CA; and Tukwila, WA.

Four communities (Tukwila and the three California cities) were chosen because they received funding from the Stuart Foundation, which funded the preparation of this report. The Coalition selected the other sites because of their demonstrated commitment to the community schools vision.

These 11 sites range in size from small cities to large urban areas. The Tukwila School District enrolls 2,100 students; Evansville and Lincoln have 23,000 and 32,000 students, respectively; and the Chicago Public Schools system is the third largest in the nation with more than 400,000 students in 600 schools. In their work, leaders in each of the 11 sites have drawn on the knowledge and experience gained from state and local community school initiatives across the country, as well as from national community school models, most notably New York's Children's Aid Society and Beacon Schools.

Despite differences in the size, needs and resources of the communities, each of these initiatives grew out of cross-sector, connected leadership at the school, community and organizational levels. The leaders in these new networks of shared responsibility have not only initiated and sustained community schools but they have also built on their successes to create more community schools. Although most of these initiatives began as pilot projects, many sites are now working to make community schools a fundamental part of their education reform strategy. Their leaders have taken purposeful and, in most cases, successful steps to establishing community schools throughout districts. "Where Is Cross-Boundary Leadership Happening?" (presented at the end of this section) summarizes the 11 sites. "Appendix A: Site Profiles" contains a comprehensive description of the efforts at each site.

The purpose of this report is to provide a deeper understanding of the community schools initiative in a range of communities, to show how leaders are creating and sustaining those schools, and to share with other schools and communities the experiences at these sites.

The challenges, strategies and lessons discussed here were gathered from a review of reports and materials from these communities, interviews with many leaders from each site, results of a focus group at the Coalition's National Forum in March 2005 and notes from a symposium with community school leaders in Sacramento in May 2005. We are grateful to all 11 communities for their generous commitment of time and information and especially for their candid reflections on their work.

Here is an outline of the findings discussed in this report:

- **Bringing Schools and Communities Together: Leadership at All Levels** describes the work of leaders at the community level, within the schools and in the middle.
- **Scaling Up and Sustaining Community Schools: Key Leadership Strategies** looks at how leaders are obtaining and enlarging the critical elements of their community school initiatives, including sustainable financing strategies, technical assistance and professional development, accountability for results and public engagement.
- **Moving Forward: Lessons for Leaders** summarizes key leadership attitudes and actions at the sites. School and community leaders pursuing or considering a community school approach are encouraged to:
 - Step out and scale up. Provide bold, immediate leadership to meet community challenges.
 - Open doors. Nurture and expand networks of community responsibility.
 - Build multi-level leadership. Connect community-wide visionaries to practical leaders in the community and at school sites.
 - Build an infrastructure to support change within and across systems. Think systemically and embed the vision.
 - Fund for the long haul. It's a marathon, not a sprint.
 - Focus on results. Use data and stories.
 - Engage the community. Share, listen and respond.

WHERE IS CROSS-BOUNDARY LEADERSHIP HAPPENING?

- **Chicago, IL.** The Chicago Community Schools Initiative, a partnership of the city, the school district and private philanthropy, is committed to making schools centers of community. The initiative met its initial goal of creating 100 community schools well ahead of schedule, and generated momentum that leaders are using to enhance existing schools and create new ones.
- **Cincinnati, OH.** Extensive community engagement and strong school board and superintendent support helped launch an ambitious \$1 billion facilities program. Leadership at all levels has ensured that new construction in most city schools will incorporate the physical characteristics, supports and opportunities that neighborhoods want.
- **Evansville, IN.** A School Community Council created what they call a “big table” that includes representatives from more than 70 organizations—including school districts, community organizations and public agencies—that meet regularly to share resources for children and families. The council has overseen the development of the community schools effort throughout the district.
- **Kansas City/Jackson County, MO.** The citizen-led Local Investment Commission, locally referred to as LINC, has used flexible funding from eight state agencies, as well as federal funds, to organize supports and services at 75 schools, particularly in Kansas City and Independence. It has also encouraged local involvement by developing School Neighborhood Advisory Councils at all 75 schools.
- **Lincoln, NE.** The Lincoln Community Learning Centers Initiative, driven by the Community Leadership Council, has increased nearly five-fold since 1999. Starting with just four sites, it now serves children and families at 19 elementary and middle schools, staffed by coordinators from community-based organizations who work hand-in-hand with school principals.
- **Long Beach, CA.** YMCA management of six community schools in high immigration areas has greatly strengthened parent leadership and involvement and expanded afterschool programming. The Stevenson-YMCA Community School earned a California Distinguished School designation.
- **Multnomah County, OR.** The county’s School Age Policy Framework, along with city investments, has expanded the Schools Uniting Neighborhoods (SUN) initiative from eight pilot sites to 51 community schools. It now provides services and supports in eight school districts.
- **St. Paul, MN.** The principles of Achievement Plus, a community schools strategy to create extended-day learning, enrichment programs (including arts, music, service) and family support services in three schools, are now being applied throughout the district.
- **San Francisco, CA.** City, school and foundation leadership have established eight school-based community centers to support youth, family and community development. Community-based organizations operate Beacon Centers in five middle schools, one high school and two elementary schools.
- **South San Francisco, CA.** A private, nonprofit organization, Families on Track, built relationships and provided supports for students and their families in large, impersonal middle schools. Although the program operation was successful, the initiative proved unsustainable because of insufficient broad-based financing.
- **Tukwila, WA.** A collaboration initiated by a private agency now provides health services, afterschool supports and counseling services in every district school. Community leaders are sustaining the initiative with a combination of public and private funding and community resources.

To learn more about community school initiatives at these sites, see “Appendix A: Site Profiles.”

BRINGING SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES TOGETHER: **LEADERSHIP AT ALL LEVELS**

Leaders who believe in community schools come together from every sector—education, government, business, nonprofits, faith-based groups, health and social services, youth and community development and more—to build supports and opportunities for young people and families.

Community school leaders must cross traditional barriers to achieve shared goals. Like the corporate leaders described in a 2001 study of outstanding companies, *Good to Great*,⁷ boundary crossers are deeply passionate about what they do and share that passion with others. But in community schools, most boundary crossers are not CEOs. They operate at every level in the local government, schools, businesses and organizations. What makes them effective is their ability to bring others together.

Boundary-crossing leaders who work together to create community schools come from these three main groups:

- **Community Leaders.** The key figures from school boards, school districts, local government, civic groups, businesses and agencies whose shared vision and policy commitments say to their constituencies, “We can do this.”
- **Leaders on the Ground.** The school staff and community members at school sites who know the issues and have the skills to build relationships and connect young people and families to resources and opportunities.
- **Leaders in the Middle.** The organizational managers whose ability to build an infrastructure across institutions and organizations keeps the community school initiative cohesive and focused.

COMMUNITY LEADERS: BUILDING AND KEEPING THE VISION

Community leaders include mayors and elected county officials, school board members and superintendents, foundation leaders and private-sector CEOs. In each locale, community leaders have banded together in ways that reflect the unique culture and context of their communities.

In Lincoln, for example, the Community Leadership Council guiding the CLC initiative is chaired by the local newspaper publisher and includes the school superintendent, school board members, the mayor, and business and neighborhood leaders. San Francisco’s Beacon Centers are led by a group that includes senior-level city and foundation leaders. In St. Paul, leaders come from a small group of public agencies and philanthropic and community organizations. Evansville’s “big table,” led by the school district, convenes dozens of diverse individuals and organizations in its leadership discussions. The Local Investment Commission in Kansas City is a citizen-driven, nonprofit organization with no public-sector representation. Tukwila has a nonprofit board composed of school, city and nonprofit leaders.

Some of these sites have created nonprofit entities with legal standing; others have come together in less formal ways but with sufficient leadership support to make the initiatives sustainable.

In every site, stability has been essential in maintaining an effective leadership group. Turnover makes it difficult for collaborative groups to expand their work. In Long Beach, for example, even though the work at Stevenson-YMCA Community School is highly regarded, personnel changes in the school system have slowed the initiative's progress.

Apparent at every site, however, is the fact that power comes from the “clout, commitment and diversity”⁸ of the various leaders at the table, rather than from a mandated arrangement or legal authority. The emphasis is not on “Who’s in charge?” but rather on “How can we get things done?”

Mayors and County Officials

The backing of mayors and county officials can build public support, tap local funds and bolster grassroots efforts. In addition, these leaders’ connections to elected officials beyond the local community can help leverage state and federal financial support.

- Former Mayor Randy Kelly of St. Paul, a visible and powerful advocate for the Achievement Plus community schools strategy, helped bring city funding to rehabilitate and improve housing in a new community school attendance area. “Now,” he said, “legislators and city council people from more affluent neighborhoods come to me and ask, ‘Why can’t we have an Achievement Plus school?’”
- Coleen Seng, the mayor of Lincoln, introduced Nebraska’s U. S. Senator Ben Nelson to her city’s community learning centers. This firsthand exposure to community schools led him to introduce the Full-Service Community Schools Act of 2005 in the U. S. Senate.
- Multnomah County Commissioner Diane Linn and Portland City Commissioner Jim Francesconi convinced the city and the county board to reallocate millions of dollars from other public programs. These funds were used to support a unified system for providing services to school-age young people and their families at Schools Uniting Neighborhoods (SUN) Community Schools. “Community schools are the premier prevention strategy for getting kids through the 12th grade and into postsecondary education,” Linn said. “Partnerships inherent in the community schools approach help schools leverage and coordinate outside funding in more strategic, effective ways.”
- Cedric Yap, former assistant to Mayor Gavin Newsom of San Francisco, has helped put teeth in the city’s community school efforts simply by being able to say, “The mayor believes in this.”

School District Leaders

School board members, school system CEOs and superintendents are natural champions of community schools. They have ready access to parents, community organizations and other public- and private-sector officials. By using their “bully pulpit” in a variety of venues, school leaders in the 11 communities have helped to educate the public, actively engage citizens in improving their schools and build crucial support for community school approaches.

- When Cincinnati voters approved a bond issue that yielded nearly \$1 billion in state and local funds for school construction, the school board authorized a community engagement process that involved each neighborhood in setting a vision for its school. The same process also helped develop the partnerships necessary to make each school’s vision a reality. Board of Education member Jack Gilligan said, “When you open the door and invite people in, you tap pools of energy that have been idle simply because no one ever asked them to help before.”
- Arne Duncan, CEO of the Chicago Public Schools, made a bold commitment in 2002 to create 100 new community schools. He presented a transformative vision for his city’s public schools—and partners throughout the city decided to work with him. Today the city has 102 community schools, and the number is growing.
- Jim Hinson, superintendent in Independence, east of Kansas City, has promoted a sense of community connectedness—an important public value that community schools help to create. “In another five years,” Hinson said, “Independence will once again be a community where neighbors help neighbors.”
- Lincoln school board member Kathy Danek, who is also a member of the Lincoln Leadership Council, is an advocate of the capacity of community schools “to empower parents to be partners in their children’s education and to broaden the constituency for public education to voters without children.”

Nonprofit and Private Sector Leaders

The leaders of community-based organizations, local foundations and businesses typically have deep roots in their communities and have earned the respect of civic figures and neighborhood residents. Their participation helps ensure that community schools have access to needed resources, technical assistance and service delivery. In promoting their shared vision, these partners find new ways to support each other.

- In Lincoln, leaders from the Foundation for Lincoln Public Schools and the Lincoln Community Foundation worked with public and private groups to initiate what has become the Lincoln Community Learning Centers Initiative, a community school effort in 19 elementary and middle schools.
- In St. Paul, where the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation has served the community for nearly 100 years, President Tom Kingston played a leading role in bringing together leaders from the city, county, school district and YMCA for the Achievement Plus initiative.
- United Way of Southwestern Indiana Executive Director Carol Braden-Clark is also a key player in Evansville's School Community Council. She uses both positions to educate business leaders about poverty issues in the community and how community schools can help address them. Understanding and involvement continue to snowball and partnerships are growing, she reported, as "more people want to be involved in the School Community Council."
- "The YMCA has changed its assumptions about the way schools function," said Bob Cabeza, CEO at YMCA of Greater Long Beach. "Some of the things that have been blamed on the schools should really be the responsibility of the community."
- In Kansas City, business leader Bert Berkley, the founder of Kansas City's Local Investment Commission, understands—and respects—the power of neighborhoods. According to Berkley, "LINC people aren't there to tell neighborhood people what to do. They are there to find out what the problems are and what people want LINC to help them do."

LEADERS IN THE SCHOOLS: IMPLEMENTING THE VISION

Leaders in schools and neighborhoods bring the community school vision to life. They work to create reciprocal relationships between schools and communities and to make community residents feel welcome in the schools. Site-level leaders include principals, teachers and other school staff who are willing to reach out into the community to provide young people with new opportunities. Many are members of community-based organizations and public agencies who believe that schools need partners, know the needs and strengths of their communities and can mobilize community resources. Also essential are parents who want to help their children succeed and residents who want to create communities where neighbors work together to solve problems.

Principals

In successful community schools, principals are functioning in new ways, sharing leadership with community partners and building opportunities for family and community engagement in the schools.

- Principal Gonzalo Moraga of the Stevenson-YMCA Community School in Long Beach said, "Test scores...don't take into account poverty, health and lack of afterschool supports. Our kids need more enrichment to level the playing field." He decided to partner with the YMCA of Greater Long Beach's Community Development Branch to make sure that Stevenson students got more of what they needed. Together, they created a school that offers extended-day and family involvement programming, a parent resource center and homework assistance. The YMCA manages programs and helps the school cultivate student success.
- Helen Nolen, principal of Buckman Arts Magnet Elementary School in southeast Portland, saw that her school needed to improve the way it provided services. She met with parent groups to find out what they valued and what they believed the school needed. Based on these conversations, she formed a parent advisory group that met during the summer to plan and write a grant for a social services coordinator. This parent group later became an advisory group for the SUN Community Schools Initiative. Now Buckman has both a SUN school coordinator who oversees the afterschool program and taps community resources, and a social services coordinator who helps families improve students' school participation.

LEADING TO SUSTAIN CHANGE

Diane Linn

*Chair, Multnomah County Board of Commissioners
Portland, OR*

Diane Linn believes in community schools as an effective way to make sure more young people graduate from high school. In 2001 Linn became chair of the board of commissioners in Multnomah County, which includes the city of Portland and is Oregon's most populous county.

Previously, as director of Portland's Office of Neighborhood Involvement, she advanced the use of mediation to resolve conflicts, brought together neighborhood-based programs to improve their effectiveness and managed immigrant and refugee programs to help new community residents.

As chair of the county board, Linn established the Office of School and Community Partnerships to align school-based services, strengthen existing partnerships and ensure that the county had the competencies to address the needs of its increasingly culturally diverse community. Under its auspices, the county established a School Age Policy Framework to set priorities and provide support for nearly 51 SUN Community Schools in eight districts. She helped convince the county board to reallocate approximately \$12.5 million from a variety of county programs to fund SUN efforts.

For Linn, sustaining community supports for young people is a major responsibility of local government. "Education is polling at the very highest priority in many parts of the country," she said. "It's a political discussion. Look at legislators who say they support kids. Where are they spending public money? It's not that government should ultimately sustain the program but there should be a core of support so kids do not have to be affected by budgetary ups and downs."

Site-Level Coordinators

Successful planning often leads to enthusiastic participation in community school activities—and to more work for school staff who, in addition to their own jobs must schedule and monitor what is happening. As a result, the day-to-day management of site-level activities can overload even the most passionate school leaders.

In many of the sites we profiled, site-level management is facilitated by a community school coordinator who ensures the smooth implementation of community school components. These individuals may be employed by community-based organizations, public agencies or schools and either loaned or redirected by their home organization to the school site.

Coordinators wear many hats. They are expected to build relationships with potential partners, families, students and the community. They must mobilize resources, making sure that services and supports will promote not only the school's academic goals but also young people's development. Community school coordinators often refer to themselves as being the "front doors to the schools." As one coordinator said, "We are accessible when very busy principals are hard to find."

- In Multnomah County, SUN coordinators, hired by Portland Parks & Recreation and various community-based organizations, partner with school principals to bring together school and community resources. They coordinate extended supports, including school-based case management services, health opportunities, parent outreach programs, afterschool enrichment programs and homework clubs.
- Resource coordinators in Chicago organized block clubs to help students get to school safely and worked with neighbors to solve traffic problems around schools.
- In Kansas City, LINC Coordinator Lisa Stephenson said, "I am the link between school, the community and the families that we serve, many of whom are new to this country. A lot of refugees don't know that they have a right to come into the schools and sometimes that feeling is not very comfortable for them. So I help build relationships between parents and teachers."

Parent Leaders

Parents in community schools are welcomed as partners and leaders. A variety of opportunities and supports help parents emerge as strong advocates for their children and schools. A feeling of family ownership in schools can bring partners on board and keep people involved—even when the going gets tough. As community partner Sylvia Yee of the Evelyn & Walter Haas, Jr. Fund said about San Francisco’s Beacon Centers: “The kids and families feel like they own them. They’d all go to bat for their center.”

- In Long Beach, parent engagement was a vital factor in Stevenson-YMCA Community School’s designation as a California Distinguished School. California Department of Education officials said they had never seen such a high level of parent involvement in a school serving low-income, immigrant children.
- In St. Paul, parents, along with community organizations and school partners, interviewed candidates for principal of a new community school. This committee selected three top candidates from which the superintendent chose the school’s principal. When the new school opened, parents and the entire community already felt connected because they had helped select the principal.

School-Level Planning Groups

School planning groups are typically informal and flexible and their membership reflects the special character, needs and resources of their school and neighborhood. In Chicago they are known as Oversight Groups; similar bodies are called School Neighborhood Advisory Councils in Kansas City; School Neighborhood Advisory Committees in Lincoln; and Site Planning Councils in Evansville. Members include school staff, neighborhood leaders, parents and representatives from public and private organizations (e. g., hospitals and health centers, literacy councils, neighborhood associations, churches, mental health agencies and youth groups).

- The Caring Communities School Neighborhood Advisory Council at Crestview Elementary School in Kansas City was concerned about traffic in front of the school during parent dropoff and pickup. The council worked with the school district to study the problem and propose solutions. As a result, car and bus traffic patterns were altered to create safer conditions. A local church agreed to provide crossing guards to guide student walkers and direct traffic at key intersections. Council members now

serve as chairpersons for numerous community improvement groups and the council partners with the City of Kansas City to plan road improvements and spur neighborhood revitalization.

- At Plaza Park Middle School on Evansville’s east side, a Site Planning Council composed of students, staff and business representatives helps in decision-making. Because many of its members are from local businesses, hospitals and community-based organizations, the council can provide resources and support to the school. As part of a school wellness program, a council member from the Welborn Clinic convinced the clinic to spearhead a walking program for students. The local YMCA, also a member of the council, trains students on YMCA equipment and allows them to be bused to their gym. Overall, the council has helped create a culture of health at the school for students, staff and parents.

LEADERS IN THE MIDDLE: KNITTING IT ALL TOGETHER:

Leaders in the middle are often midlevel managers who have direct access to top-level leaders and their policy discussions, as well as connection to school and community programs. They connect the vision and authority of top-level leaders to community residents’ concerns, assets and energy. These leaders in the middle help build the organizational infrastructure—the personnel, policies, services and facilities—needed to implement and sustain community school initiatives.

These individuals are housed in many different organizations. Ideally, they work at the behest of their CEOs to carry out his or her authority, while staying flexible enough to develop partnerships and share resources. In Evansville, Lincoln and St. Paul, leaders in the middle work out of the school district. In Multnomah County, they are housed in the county’s Office of School and Community Partnerships. In Kansas City, they are located at the nonprofit Local Investment Network. Tukwila has set up a separate nonprofit organization whose directors manage service delivery and provide oversight and direction. Chicago distributes these functions across the school system, philanthropic organizations and a university. Clearly, where these individuals are housed is less important than their having the support of key community stakeholders for their work.

Unlike higher profile community leaders, many of whom are elected or whose tenure is subject to political vagaries, leaders in the middle tend to hold stable positions. They know their own organizations

SHARING RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SUCCESS

Willie Poinsette

*Principal, Robert Gray Middle School
Portland, OR*

Robert Gray Middle School in southwest Portland offers students and their families an afterschool program, a homework club, enrichment activities, a before-school study club and on-site case management through the Multnomah County Department of Community and Family Services. The school is in a middle-class neighborhood, but many of its students are from more transitional neighborhoods. Twenty-five percent of the students are enrolled in the free and reduced-price meal program, and many are English language learners. While the number of students living in poverty is relatively low compared to other schools in the district, the economic disparity among students is large. Many students come from high-income homes, masking the need for services for students from low-income, high-crime neighborhoods.

According to Poinsette, "I couldn't do any of this work without the brilliance of my coordinators." She sees her site coordinators as essential to her school's success. Poinsette said that coordinating services and engaging partners is a time-consuming task, even when all agree that the net effect is a school that can provide more supports and resources to its young people and their families. She gladly shares leadership with coordinators who have the energy, relational skills and passion for the task.

This model of shared leadership works both ways. Robert Gray's coordinators also see the value of working in tandem with the principal, who is available to support their efforts and to share information about students' classroom performance.

well, are familiar with community politics and likely have participated in more than one wave of school or community reform. They know the players and the issues and have the wherewithal to work strategically within and across institutions. Leaders in the middle can help bridge the diverse cultures and expectations of schools, government, community-based organizations and other groups.

Inside their own organizations, leaders in the middle are agents for change, pushing for improvements in practice and policy. Peter Senge, author of *The Fifth Discipline*,⁹ refers to them as "network leaders." Senge writes, "We have never seen any examples of broad diffusion of new learning practices without the enthusiastic participation of effective internal networkers." Their strength comes from their ability to move about their own organizations, building broad alliances and mining the resources of informal social networks. Narrow institutional or personal agendas, limitations of employee work agreements, and the need to reallocate limited existing resources to support the community schools strategy can and do create challenges for these networkers.

Across organizations, leaders in the middle keep open the lines of communication among top-level advocates and ensure that busy leaders stay focused on sustaining and expanding the community school initiative. They often serve as "translators," increasing the visibility of organizations accustomed to operating without public scrutiny. By reaching out to people at all levels and incorporating concepts from various disciplines, leaders in the middle help bring parties together, overcome implementation barriers and increase the trust necessary for effective collaboration.

These leaders' roles often change as initiatives grow. Regardless of their background, they demonstrate a breadth of skills:

- Marketing the concept of community schools to diverse audiences
 - Finding partners whose missions match the work of community schools
 - Overseeing grant writing and fundraising to enrich initial efforts
 - Lobbying for policy changes
 - Securing stable but diverse resources to expand and sustain initiatives
 - Understanding how to build and sustain infrastructure
- Dianne Iverson of the Multnomah County Department of School and Community Partnerships sees herself as a bridge between policy makers and implementers. "Very few people feel comfortable in both of these worlds, yet both are assets that make up a whole system," Iverson said. "Someone must glue all of these pieces together so that no one entity gets credit for this but it is a community-wide effort at all levels."
- Beth Swanson, director of the Office of Afterschool and Community School Programs in Chicago Public Schools, described her role this way: "At first, it was a marketing campaign, then fundraising leadership, trying to get some state grants and federal grants. As more people get involved, it changes. I'm working with the state to have the governor's people embrace and beef up funding."

LEADING FROM THE MIDDLE

Lea Ann Johnson and Cathie Petsch
Co-Coordinator, Community Learning Centers
Lincoln, NE

"When we were hired, some people thought we would divide the job differently," said Lea Ann Johnson. She and Cathie Petsch are co-coordinators of the Community Learning Centers in Lincoln. Had they continued in their familiar roles, Petsch, a former school board member and administrator, would have worked inside the school district while Johnson, with her background in community-based organizations, would have worked in the community. Instead, they developed their roles as they went along to make the most of their interests and talents and to forge effective connections.

Now Petsch handles much of the engagement work in the community. "I knock and talk...and raise the funds," she said. Working on the "outside," she meets with community leaders and groups, building resources to achieve sustainability. Johnson, on the other hand, forges internal networks so that site supervisors and principals work under the same assumptions and operating principles. She also analyzes program data to ensure accountability for the strategy's success.

The pair's relationships with community partners have created new opportunities for young people. For example, in an activity sponsored by the mayor's office, students used photography and writing to depict their urban environment and made presentations to an urban visioning conference.

Reflecting on their roles as leaders in the middle, Johnson said, "It's about relationships. Every stakeholder brings a different perspective to this work: kids, families, school staff, Community Learning Center staff, community leaders. As a leader, you have to understand all the perspectives so that they can connect and be shared."

SCALING UP AND SUSTAINING COMMUNITY SCHOOLS: KEY LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES

*In his 2000 best-seller, **The Tipping Point**,¹⁰ Malcolm Gladwell persuasively argues what he calls the “Law of the Few”: “When a handful of the right influential people become advocates for an idea, additional supporters will follow.”*

In community school initiatives, when cross-boundary leaders at all levels agree on and set about achieving visible, ambitious goals, every success can be used to legitimize their goals and help create the expectation that these goals will be achieved. Enthusiasm builds and creates a climate which makes it easier to leverage new partners and new resources. Existing schools are sustained and strengthened and new ones are created. Steady progress is made.

Eventually a tipping point is reached, when the conditions for learning created by a community school approach are no longer viewed as add-ons or as beyond the scope of what schools should do. Instead, they are accepted as the norm across whole jurisdictions—they become recognized as what citizens, parents, employers and young people expect in 21st century schools.

The growing number of community schools in the places reviewed in this report—102 in Chicago, 51 in Multnomah County, 19 in Lincoln—and other system-wide strategies suggest that these communities are at the tipping point.

Reaching a tipping point, however, doesn't happen just because good and even highly influential people want it to. Scaling up a boundary-crossing strategy like community schools takes leadership, money, a strong infrastructure, and a broad base of ownership to keep the work focused and productive. In the communities we looked at, it was clear that where initiatives were sustained and expanded,

leaders consistently and intentionally did at least four things to embed their vision in the hearts, minds, and budgets of their communities:

- Developed and implemented a sustainable financing strategy
- Transformed policies and practices through technical assistance and professional development
- Focused on data and stories to show accountability for results
- Pursued a public engagement strategy to build public will

SUSTAINABLE FINANCING STRATEGIES

Cross-boundary leaders have learned that creating a long-term, stable funding base for their community school efforts is a major challenge. They have all seen funding sources, both government and private, dry up because a grant runs its course, a funding stream is eliminated or a foundation shifts its priorities. The relentless pursuit of funding and support can destabilize community strategies, leading to staff turnover, weakened partner relationships, and unreliable services and supports for children and families.

TRANSFORMING THE CITY THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS

Arne Duncan

*CEO, Chicago Public Schools
Chicago, IL*

Arne Duncan calls community schools “a triumph of common sense” because of their power to bring together assets from across the city and align them for children and families. As a former professional basketball player and director of a youth-serving organization, Duncan understands the value of developing young people’s talents and capacities. The 40-year-old CEO of the nation’s third-largest school district is passionate about making schools the center of their communities and is committed to transforming his city through partnerships.

“Chicago has hundreds and hundreds of community organizations that are idea-rich and resource-poor,” Duncan said. But he sees this fact as an opportunity, not a problem. “We can mix our great physical resources with their resources, rather than being the competitor or the enemy.” Duncan has consistently used his executive position to advocate for cross-boundary relationships among school staff, community organizations and city-wide partners.

Community schools are an integral part of Duncan’s reform strategy for the Chicago Public Schools. He is enlarging the community schools vision in Chicago by partnering with the private sector, using district funds from such sources as the 21st Century Community Learning Centers to create new community schools, and offering schools under the Renaissance 2010 plan the opportunity to become community schools.

A groundswell of support from philanthropy, business and university partners suggests that many in the community endorse the initiative. “I think everyone is invested in it and that’s why it’s working,” said Duncan. “It truly is a city-wide effort.”

Financing for the long haul is most successful when leaders show a strong and clear vision, local assets are mobilized and diverse funding sources are tapped. Initiatives that depend on a single source of funding are at the greatest risk. Leaders at the 11 sites sought to allocate resources from their own community organizations; refocus federal, state and local funding; redirect existing programs and services; and develop additional sources of support. In Evansville, for example, the school district and its community partners see nearly every grant as an opportunity to support their vision for community schools. Leaders in Evansville seek funding not only to support programs and direct services but also to build a cross-boundary infrastructure that can sustain and expand their work.

Funding the Infrastructure

The experiences at all 11 sites suggest that communities and schools must allocate sufficient funds to adequately administer initiatives and to build the capacity of those initiatives with technical assistance, staff development and evaluation.

Understandably, both public and private funders want as much of their money as possible to go toward providing direct services. Leaders, however, need to remind their funding sources of the importance—and expense—of building strong cross-sector collaboration. Significant staff development and technical assistance are required to implement a community-wide vision and a curriculum focused on youth development, not just academic achievement. Cross-boundary leaders in Chicago urge supporters to “fund the whole vision, not just individual programs.”

Each of the 11 communities has found different ways to help defray their infrastructure costs. San Francisco and Multnomah County use large public funding sources. Evansville has received infrastructure funding from the Welborn Baptist Foundation. Lincoln is using administrative dollars from federal programs. In Chicago and Cincinnati, the local school district and private groups have redirected space and personnel to help provide infrastructure support.

Local Financing

Financing strategies often start at the local level. Cross-boundary leaders have used city, county or district funding for their community school vision. In some cases, their success has been parlayed into sizeable taxpayer commitments. Several initiatives have helped develop or have benefited from new local funding sources generated through tax levies or other means intended to fund comprehensive supports for children and families.

According to Lorenzo Poe, former chair of the Portland School Board and director of the Multnomah County Department of School and Community Partnerships, the success of SUN Community Schools contributed to voter support of an income-tax levy to create a Children's Investment Fund. "Schools are being turned back to the community," he said, "and not just to people with kids in the schools but to the broader community."

- Leaders in Multnomah County and the City of Portland developed local funding to sustain an initiative originally funded, in part, through time-limited federal grants. The SUN initiative started with an allocation of resources from the county and a redirection of funds from the city's community education program run by the parks and recreation department. The county has expanded its investment to \$12.5 million, the largest county investment in community schools in the country. Ongoing funding from the City of Portland and from the tax-supported Children's Investment Fund are helping to operate new SUN model sites. Title I and Supplemental Education Services funds also are being used.

- Lincoln has secured local funds to build infrastructure for the salaries of their community school coordinators. Their most unique funding source is the Nebraska Investment Finance Authority (NIFA), an independent, nonprofit organization that encourages the investment of private capital in Nebraska to stimulate economic growth.

An entity that generates its own revenue, NIFA is attracted to Lincoln's Community Learning Centers initiative because of its potential to reduce student mobility and create more stable neighborhoods. NIFA's \$35,000 per year commitment for five years has spurred a donation of \$108,000 from Lincoln businesses and foundations to fund community school coordinators. In addition, Lincoln Mayor Coleen Seng is considering using a Nebraska law that authorizes two or more bodies of

elected officials to jointly access spending authority to sustain schools' infrastructure and resource coordination.

- In San Francisco, each of eight Beacon Centers receives \$300,000 per year in core funding from the city's Children's Trust Fund. The fund was approved by voters in 1991 to provide sustainable program support for children. In 2000, the fund was reauthorized for 15 more years—at 74 percent voter approval.
- In Chicago, the Campaign to Expand Community Schools, using foundation and corporate dollars matched with school district funds, created the first 37 of 102 community schools that are part of the Chicago Community Schools Initiative. The initiative's newest schools are being financed as part of Renaissance 2010, another local community initiative financed by private and public funding sources. Arne Duncan, CEO of the Chicago Public Schools, estimates that every local dollar spent has leveraged five to six dollars more. "In a time of tight resources," he said, "this has been an extraordinarily good use of public funds."

Some smaller communities, however, have faced challenges in developing local, long-term funding sources. Tukwila and South San Francisco, small districts in relatively isolated parts of large counties, share a financing problem. While many of the financial assets they need are available in their counties, these relatively small cities have had difficulty bringing these funds into their jurisdictions. As a result, both initiatives suffered when initial grant funding expired.

- Families on Track in South San Francisco, initiated with funding from a private foundation, was not able to continue when that support diminished after several years of operation. It recently closed its doors, despite strong family and student support. "You have got to diversify your funding from day one," says Charles Casey of Pacific Foundation Services. The former Families on Track director, Julene Johnson points to the role of leaders. "You need to know who's going to be there when push comes to shove," Johnson said. "Leaders need to bring resources to the table."
- The situation in Tukwila is more encouraging. The initiative there has struggled to maintain its district-wide programs since initial support from a large private agency ended. However, Mayor Steve

FUNDING THE VISION IN EVANSVILLE

Cathy Gray

*Assistant Superintendent, Evansville-Vanderburgh
School Corporation
Evansville, IN*

Cathy Gray, assistant superintendent for the Evansville-Vanderburgh School Corporation, said leaders have tapped various programs under No Child Left Behind, such as 21st Century Community Learning Centers, Title I, Safe and Drug Free Schools, Title IV and Title V. In addition, the district received a Coordinated School Health Grant from the Indiana Department of Education and a federal Safe Schools/Healthy Students grant. Locally, United Way of Southwestern Indiana recently gave a local partner agency \$100,000 to fund social workers in the schools, Smokefree Indiana has given the school corporation approximately \$100,000 and the local Teachers Federal Credit Union recently donated \$10,000 to the School Community Council to support families. The Welborn Baptist Foundation has helped to support the infrastructure.

Mullet and Superintendent James Hammond are strongly committed to community schools and they have allocated city and school district revenue to them. This highly visible resource commitment may yet leverage additional funding. In the meantime, faced with limited resources, Tukwila leaders are implementing a sustainability strategy that uses community resources, such as recreation and counseling services from city employees and tutoring from University of Washington volunteers.

State Financing

State funding streams are typically not set up to provide direct support for cross-cutting initiatives such as community schools. However, many federal programs—21st Century Community Learning Centers grants, for example—are administered at the state level, and numerous state-funded programs help support components of local community school initiatives. Multnomah County is part of a state-wide effort to develop a community schools strategy throughout Oregon.

Chicago is mounting an advocacy campaign sponsored by public and private entities, and targeted, in part, to building state funding support for community schools.

- 21st Century Community Learning Centers grants have been used to fund services and infrastructure costs in several of the communities. In Chicago, for example, the school district used these dollars to establish 30 of its 102 community schools. In Cincinnati and Evansville, this money pays for coordinators to run afterschool programs and to mobilize community resources. In Lincoln, 21st Century funds have helped expand an effort that began in four schools and now is in 19.
- Most states do not have one large funding source for all community school services, so Missouri created one. In the 1990s, eight state agencies pooled resources to provide flexible funding for community initiatives to improve services for children and families. These dollars helped the Local Investment Fund support Kansas City's Caring Communities school sites. Today these schools are supported largely through the Child Care Development Fund, a federal source also used by the Long Beach initiative to fund some of its afterschool activities.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Technical assistance to solve implementation and operation problems and professional development to strengthen staff knowledge and skills are key. These essentials should be an ongoing part of every community school initiative—planned for and provided *before* implementation difficulties occur.

- The Chicago initiative has contracted with a group of technical assistance providers to help community schools with planning and program development, use of data and training of oversight committees. In addition, the School of Social Service Administration at the University of Chicago, through a grant from JP Morgan Chase, is conducting professional development for principals and resource coordinators from community-based organizations. The university is also developing a program to prepare social workers to work in community schools.

- In Multnomah, county staff members provide technical assistance to help new sites get up and running. They also help resolve implementation problems. They continue to look for ways to strengthen and fine-tune their community school model. Recently, for example, they developed a strategy to help schools establish business partnerships.
- In Lincoln, a “curriculum coach” helps afterschool staff design programming that relates to grade-level curricula. The district also provides professional development for staff from all partner organizations so that school activities are informed by the same expectations and rules.
- In Cincinnati, staff of the school district and the Community Building Institute at Xavier University provide technical assistance to community-based organizations so they can apply for local foundation funding to support their work in community schools. They also help build connections between the Community Learning Centers initiative and other local collaborative initiatives focused on health, mental health, afterschool and arts programs in order to bring those services into the Learning Centers.
- In Evansville, staff from partner organizations support local leadership by offering training for school-based site councils.

National technical assistance has helped many of these communities build and sustain their initiatives. For example, many of these sites have benefited from the Children’s Aid Society’s National Technical Assistance Center for Community Schools, which offers on-site support based on its national model. The Coalition for Community Schools also has facilitated connections among the 11 sites so they can learn from one another.

DATA AND STORIES SHOW ACCOUNTABILITY FOR RESULTS

The case for community schools rests heavily on their ability to improve a range of important outcomes that contribute to young people’s development. To show results, leaders are using both qualitative data (stories) and quantitative data (numbers).

Community school leaders are using well-designed evaluation efforts to strengthen their initiatives and measure outcomes. Ideally, these evaluations are built into initial planning and implementation efforts. They are crafted to answer specific questions about the initiative’s design, progress and effectiveness. Chicago, San Francisco and Lincoln have aggressively worked to secure funds for third-party evaluations. Evansville has an in-house evaluator. Other communities are tracking a variety of existing data sources to assess their results.

Leaders use this information to its greatest benefit, citing data or relating stories depending on the audience they’re addressing. For example, in Lincoln, where the public is already highly supportive of schools and community learning centers, CLC Co-Coordinator Cathie Petsch has found that her audiences are most interested in hearing about individual children who have benefited from their investments. Whenever she talks to community groups, she relates stories about children facing and overcoming barriers to learning. In St. Paul, however, where public schools are often criticized for low levels of student achievement, Amherst H. Wilder Foundation President Tom Kingston stays focused on hard data and shows how the Achievement Plus community school initiative has improved state test scores.

Specifically, many of these initiatives are collecting data that show how they are improving a variety of factors related to academic achievement, student behavior, student motivation and engagement and family involvement. Results of these evaluations showed improvements in student attendance and graduation rates, test scores, parental involvement, and reducing mobility rates of students from one school to another.

FOLLOWING ARE SOME OF THE DATA THESE COMMUNITIES HAVE COLLECTED:

- In Chicago, **81 percent** of community schools are showing improvement in academic achievement versus **74 percent** of regular public schools. The original Polk Bros. evaluation, on which the expansion of the community schools initiative was based, showed that high school dropout rates decreased from **23.7 percent** in year one to **12.8 percent** in year four.
- In Evansville, an ongoing evaluation shows that attendance rates for high poverty schools have increased due to the community schools initiative in the district. These schools began with average attendance rates of **94.5 percent** in 1999-2000 and increased to **96.2 percent** in 2002-2003. In addition, elementary school students attending 30 or more days had significantly higher math and language arts scores the following school year, as measured by the state achievement test.
- In Kansas City, a 2002 evaluation conducted by the Yale Bush Center found that students and parents felt valued and supported by staff and that teachers believed the program has had a positive impact on academic achievement. Among the teachers who participated in the evaluation, **75 percent** believed that the program made a difference in the school. Of site staff who work directly with students and see them daily, **65.5 percent** indicated that they have seen marked improvements in student behavior. Evaluators noted that the program was based on best practices and that parents and principals were highly supportive, especially of the range and quality of activities for children.
- In Lincoln an evaluation of the Community Learning Centers in 2002-2003 found a significant gain in students' motivation to achieve. The evaluation also found that more than **75 percent** of students participating in CLCs had improved their participation in class. In addition, **75 percent** had classroom academic performance rated satisfactory and above.
- Long Beach has documented increased levels of family involvement in the schools and the community as a result of extensive adult and family programming, including its Community Leadership Institute, in community schools. Parents and teachers have reported improved school behavior and homework completion. When parents were asked in a survey about changes in their children due to their participation in the program, **90 percent** indicated their child's behavior had improved, **83 percent** indicated that their grades had improved and **88 percent** said that their child was completing homework more often. In addition, when compared to their peers not in the program, children in the program have shown significantly higher fiction benchmarks and social skills as well as fewer absences. The program's Academic Performance Index, a state measure of individual school progress, has risen steadily.
- In Portland/Multnomah County, preliminary evaluation results showed a positive impact on outcomes that promote student achievement, including higher parent involvement with their children's education, as well as upward trends in math and reading scores. Outcomes from the 2004-2005 school year for students participating regularly in community school activities and services include a significant percentage of students showing increases in state-wide benchmark scores, strong school attendance rates and improvement in other key assets and behaviors. Students and families receiving social services and case management also showed promising results related to family stability and self-sufficiency.
- In St. Paul, Achievement Plus schools have documented significant increases in student achievement in neighborhoods serving the city's poorest children. They also show a positive impact on life in the community. Results from the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment showed that between 2002 and 2005 the number of students at Dayton's Bluff Achievement Plus Elementary testing at or above proficiency in math increased and reading rose an average of **43 percent**. At John A. Johnson Achievement Plus Elementary, the average gain for the same time frame was **36 percent**. These percentages are more than three times the gains made by Minnesota students as a whole. At both of these schools 93 percent of the students qualify for free and reduced-price lunch.
- In San Francisco **90 percent** of participants in Beacon Center activities said they felt supported by both peers and adults and **80 percent** reported a strong sense of belonging. Participants were also significantly less likely than nonparticipants to experience a decline in school work or self-efficacy.
- In South San Francisco, the Families on Track initiative reduced students' involvement in street gangs as a result of work with middle school and high school students and their families.

- In Tukwila, a 2004 evaluation of the Community Schools Collaboration’s extended-day program has documented higher grade point averages among participating students, reduced absenteeism and a large increase in the number of families participating in family events and activities. The overall district mobility rate in 2004 was **5.23 percent** for participants in the collaboration’s extended-day program, compared to **22.9 percent** district wide. The district’s schools also show an overall increase in reading and math scores, and all schools have waiting lists for afterschool programs.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT TO BUILD PUBLIC WILL

Most voters and taxpayers do not have children in public schools. To build broad-based support for community schools and for public education overall, cross-boundary leaders work to persuade constituencies that schools are important for all citizens, not just parents. Partnerships may flourish on school grounds but unless the public learns about the work of community schools they are not likely to appreciate their value—or support them. Especially in communities where very high percentages of voters do not have children in public schools, leaders at all levels must use every opportunity to talk about the vision and accomplishments of community schools.

Public engagement—a process of convening groups, conducting surveys and interviews, and listening to the public—exposes leaders to community residents’ values, beliefs and behaviors, helping those leaders make decisions that more fully reflect the will of citizens.

At the same time, public engagement invariably leads to greater community investment in school issues. People are much more likely to embrace ideas and institutions they can understand. As a result, citizens are better served and community schools are better sustained. As Suzanne Kerbow of the Polk Bros. Foundation in Chicago said, “By building more of the community into our model, we ensure its longevity.”

Cross-boundary leaders have found a variety of ways to engage the public in their communities. Increasing visibility and promoting the community school’s brand can be as simple as hanging brightly colored banners outside of the school building. Some schools have sponsored a series of public dialogues or seminars on issues relevant to a wide range of community members. In every case, leaders listen first, then marshal available resources and address their communities’ real needs and interests.

ADVOCATING FOR CHANGE IN THE COMMUNITY

Carol Braden-Clark
Executive Director, United Way
of Southwestern Indiana
Evansville, IN

When Carol Braden-Clark came to Evansville to head the United Way of Southwestern Indiana, she saw little evidence of poverty. “There were no boarded-up windows, no people on the street corner doing drugs,” she said. Even so, nearly one-half of the 23,000 children enrolled in the Evansville-Vanderburgh school district are eligible for free or reduced-price lunches. “There are many working people who are poor,” she said. “They are frugal and proud and reluctant to admit to problems.”

Braden-Clark is an unassuming, soft-spoken leader who believes that the United Way in her community should educate people about poverty issues. “We need to shift from talking about how much money we can raise to focusing on community issues,” she said. “Schools are the place to do that. If we don’t focus on the social issues that are impacting children’s ability to learn, we will fail as a community.”

Braden-Clark actively participates in the Evansville-Vanderburgh School Community Council. Its mission is to strengthen bonds linking families and children with schools and community and to improve the physical, mental and emotional health of children and families.

This work has made her an ardent supporter of community schools and the need to draw attention to their effectiveness. “We need to be aggressive in getting the word out,” she said. “The evaluation results are just incredible, and the business community needs to know about them.”

A genuine cross-boundary leader, Braden-Clark has also used her network of relationships to secure a position on the transition team of Evansville’s newly elected mayor. “People yelled at me for that,” she said. “They said I wasn’t supposed to get involved in politics. I told them that if the incumbent mayor had won, I’d do the same thing. It’s not about political parties; it’s about what’s good for the community.”

BRINGING TOGETHER A DIVERSE COMMUNITY

James Hammond
Superintendent, Tukwila School District
Tukwila, WA

James Hammond, a relative newcomer to Tukwila, became superintendent of the 2,100-student Tukwila School District in 2004. Although he had no previous experience with community schools, he brought to this culturally and ethnically diverse district a keen vision of schools as a place where young people and their families can come together to learn. “We have a well-prescribed program for kids,” he said. But for Hammond that’s not enough. “How can we expand to help families to be successful even if that vision exceeds my pot of money?”

Some of the answers have come through Hammond’s leadership role in the Tukwila School-Community Collaboration. Begun several years ago, the collaboration once benefited from a sizable infusion of foundation funds. When that source dried up, the school district and the city committed to maintaining their partnership and to finding new funding for community schools.

In a multiethnic, multilingual community, the collaboration concentrates on building a sense of community around the schools and increasing opportunities for young people and residents. According to Hammond, the collaboration is continually asking, “What are some ways to break down barriers for non-English-speaking or low-income families?”

Because of the collaboration, Hammond said, there are now “family literacy centers in schools and local Somali leaders want to connect their afterschool programs with ours.”

Community interest is steadily rising. “I go to schools and see 100 elementary kids and 50 to 60 secondary kids in afterschool programs. The transience rate has decreased and schools are meeting their goals under No Child Left Behind requirements,” Hammond said. “Sometimes I don’t care that I’m the superintendent. I just want to do what works for children.”

- In Multnomah County, leaders developing the policy foundation for SUN Community Schools wanted to use an open process to promote system-wide changes for young people and families organized around schools. So they held a set of community conversations to discuss their ideas. What they heard reinforced their view that schools are a good place for youth and their families to access services. With a sure sense of community support, the board of commissioners expanded the SUN initiative from small-scale implementation to a county-wide strategy to support young people and build community into their schools.
- Cincinnati has built public engagement through bricks and mortar. Instead of making closed-door decisions about the design of new school facilities, school district leaders embarked on a process of intensive community engagement to incorporate each neighborhood’s vision for itself and its schools. Darlene Kamine, who is leading the community engagement effort, said, “We have created a sustained process with a group of more than 100 core leaders from the community guiding us. I work for them, staffing what their leadership envisions.”
- Kansas City has created closer connections with community residents by inviting them to design and participate in their own programming. Each site has money earmarked for community programs and local residents decide how to use it. These programs increase interaction and understanding among adults, senior citizens and young people, and they help residents understand and value their stake in local schools.
- In Tukwila, where many immigrants are entering the schools, Family Literacy Centers have helped engage new constituencies and build ownership. Families are using these services and, in turn, communities are offering support and resources. According to Superintendent James Hammond, “Now Somali leaders want to come in and connect their own afterschool programs with our collaboration.”

MOVING FORWARD: **LESSONS FOR LEADERS**

School and community leaders who work to create community schools take on the major challenge of pulling together human and financial resources from disparate venues and connecting them in schools. In doing so, they are changing the cultures of their own organizations, linking diverse groups within their communities, tapping community assets, piecing together funding from many sources, engaging the community and creating the public will to build and sustain their initiatives.

The personal styles and professional backgrounds of the leaders in the 11 communities vary widely. But all have shown themselves to be resilient and optimistic. They have worked through tough spots in their initiatives and remained unshaken in their commitment to young people and their communities. Despite their differences, these leaders demonstrate a remarkably similar—and effective—set of core attitudes and behaviors.

Some of these actions are summarized below as lessons for new leaders. Because an important goal of community schools is transforming entire systems so that every child, family and community can benefit, the credo that drives this commitment is listed first: “Step out and scale up.” The following are a set of simultaneous, continually repeating strategies and attitudes, rather than “once and done” actions:

- **Step out and scale up. Provide bold, immediate leadership to meet community challenges.**

Leaders who act cautiously, waiting until conditions are just right or their model is fully refined, are likely to find their efforts stalling. At best they may yield only a few community schools and win limited community understanding and support. A bold effort, informed by sound data and practice, can generate the momentum to make community schools permanent fixtures in communities.

- **Open doors. Nurture and expand networks of community responsibility.**

“There is no magic structure for this work: just people and relationships,” write Neal Peirce and Curtis Johnson.¹¹ Networks—informal structures that connect people across community sectors—promote mutual learning and serve as springboards for leadership and action. Creating larger networks of responsibility brings additional brainpower and perspectives to the table and pulls together diverse groups for mutual benefit. In community schools, every government unit, private institution, community-based organization and civic and faith-based group has a role to play.

- **Build multilevel leadership. Connect community-wide visionaries to practical leaders in the community and at school sites.**

Successful initiatives need a few high-flying thinkers so that everyone else can see their vision for transforming the community—and add to it. These visionary CEOs and elected officials inspire and motivate others. However, high-flyers need the support of leaders in schools and neighborhoods who have day-to-day connection with students and families and the expertise to bring initiatives to life. Leaders in the middle, typically midlevel professionals in partner organizations, keep visionaries and local leaders connected. They have the organizational skills to build an infrastructure that can sustain the entire enterprise.

- **Build an infrastructure to support change within and across systems. Think systemically and embed the vision.**

Productive work across systems and organizations requires a supportive infrastructure. Success hinges on the efforts of dedicated people who help community leaders move their agenda forward; facilitate data collection and evaluation; develop public engagement strategies; and connect school-level work to technical assistance and professional development. Strong infrastructure support embeds the community school's vision throughout its partner institutions and within the community.

Change must occur at all levels—in the way staff in schools and community agencies work with students and families; and in the intent and effectiveness of organizational policies and practice. Leaders must help funders understand the importance of financing this work. They also must look within their own organizations and budgets for sources of personnel and technical assistance to meet critical needs.

- **Fund for the log haul. It's a marathon, not a sprint.**

Community schools need a long-term, diversified base of support to sustain themselves. Efforts instituted with full funding from a single source are often seen as isolated projects and frequently lack broad-based ownership. Unless leaders begin early to develop additional funding sources, initiatives will falter when time-limited funding runs out. Leaders of successful initiatives find monies from local, state, federal and private sources and redirect services and personnel from partner agencies. Consistent leadership efforts toward full community engagement boost the initiative's visibility, thereby making it easier for leaders to leverage new sources of support when revenue is lost.

- **Focus on results. Use data and stories.**

Public schools are among the most scrutinized institutions in America. Leaders must show their constituencies that community schools are making a profound difference in the lives of children and families—and that these changes contribute to academic achievement. Determining results must be an important part of an initiative's ongoing planning, evaluation and improvement process. The most successful leaders insist that initiatives collect data and personal anecdotes. Leaders use this information strategically, and at every opportunity, to convince a variety of audiences of the positive effects of community schools.

- **Engage the community. Share, listen and respond.**

Public will is an essential ingredient for sustaining community schools. It grows through consistent and focused efforts to engage not just parents but all segments of the community. Unlike marketing or public relations, public engagement strategies create conversations about matters that all community residents care about. They give citizens opportunities to have a voice in crafting solutions that reflect—rather than manipulate—their preferences and values. To build public support, cross-boundary leaders must keep communicating the value of community schools and make their successes visible. They must continually demonstrate how community schools incorporate the preferences, resources and best interests of all local citizens.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE FOR ALL

Successful leaders in community schools are committed to providing the conditions for learning that *all* children, not just some, need to succeed. When they employ the kind of strategic and bold leadership described here, the results help young people develop academically as well as in other ways: social, emotional, physical, moral and civic. And as the network of community schools grows, its public value becomes stronger and deeper. Community schools help restore residents' faith in government, commitment to schools and belief in the core values of our democracy. The ideals embodied in community schools remind us that we share responsibility for shaping our community's future. Building and sustaining these important initiatives is a task that can make a meaningful difference in the lives of every citizen in our communities.

LEADING ACROSS BOUNDARIES FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Bert Berkley

*Vice Chair, Local Investment Commission
Kansas City, MO*

Bert Berkley is chairman of the board of Tension Envelope Corporation, a family-owned international manufacturing corporation based in Kansas City. Berkley was instrumental in forming the Local Investment Commission (LINC), a citizen led collaborative that works with neighborhood representatives and business, civic and labor leaders. Community voices drive LINC decisions at all levels, and commission members are active in gathering information, reviewing data and developing the organization's approach.

LINC now operates Caring Communities sites at 75 schools in Jackson County, including before- and afterschool programs and many other supports and opportunities. LINC provides a school-community coordinator at each site to work in the community, help families identify their needs, and find ways to meet them. A sense of community is growing around these schools. "Working in the schools surpasses anything—all the things—LINC has done in the community," Berkley said. "As the school becomes a community center, we are seeing growing parent and community involvement."

Berkley's clout and connections have attracted considerable state funding to expand LINC's vision and help sustain it. For Berkley, it is part of his commitment to make sure that community voices continue to build a stronger Kansas City.

APPENDIX A:

SITE PROFILES

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Chicago Community Schools Initiative

The Chicago Community Schools Initiative grew from the work of the Polk Bros. Foundation Full Service Schools initiative and other city partnerships linking schools and community-based organizations. When Full Service Schools evaluation data showed student reading gains that exceeded the city-wide average and decreases in student mobility, local leaders decided to push the community schools idea forward.

The Chicago Public Schools, the City of Chicago and a variety of private-sector partners—including the Polk Bros. Foundation, JP Morgan Chase (formerly BankOne) and other local and regional philanthropic organizations—organized the Chicago Campaign to Expand Community Schools. The campaign was designed to foster the growth and development of the city's community schools through public awareness, goal setting, financial support, technical assistance and ongoing efforts to seek long-term public and private financing.

With support from the campaign, the Chicago initiative has developed 102 new community schools in a district of more than 600 schools serving more than 435,000 students. Each community school is a partnership between a school and a community-based organization selected by the school. Many provide afterschool opportunities, adult education classes, health and family services, family involvement opportunities and other supports. At each school, a resource coordinator employed by the community-based organization manages these activities. Work within the Chicago Public Schools is led by the Office of Afterschool and Community School Programs. The University of Chicago's School of Social Service Administration provides professional development for the resource coordinators and offers a masters program for social workers in community schools.

The University of Illinois at Chicago is conducting an evaluation of the initiative. A preliminary report is expected in 2006.

CINCINNATI, OHIO

Cincinnati Public Schools Community Learning Centers

Cincinnati Public Schools serves nearly 39,000 students. Seventy-one percent are African-American, 23 percent are white and nearly 65 percent are economically disadvantaged. From the school district's partnerships with community-based organizations—and funding from the United Way of Greater Cincinnati, federal 21st Century Community Learning Centers grants, corporate donors, philanthropic groups and other sources—some two dozen schools now have community school services. Each site has its own coordinator, hired by a lead agency, a community-based organization selected by the School Planning Team.

In 2003, Cincinnati voters approved funding for a \$1 billion facilities master plan enabling the district to build or rebuild all of its schools. City leaders saw a chance to develop an overall neighborhood revitalization strategy and to build support for community school ideas.

With strong leadership from the school board and the superintendent, the district, the KnowledgeWorks Foundation, Xavier University's Community Building Institute, the YMCA and other community groups worked together to develop a community engagement process. Residents were asked what these new schools should look like—and how they could be created as community-based learning centers. Across the city, residents in many neighborhoods offered valuable guidance and buy-in to this major community investment.

The first new school building opened in early 2005—complete with a school-based health center that serves the children in the school and residents in the surrounding community. Seven new buildings will open in the 2005-2006 school year. Each will provide in-school space for a variety of community partners offering a range of services and supports.

The school district's community engagement process has fostered a range of community collaboratives in health, mental health, afterschool programs and the arts. These services have made it easier for resource coordinators to bring supports and opportunities to their schools and to meet the needs of students, families and community residents.

EVANSVILLE, INDIANA

Evansville-Vanderburgh School Corporation School Community Council

Community schools in Evansville grew from a single, full-service school launched by a school principal with support from the United Way of Southwestern Indiana. During its first year as a full-service school, test scores at Cedar Hall Elementary School rose nearly **15 percent**.

In 2000, the Evansville-Vanderburgh School Corporation, with continuing help from the United Way of Southwestern Indiana, decided to expand this full-service model to other district schools. The Corporation, which serves all of Vanderburgh County including Evansville, enrolls about 23,000 students. Fifteen percent are African-American or Hispanic; 45 percent are eligible for free or reduced-price meals.

School and community leaders realized that successful expansion would require strong partnerships and ample resources. Today, the Evansville-Vanderburgh School Community Council comprises more than 70 community organizations—including the United Way, two local hospitals, social service agencies, and city and county departments. The council enables partners to better understand school, student and family needs and to find ways to bring effective services and supports to school sites. The council has secured additional funding from the federal 21st Century Community Learning Centers program, the Welborn Baptist Foundation and other local, state and federal grants.

Every school in the district has benefited from these efforts. Each school convenes a site council to identify needs and gather resources and supports. District staff, led by the assistant superintendent, an assistant director and the director of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program, support the council and ensure open lines of communication between schools and district leadership.

In Evansville, an ongoing evaluation shows district-wide increases in attendance and graduation rates. In addition, students who participate in afterschool and summer programs for more than 30 days have higher reading and math grades and fewer absences than students who either do not participate or attend infrequently. Community schools also have increased school attendance by helping children with asthma learn to manage their condition.

KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

The Local Investment Commission's Caring Communities

The Local Investment Commission (LINC) is a citizen-led collaborative that works to improve the lives of children and families in Kansas City, Independence and the rest of Jackson County. Local leaders developed the idea for LINC as a vehicle for social services reform; the State Department of Social Services sanctioned LINC's creation in 1992.

LINC has established community school sites called Caring Communities in 75 schools in five school districts with high rates of free or reduced-price lunch participation: Kansas City, North Kansas City, Independence, Hickman Mills and Ft. Osage. At each site, a school-community coordinator works with a School Neighborhood Advisory Council. Councils are composed of families and community residents who design programs and develop partnerships to meet community-identified preferences and needs. Typically, Caring Communities schools offer afterschool programs, as well other family, health and related services and supports that bring families together around the school. LINC provides training, technical assistance, data management and other support to the sites.

Financial support for Caring Communities has come from flexible funding pooled from eight state agencies with the Department of Social Services as the lead agency, as well as from the state Childcare Development Fund. Funds from the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program have financed the initiative's expansion into middle schools. Title I monies from participating school districts and philanthropic funds also support the effort.

In Kansas City, a 2002 evaluation conducted by the Yale Bush Center found that students and parents felt valued and supported by staff and that teachers believed the program has had a positive impact on academic achievement. Among the teachers who participated in the evaluation, **75 percent** believed that the program made a difference in the school. Of site staff who work directly with students and see them daily, **65.5 percent** indicated that they have seen marked improvements in student behavior. Evaluators noted that the program was based on best practices and that parents and principals were highly supportive, especially of the range and quality of activities for children.

LINCOLN, NEBRASKA

Lincoln Community Learning Centers Initiative

The Lincoln Community Learning Centers Initiative began in 1999. After an extensive public engagement and planning process, the Foundation for Lincoln Public Schools raised private funding to establish pilot centers at four elementary schools. Now 19 schools, more than half of the district's 32,000-student elementary and middle schools, are community schools with Community Learning Centers (CLC) components.

At each site, coordinators from community-based organizations work with school staff and community members through a School Neighborhood Advisory Committee to plan programs that serve students and their families. Activities include extended-day learning opportunities, social services and counseling programs, and programs to help families support their children's learning.

To sustain and expand city-wide efforts, partners created the Community Leadership Council, a diverse group of community stakeholders responsible for guiding the development and long-term financing of the initiative. In addition to a grant from the national Public Education Network to the Foundation for Lincoln Public Schools, all CLCs now receive funding from various sources, including the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program, the City of Lincoln, Lincoln Public Schools, the Nebraska Investment Finance Authority, as well as from local businesses and community-based organizations. Lincoln Public Schools and the Foundation for Lincoln Public Schools act as fiscal agents for the initiative. A management team employed by the school district and housed at a partner organization in the community provides support to the leadership council and each CLC site.

In Lincoln an evaluation of the Community Learning Centers in 2002-2003 found a significant gain in students' motivation to achieve. The evaluation also found that more than **75 percent** of students participating in CLCs had improved their participation in class. In addition, **75 percent** had classroom academic performance rated satisfactory and above.

LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA

Stevenson-YMCA Community School

The Stevenson-YMCA Community School in Long Beach began as an adaptation of New York's Children's Aid Society community school model and received support from the DeWitt Wallace Foundation. The number of school suspensions at Stevenson has declined and its Academic Performance Index, a state measure of individual school progress, has risen steadily. In 2004, Stevenson was named a California Distinguished School.

Stevenson's success has leveraged additional funding from the Communities Organizing Resources to Advance Learning Initiative of the James Irvine Foundation, the Stuart Foundation and CalWORKs. As a result, extended-day and family involvement programming is now a regular feature at five additional schools in this predominantly Hispanic school district of 97,000 students.

All six community schools in Long Beach have a strong focus on parent leadership. The YMCA of Greater Long Beach's Community Development Branch, serving as lead agency, provides afterschool programming, adult education programs, a parent resource center and homework assistance. A partnership with the Department of Social Work at California State University, Long Beach, has helped strengthen all of this work.

MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

Schools Uniting Neighborhoods Community Schools Initiative

The SUN Community Schools Initiative emerged from a 1998 decision by Multnomah County and the City of Portland to partner with the aim of improving schools. Multnomah County, including Portland, is more than three-quarters Caucasian; six percent is African-American, 7.5 percent is Hispanic and the remainder is Asian and other groups. Its 12.3 percent poverty rate is heavily concentrated in Portland.

County and city leaders, in collaboration with school districts and local nonprofits, created a model bringing together existing programs such as Portland Parks & Recreation's school-based recreation and enrichment programs and the county's school-based programs in health, mental health and family support. The SUN initiative increased the impact of these resources by organizing them to better integrate education with social services and youth development programs and to increase the involvement of families, community members and local businesses.

In July 2003, the SUN initiative was strengthened by the development of a county-wide School Age Policy Framework—a cross-sector leadership effort to build a more comprehensive, better aligned service delivery system. Under the terms of this new framework, the county now provides each SUN school with resources to hire a site manager and a half-time case manager, and allocates flexible funding to support extended-day programming. In addition, county staff members provide technical assistance and program development.

The county's \$12.5 million investment in its children has affirmed the value of confident leadership and encouraged the initiative's growth. The SUN model has now expanded into 51 schools in eight districts—one-third of the county's schools. Preliminary evaluation results show a positive impact on outcomes that promote student achievement, including higher parent involvement with their children's education, as well as upward trends in math and reading scores.

ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA

Achievement Plus

In 1997, Achievement Plus community schools were introduced into the St. Paul Public Schools through a comprehensive urban education reform model. The St. Paul school district enrolls about 42,000 students; 70 percent are students of color. Leaders from the district, city, county and private sector selected the Achievement Plus community school approach to ensure academic achievement for all students by better connecting public and private resources to school, community and family needs.

The three Achievement Plus schools provide extended-day learning; recreation opportunities for students, families and neighborhood residents; a family resource center; and medical, dental, mental health and related services and supports for families. Case managers work with families who are experiencing crises to help them with housing and other urgent needs.

The school district serves as the initiative's lead agency. Other partners include Ramsey County, the City of St. Paul, the YMCA and the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation. The State of Minnesota has provided significant financial support; numerous foundations and corporations have also contributed.

The model has been fully developed at three schools and it is being applied to other schools throughout the school district. Achievement Plus schools have documented significant increases in student achievement in neighborhoods serving the city's poorest children. They also show a positive impact on life in the community.

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

San Francisco Beacon Initiative

The San Francisco Beacon Initiative is a broad-based public and private partnership, based on New York City's Beacon School-Based Community Centers model. Stakeholders include the San Francisco Department of Children, Youth and Their Families; the San Francisco Unified School District; the San Francisco Juvenile Probation Department; community organizations; a corporate partner; and local foundations represented by the Evelyn & Walter Haas, Jr. Fund. Funding for the Beacon Initiative comes primarily from a voter-approved allocation of funds for children and families in the city budget. Oversight is provided by the Beacon Steering Committee, which includes representatives of each stakeholder group.

Eight public schools currently house Beacon Centers. They provide youth development opportunities before and after school, on weekends and in the summer, and serve some 7,500 youth and adults each year. Each Beacon Center is managed by a nonprofit, community-based organization that serves as its lead agency, with a director and staff at each school site. The lead agency partners with a number of local community and public agencies to offer activities in five core areas: education, leadership, health, career development, and arts and recreation.

An evaluation by Public/Private Ventures shows that **90 percent** of participants in Beacon Center activities said they felt supported by both peers and adults and **80 percent** reported a strong sense of belonging. Participants were also significantly less likely than nonparticipants to experience a decline in school work or self-efficacy.

SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

Families on Track

The Families on Track program, a collaborative community school effort, was founded and financially supported by a group of private foundations in 1999. For more than four years, it served more than 1,500 families in three South San Francisco schools. Working year-round, it provided a full range of educational, social and health services designed to educate, inspire and assist families and students at Parkway Heights Middle School, El Camino High School and South San Francisco High School.

Families on Track functioned as a nonprofit corporation overseen by a board of directors from local foundations, municipal offices, the South San Francisco Unified School District and private industries. The program documented success in improved attendance, higher grades, increased family involvement and fewer risky behaviors by students.

From its inception until 2004, Families on Track was a privately funded program provided at no cost to students, families or schools. In 2004, it won two public grants that partners hoped might lead to more sustainable funding. However, payment on these grants was slower and less generous than expected, and the program underwent serious cash flow problems and slipped into debt. Even with an influx of private funding, Families on Track was unable to regain its financial footing. Thus, despite demonstrated successes and strong support from parents, students and teachers, Families on Track was forced to close its doors in March 2005.

TUKWILA, WASHINGTON

Tukwila Community Schools Collaboration

Tukwila is a small community in King County, south of Seattle. In recent years, the community has undergone rapid urbanization. Tukwila School District serves about 2,100 students in five schools; 65 percent are students of color, including Hispanics, East Africans, Eastern Europeans and Pacific Islanders.

The Tukwila Community Schools Collaboration grew out of brainstorming meetings begun in 1998 by the Northwest regional office of the Casey Family Programs. The initial planning group included members from the Puget Sound Educational Service District, the Tukwila School District, the Tukwila Mayor's Office and the Washington State Division of Children and Family Services.

The collaboration was designed to serve students and their families with extended-day and transitional programs, as well as family and community services such as annual health fairs, yearly physicals, immunization, dental clinics, family nights and literacy centers. It now operates through a nonprofit organization with its own board of directors. The original planning group has assumed an advisory and resource development role.

Casey Family Programs no longer provides funding for the collaboration, although substantial support still comes from foundation grants, particularly the Stuart Foundation. In the last two years, however, the City of Tukwila and the school district have increased their support. The city provides staffing for recreation services and a full-time counselor at each elementary school. Funding from the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program helps support the initiative.

In Tukwila, a 2004 evaluation of the Collaboration's extended-day program has documented higher grade point averages among participating students, reduced absenteeism and a large increase in the number of families participating in family events and activities. The overall district mobility rate in 2004 was **5.23 percent** for participants in the collaboration's extended-day program, compared to **22.9 percent** district wide. The district's schools also show an overall increase in reading and math scores, and all schools have waiting lists for afterschool programs.

APPENDIX B:

PUBLICATIONS BY THE COALITION FOR COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Available at <http://www.communityschools.org>, under Resources.

RESEARCH AND REPORTS

Making the Difference: Research and Practice in Community Schools

Atelia Melaville, Bela P. Shah, and Martin J. Blank
Evaluation data from 20 different community school initiatives and a synthesis of their combined results.

Community Schools: Partnerships for Excellence

Atelia Melaville
Relationships among educators, families, community volunteers, business, health and social service agencies and youth development organizations are changing the educational landscape by transforming schools into partnerships for excellence.

Evaluation of Community Schools: An Early Look

Joy Dryfoos
What a community school looks like and what we know about the impact of community schools on a range of results. Three recent evaluations of community school initiatives are highlighted.

Evaluation of Community Schools: Findings to Date

Joy Dryfoos
A summary of data from available evaluations of community school initiatives.

COMMENTARIES

Creating a Culture of Attachment: A Community-as-Text Approach to Learning

Milbrey McLaughlin and Martin J. Blank
(December 10, 2004)
This commentary reflects the Coalition's perspective that engaging and motivating young people to learn is essential for their academic and life success.

Community Schools: A Vision of Learning that Goes Beyond Testing

Education Week (April 2002)
Martin J. Blank and Ira Harkavy
Research and experience confirm what common sense suggests: What happens outside the classroom is as important as what happens inside.

ARTICLES AND BRIEFS

Community Schools: Educators and Community Sharing Responsibility for Student Learning

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development Infobrief (January 2004)

Martin J. Blank and Bela P. Shah

What research tells us about how community schools help young people succeed.

Community Schools: Engaging Parents and Families

National PTA Magazine, *Our Children* (January/February 2004)

Olga Heifets and Martin J. Blank

Ideas for PTAs and local community groups on how community schools can help engage families.

Making the Difference with Community Schools

Principal Leadership

Bela P. Shah and Martin J. Blank

Principals from East Hartford High School (CT) and Carson High School (CA) tell how community schools strengthened their ability to serve students.

System Change Through Community Schools

American Association of School Administrators Magazine, *The School Administrator* (January 2004)

Martin J. Blank and Dan Cady

How superintendents in four small to midsize districts used community schools to combine state and community services to solve problems of family mobility, insufficient health care and unsafe neighborhoods.

How Community Schools Make a Difference

Educational Leadership Magazine (May 2004)

Martin J. Blank

Because community schools link school and community resources, they offer additional resources, thereby reducing the non-instructional demands on school staff.

POLICY FRAMEWORKS AND TOOLS

A Policy Approach to Create and Sustain Community Schools

Coalition for Community Schools

A template for individuals considering policy options for community schools, including a discussion of relationships between schools and communities.

A Handbook for State Policy Leaders—Community Schools: Improving Student Learning/ Strengthening Schools, Families, and Communities

Coalition for Community Schools (2002)

Designed to guide state leaders in forming vital connections between schools and communities to improve student learning, this handbook is also helpful to the work of policy leaders in cities, counties, local school districts and philanthropy.

VISION, MISSION AND PARTNERS

The Coalition for Community Schools is an alliance of national, state and local organizations in education, K–16, youth development, community planning and development, family support, health and human services, government, and philanthropy as well as national, state, and local community school networks. The Coalition advocates for community schools as the vehicle for strengthening schools, families, and communities so that together they can improve student learning.

Our mission is to mobilize the assets of schools, families, and communities to create a united movement for community schools.

The Coalition for Community Schools' partners include the following organizations:

Community Development/Community Building

Asset-Based Community Development Institute

Center for Community Change

Development Training Institute

The Harwood Institute for Public Innovation

National Community Building Network

National Congress for Community Economic Development

National Council of La Raza

National Neighborhood Coalition

National Trust for Historic Preservation

National Urban League

Police Executive Research Forum

Education

American Association for Higher Education

American Association of School Administrators

American Federation of Teachers

American School Counselor Association

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

Council of Chief State School Officers

Council of the Great City Schools

Developmental Studies Center

Learning First Alliance

National Association for Bilingual Education

National Association of Elementary School Principals

National Association of School Psychologists

National Association of Secondary School Principals

National Association of State Boards of Education

National Association of State Directors of Special Education, Inc.

National Education Association

National PTA

National School Boards Association

National Service-Learning Partnership

Pacific Oaks College & Children's School

Family Support/Human Services

Alliance for Children and Families

American Public Human Services Association

Child Welfare League of America

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning

The Educational Alliance

Family Support America

National Center for Family Literacy

United Way of America

Local and State Government

National Association of Counties

National Conference of State Legislatures

National Governors Association

National League of Cities

The U.S. Conference of Mayors

Federal Government

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Learn and Serve America

21st Century Community Learning Centers

Health and Mental Health

American Public Health Association
 American School Health Association
 National Assembly on School-Based Health Care
 National Mental Health Association
 School Mental Health Project, UCLA Center for Mental Health in Schools
 Society of State Directors of Health, Physical Education and Recreation

Local Community School Networks

Achievement Plus, St. Paul, MN
 Alliance for Families & Children, Hennepin County, MN
 Baltimore Coalition for Community Schools, MD
 Bates College/Lewiston Public Schools, ME
 Birmingham Public Schools, AL
 Boston Excels, MA
 Boston Full Service Schools Roundtable, MA
 Bridges to Success, United Way of Central Indiana, Indianapolis, IN
 Bridges to Success, United Way of Greater Greensboro, NC
 Bridges to Success, United Way of Greater High Point, NC
 Bridges to the Future, United Way of Genesee County, MI
 Chatham-Savannah Youth Futures Authority, GA
 Chelsea Community Schools, MA
 Chicago Coalition for Community Schools, IL
 Chicago Public Schools, The Campaign to Expand Community Schools in Chicago, IL
 Community Agencies Corporation of NJ
 Community College of Aurora/Aurora Public Schools, CO
 Community School Connection, New York, NY
 Community Schools Rhode Island, RI
 Evansville-Vanderburgh Corporation School Community Council, IN
 First Doors to the Future, United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA
 Jacksonville Children's Commission, FL
 KidsCAN, Mesa United Way, AZ
 Lincoln Community Learning Centers, NE
 Linkages to Learning, Montgomery County, MD
 Local Investment Commission, Kansas City, MO

Minneapolis Beacons Project, MN
 New Paradigm Partners, Turtle Lake, WI
 New Vision for Public Schools, New York, NY
 Project Success, IL
 Rockland 21st Century Collaborative for Children & Youth, NY
 St. Louis Park Public Schools, MN
 St. Louis Public Schools, Office of Community Education, MO
 School Linked Services, Inc., Kansas City, KS
 Schools Uniting Neighborhoods (SUN), Portland, OR
 S.C.O.P.E., Central Falls, RI
 University of Alabama-Birmingham/Birmingham Public Schools, AL
 University of Dayton/Dayton Public Schools, OH
 University of Denver/Denver Public Schools, CO
 University of Kentucky/Lexington Public Schools
 The University of New Mexico/United South Broadway Corp/Albuquerque Public Schools, NM
 University of Rhode Island/Pawtucket Public Schools, RI
 West Philadelphia Improvement Corps, PA

National Community School Networks

Beacons Technical Assistance Program, Youth Development Institute at the Fund for the City of New York
 Center for Community Partnerships, University of Pennsylvania
 The Children's Aid Society
 Collaborative for Integrated School Services, Harvard Graduate School of Education
 Communities in Schools
 National Community Education Association
 School of the Twenty-First Century, Bush Center in Child Development and Social Policy, Yale University

Policy, Training and Advocacy

American Youth Policy Forum
 Children's Defense Fund
 Cross City Campaign for Urban School Reform
 Joy Dryfoos, Independent Researcher
 Education Development Center, Inc.
 Eureka Communities

Family Friendly Schools
The Finance Project
Foundations, Inc.
Institute for Education and Social Policy, New York University
Institute for Responsive Education
John W. Gardner Center for Youth and Their Communities, Stanford University
National Center for Community Education
National Center for Schools and Communities, Fordham University
National Child Labor Committee
National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education
National Youth Employment Coalition
Parents United for Child Care
Public Education Network
RMC Research Corporation
The Rural School and Community Trust

Philanthropy

The After-School Corporation
Carnegie Corporation of New York
Charles Stewart Mott Foundation
Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation
KnowledgeWorks Foundation
The Milton S. Eisenhower Foundation
Polk Bros. Foundation
Rose Community Foundation
Wallace-Reader's Digest Funds

School Facilities Planning

Concordia, LLC
The Council of Education Facilities Planners International
National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities
New Schools Better Neighborhoods
Smart Growth America
21st Century School Fund

State Entities

California Department of Education
Center for Community School Partnerships, CA
Child and Family Policy Center, IA
Colorado Foundation for Families and Children
Community Schools Rhode Island
Education Leadership Beyond Excellence, NC
Foundation Consortium for California's Children and Youth
Healthy Start Field Office, CA
Illinois Community School Partnership
Nebraska Children and Families Foundation
New Jersey School Based Youth Services, Department of Human Services
Office of Family Resource and Youth Services Center, KY
Ohio Department of Education
Ohio Family and Children First
Readiness to Learn Initiative, WA
State Education and Environment Roundtable, CA
Tennessee Consortium for Full Service Schools
Voices for Illinois Children

Youth Development

Academy for Educational Development
AED Center for Youth Development and Policy Research
After School Resource Network
America's Promise
Association of New York State Youth Bureaus
Big Brothers Big Sisters of America
Boys and Girls Clubs of America
California AfterSchool Network
Camp Fire USA
Center for Collaborative Solutions
Coalition of Community Foundations for Youth
Families of Freedom Scholarship Fund
Forum on Youth Investment
National AfterSchool Association (formerly known as the National School-Age Care Alliance)
National Collaboration for Youth
National Institute on Out-of-School Time
Partnership for After School Education
YMCA of the USA

ENDNOTES

¹ J. W. Gardner (1988). *The Changing Nature of Leadership*. Washington, DC: Leadership Studies Program, Independent Sector.

² N. Peirce and C. Johnson (1998). *Boundary Crossers: Community Leadership for a Global Age*. College Park, MD: Academy of Leadership.

³ M. Gladwell (2000). *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference*. New York, NY: Little, Brown and Company.

⁴ P. Barton (2001). *Facing the Hard Facts in Education Reform*. Princeton, NJ: ETS.

⁵ M. H. Moore (1995). *Creating Public Value: Strategic Management in Government*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

⁶ M. Blank, A. Melville and B. Shah (2003). *Making the Difference: Research and Practice in Community Schools*. Washington, DC: Coalition for Community Schools.

⁷ J. Collins (2001). *Good to Great*. New York, NY: HarperCollins.

⁸ A. Melville and M. Blank (1993). *Together We Can*. Washington, DC: Institute for Educational Leadership.

⁹ P. Senge (1990). *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*. New York, NY: Doubleday.

¹⁰ M. Gladwell (2000). *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference*. New York, NY: Little, Brown and Company.

¹¹ N. Peirce and C. Johnson (1998). *Boundary Crossers: Community Leadership for a Global Age*. College Park, MD: Academy of Leadership.

THE INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

The Coalition for Community Schools is staffed by the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL). Since 1964, IEL has been at the heart of an impartial, dynamic, nationwide network of people and organizations from many walks of life who share a passionate conviction that excellent education is critical to nurturing healthy individuals, families, and communities.

Our mission is to help build the capacity of people and organizations in education and related fields to work together across policies, programs, and sectors to achieve better futures for all children and youth.

To that end, we work to:

- Build the capacity to lead
- Share promising practices
- Translate our own and others' research into suggestions for improvement
- Share results in print and in person.

IEL believes that all children and youth have a birth right: the opportunity and the support to grow, learn, and become contributing members of our democratic society. Through our work, we enable stakeholders to learn from one another and to collaborate closely—across boundaries of race and culture, discipline, economic interest, political stance, unit of government, or any other area of difference—to achieve better results for every youngster from pre-K through high school and on into postsecondary education. IEL sparks, then helps to build and nurture, networks that pursue dialogue and take action on educational problems.

We provide services in three program areas:

Developing and Supporting Leaders

Strengthening School-Family-Community Connections

Connecting and Improving Policies and Systems that Serve Children and Youth.

Please visit our Web site at www.iel.org to learn more about IEL and its work.

