



Engaging Cities



*How Municipal Leaders Can
Mobilize Communities
to Improve Public Schools*



Annenberg
Institute for
School Reform

AT BROWN UNIVERSITY

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Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University
in cooperation with the Institute for Youth, Education, and
Families of the National League of Cities

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Building Public Support for Schools
in **Five Cities**

If our nation is to make good on its declared goal of ensuring educational success for all students, we must mobilize the entire education capacity of our cities and towns. The teachers, principals, and central office administrators of local schools are an essential part of – but not the only players in – such efforts. Indeed, municipal leaders and agencies, as well as public libraries, grass-roots organizers, after-school providers, business, higher education, and the general public, in alliance with educators, must work together to provide more and better learning opportunities for young people – before, during, and after the regular school day.

More than at any time in our nation’s history, mayors are playing an active role in mobilizing these local community and civic interests to act collectively on behalf of children and youth. These leaders see a vital

link between their cities’ capacity to prepare young people for successful adulthood and long-term civic vitality. More than any other single leader or organization, mayors can bring together these sometimes-competing groups to engage and mobilize around a compelling common interest – the future of the city’s children.

How Mayors Are Engaging Their Communities in Public Schools

This report looks at five cities where mayors are responding to the challenge of improving local public schools by seeking new and more effective ways to engage key segments of their communities. The stories of Denver, Akron, Long Beach, Nashville, and New York help us identify and describe practical, high-yield engagement strategies and solutions mayors are using and



resources they have found or created. In many instances, these mayors are making a difference without the aid of much formal authority over the school system's budget, personnel, or school board.

Mayors are in a unique position to mobilize a community's diverse stakeholders in support of public education. The visibility and authority of their office provide opportunities to place public education high on the city's list of priorities, work toward ensuring adequate funding and resources, forge partnerships that enrich and sustain schools, and build public will and support to improve outcomes for the city's children and youth.

While the long-term effects of these efforts are not yet clear, it is evident that without strong connections between communities and schools our young people will likely fall short of their dreams for a brighter future. The tasks are too complex, the gaps too large, and the promise too nearly realized for schools and educators to do it alone.

The following chapters tell the stories of five cities whose mayors used the leverage and standing of their offices to make real those connections and relationships. These mayors have mobilized their communities to invest in young people – and in the future of their cities.

About the Case Studies

These case studies were completed by the Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University in cooperation with the Mayors' Education Policy Advisors Network (see sidebar) of the National League of Cities (NLC). Institute staff conducted the research for the city cases and wrote this report.

The cities featured in the report were selected from a larger list of cities (assembled by Annenberg Institute staff) whose mayors have been particularly effective in mobilizing a range of constituencies to support local schools. We made the final selection in consultation with colleagues at the NLC and other organizations whose work involves public engagement for high-quality schools.

Institute staff then worked directly with a local education policy advisor or other liaison in each city, who supplied us with background information and handled logistics and scheduling for a two- to three-day site visit. Prior to each visit, we reviewed official documents, newspaper archives, and Web-based resources.

During each site visit, Institute staff interviewed school officials, municipal leaders, and community representatives and toured schools and their neighborhoods. Following the site visit, we conducted

The Mayors' Education Policy Advisors Network

These studies of mayoral leadership in five cities grew out of the Mayors' Education Policy Advisors Network (EPAN), created in 2003 by the Institute for Youth, Education, and Families of the National League of Cities with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Presently, EPAN includes mayors' senior policy advisors from approximately sixty-five U.S. cities.

EPAN provides members with access to the network's collective expertise and to technical support from education reform organizations such as the Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University. The Institute serves as a resource to EPAN on public engagement strategies by publishing a monthly e-newsletter and providing direct technical support to several cities.

phone interviews with the advisors or other individuals as needed, then prepared drafts of the case studies and asked each local liaison to review the draft of the city's case study for accuracy and completeness. Final content editing was completed jointly by Institute and NLC staff.

This report is intended to provide municipal leaders with resources for successful public engagement to support education reform. In each city chapter, specific strategies that could serve as models for other cities, as well as useful resources, have been highlighted in pull-outs and sidebars. The final chapter offers an annotated list of additional print and Web resources for municipal leaders on engaging the public to support children and youth.

Acknowledgments

The authors wish to thank the many individuals whose support and good ideas made possible the completion of *Engaging Cities*.

First, we want to recognize our colleagues at the Institute for Youth, Education, and Families (IYEF) of the National League of Cities. We greatly value our longstanding partnership with IYEF, which has enriched the work and thinking of the Annenberg Institute in countless ways.

Several colleagues from IYEF were instrumental in developing and shaping the case studies featured in this report. Executive director Clifford Johnson, program director for education and after-school initiatives Audrey Hutchinson, research associate Lucinda Dugger, and former senior program associates Rob Wexler and Jennifer Riccards helped develop the concept of "engaging cities," sought out the interest of cities, helped us select the featured cities, brokered connections with local advisors, and reviewed and provided guidance on drafts at all stages of the study.

We also thank the local education policy advisors and our other liaisons in the



featured cities – Maria Guajardo Lucero, executive director, and Maxine Quintana, director of student programs, of the Mayor’s Office for Education and Children in Denver; Laraine Duncan, deputy mayor for intergovernmental relations in Akron; Marc Hill, director of the Mayor’s Office of Children and Youth in Nashville; Diane Jacobus, senior advisor to the mayor in Long Beach; and Eric Zachary, coordinator of CC9 and a senior project director of the Community Involvement Program at New York University. These dedicated civic leaders made major contributions to the study by arranging interviews with mayors and with school and community leaders, helping with the logistics for site visits, arranging for photos, and reviewing several drafts of their city’s chapter.

We thank mayors John Hickenlooper of Denver, Don Plusquellic of Akron, Beverly O’Neill of Long Beach, and Bill Purcell of Nashville for taking time from their schedules to meet with the authors and share their cities’ successes and challenges in mobilizing support for public education. We also acknowledge the influence of New York City mayor Michael Bloomberg, who, while he did not have a direct role in this study, created the conditions for innovations like CC9 through his vision for public education and education reform. We thank the many municipal, educational, and community leaders we interviewed, who greatly added to the value of this report by generously sharing their knowledge and insights.

Finally, the authors wish to acknowledge our colleagues at the Annenberg Institute whose tireless and effective efforts helped bring this complex project to a successful conclusion: Susan Fisher, Margaret Balch-Gonzalez, Haewon Kim, and Mary Arkins,



Photos courtesy of Denver Public Schools and the Mayor’s Office for Education and Children, City and County of Denver (3)

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Mobilizing the **Denver** Community
around Latino Academic Achievement



■ *Convene leaders from a range of constituencies to tackle critical challenges together*

In December 2003, a group representing a coalition of Latino community organizations and activists in Denver met with Mayor John Hickenlooper to express concerns about the mayor's relationship with the Latino community. A few months after the meeting, the group issued a series of recommendations to the mayor, including a proposal that he convene a summit on Latino academic achievement.

A Community States Its Needs

The group did not have to push very hard to see that recommendation adopted. In fact, Mayor Hickenlooper had already been considering a similar proposal. A school

board member, the Reverend Lucia Guzman, executive director of the mayor's Agency for Human Rights and Community Relations (see sidebar), had spoken out about having the school district tackle the issue of Latino achievement. Guzman and Maria Guajardo Lucero, executive director of the Mayor's Office for Education and Children (see sidebar on page 9), had attended a two-day conference in Washington, D.C., on the issue. And both recognized that Mayor Hickenlooper's approach to municipal leadership was to bring together leaders from a range of communities to consider what they could do to tackle critical challenges. "We've tried not to be the ultimate problem solver, but to be a catalyst," Hickenlooper says.

Mayor John Hickenlooper gives high fives to Denver's Summer Scholars



Mayor's Agency for Human Rights and Community Relations

The Agency for Human Rights and Community Relations was established in 1948 by the City and County of Denver. The agency empowers communities to address local issues, strives to promote equal opportunity, and protects the rights of all regardless of race, color, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, or disability.

▲ Agency Web site:
www.denvergov.org/HumanRights/default.asp

■ *Follow up on productive discussions to make sure they lead to action steps*

Hickenlooper convened the Mayor's Summit on Latino Academic Achievement (see sidebar on page 13) on October 20, 2004. By all accounts, the meeting was a resounding success. Some three hundred people, including business leaders, elected officials, community activists, and educators, attended and addressed issues like teachers' roles, parent engagement, the role of language, preschool, and access to higher education. Many say they emerged from the meeting with a renewed commitment to act to improve Latino achievement in Denver.

But to Hickenlooper, the test of the meeting would be what came afterward. He pledged to hold a follow-up meeting 100 days after the summit to consider what happened in

the wake of the first meeting and what next steps participants might take. The second meeting drew an overflow crowd and led to new partnerships and pledges for action. The issue is now a high priority for the community. "This wasn't just something to have and walk away from," he says. "We wanted to have actionable results."

Strong Schools Mean Strong Neighborhoods

Hickenlooper was elected in June 2003 in his first try for public office. A successful entrepreneur, Hickenlooper had helped spark the revitalization of an aging section of Denver known as Lower Downtown, or LoDo, which is now one of the most



Mayor Hickenlooper attends a music class

■ *Look for strategic advantages and returns on taxpayer investment*

vibrant sections of the city. In many ways, Hickenlooper approaches municipal leadership like a businessman, seeking strategic advantage and ensuring that the taxpayers' investments reap returns.

During his campaign, Hickenlooper stressed often that a strong city depended on strong neighborhoods, which depended on strong schools. He pledged during the campaign to visit a Denver public school each week, a pledge he has, by and large, kept.

Despite the mayor's strong interest in education, he did not set out to take over or run the school system. "What I should be doing is working as hard as I can with the system. We have to help it achieve the best

results possible," he says. "I'm conscious there are other systems out there. But there are historical reasons why the system is the way it is. Things that look like mistakes to us have sound reasons behind them."

According to former Denver Public Schools superintendent Jerry Wartgow, Mayor Hickenlooper was his biggest cheerleader. "Denver is the envy of a lot of other cities," Wartgow said shortly before his retirement in 2005. "There is a great relationship between the mayor's office and the school district. I can't imagine it being better. It's not a matter of turf."

If anything, the relationship between the school system and the mayor grew even stronger after Wartgow's retirement, when

Mayor's Office for Education and Children

The Mayor's Office for Education and Children is committed to helping Denver children grow up with the strengths, knowledge, and skills necessary to become confident and successful residents. The focus is on the first two decades of life, from infancy to young adulthood. Established in 1995, the office advocates for the children, youth, and families of Denver and serves as the city's liaison to Denver Public Schools.

▲ Office home page:

www.denvergov.org/Education/default.asp

■ *Cultivate collaborative, supportive relationships with school district leaders*

■ *Use the power of the mayor's office to rally voters in support of funding for public education*

the school board selected Hickenlooper's chief of staff, Michael Bennet, as the next superintendent of schools. As an indication of Hickenlooper's support for the school system, the mayor, in fall 2005, campaigned hard for a ballot measure to raise property taxes by \$25 million to support a new compensation system for teachers (see sidebar). The measure passed, approved by 58 percent of voters.

"Denver Voters Pave Way for Incentive Pay"

This article in *Education Week* by Bess Keller (November 9, 2005) describes Denver voters' approval of a property-tax increase to finance a new compensation plan for Denver teachers – based on incentives, rather than seniority – that attracted national attention. The measure was designed by a district-union team and backed by the mayor, the city council, other business and civic leaders, and a campaign war chest of more than \$1 million, mostly from foundations and businesses.

- ▲ Article:
www.edweek.org/agentk-12/articles/2005/11/09/11denver.h25.html (limited access with free registration)
- ▲ More on Denver's teacher compensation system:
www.annenberginstitute.org/VUE/fall04/Jupp.html
- ▲ Excerpt from "Creating Faculties that Support School Communities," Brad Jupp, Teacher Coordinator, Denver Public Schools/Denver Classroom Teachers Association, *Voices in Urban Education* no. 5 (Fall 2004):
www.annenberginstitute.org/VUE/fall04/Jupp.html

What the Mayor Did

In his efforts on behalf of the schools, Hickenlooper has sought to focus on areas where the mayor's office can provide an advantage. "I try to look at ways to help the schools without stepping on toes," he says. One area of focus has been after-school programs. The mayor has worked with city agencies such as the Parks and Recreation Department to coordinate their maps of services with those of the tax assessor's office so that the city can determine whether low-income neighborhoods have access to after-school services.

In addition, the mayor has lined up private funds to pay "last dollar" college scholarships for students in one middle school who graduate from high school, and he is trying to raise funds to extend the program to all middle schools. He is also using city bonds to finance low-interest college loans for all Denver students. Students who sign up for the program will also have up to \$1,500 of the loan waived at the time of graduation.

Hickenlooper has also addressed early childhood education, a traditional focus of the Denver mayor's office (see sidebar on page 11). He has worked with cultural institutions to launch a campaign, the 5 By 5 Program, to encourage all young children to have at least five cultural experiences – visits to museums or the symphony – by the age of five. Hickenlooper also convened a summit on early childhood education in February 2004 – the model for the Latino summit. In addition to generating ideas for

■ *Focus on areas where the mayor's office can provide an advantage*

improvements in programs, the early childhood summit produced an immediate outcome: a local water company pledged to contribute ten cents to early childhood programs for every bottle of water sold.

Backed the Call for a Latino Summit

The Latino Summit addressed all levels of education, but it also represented Mayor Hickenlooper's approach of seeking solutions from across various sectors of the community.

To many Denver residents, the need for a focus on Latino academic achievement was obvious. Latinos make up the largest and

fastest-growing segment of the student population in the city and are among those with the greatest needs. Currently, 57 percent of the students in Denver Public Schools are Latino, up from 45 percent a decade ago. And Latinos are much more likely than other students to live in poverty and to have parents with less than a high school diploma.

Student-achievement data suggest that achievement gaps between White and Latino students are substantial and growing. White students are more likely than Latinos to receive satisfactory grades in high school, and much more likely to complete advanced



The Mayor's Early Childhood Initiatives

The 5 By 5 Program, sponsored by the Mayor's Office for Education and Children, aims to provide the city's children with five cultural experiences before they reach the age of five. This free program, made possible through in-kind and financial support from the city's cultural partners and corporate sponsors, is available to Denver Head Start families with children under the age of five. The program, building on Mayor Hickenlooper's "Invest in Success" early childhood education summit, strives to introduce arts, culture, and play to spark imagination and stimulate creativity and learning.

- ▲ 5 By 5 Program:
www.denvergov.org/dephome.asp?depid=1950
- ▲ Early childhood education summit press release:
www.denvergov.org/Mayor/1688press1218.asp

■ *Engage the community rather than impose solutions*

coursework. Only 29 percent of Latinos in the high school class of 2003 graduated from high school in four years, compared with 51 percent of White students.

Former superintendent Wartgow and others have noted that cultural and language issues make Latino education a special challenge. Some 15,000 students in Denver come from families where Spanish is the first language, and many are immigrants who are unaware of the services available to them. According to Wartgow,

If you look at the demographics of the district and analyze the gap in achievement, it's crystal clear there is no way the district can achieve its goals unless we focus on Latino students. The school populations have shifted, but it's not just a different color.

But the issues surrounding Latino education in Denver go well beyond the challenges of

improving schooling for English-language learners, notes Nita Gonzales, president and CEO of Escuela Tlatelolco (see sidebar), an independent, community-based school. "Don't use immigration as a scapegoat," she says. "They are not succeeding with fifth- and sixth-generation Chicanos. They don't even speak Spanish. Something is dramatically wrong when you are losing children who grew up here."

Because of these stark realities, the idea of a summit on Latino academic achievement sparked little opposition. However, Guajardo Lucero notes that a number of people suggested that the gathering could focus on improving achievement more generally, rather than just on Latinos. And some in the African American community asked when the city would hold a summit on African American achievement. The mayor insisted on the need for a summit focused on Latinos.

Engaged the Wider Community

In keeping with the mayor's approach of engaging the community rather than imposing solutions, Guajardo Lucero sought input on the summit from a broad range of individuals and organizations. She held coffees with some one hundred individuals to gather suggestions on the content and the format of the meeting, then convened a smaller group, made up largely of members of Denver's Latino community, to plan the meeting.

To her surprise, many more people wanted to take part in the event than they had originally planned on, so Guajardo Lucero

Escuela Tlatelolco

Escuela Tlatelolco is a community-based private school, developed in the late 1960s to provide an alternative education for young Chicanos, Mexicanos, and Raza Indigena, especially those who have not had success in traditional public school settings. The school aims to provide these students with academic proficiency and instill in them cultural pride, confidence, and leadership.

▲ Escuela Tlatelolco:
<http://escuelatlatelolco.org>

■ *Involve a wide range of people with different experiences and viewpoints*

asked some to serve as volunteers and others to contribute financially. In all, the group raised \$75,000 to stage the summit. “Once people got wind of it, there was a great interest,” Guajardo Lucero says.

To ensure that the meeting accomplished the goal of engaging the broader community, the planning group resisted pleas to focus the meeting solely on teachers’ or parents’ concerns. And they were strategic in extending invitations and assigning roles at the summit. For example, the group made sure to invite people from organizations that had focused on educational improvement, but not necessarily on Latino

achievement, and had them moderate sessions so that they would stay and attend to the discussion. “People from organizations that would not have mentioned Latino achievement sat up a little straighter,” she says. “It helped turn some people around.”

The process of gathering input and engaging people from a range of sectors of the community was cumbersome, but Mayor Hickenlooper is convinced it produced a better outcome. “It makes everyone’s work harder to have so many people involved,” says Hickenlooper. “But you end up with a final product that’s far superior to whatever a city agency could come up with by itself.”

Former mayor Federico Peña speaks at the Mayor’s Summit on Latino Achievement



Mayor’s Summit on Latino Academic Achievement

There is extensive documentation on the Web about the Mayor’s Summit on Latino Academic Achievement, including a message from Mayor Hickenlooper; the opening presentation by Kati Haycock, director of the Education Trust, about closing the achievement gap; the closing presentation by Federico Peña, calling the business community to action; demographic information; a summary of the issues; a student mural; a video of the summit; conference proceedings; and results from the attendee evaluations. Some three hundred business, civic, and educational leaders attended the summit.

- ▲ Summit Web site:
www.denvergov.org/latinosummit
- ▲ Federico Peña’s closing address:
www.denvergov.org/LatinoSummit/template316582.asp
- ▲ Kati Haycock’s keynote address:
www.denvergov.org/LatinoSummit/template316572.asp
- ▲ Report, “Today’s Latino Student: America’s Future Human Capital,” can be downloaded at:
www.denvergov.org/LatinoSummit/template316711.asp (click on Denver MayorSummit04.pdf), by Excelencia in Education (Web site: www.edexcelencia.org)

■ *Create a sense of urgency and educate citizens and businesses that they can make a difference*

Kept to Clear Goals

One key goal of the meeting was to broaden awareness of the challenges and possible solutions, Hickenlooper says.

A lot of what the mayor's office can do is keep communicating different aspects of the challenge. It becomes almost like an education issue in and of itself: a) creating a sense of urgency, and b) educating citizens and business that they can make a difference on something that's of great importance to them – their business's future, the city's future. With a lot of large issues, part of people's inaction is rooted in a sense of hopelessness – the belief that they're not going to be able to make a difference. That's obviously wrong.

To highlight the challenges, the Colorado Children's Campaign, an advocacy organization, prepared a report that presented the stark data on demographics and educational outcomes (see sidebar). The report was an eye-opener, according to Van Schoales, vice president for education initiatives and executive director of the Colorado Small Schools Initiative at the Colorado Children's Campaign. "I'm not sure most people knew the majority of kids in DPS are Latino, and I'm not sure most people knew that those kids are not succeeding or the magnitude of the problem," he says. "Just getting [the data] out there is a critically important first step."

Another goal of the Latino Summit was to help make sure all participants understood the importance to the city's future of



Colorado Children's Campaign

The Colorado Children's Campaign has worked since 1985 to mobilize individuals and organizations to think and act on behalf of children, with particular attention to the health, education, and safety of children most at risk.

- ▲ Colorado Children's Campaign:
www.coloradokids.org
- ▲ Colorado Small Schools Initiative:
www.coloradosmallschools.org
- ▲ Report: Denver's Latino Students: A Snapshot of Education and Opportunity, October 2004. Available for download at:
www.coloradosmallschools.org/resources/cssiresearch.html

■ *Keep the momentum going with follow-up conversations leading to concrete strategies*

solving the problem of Latino achievement. Here, former mayor Federico Peña played a key role. In a closing address, Peña, a former U.S. Secretary of Energy and Transportation and currently the managing director of Vestar Capital Partners, spoke directly to the business community about the challenge. “We are losing the global war to produce the smartest and most creative workforce in this century,” Peña said. “We must act now, and we must especially focus on Latino students.”

A third goal of the meeting was to highlight successes and show that the problem could be solved. In a keynote address, Kati Haycock, director of The Education Trust (see sidebar on page 16), provided data on schools and districts from around the country where Latino children achieve at high levels. The conference showcased some local examples of schools that had succeeded with Latino children, and students themselves played key roles as presenters. (For links to the addresses by Federico Peña and Kati Haycock, see the sidebar on the Mayor’s Summit on Latino Academic Achievement on page 13.)

“You don’t have to reinvent the wheel,” says Antonio Esquibel, the retired director of Rocky Mountain SER (Service, Employment, Redevelopment) Head Start. “Part of it is convincing people that if you address Latino education in a certain way, you can be successful.”

Kept the Momentum Going

The summit produced some immediate results. Darlene LeDoux, principal of North High School, was so impressed by Haycock’s presentation that she went to Washington, D.C., a few weeks after the summit to attend The Education Trust’s annual conference. She then arranged for two staff members from the Trust to visit her school and speak with members of the faculty. “We were in the middle of reform already at North,” says LeDoux. “Haycock’s presentation reinforced our thinking.” North has now contracted with The Education Trust to help with their reforms, and staff members attended the organization’s 2005 annual meeting.



A student speaks at the Mayor’s Summit on Latino Achievement, with the Summit mural “En Transición” in the background

■ *Keep action steps high on everyone's agenda*

Elsewhere, there was considerable enthusiasm for keeping the momentum of the summit alive. As promised, the mayor held a second meeting in February to take stock of plans 100 days after the summit. Initially, officials expected a relatively small group, who would meet for two hours and come out with an action plan. But more than two hundred people attended the follow-up meeting – more than the hall could accommodate – and the organizers extended the agenda to four hours. The participants heard from a reporter who had been spending the year at North High School, a leader of a community activist group, Superintendent Wartgow, and the head of the Colorado Commission on Higher Education, and then worked in small groups to plan strategies.

Out of these and subsequent conversations, some concrete strategies emerged. For example, the city contracted with the BUENO Center for Multicultural Education at the University of Colorado at Boulder (see sidebar) to prepare briefing papers on ways to support English-language

learners in early childhood education and to train Head Start staff to meet the needs of English-language learners. More than half of all children in Head Start in Denver speak a language other than English at home; the vast majority of these children speak Spanish.

Mayor Hickenlooper and his staff have also kept the issue of Latino achievement high on the agenda in the Denver public schools. In his weekly school visits, the mayor asks principals what they are doing to support Latino students. And the planning group for the summit has briefed the DPS curriculum department and the new chief academic officer on issues around Latino achievement.

The Road Ahead: Old Divisions, New Players

Over the longer term, city leaders hope that the connections among the broader community represented at the summit can galvanize improvements in achievement for Latino children. To be sure, the one-day

The Education Trust

The Education Trust works for the high academic achievement of all students at all levels, pre-kindergarten through college, and forever closing the achievement gaps that separate low-income students and students of color from other youth. Its basic tenet is that all children will *learn* at high levels when they are *taught* to high levels.

▲ The Education Trust home page:
www2.edtrust.org/edtrust

▲ The Education Trust Annual Conference:
www2.edtrust.org/edtrust/Conferences+and+Meetings

BUENO Center for Multicultural Education

The BUENO Center for Multicultural Education is an integral part of the School of Education at the University of Colorado at Boulder. Through a comprehensive range of research, training, and service projects, the center strongly promotes quality education with an emphasis on cultural pluralism. The center is deeply committed to facilitating equal educational opportunities for cultural and language minority students.

▲ BUENO Web site:
www.colorado.edu/education/BUENO

meeting and the follow-up did not magically create a citywide coalition for educational improvement. As several participants noted, some divisions remain, even within the Latino community, where Chicanos and recent immigrants do not always see eye to eye. But the summit provided a rare opportunity for the various sectors to meet and consider the issues, notes Gully Stanford, precollegiate program coordinator for the Colorado Commission on Higher Education. “The willingness of the city to do this means that we can all [work together] in an atmosphere of exploration rather than blame,” he says. “In the past, the only venues were confrontational.”

Indeed, the summit brought new players to the table. Although Denver has a long history of Latino activism in education – in the late 1960s, thousands of Latino students walked out of school after a racial incident – Mayor Hickenlooper and the summit made sure the activists were heard, says Esquibel, the retired Head Start director. “In the past, we would sit in or protest just to cosponsor an event,” he says. “Here, they said, ‘What can we do? Give us ideas.’”

Likewise, the business community and higher-education institutions, spurred by the leadership of figures such as former mayor Peña and their participation at the summit, have indicated that they are ready to undertake more comprehensive efforts to improve education in Denver. “I do believe business is beginning to play a more important role, beyond individual initiatives,” says Linda Alvarado, the president of a local construction company. “As business leaders,” she adds, “it is our job to be aware of trends. There are more than 50 percent Latinos in the Denver public schools. This is our workforce.”



A City-School Board Partnership to
Rebuild the Akron Public Schools



■ *Support public schools as part of a vision for civic vitality*

In his eighteen years as mayor of Akron, Don Plusquellic has been a force for community and economic development; his support for local public schools was a natural extension of his long-term vision for civic vitality. In his view, if we are serious about creating new and better opportunities for our young people as they take on new workforce and citizenship roles, there is no responsible alternative but to get behind efforts to improve the schools.

“The loss of the rubber industry in the 1970s could easily have turned Akron into a

ghost town,” says Laraine Duncan, Akron’s deputy mayor for intergovernmental relations. Instead, today’s vibrant downtown area is anchored by a minor-league ballpark, new shops and restaurants, and office buildings with high occupancy rates. The new economic solutions developed by

Mayor Plusquellic’s administration have branded Akron as a city conducive to business incubation. Seeing a clear link between the long-term economic viability and quality of life in Akron and high-quality schools, Plusquellic believed that the future of the city’s economic revival depended on the system’s capacity to prepare its young people for higher education or the workforce.

An Opportunity Lost

In 1997, the Ohio General Assembly created the Ohio School Facilities Commission

(see sidebar) to address the widespread problem – especially acute in urban centers – of decaying school buildings in Ohio. In signing the bill into law, Governor Bob Taft said, “We are building shining new sports stadiums across our state. Surely, we can afford to provide decent, safe places for our children to learn the skills and knowledge that they need to succeed in life.”

Ohio School Facilities Commission

The Ohio School Facilities Commission provides funding, management oversight, and technical assistance to local school districts for construction and renovation of school facilities to provide an appropriate learning environment for Ohio’s schoolchildren.

www.osfc.state.oh.us



Breaking ground for the Helen Arnold CLC/Urban League construction project are Akron Urban League president Bernett Williams (left); school superintendent Sylvester Small; Helen Arnold’s daughter Cathy Lee; Mayor Don Plusquellic; children who will attend the new school; and city council president Marco Sommerville

■ *Look for ways to take advantage of state matching funds*



Mayor Plusquellic addresses the gathering at the groundbreaking ceremony

Summit County Sales Tax Referendum 2002

Summit Education Initiative: Issue 12 was a proposal for a one-half-percent sales tax that would have been distributed by a community improvement board to provide additional revenue for permanent improvements for school districts. The countywide measure failed to pass.

▲ Election Report 2002, Greater Cleveland Growth Association/Council of Smaller Enterprises, can be downloaded at:

http://intranet.cose.org/pdf/election_report_2002.pdf

The commission was charged with administering a capital fund of \$2.3 billion to improve school facilities throughout Ohio. About \$1.0 billion would be provided by the state, much of it from the state's tobacco-settlement fund. School districts would have to raise local matching revenues of between 40 and 60 percent of the state grant, depending on local capacity to pay. Akron stood to gain \$800 million over fifteen years.

Like most municipalities, Akron needed voter approval for a tax increase in order to qualify for its share of the capital fund. The city failed in its first attempt, a countywide sales tax referendum in November 2002. Laraine Duncan recalls,

The measure went down in flames countywide, although it passed in the city easily. There was a lot of resentment in other parts of the county that Akron would get the most revenue from the increase and would have the largest contingent on the monitoring board. The attitude was, Akron would be telling us how to spend our money. That wasn't the issue at all. Sadly, school districts outside of Akron didn't see the benefit to their bottom lines, and county residents rejected the idea that they should participate in helping the Akron Public Schools.

Mayor Plusquellic had worked tirelessly on the sales tax campaign and took the loss very hard. The night of the election, an emotional Plusquellic concluded his remarks by saying, "Hopefully, we're laying the foundation for people coming together. Thank you all – and we're not done yet!"

The mayor was as good as his word. Within six months, the city had rebounded from

■ *Keep acting on important issues even in the face of setbacks*

that loss to capture the needed local revenues through voter approval of a new tax measure, Issue 10 (see sidebar). The school board, the city council, and a coalition of community organizations, united under the leadership of the popular mayor, marshaled the political will needed to make it happen.

What the Mayor Did

It was almost as though Plusquellic drew energy from his initial failure to raise the local revenues for the building plan. “Don cared so deeply about this issue that he was not going to leave a stone unturned to find a way to raise matching funds,” says Donna Loomis, Akron’s former deputy superintendent, who was the school district’s point person on Issue 10. “This was an opportunity you don’t want to blow. If the state offers you that much money, you don’t pass it up. In the face of the sales tax defeat, the mayor was trying to be creative and thoughtful and benefit everybody in the best way.”

Championed a Successful Campaign for School Funding

In his determination not to lose the opportunity for state funding, the mayor sought legal advice on other ways to raise local revenues after the sales tax measure failed.

Issue 10

Mayor Plusquellic, Superintendent Sylvester Small, and community leaders launched an all-out effort in March 2003 to pass Issue 10, a proposed one-quarter-of-one-percent increase in the Akron city income tax with the goal of generating the matching funds needed to secure \$409 million from the state of Ohio to rebuild and renovate every school in Akron – without raising property taxes.

- ▲ “Issue 10 Kick Off,” City of Akron News Release, March 31, 2003:
www.ci.akron.oh.us/News_Releases/2003/0331.html
- ▲ Duncan, Laraine, and Donna Loomis. 2005. “Funding and Rebuilding Schools as Community Learning Centers: Akron, Ohio,” *Voices in Urban Education*, no. 7 (Spring). Available on the Web at:
www.annenberginstitute.org/VUE/Spring05/Duncan.html

Laraine Duncan describes the mayor’s tenacity and resourcefulness in finding a solution to the challenge:

Our mayor is not a person who surrenders easily, and he certainly didn’t want to give up \$800 million over fifteen years. With the help of our own law department and outside counsel, he was able to find a provision in the Ohio Revised Code that allows a municipality

■ *Explore all options, using expert advice*

■ *Appeal to a broad range of community needs*

to use income tax revenue to construct or improve “community learning centers.” We wrote a ballot measure, had it looked at by attorneys; it passed muster, and we put it before the voters.

Voters went to the polls in May 2003 to consider a measure that would raise the city income tax from 2 percent to 2.25 percent to fund a fifteen-year plan to rebuild and remodel schools and convert them into community learning centers. The advantage of the income tax approach over the county sales tax was that, while it was voted on only by Akron residents, it would be levied on any individual who worked in Akron, although it would not be assessed against pension income, Social Security income, or investment income. The measure was approved by 64 percent of the voters.

21st Century Community Learning Centers

The 21st Century Community Learning Center program, a key component of President Bush’s No Child Left Behind Act, is an opportunity for students and their families to continue to learn new skills and discover new abilities after the school day has ended. The program provides expanded academic enrichment opportunities for children attending low-performing schools, as well as youth-development activities such as drug and violence prevention programs; technology education programs; art, music, and recreation programs; counseling; and character education to enhance the academic component of the program.

▲ U.S. Department of Education 21st CCLC Web site:
www.ed.gov/programs/21stcclc/index.html

Cheri Cunningham, assistant director of law for the City of Akron and a key player on Issue 10, underscores the importance of the mayor’s resolve to the success of the measure. But as former deputy superintendent Loomis observes, “It wasn’t just the mayor who poured himself into this campaign. Every councilperson worked on Issue 10, as did community leaders.” Wards 3 and 4, home to many of Akron’s African American residents, had been steady supporters of the mayor over the years. Ministers and community organizations lent their support for Issue 10 and helped with voter turnout in those parts of the city.

Envisioned a Broader Role in the Community for Schools

Deputy Mayor Duncan stresses the importance to the community of using the community learning centers (CLCs) for a wide range of activities outside of school.

One of the keys to the [successful] campaign is that we emphasized that these new or renovated buildings would truly function as community learning centers. As such, they will be open to the public at all times, including summer months. If a group wants to use the auditorium, they can. During the day, they will be learning centers. We want to keep kids safe; the people want facilities in their neighborhoods. There will be dedicated space for city employees in every CLC. This will serve as a hub for city services such as parks and recreation, health, and social services.

■ *Develop new kinds of community partnerships to support schools*

The CLC project builds on Akron's long history of community involvement in the schools. The school district has a federal 21st Century Community Learning Center (see sidebar on page 22) grant that includes a substantial tutoring component, partially paid for by the city, serving about a thousand kids. Duncan comments, "The city has quite a few after-hours programs in the Akron schools, including an after-school program that uses certified teachers to help ensure the program is aligned with learning standards. We offer myriad enrichment programs ranging from city recreation to chess club, theater arts, cooking, and sewing."

The transformation of all the city's schools to community learning centers opened the door for new types of partnerships, says former deputy superintendent Loomis. "We're seeing a number of other nonprofit organizations stepping up looking for ways to partner." Loomis says that other civic leaders in Akron are reaching a similar conclusion. "It's not financially sustainable to try to do this alone. We have to do a better job of combining our community networks and resources." One such partnership has led to the recent groundbreaking for facilities to be shared by the Helen Arnold CLC and the Akron Urban League (see photos).

Mayor Plusquellic and other civic leaders speak at the groundbreaking ceremony; behind the podium are banners representing major partners for the Helen Arnold project: Akron Public Schools, the City of Akron, the Akron Urban League



A School-Construction Partnership

Akron's school district, city government, and community organizations have joined together to rebuild the city's schools in a new type of partnership called Imagine Akron Community Learning Centers. The partnership's Web site has information about the partners and their roles, along with plans and progress reports for each CLC construction project, photos, and the text of the joint use agreement governing the project.

www.imagineakronschools.com

A Community Partnership to Rebuild Schools

Transforming Akron's entire system of fifty-seven schools to community learning centers is a more expensive and complex endeavor than previous attempts at city-school system partnerships. As Akron moves deeper into implementation, the realities of partnership are becoming apparent.

The governing mechanism for the new school-building partnership in Akron is a body called the Joint Board of Review (JBR), whose members represent the city government and the school district. The work of the board is governed by a joint use agreement, which provides a basic legal framework for the partnership.

While the JBR was able to hit the ground running because many of its members had worked together on the income tax

campaign, the group is finding that, like all collaborations, their joint efforts require a great deal of work. (See sidebar for more about the partnership and joint use agreement.)

The city's plan to transform all its existing schools into community learning centers – Imagine Akron Community Learning Centers – is an aggressive, fifteen-year plan to remodel or rebuild Akron's public school buildings. With joint funding from the state and local community, more than \$800 million is available for this program – the largest construction opportunity in the history of Akron. Four boards will oversee Imagine Akron: the Joint Board of Review, the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise and Workforce Development Advisory Committee, the Citizens Monitoring Committee, and the Community Learning Center Advisory Board.

David James, the school system's director of business affairs and a representative to the JBR, characterizes the new city-school partnership as “a bit of a shotgun marriage. We've been brought together through the good fortune of new resources, and now the hard work begins – for example, reaching agreement on which decisions are the purview of the JBR versus those that the city or the school board are free to make on their own.”

- *Commit to a close working relationship between the city and the school district*

■ *Respect fiduciary obligations to taxpayers*

The District: Forging a Strong Relationship with the City

Some tensions have already risen to the surface. For example, according to Superintendent Sylvester Small, Plusquellic was “furious” that the school board decided on a name for an existing school that is being rebuilt, a decision the mayor thought was the JBR’s to make. But Small and others suggest that the goodwill that was developed during the campaign for Issue 10 will enable all the parties to work through such differences and make the working relationship a smooth one.

“One of the stories from Issue 10 is how the school district and the city worked together on that campaign; everybody was in the same place from the start,” says Donna Loomis. “We had some good times together, and some tough times as well. That’s been healthy. We got to know every-

body. Our working relationship filtered into the joint use agreement. Yes, we had disagreements and discrepancies, but we worked together to resolve those.”

Another factor that will contribute to smoothing out the working relationship, Loomis says, is the commitment all parties feel toward the project. “One of our early breakthroughs was when we realized that it’s not the city’s money or the school system’s – it’s the *community’s* money.” And, Loomis adds, “we’re really trying to get beyond the ‘we/they’ stuff. This is really about new opportunities for our kids and our community.”

Superintendent Small agrees. “I’ve always felt that what will make or break the partnership is the quality of relationships between our organizations – and that starts at the top with the mayor and me. We both have strong opinions and sometimes differ on how the program should be run. But you can weather these storms if you have strong relationships to fall back on. We’re struggling through uncharted territory, but we’ll get there.”

The School Board: Pressures of Obligations and Responsibilities

For their part, members of the school board say that they share the goal of improving the buildings and the city, but they want to be sure that they protect their obligations to



Superintendent Sylvester Small challenges attendees at the groundbreaking to return when the building is complete and become active in the lives of the children who will attend the school

■ *Commit to a strong, active role for the community*

taxpayers. Linda Omobien, a board member who served as president during the Issue 10 campaign, says, “I know that some have been critical of the board for appearing overly controlling, but one has to understand that we have a fiduciary responsibility to protect the assets of the school system. It’s one of the reasons that we were very specific about how long we are willing to cede control of the school buildings to the city.”

Joann Robb, the school district’s now-retired director of grants and strategic planning, who helped lead the Issue 10 campaign, adds that, despite the strong support for the plan, educators might be

reluctant to share their facilities. Similar concerns have doomed community-school efforts in the past in Akron, she notes.

We know we’ll be relying on young, relatively inexperienced individuals making six dollars an hour to run or help supervise some of the after-school activities in schools. We know that teachers and principals will not be happy to walk into a gym the morning after [a community meeting] and find equipment out of place. We will have to deal with the ‘Whose space is this?’ problem that has long been a thorn for the community-schools movement. We’ll also have to address that strong culture in schools that makes some outsider providers feel like second-class citizens.

The Community: The Right Kind of Involvement

In addition to building a partnership with the district and school board to determine control and use of the new facilities, city and school leaders have also had to work through their relationships with the beneficiaries of the revenue – the community organizations that will use the new community learning centers. To ensure that the new and refurbished buildings serve as community learning centers in fact and not just in name, the partnership made a commitment that community residents will have a strong, active say in their design.

To enforce that commitment, the joint use agreement stipulates that a Community Learning Center Advisory Committee shall



Renderings of the Helen Arnold CLC and Akron Urban League, which will share the facilities, making the building a center for the entire community to enjoy

Photos courtesy of Akron Public Schools (5)

■ *Acknowledge real constraints and keep community expectations realistic*

be appointed to “review documents and provide advice and recommendations to the City and the Board of Education” (see the sidebar on the school-construction partnership on page 24). And there is also an understanding that community residents will have a say in the ultimate use and design of the centers. Recognizing that it is the community’s money, the partnership is asking, “What role should the community have in determining how the money is spent?”

Akron leaders have struggled with how communities should participate in the design process, how extensive that role should be, and how it could be sustained. Deputy Mayor Duncan concedes that many mistakes were made in the initial attempt to engage the community in the design of CLCs. During phase one design work, involving the first eight schools, she notes, “we hired a consulting firm that unintentionally created the impression that residents would have free rein in building design. We virtually invited residents to begin the design process from a blank slate. And the result was predictable: Every community wanted a learning center with a swimming pool and a pitched roof.”

The city changed course for phase two of the design process. While the new design process provides for a strong and continuous role for community residents, it is bounded by the amount and type of costs the state permits. Leo Jennings, vice

president of Burges and Burges, an Ohio consulting firm that had worked with Akron city officials on earlier political campaigns, won the contract to coordinate phase two of the community engagement work. Jennings says,

We’ve put together a three-part planning process that starts with an assessment of community needs and assets from the point of view of key leaders in the community – school principals, heads of provider organizations, the churches, local businesses, local elected officials, et cetera. That will help us identify six to ten programming options for the community learning centers – after-school and continuing education programs, health and social services, recreation, et cetera. Then we’ll hold open forums where community residents and parents can help us determine which

Community Meetings on School Building Design

Citizen involvement was crucial to the process of converting Akron’s public schools into Community Learning Centers.

▲ “Schools, City poised to take next step in shaping Akron’s future; Planning Teams will help define, design, and build first wave of Community Learning Centers,” City of Akron News Release, December 5, 2003:

www.ci.akron.oh.us/News_Releases/2003/1205b.html

■ *Help business and unions to envision the positive economic impact of school construction*

of the options to pursue. Once we have community consensus, we can take that to the architects, who will make sure the building can accommodate that specific array of programs.

When asked what will make this fly, Jennings returns to the importance of programming. “What’s essential is that we get beyond the use of these buildings only for the obvious and traditional – for example, the evening basketball and rec leagues. The city really has to push for using the centers as community hubs that, if well designed and administered, can improve life chances for young people. There also needs to be an ongoing role for community governance of center programming and outreach.”

Yet, despite the improvements in the process of working with community groups, Duncan warns that the city and schools face a challenge because enrollment projections – on which state funding is based – show declines, and Akron may not be able to build as many facilities as residents had hoped during the campaign for Issue 10. “It’s going to be hard for residents to accept this,” she says. “Our Issue 10 campaign message promised that we’d all have all new schools.” But “some people are not going to have a school in their neighborhood. Since the state is paying 59 percent of the funds, we’re going to have to live with fewer schools.”

The Economic Impact

A critical selling point during the campaign for Issue 10 was the impact that an \$800-million infusion of construction funds – the largest capital expenditure program in the city’s history – would have on Akron’s economy. Issue 10 was pitched as good for kids, good for workers, good for business, and a potential source of new job opportunities, especially for young people trying to enter a building trade. For this reason, business and the unions were strong backers of the measure. The superintendent, the mayor, and the president of the city council worked to ensure that Issue 10 would create as many local jobs as possible.

Community politics played a role in this, as well. In Wards 3 and 4, the focus of African American community life, residents have been steady supporters of Plusquellic over the years, and they turned out in big numbers to support Issue 10. Local leaders expected that passage would translate into new opportunities for residents, in addition to new buildings for the community.

Before the campaign, the city had meetings with trade unions and minority-owned firms and started a \$400,000 “capacity-building” program to try to level the playing field for minority-owned firms and help them win subcontracts on the construction projects. “We held career fairs with the Urban League,” Duncan says. “We’re doing everything we can to funnel people in that

■ *Use school improvement to help rebuild neighborhoods*

direction, to get them onto a job site and get training. We hope these are lifelong jobs.”

According to Duncan, the city looks at the CLCs as a significant part of an economic development strategy.

We’re going to rebuild neighborhoods. For example, one school will be moved across the street and connected to a city recreation center. We want to create a “learning corridor” anchored by a new branch library at the opposite end. On the site vacated by the old school, we can build thirty to forty houses. We’ve had a very successful partnership with the Home Builders Association throughout the city. Typically, these new homes sell quickly. People will live in the city when we build houses at a reasonable price. We have a good track record.

Vision for the Future

When asked how he will judge the success of the CLC initiative five years out, Superintendent Small offers these thoughts: “First, I want the learning centers to be fully utilized from morning until night for programs that address the community’s priorities and local assets. Second, I will look for community pride and ownership of that building, so that not only parents of students, but other members of the community are taking full advantage of what they have to offer. And, finally, I want the narrow concept of ‘school’ to disappear altogether; these should be ‘centers’ of community life in every sense of the word.”

The mayor concurs with the superintendent’s vision for the community learning centers, adding,

As the mayor of an urban city, I can’t think of anything more critical to the future of our community than giving our children an excellent education and preparing them for the fast-paced new global economy. But, in a district such as Akron, where only about 20 percent of the residents have school-aged children, I recognize that many people feel disconnected from the local school district and what goes on in those buildings. I am optimistic that people generally do the right thing when they are given accurate information. I am hopeful that, by opening the doors to the public and inviting them in, there will be a sense that we must all take responsibility for educating our children.

Once they begin using the CLCs, they will feel more ownership of the facilities, and they may begin to see great value in participating in the education process by mentoring, tutoring, or reading to children. Finally, the public may begin to understand what it takes financially to educate our children, which could make the school levy process more successful.

A "Seamless" Education System within the
Long Beach City Limits



■ *Build support for schools by engaging business leaders and other community partners*

Mayor Beverly O'Neill of Long Beach, California, likes to show visitors a picture she displays in her crowded office. Entitled "Hands Up for Education," the photograph depicts the mayor, along with Carl Cohn, superintendent of the Long Beach Unified School District; Jan Kehoe, then president of Long Beach City College; Robert Maxson, president of California State University at Long Beach; and a class of elementary pupils all raising their hands, during a school visit by former U.S. Secretary of Education Richard Riley.

Carl Cohn (left), Jan Kehoe, Mayor Beverly O'Neill, Robert Maxson, and students give a "hands up for education" during a visit by former U. S. Secretary of Education Richard Riley



To O'Neill, the photograph is a perfect illustration of what leaders in Long Beach have been trying to achieve over the past decade: a system in which all levels of education and the city government work together on behalf of the city's children. Their goal has been to create a "seamless" education system where it is possible to get a top-notch education from kindergarten through a master's degree, all within the city limits.

A Concerted Effort Pays Off

To Mayor O'Neill, education is a critical element in urban revitalization. "Mayors have become more and more involved in education because they realize that if there are not good schools in the city, new businesses will not locate there," she says. "One of the first questions people ask, whether buying a house or bringing in a business, is about the quality of schools. If they aren't succeeding, mayors are concerned." Mayor O'Neill and Long Beach's education leaders have made concerted efforts to engage the community and build public support for the schools. By bringing members of the business community and others into schools and being responsive to community concerns, the mayor and the education leaders have also sought to integrate the education system with the community.

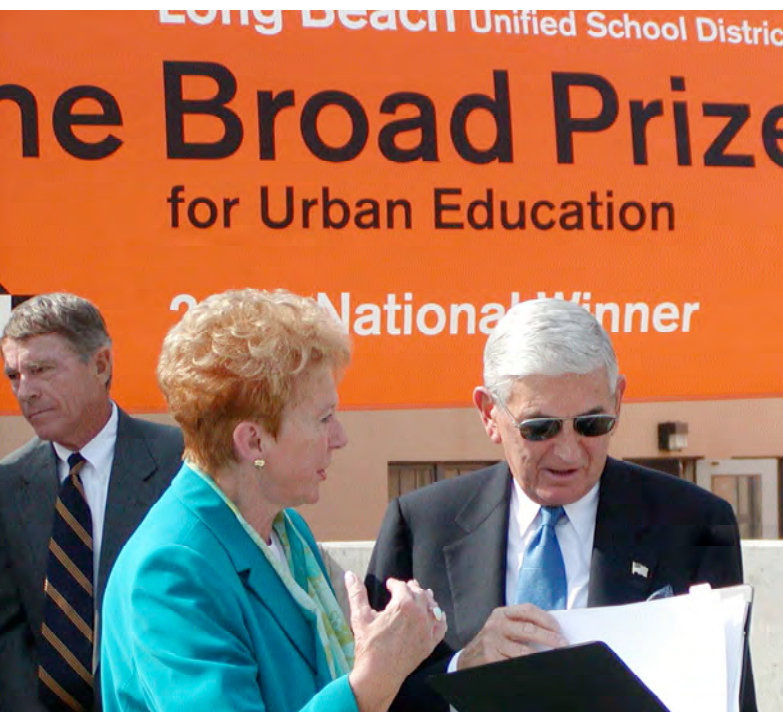
■ *Recognize and support the role of public education in urban revitalization*

Their efforts have produced impressive results. The public has shown its support for schools by approving a substantial bond issue for capital improvements. Data show that student achievement in elementary and secondary schools has improved and that more students are graduating from high school, getting a good preparation for higher education, and succeeding at community college and the university. And, in recognition of their efforts, the Long Beach Unified School District (LBUSD) was named the 2003–2004 winner of the Broad Prize for Urban Education, given to a district that has made exemplary progress in raising achievement and closing achievement gaps (see sidebar).

“There is a seamless education flow we were trying for when we started,” says O’Neill, an educator who was formerly the president of Long Beach City College. “We really did make a difference.”

Creating a Common Mission

While the partnership among the education institutions and the city has won national accolades, Long Beach’s reputation was far different when the collaboration began in the early 1990s. At that time, the Navy had closed its shipyard and a major employer, McDonnell Douglas, was laying off hundreds of workers. Tourism, always a mainstay in the oceanside community, was down, and gang violence devastated many



Long Beach Unified School District: 2003–2004 Winner, Broad Prize for Urban Education

The Broad Prize for Urban Education is a \$1 million prize awarded annually to the best urban school districts in the nation that make the greatest improvement in student achievement while reducing achievement gaps among ethnic groups and between high- and low-income students. Five urban school districts are selected as finalists each year. The winning district receives \$500,000 in scholarships for graduating seniors, and each finalist district receives \$125,000 in scholarships.

- ▲ More about the Broad Prize:
www.broadfoundation.org/flagship/prize2.shtml
- ▲ LBUSD. n.d. “Did You Know?” Long Beach Unified School District Web site:
www.lbusd.k12.ca.us/district/didyouknow.asp

Mayor O’Neill speaks with Eli Broad at the award ceremony for the Broad Prize for Urban Education, 2003–2004

■ *Convene district, higher-education, and business stakeholders in a structured partnership to support a “seamless” education system*

neighborhoods. The city also experienced the riots that erupted in 1992 after Los Angeles police officers were acquitted of charges of beating motorist Rodney King.

In the wake of these troubling signs, then-mayor Ernie Kell formed a task force to address education, economic development, and public safety. He asked George Murchison, a local businessman, to bring the leaders of the public educational institutions together.

At Murchison’s urging, the education leaders met informally for breakfast, and then Murchison organized a retreat in 1994, where twenty-seven superintendents, presidents, vice presidents, and deans met for two days to plan a partnership. The meeting was considered so critical that Murchison arranged for a helicopter to fly Karl Anatol, then the acting president of California State University at Long Beach, from the airport to the retreat site, so that he would not miss the gathering.

Participants say the meeting began with the finger-pointing that often characterizes discussions between schools and higher-education institutions. “We said, ‘*You* send us better teachers’ and they said, ‘*You* send us better students,’” recalls Christopher J. Steinhauser, now the superintendent of LBUSD. Very quickly, however, their attitudes changed, and participants agreed to work together toward the common mission of improving education in Long Beach.

It helped that many of the participants knew one another and the city, Steinhauser adds. “Many of us in the room, including myself, were products of the community,” he says. “We had seen the glory days and seen it become almost like a ghost town.”

The participants agreed to create a formal partnership with the aim of creating a “seamless education system” and named Judy Seal, a Long Beach native who had attended and worked at all three institutions, to direct the partnership, with her salary paid by the three entities. Local businesses, such as Boeing, also contribute to the partnership (see sidebar).

Long Beach Education Partnership

The Long Beach Education Partnership began in 1994 when the leaders of the city’s three largest educational institutions met to discuss how they could protect the education of young people in Long Beach’s worsening economic environment. The partners work together to increase achievement for all pre-kindergarten through graduate school students in a large, highly diverse, multilingual urban area. The partnership seeks to solve problems ranging from day-to-day operational barriers to complex intellectual issues such as shaping the major redesign of the undergraduate preparation of elementary teachers. The leadership demonstrates a systems approach to the partnership that promotes flexibility and an ability to expand to encompass new problems and activities.

▲ More about the partnership:
www.ced.csulb.edu/about/partnerships.cfm

What the Partnership Did

The major work of the partnership has been to ensure a smooth transition for students between high school and college and between community college and the university. At the time of the partnership's inception, these transitions were rocky, recalls Mary Stanton, the president of the Long Beach school board. "I remember a parent called me," she says. "Her daughter passed all her classes, but failed the English entrance exam to Cal State. They were testing what we weren't teaching."

Aligned the K–16 Curriculum

The institutions were able to change that by getting faculty members from all three levels to sit down together and go over the content of their courses, course by course. In that way, they could make sure that students who passed at one level were prepared for the next level. "There are no secret formulas here," says Robert C. Maxson, president of Cal State–Long Beach. "It's done face-to-face by the faculty. Public school English teachers, English professors from

the community college, and English professors from the university get in a room. They look at the content and make sure it is seamless."

The institutions also sought to eliminate duplication by making it easy for students to take appropriate coursework at any level of schooling. Now, for example, a high school student who has completed college-level coursework can earn credit at the community college or Cal State after passing an examination. City College students can do the same.

Prepared Teachers for Urban Classrooms

The partnership also focused on teacher education. At the initial retreat, teachers and administrators from the school district sharply criticized Cal State for its teacher-preparation program, which they said did not prepare teachers adequately for the city schools, notes Stanton. "They were out there by themselves," she says of the university. "They wouldn't send student teachers to Long Beach; they sent them to Orange



Former U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige praises Seamless Education Partnerships as Mayor O'Neill, Cal State–Long Beach president Robert Maxson, and Cal State chancellor Charles Reed look on

California State Teacher-Education Program

The Department of Teacher Education offers a teacher preparation (credential) program for those desiring to become elementary teachers (K–8), course work for those preparing to be secondary (high school) teachers or special education teachers, and graduate-level course work leading to master's degrees, advanced credentials, and certificates.

▲ More about the program:

www.ced.csulb.edu/teacher-ed/index.cfm

■ *Make sure programs prepare teachers for urban schools*

County. When teachers came here to get a job, they didn't know what they were doing."

Maxson points out that many communities in Orange County are urban as well, but he says the university has rededicated itself to preparing teachers for where the jobs are: in the city of Long Beach. And the partnership, in 1998, retooled the Cal State teacher-education program to help ensure that teachers were well prepared when they started their careers (see sidebar on page 34).

The goal of the redesign effort was to integrate pedagogical skills and content knowledge, and teachers from the district played a key role. Teachers served on the steering committee and worked closely with university educators to design courses. The teachers were particularly important in keeping the district standards for student performance front and center, so that prospective teachers would know what students would be expected to know and be able to do.

The resulting program is so strong, Maxson notes, that it comes with a warranty: if a teacher, supervisor, or principal believes that a Cal State graduate is not adequately prepared, the university will provide additional instruction or send a supervisor to work directly with the teacher on site. Over the past five years, only three teachers have requested additional assistance. "Most people will only give a warranty on a thing that is going to work," he says. "We were so confident [in our program], we put this out."

Involved the Community

The city, the district, and the university collaborated on a novel plan to share an unused hundred-acre property that the Navy was willing to sell for one dollar. "We needed a high school; homeless veterans wanted a center; and Cal State needed a research center," says Steinhauser. "We all worked together. There wasn't too much controversy."

In addition, the three educational institutions cooperated on a grant-funded program to prepare teachers for city schools. Under the program, known as CityTEACH, City College identifies students who are interested in teaching in Long Beach schools (see sidebar). If they are successful in introductory courses, they are guaranteed admission into Cal State's teacher-education program. If successful in that program, they are then

CityTEACH at Long Beach City College

CityTEACH is a comprehensive academic and experiential teacher-preparation program for students who plan to become elementary school teachers. Students who successfully complete the CityTEACH program are eligible for priority transfer into the teacher-preparation programs at Cal State–Long Beach and Cal State–Dominguez Hills.

▲ CityTEACH Web site:
<http://cityteach.lbcc.edu>

■ *Be responsive to community concerns*

guaranteed a job in LBUSD. Some 450 students have participated in the program.

Hundreds of city college and university students have also volunteered to tutor in Long Beach schools as part of their commitment to service learning. “Our students on this campus have donated two hundred thousand hours of volunteer work, much of it in schools,” says Maxson.

O’Neill and the other leaders have also reached out to the community to volunteer in schools. The partnership sponsors a

“principal for a day” program, in which community residents spend a day shadowing a school principal. By seeing what is actually happening in the schools, some negative impressions get wiped away, according to Judy Seal, the partnership’s director (see sidebar).

At the same time, city and education leaders have sought to be responsive to community concerns and improve their programs based on parent and community needs. For example, LBUSD launched a nationally recognized program to require school

■ *Encourage community outreach to schools*



Steven Chesser, a senior manager with the Boeing Company, visits Newcomb Academy as Principal for a Day

Principal for a Day Program

Principal for a Day, co-sponsored by the Long Beach Area Chamber of Commerce, the Long Beach Unified School District, and the Long Beach Education Foundation, brings residents of the Greater Long Beach area into every school in the district in the role of principal. Each “principal for a day” is given the opportunity to interact with students, teachers, parents, and administrators through classroom visits, meetings, testing, and playground supervision. Participants get a birds-eye view of what it takes to be in education leadership in the third-largest school district in the state. Following a day at the school, the principals for a day are hosted at a debriefing reception, where district school board members, administrators, teachers, and student representatives hear what the principals for a day learned and recommendations to improve local schools. This program has been one of the most successful business-in-education activities of the last decade, generating hundreds of business and education partnerships.

▲ More about program:

www.lbusd.k12.ca.us/community/education_foundation/LBEFpfad.asp

■ *Be a champion and keep public support for schools on the front burner*

uniforms because of parental demands for orderliness, says O’Neill. “That came through the parents at one of the schools,” she says. “It’s so successful. Now, 85 percent of kids are wearing uniforms.”

Passed an Education Bond Issue

The result of all of this cooperation and engagement has been improved teaching and learning – and stronger support for the education institutions. In 1999, city voters approved a \$295-million bond issue for the Long Beach schools, with more than 70 percent support. And officials say there is strong confidence among residents for all the institutions. “The city is proud of its schools,” says Mayor O’Neill. “They know that you can go from kindergarten to a master’s degree in the same city, and they are all outstanding institutions. In the 1980s, there was White flight, but that’s reversed now.”

What Made It Work

Why does the seamless education partnership in Long Beach work so well? Many in the city credit Mayor O’Neill’s role. Although the city government does not support the partnership financially, Mayor O’Neill has championed it and kept it on the front burner. And she is so popular – she was reelected in 2002 as a write-in candidate after she was barred from the ballot because of term limits – that when she speaks, people listen.

“The mayor just talks about it all the time,” says Maxson. “Every time she gives a speech

about the accomplishments of the city, she mentions the program. That gives it credibility and visibility.”

O’Neill says her support also keeps the partnership thriving, because the education institutions know they can count on the city to provide them what they need. “They know I am a champion for them, and that makes a difference,” she says. “They know the city will cooperate.”

The commitment of the leaders of the educational institutions also helps keep the seamless partnership thriving, Maxson adds. Although the hard work of the partnership is done by faculty members and administrators, the leaders’ support is essential. “They know it’s the commitment of the university,” he says of the 2,000 faculty members and eight deans who are involved in the partnership.

The partnership also works because many of the partners know one another and connect with one another regularly. In various ways, many note, Long Beach, though a large city of nearly a half million residents, is a small town, where people have deep roots and informal ties. For example, Superintendent Steinhauser is the president of the local Rotary Club, to which Arthur Byrd, the vice president of City College, belongs. “If I want to talk to him, I know I’ll see him next Thursday,” Byrd says. “It makes it easier to get things done when you have those kinds of relationships.”

■ *Think about sustainability and embed support for schools in the community*

Looking to the Future

Because of the strong support Mayor O'Neill has provided, some worry that the partnership may wane after she leaves office in 2006. She has said she will not seek a fourth term, and her potential successors, while supportive of the partnership, may have other priorities.

But others maintain that the partnership has become so entrenched in the community it will remain no matter who is mayor. "Seamless is a way of thinking and looking at education," says Seal. "You don't look at one issue as being your issue. If you need help, you call partners, and they help."

Indeed, the notion of partnership has spread beyond the three educational institutions; the city and the school district have been forging stronger partnerships. Here, again, Mayor O'Neill has been instrumental. She holds quarterly meetings with the superintendent and members of the city council and school board to consider everything from land use to the skill needs of the future workforce.

■ *Eliminate duplication to operate more efficiently*

The partnerships have produced some concrete results. In 2004, the district opened a new school in downtown Long Beach, the Cesar Chavez Elementary School, that represents a genuine collaboration between the school district and the city parks department. Under the arrangement, the school will have access to a city park that was built under a bond issue; in turn, the school will open its gymnasium to the public after school hours. "I really think [Phil T. Hester, the director of the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Marine] had a vision," says Suzanne Mason, assistant city manager. "I'd like to see it happen in many more locations."

The city and school district have also worked together to try to eliminate duplication and operate more efficiently, since



Mayor O'Neill speaks at the Broad Prize award ceremony

Photos courtesy of the Long Beach Unified School District (5)

■ *Establish an advisory group on youth and children*

both agencies face budget crunches, Mason notes. For example, the district's food service department will provide meals for the city jail, and the city is collecting recycling for the schools.

In addition, the city has established a commission on youth and children that includes a school board member along with representatives of city agencies and youth (see sidebar). As its first product, the commission prepared a report on the well-being of youth that includes educational data. "How can we not address what happens in school?" asks Cynthia Fogg, the superintendent of youth services for the City of Long Beach.

To be sure, these new partnerships are occasionally rocky. City officials, for example, have found working with schools somewhat difficult because of the district's policy of devolving authority to school principals; the city officials find they have to negotiate with hundreds of principals rather than a single official in the district office. And there have been occasional clashes over data collection. In one case, for example, the district was reluctant to issue a questionnaire to high school students for a survey of city services because district officials did not want to burden the students near test time.

■ *Build relationships that support young people's success and foster a cooperative spirit*

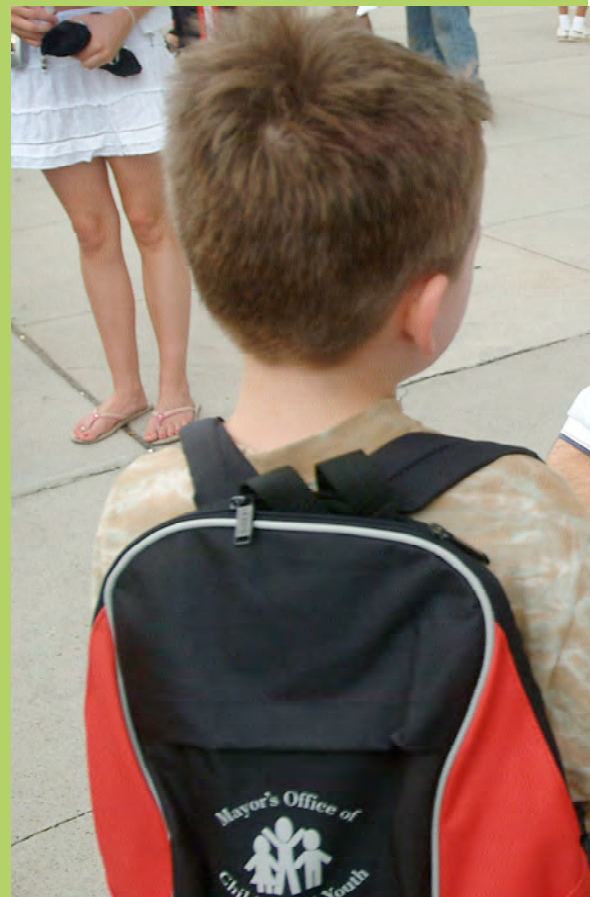
City Commission on Youth and Children

In 2003, the Long Beach City Council adopted a resolution forming the city's first Commission on Youth and Children, consisting of ten adults and nine youth. The adult commissioners include one Long Beach Unified School Board member, one parent of a child or children under the age of twenty-one, and eight youth service experts. Each youth member has been appointed by the City Council member of the district in which he/she resides, and is under the age of nineteen at the time of appointment. The Commission serves as an advisory group to the mayor and city council on issues affecting youth and children.

▲ Commission Web site:
www.longbeachyouth.org/comyouth.html

But city and school officials say the relationships are improving. The city government, the school district, and the higher education institutions are producing a seamless system that will improve prospects for all of Long Beach's young people. "We're building relationships so that we have a cooperative spirit," O'Neill says. "I'm strong on partnership."

Restoring Public Confidence in the
Nashville Public Schools



■ *Embrace education improvement as a chief public policy priority*

It was mid-afternoon and Mayor Bill Purcell was still animated about his visit early that morning to Hume-Fogg Academic High School. He had addressed a large assembly of students, teachers, and alumni who had gathered at Nashville's oldest school to commemorate the 150th anniversary of its founding. "Following the roll call of the graduating classes," Mayor Purcell recalled, "A woman rose from the audience and silently held a graduation medal over her head. Now, everyone assumed it was *her* medal and she had been overlooked in the official program. But it wasn't. When she

was recognized from the podium she explained that it was her father's graduation medal from the Class of 1925, and his affiliation with Hume-Fogg meant so much to him and his children that she felt compelled to speak.

"It was a very moving moment and reaffirmed for me why we all work so hard to make the schools work," the mayor continued. The same bond and sense of legacy is how this mayor wants all of Nashville's citizens and students to feel about their schools.

Taking a Stand for Educational Success

The high-stakes assessment terms of No Child Left Behind have made for perilous times for educators and civic leaders alike. Some local elected leaders who have no legal obligation or authority over the schools have chosen to stand clear, out of fear that their political futures will be harmed by associating with failing schools. As the list of low-performing schools in many cities steadily grows, these leaders see public schools as a risky venture.

Nashville's Purcell, on the other hand, embraces education improvement as the



Nashville mayor Bill Purcell chats with students at the Mayor's First Day Festival on August 15, 2005

Child and Family Policy Center

The Child and Family Policy Center was created in 1996 to bridge research, policy, and best practice to benefit children and families. Through grants from the Danforth Foundation and the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Center manages the Policy Maker's Program and co-sponsors the Family Re-Union Conference hosted by former vice president Al Gore.

The mission of the Child and Family Policy Center is to develop, promote, and implement public policy and community strategies that strengthen children and families through research, advocacy, and education.

www.vanderbilt.edu/VIPPS/C&FPC/index.htm

- *Recognize the importance of developing future human capital to the community's civic health*

chief public policy priority of his administration. When asked why, he explains that "it's a lot about who I am." Prior to being elected mayor, Purcell was director of the Child and Family Policy Center at the Vanderbilt Institute for Public Policy Studies – a center whose mission is to benefit children and their families through research, public policy, and best practices (see sidebar). Before that, he was majority leader of the Tennessee House of Representatives and chair of the Select Committee on Children and Youth. Purcell served five terms in the Tennessee House, beginning in 1986. He was chief architect of the Tennessee education reform. He started his career as a legal-aid attorney.

Given his orientation, it comes as no surprise that Purcell put his office squarely behind an effort to improve the schools. While Nashville's nine-member, popularly elected school board and their appointed director of schools have complete day-to-day authority over the 70,000-student district, it is the mayor who processes the school board's annual operating and capital budget request. It is the mayor's responsibility to then make an overall city budget recommendation, which includes schools, to the city council for approval.

Like other mayors who choose to stake their political careers on improving schools, Purcell views it as a social imperative. These mayors see that the future civic health of their communities is more than building stadiums and light-rail systems; increasingly, public leaders see that the well-being of their cities is tied in fundamental ways to developing future human capital. They believe that their city's schools and other social institutions must do more

■ *Use the unique leverage points of the mayor's office to advance educators' goals*

to prepare young people to take on their future family and civic obligations and that choosing not to deal with this issue is simply not an option. And the better than 80 percent of Nashvillians who voted for Purcell's reelection in 2003 seem to agree.

Sharing Leadership to Improve Schools

Purcell is not a fan of the takeover models used by some of his fellow mayors in New York, Chicago, and Cleveland. With a touch of irony, he explains: "I know it's hard to believe, but every once in a while you do get a bad mayor, so why would you want a bad mayor running your schools?"

The alternative that evolved in Nashville and other cities features shared leadership between school leaders and the mayor, in which each side plays to its respective strengths. In many cities where mayors have become more active in schools in recent years, city hall takes the common-sense approach that the day-to-day management of the schools is best left to the educators. The mayors, meanwhile, use their unique leverage points of public opinion, municipal services, and funding authority to advance local education goals.

Mayor Purcell has pursued this strategy since he took office in 1999, says longtime mayoral advisor Marc Hill. "It all started



On the first day of school, Mayor Purcell talks with parents at Julia Green Elementary School about the importance of community involvement

■ *Call together a broad coalition of civic leaders who share a belief in developing the human talent of young people*

during the mayor's first campaign, where he pledged to voters that he would visit every public school in the Metropolitan Nashville district in his first year in office." These were anything but superficial visits. As Hill notes, "The mayor would walk the halls with his staff, talk with teachers, the principal, even students." Aides would take detailed notes about problems with the facility, the quality of the learning environment, and the roles of parents and the community, all based on conversations he'd have with the staff and students. These notes

would be translated into memos and sent to the director of schools with an expectation for swift action.

This shared-leadership dance between city hall and the school district produced a few bruised toes at the start. However, over time, what evolved was a mutual understanding about roles and responsiveness.

What the Mayor Did

Purcell recognized that pursuing a big budget increase for education at the outset of his term would be a difficult sell. The public's opinion of the schools was too low to support such a reward. Like many urban districts, the Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools were losing student population to private schools and to more affluent school districts in adjoining Davidson County. Moreover, new arrivals to greater Nashville were avoiding buying homes in Nashville, in large measure due to the poor reputation of the public schools. The schools were beleaguered by the symptoms familiar to urban systems in decline: physical facilities in disrepair, stagnant test scores, chaotic learning environments, and high teacher turnover.



Students enjoy free entertainment in Nashville's downtown arena at the 2005 First Day Festival

■ *Actively promote parent and community involvement*

Celebrated Schools: First Day

Purcell realized he had to tackle these reputation and support problems head on. He started by calling together a broad civic coalition of leaders who shared his belief that developing the human talent of young people was a social imperative. In 1999, this leadership coalition of representatives from business, higher education, and community-based organizations joined the mayor in sponsoring a signature back-to-school event called the First Day Festival (see sidebar). According to Hill, “Education is the most important thing the city does. First Day is the chance to focus the whole city on the start of school with the idea that if we can create that kind of citywide enthusiasm, it will carry forward throughout the year.”

Since 2000, the Mayor’s First Day Festival has been a citywide celebration that takes

place the Sunday prior to the first day of school. The event includes a full afternoon of attractions and activities at or around the city arena in downtown Nashville. Billed as a good time for all ages, First Day features musical entertainment, storytelling, puppet and magic shows, and roving mascots. It also offers back-to-school giveaways from its many corporate sponsors, including the much-coveted back-to-school backpacks. In more recent years, the event has made a special outreach to teenagers, with back-to-school concerts at a separate venue.

At the lead-up to the 2003 event, Purcell was quoted as reminding parents that “part two” of the Festival begins the following morning, when all parents are encouraged to accompany their children to school, as he does with his daughter, a high school senior. By the fall of 2005, the event was attracting in excess of 20,000 people.

Mayor’s First Day Festival

The Festival features family fun, educational entertainment, and free school supplies and snacks. There are outdoor activities as well as live music in the park adjacent to the Gaylord Entertainment Center. The Web site contains information about the Mayor’s First Day Festival 2005, a description of the activities, a link to the Mayor’s Honor Roll of companies with leave policies that allow families to attend the event, and archives of past Festivals.

www.nashville.gov/mocyc/firstday_2005/

Teen musicians perform at the 2005 First Day back-to-school party for high school students



In no small measure, First Day has benefited human relations among the Nashville community, uniting groups of organizations and citizens who normally have little contact on a day-to-day basis. V. H. “Sonnye” Dixon, pastor of Hobson United Methodist Church and recent past president of the Nashville Chapter of the NAACP, reflects on First Day in the context of Nashville’s troubled history of race relations: “First Day is one time when we take down the walls that separate us and celebrate together.”

Engaged the Community: First Week

The downtown event has been used by schools as a springboard for further engagement with parents and community. Following the citywide celebration, all schools sponsor First Week activities that provide incentives for parents, neighbors, and community providers to visit the schools. According to a school counselor at Inglewood Elementary, “The public libraries, Boys and Girls Clubs, and social service organizations all use this prime opportunity to sign up kids and parents for extended learning activities.” The staff at this school

credit the mayor for the big bump they’ve seen in parent and grandparent participation. The counselor adds, “He’s really the only person in Nashville who can create a buzz and hold the attention of the local media.”

At Dan Mills Elementary, which serves an older, working-class section of Nashville about fifteen minutes northeast of downtown, First Day triggers a series of welcome-back activities that span the first few weeks of the school year. “We host a whole series of events to welcome kids and their parents or grandparents back to school,” says Principal Patti Yon. The school sponsors a “Walk Your Child to School Day” on the first day of school and a “Boo Hoo Breakfast” to help parents of new kindergartners cope with the emotions of dropping off their five-year-old for the first day of school.

Principal Yon adds that “our back-to-school campaign actually begins on July fifteenth, when I return to school and we begin registering new students. Our director of schools [Dr. Pedro Garcia] insists that schools be prepared to provide a full-day learning

PENCIL Foundation Partners program

PENCIL Partners are Nashville-area businesses, organizations, and faith communities who partner with a Nashville public school. PENCIL Partners volunteer time and other resources to help children achieve academically, develop life skills, and make a successful transition from school to career. The Web site contains links to program descriptions and to the Partnership Coordinator’s Manual.

www.pencilfd.org/partners

■ *Build on strategic partnerships with local businesses*

experience on the first day of school. My staff and I are ready to welcome parents, and our teachers are ready to teach their students, on day one. There is no such thing as a throw-away day at Dan Mills.”

Built Civic Partnerships

Leaders are quick to point out that Nashville has a rich heritage of business partnerships with the public schools. One of the bases for this is the PENCIL Foundation, which arranges business-school collaborations through its PENCIL Partners program (see sidebar on previous page). Partner organizations and volunteers support their sponsored schools in a variety of ways, including financial contributions, awards and incentives, special events, tutoring, and mentoring.

A few years ago, Purcell introduced his Mayor’s Honor Roll, which lists all the local employers who have release policies for employees to visit their children’s schools, especially on the first day (see sidebar). The mayor set an example for Nashville’s employers by successfully pushing through reforms to the civil service code, which

provides up to three hours of release time for city employees to visit their children’s schools on the first day of school, and six additional hours throughout the year to attend parent-teacher conferences and volunteer in their children’s classrooms (see sidebar). By the start of the 2005–2006 school year, Mayor Purcell had named 130 local employers to the Honor Roll. Business leaders acknowledge that it’s not likely they would have done this without the mayor taking the lead.

Fifth Third Bank was one of the organizations that followed suit with this family-friendly parental-leave policy. According to the bank’s president, Todd Clossin, it has resulted in a win-win situation for employees and the company alike. He sees “improvements in morale” and, he believes, in workplace productivity. “Parents aren’t preoccupied about whether their kids made it to school OK and generally how they’re faring on their first day of school.” In past years, “folks would be sitting at their desks on the first day of school worried about how their kids were making out. Now they have peace of mind and are functioning

Family-Friendly Parental-Leave Policies

.....

Mayor Purcell has set an example by making sure city employees have time off to visit their children’s schools, and many private employers have followed suit.

▲ **Section 4.17: Parent Teacher Conferences**

In 2000, Nashville’s city government passed a civil service rule – Section 4.17 – to provide leave for city employees to visit their children’s schools.

www.nashville.gov/mocy/firstday_2004/section4.17.htm

▲ **The Mayor’s Honor Roll**

The Mayor’s Honor Roll recognizes businesses that allow and encourage their employees to take their children to school on the first day.

www.nashville.gov/mocy/firstday_2005/business.htm#hono

■ *Encourage family-friendly
leave policies*

■ *Restore public confidence and willingness to make long-term investments in the schools*

better in the workplace. I know *I* am – and that’s from the perspective of a parent of young children.”

Restored Public Confidence

Activities such as First Day and an independent performance audit that recommended increased investment helped restore public confidence in the Nashville schools. That confidence was bolstered by a new director of schools, Pedro Garcia, who came to town with a strong commitment to improving student performance. With renewed support, Mayor Purcell banked on the confidence that the public would be willing to back increased funding for the

schools. He was right. The city council approved his request to increase annual funding for schools from \$397 million in 2000 to \$503 million in 2003. In addition to increases to the operating budget, the council approved \$165 million in capital funds for new schools and school renovations.

Nashville educators attribute much of the steady increases in civic confidence and investment to the mayor. Garcia says that Mayor Purcell’s broad-based effort to heighten public confidence in the schools has paid off in increased public participation and investment. The effort involved many civic and educational leaders, but Garcia



Mayor Purcell is joined by Nashville business leaders and school officials for a press conference in August 2005 to encourage companies to join the Mayor's Honor Roll

■ *Prepare to sustain reform in the face of leadership changes*

makes it clear that it could not have come together without the mayor's leadership: "This is a process that's evolved over the years with the help of a lot of local leaders, but there's no doubt who's at the head of this parade."

Verne Denney, former school board president who now heads up the district's Student Assignment Services, remembers a time in the not-too-distant past when the reputation of the Metro Schools was "in the dump." The system was hemorrhaging students to independent schools and families relocating to the region were choosing the suburbs over Nashville. Today, Denney observes, Mayor Purcell is helping restore public confidence and participation in the schools. "And there's evidence that we're regaining our share of the 'educational marketplace,'" he adds.

Likewise, the current board president, Pam Garrett, sees more evidence that parents view the Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools as a viable option. The Board makes a concerted effort to reach out to key civic organizations at least once a month. These key groups include the NAACP, Chamber of Commerce, PENCIL Foundation, local education fund, and local Board of Realtors.

The Challenge of Leadership Change

With any large-scale civic campaign that is identified with a few key leaders, the question arises: Does the movement survive when the leaders leave? Last spring, Pedro Garcia was named a finalist in the search for a new superintendent in Miami, signaling that he may want to move on. And Bill Purcell has decided not to run for a third term.

The prospect of leadership change doesn't worry board president Garrett. She believes that the civic will and capacity are too deep to crumble in the wake of one or more key leadership moves. "Anyone trying to alter any major aspect of this new commitment would face heavy resistance from the community and civic leadership," she says. "For one, our business leaders would go 'nose to nose' with any effort to dismantle some of the important traditions, from First Day to our business partnerships to the Mayor's Honor Roll. These changes are here to stay." This resolve will be tested in 2007, when Nashville will elect a successor to Mayor Purcell.

What's Next? Looking Ahead

Educators from the schools to the school board agree that Mayor Purcell has delivered on his commitment to increase public support and investment in Metro schools. Four years of steady gains, increases in school funding, and greater community and

■ *Cultivate strong bonds among individuals, organizations, and civic leadership*

business engagement certainly created favorable conditions for school success; however, there wasn't much to show in terms of student gains. When interviewed in late 2004, the mayor was clear that 2005 was a critical mark in this effort – the schools had to prove to civic leaders, the business community, and citizens alike that their added investment and commitment to schools was paying off. So it was with great

pride that school leaders reported in August 2005 that Metro Nashville Schools showed significant, across-the-board achievement gains at all grade levels on the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program.

In addition to sustaining these gains in student performance, the mayor wants to take the community-school partnership concept to the next level. He knows that research



At Andrew Jackson Elementary School, Mayor Purcell (center) and Director of Schools Dr. Pedro Garcia (on the mayor's right) are joined by students and community members for the official opening of the new school year

■ *Show civic leaders, the business community, and citizens that their investment and commitment pays off*

shows how important it is for youth to have a responsible adult to turn to for guidance, and he admires some of the mentoring programs that have grown up through the PENCIL Partners. He would like to see mentoring relationships between adults in the community and youth in middle and high schools, especially for students at greatest risk of dropping out.

An instinct for focusing on the quality of human relations seems to be what makes the Purcell administration's efforts to drive school improvement in Nashville work. Cultivating strong bonds among individuals, organizations, and civic leadership has been Nashville's leading strategy to build stronger families and communities. Stakeholders in the future of the city look forward to the day when it will be commonplace for graduates of the Nashville schools to raise their graduation medals with pride to honor a lifelong bond with their schools.

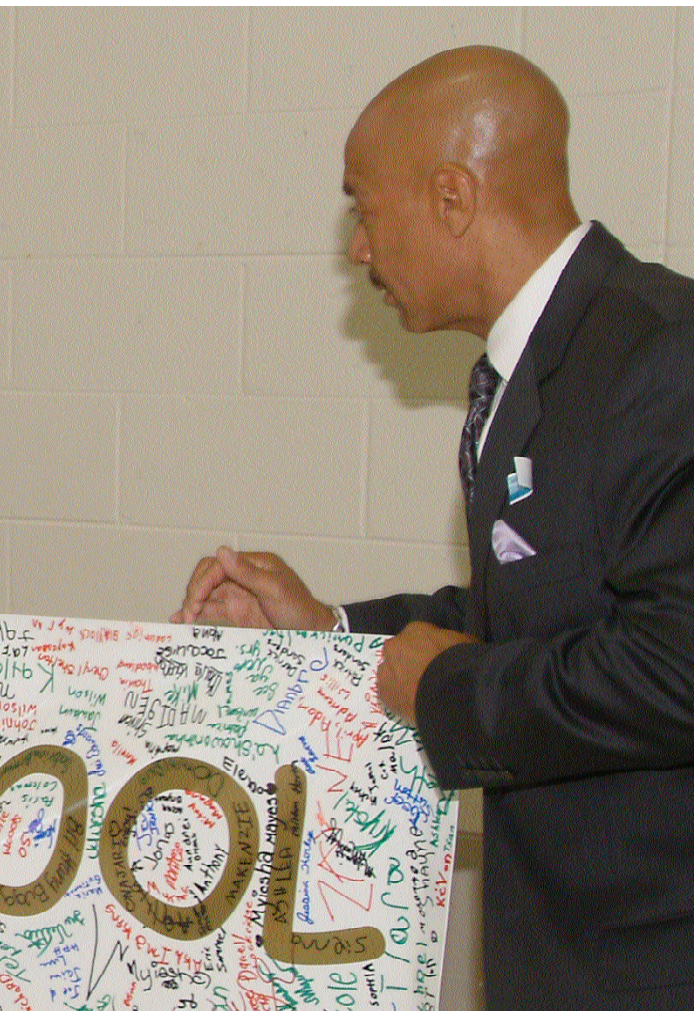


Photo Credit: Gary Loydb/City of Nashville (6)

Developing Community Leadership around Education Reform: A Bronx Tale

New Settlement Parent Action Committee, part of the CC9 coalition, marches for safety in the public schools



In December of 2002, a coalition of six Bronx community groups, calling themselves the Community Collaborative to Improve District 9 Schools (CC9),¹ met with members of the New York City teachers union to discuss the implementation of a four-point platform for school improvement developed by the coalition. CC9 had prepared the platform to lay out a vision of what the education system needed to do to provide an excellent education for all children, but particularly those children attending schools in District 9, a chronically underperforming district in the Bronx.

There was great hope on the part of attendees at the meeting that, together, the twenty-five assembled individuals could forge a shared vision of education reform for local schools. At the same time, participants were anxious and uncertain, because this kind of meeting had never before taken place. There had been numerous attempts by teachers to engage parents and community members in the typical roles of volunteer and homework tutor, and there were opportunities for individual parents to meet with their child's teacher. But rarely had

organized groups of parents, community members, and teachers met with one another to explore the possibility of partnership.

From Contention to Cooperation

Earlier that year, most of the meeting participants and their constituents had attended a series of organizing events and smaller gatherings with CC9, followed by rallies that signaled shifts in perspective and an expansion of the possibility of change where little had previously existed. Some of those assembled felt intuitively that collaboration had the potential to impact teaching and learning in the district, but few were certain of anything other than the dire need to do something powerfully different and innovative. CC9's platform contained a number of contentious proposals, including parental observation of classroom practice

¹ Following the events described in this narrative, the collaborative's name was changed to Community Collaborative to Improve Bronx Schools (CCB), reflecting a commitment to expand to other areas of the Bronx.



Community Collaborative to Improve District 9 Schools (CC9)

CC9 is a community-led collaborative of parents, community members, community-based organizations, and other partners that organizes parents and neighborhood residents for school reform in the South Bronx, with support from New York University's Community Involvement Program. CC9 has successfully combined community organizing with the development of collaborative relationships with New York City government and institutional partners, working with the New York City Department of Education and the teachers union to design the Lead Teacher program and transform the district into one that will serve as a model for how to improve a low-performing urban school district.

▲ CC9 mission statement, background documents, and articles are available on the Emerging Knowledge Forum Web site, Annenberg Institute for School Reform):

2005: www.annenberginstitute.org/EKF/2005/Bronx.html

2004: www.annenberginstitute.org/EKF/2004/SessionH.html

▲ Ocynthia Williams, "A Community-Led Reform: Improving Schools in the South Bronx," *Voices in Urban Education* no. 5 (Fall 2004). Available for download at:

www.annenberginstitute.org/VUE/fall04/Williams.html

■ *Place a high priority on public education*

and a shift in the roles of parents and community members to becoming formal partners in education policy and program development. However, the importance of these issues seemed small in comparison with the challenge of working and learning together.

There was a shared feeling that it would not be enough to simply identify a series of problems and potential solutions. Participants in the meeting felt that this time around, things could be different – maybe through a project that would focus not on placing blame, but on improving teaching and learning. Perhaps it was just a function of timing, the uniqueness of the gathering, or the tug of urgency that gave them hope; at the outset of the meeting, no one could say. However, as those who were there that night will attest, over the course of a few hours, minute by minute, point by point, it became clear to everyone that change was in the air.

“Mutual blame shifted to mutual support,” recalls Eric Zachary, the coordinator of CC9 and a senior project director of the Community Involvement Program at New York University, which provides support to the collaborative. Though they may not have realized it when they agreed to attend the meeting, he adds, “everyone was at a place where they were ready to listen, help, support, and change.” An emerging awareness of the promise of working together and a sense of possibility quickly came to distinguish both that initial meeting and the

present work of the collaborative. What brought them to this pivotal moment?

A System Resistant to Change

Public education in New York City, as is the case in many large urban areas, had long been characterized by high teacher and administrator turnover, insufficient student progress, ever-increasing tension and suspicion between unions and district leadership and between unions and parents, and the general disengagement of individual teachers, parents, and students. In an effort to address these issues, in the mid-1960s New York moved to a decentralized administrative structure with control split between local community school boards and the board of education.

Despite the best intentions over a forty-year period, decentralization failed to produce desired gains in student achievement, public will and support, teacher performance, compensation, or professional satisfaction. For a number of reasons, such as the short tenure of chancellors and the inherent conflicts over local control and centralized authority, the structure seemed especially resistant to meaningful reform and systemic change. To the five men who were elected mayor of New York City from 1973 until 2001, only one solution would work. To bring about lasting change and create excellent educational opportunities for all of New York City’s children and youth, the mayor had to have substantial, if not complete, control of the school system.

- *Focus on a systemwide instruction approach, meaningful partnerships with families, leadership development for principals, and a streamlined and centralized system*

What the Mayor Did

After years of negotiation and lobbying, the New York State Legislature decided to end local community control of schools and districts in New York City, shifting the responsibility for schools to the mayor's office. In 2002, Mayor Michael Bloomberg was granted full control of New York City schools, calling education "the number one focus of my administration."² Mayor Bloomberg, along with Chancellor Joel Klein, launched the Children First initiative

² Gail Robinson, "Improving The Schools," *Gotham Gazette*, July 29, 2002. Available online at: <http://gothamgazette.com/article/20020729/200/266>

as the central component of his education reform efforts (see sidebar).

Children First centers on four core elements designed to fulfill the promise of public education for New York City students and families. Children First mandated the adoption of

- a single, coherent, systemwide instruction approach to math, reading, and writing, supported by strong professional development;
- the establishment of a parent support system that facilitated the meaningful partnering of families and schools in the education of children;



New Settlement Parent Action Committee members and their children participate in the March for Safety in Schools

Children First Reform Agenda

The New York City Department of Education's Children First Reform Agenda grew out of a citywide series of community engagement meetings between Chancellor Joel Klein and his staff and thousands of parents, students, teachers, principals, department staff, community groups, education experts, faith-based leaders, and business groups. From the information and suggestions gathered and an analysis of best practices in New York City and other urban districts, the chancellor and mayor developed core proposals designed to give all New York's schools, teachers, and principals the resources and support they need to improve teaching and learning in individual schools and classrooms.

▲ More about Children First:

www.nycenet.edu/Administration/Childrenfirst/CFAGenda.htm

■ *Engage parents through parent liaisons and community-wide educational councils*

- the development of principals as key instructional leaders in schools through leadership development programs; and
- the reorganization of the system from a board-appointed chancellor and thirty-two community boards to a centralized system led by a chancellor selected by the mayor.

The reorganization of the system is the element that most directly embodies the mayor's leadership in the district. It has created powerful supports for reducing bureaucratic inertia and advancing a reform agenda through a renewed focus on accountability and innovation.

Two aspects of the mayor's Children First transformation provided a fertile context for the growth and success of the collaborative work between CC9, the New York City United Federation of Teachers (UFT), and the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE). First, the plan eliminated community district offices and boards and created a region-based structure, with each of ten districts led by a regional

superintendent. The plan also eliminated the board of education and replaced it with a panel appointed by the mayor and borough presidents. Second, Children First called for substantial parent engagement by establishing a parent liaison in each school and creating community-wide educational councils.

These provisions created both the space and the support that allow innovations to flourish, notes Vincent Gaglione, a UFT representative from a District 9 school. "District 9 was in serious trouble," he says. "Both the parents and teachers were under siege by the decentralized structure. The shift in structure created the opportunity to trust. There was an incredible sense of timing. The centralized system has less of an ability to ignore and put off collective action. The collaborative filled a vacuum that school boards were supposed to fill, yet hadn't for decades." The newly centralized administrative structure removed barriers to reform by simplifying the decision-making process and building upon the extant successes of CC9 and district educators and leaders. Clear lines of potential support created a context in which innovations might flourish.

■ *Create the space and support that allow innovations to flourish*

■ *Nurture community ownership of school reform*

What the Collaboration Accomplished

One aspect of Children First – the reorganization of community school districts into larger regions – created a potential problem for CC9. The coalition – which included New Settlement Apartments, ACORN, the Citizen’s Advice Bureau, the Northwest Bronx Community Coalition, the High-bridge Community Life Center, and the Mid-Bronx Council – had been formed around the schools of District 9. Subsuming them into a larger structure threatened to undermine the sense of ownership the collaborative members felt for their schools. This concern was reinforced by teachers and administrators, who viewed the emerging

relationships and the development of a network in District 9 as key to the success of the collaboration.

Yvonne Torres, local instructional superintendent for the targeted schools, states, “Basically, it was about sharing ideas and coming together to work. I thought it was important and lobbied hard to maintain the district network to continue and nurture what we had.” The schools of District 9 were theirs, despite any shortcomings in performance or achievement. For community members, parents, funders, teachers, and administrators alike, it was clear that any interventions had to both capitalize on and further develop that burgeoning sense of ownership.

CC9 (now CCB) parent leaders envision the future of education organizing at a planning retreat



Created Relationships That Made the Difference

While the Children First agenda provided opportunities for the collaboration between CC9, the UFT, and the NYCDOE, the development of relationships – with the teachers’ union and the department of education, in particular – made it happen.

Jacqueline Elias, Vice President at JP Morgan Private Bank and member of the Donors’ Education Collaborative, one of the earliest and key sponsors of CC9’s work, explains that relationships are at the heart of the collaborative’s strategy. The collaborative “is not built upon overnight change,” she says, “but, instead, is founded upon the notion of incremental changes in policy, practice, and interactions through mentoring and relationship building.”

One of the most significant relationships was between CC9 and the UFT. “We sat down after creating the platform and realized that teachers were at the center of the vision,” says Ocyntia Williams, a CC9

organizer. “We asked for and gave support. It was reciprocal between the community and teachers. No change could happen without everyone, but especially without teachers. We decided to stop the blame games. Of course, we wouldn’t and couldn’t agree with everything, but still we have to come together.”

As they developed and refined the CC9 process, forging new relationships and recasting existing ones lay at the heart of CC9’s capacity building. First and foremost for CC9, that meant grounding their arguments in facts. “We knew it had to be different, so we came prepared with information, data, and some knowledge about what was going on,” Williams says. “We presented data as a part of our approach, not emotionally or negatively. The dialogue was data focused.”

From the beginning, the collaboration has faced a number of challenges, the most daunting being early attempts to negotiate the relationships. As Herb Katz, a UFT



CC9 meets with Michele Cahill (front row, in center), senior counselor for education policy of the NYCDOE, to develop the Lead Teacher Program

leader from District 9, recalls, the participants were able to work through their differences in a spirit of cooperation, rather than confrontation.

The first test was to tweak the platform that they created and presented to us. There was no resistance, just people listening to each other – really listening – and sharing their concerns. Parent access to classrooms was a big issue and that showed something. It couldn't happen immediately, but no one panicked as we explained why and how we saw it. We needed to pilot it and work out a process. The answer wasn't "no," but there were some issues that need to be worked out. Ultimately, it was a question of trust and respect – another step in building our relationship.

Learned to Dialogue

CC9's approach also requires shifting the traditional organizing paradigm from a confrontational stance to one much more heavily invested in dialogue. Before inviting all constituent groups to rallies, CC9 began by holding meetings with officials where they presented their platform, not as a list of demands, but as a starting point for a real dialogue. The hope was to create a shared vision of education practice in District 9 through dialogue, trust, and negotiation. "Their work goes far beyond rallies and protests but navigates the support-versus-demand tensions beautifully," says Elias. "There are no ultimatums, just a promise to always work for something better. It seems as though the best form of behavior modification is good communication – reciprocal and respectful communication between parents and schools."

Herb Katz describes the working relationships of CC9: "There is a mutual sense of accountability and responsibility. That is what *collaborative* means. Relationships are defined by their barriers, sustainability, mechanisms, and structures. The collaborative provided the UFT and individual teachers with a way to engage and involve parents in a meaningful way with mutual respect."

Moved toward Change

Once differences in perspective were resolved through dialogue with individual teachers in District 9 and the larger UFT, negotiations began in earnest with the NYCDOE to fulfill the promise of the collaborative through changes in policy and practice, specifically the development of a Lead Teacher program focused on providing additional supports to new teachers in District 9. Negotiations centered on teacher selection, pay differentials, and stipends – sensitive and explosive issues that had the potential to cripple the budding relationship in its infancy.

Under normal circumstances these would be tense negotiations, but both the circumstances and composition of the negotiation table were far from routine. While both the DOE and the UFT had long advocated and sought substantive parental involvement in schools, UFT President Randi Weingarten used the negotiations to further that principle to levels of unprecedented breadth and depth. By inviting members of CC9 to sit at the negotiation table around the project, she clearly and forcefully signaled the seriousness and distinctiveness of the new relationship to district officials, members of her union, and CC9 members as well.

■ *Recognize the potential of an innovative program*

Around the same time, CC9, in turn, testified before the city council during hearings on teacher labor issues. “We didn’t compromise ourselves at all, because we felt they were being unfairly attacked,” says Zachary of New York University. “We testified on behalf of our relationships and their commitment to the work, not on specific provisions of the contract.”

Created the Lead Teacher Program

In addition to the successful development of a shared vision and commitment to support each other and work cooperatively, the collaboration between CC9 and the UFT also produced a concrete outcome: a pilot project to establish the position of *lead teacher* in District 9 schools. The goal was to enhance teacher retention and improve instruction by enabling experienced, master teachers to serve as mentors and supporters of both newer and veteran teachers. By working half-time in their own classrooms and half-time outside, the lead teachers provide direct instructional and curricular support through extended visits to other teachers’ classrooms and by offering their classrooms as laboratories in which less-experienced teachers can observe and learn.

The collaboration behind the Lead Teacher program also strengthens the link between schools and the community by building upon the CC9 practice of “community walks,” which pair teachers with youth and parents for neighborhood tours. In addition to helping teachers get to know the community better, such walks help maintain the relationships that make CC9 possible, says

Ernesto Maldonado, a parent leader with CC9. “It was time to incorporate the teachers back into the community,” he says. “They are, and needed to see themselves and be seen, as important to the community as the corner store. That was the only way this could work.”

A crucial next step was securing additional financial support from the philanthropic community and, perhaps more important, securing policy, financial, and administrative support from the NYCDOE. When compared with the amount the nation’s largest school system spends on teacher salaries and related expenses, the Lead Teacher budget was relatively inexpensive. The main cost of the program would be the salaries of the proposed lead teachers – an additional thirty-six positions for the district. These teachers would earn approximately \$10,000 more than other teachers with similar education and tenure, with the additional requirement of four hours of training per month during the school year (after school) and one week of additional training during the summer. Nevertheless, any additional expenditure is hard-fought at a time when New York, like most states, faces a financial crunch.

Early support of, and faith in, the work of CC9 in the form of a \$400,000 grant from the Booth Ferris Foundation to pilot the project allowed the collaborative to leverage an additional \$1.6 million in 2004 from Joel Klein, chancellor of the NYCDOE, for the Lead Teacher program. The chancellor recognized that the Lead

■ *Be open to structural changes when needed*

Teacher program held enormous potential as a retention strategy and as one of a number of models for reshaping professional development citywide. As he commented later on the appeal of the Lead Teacher program, “Talent draws talent. . . . Talent attracts talent. . . . Talent can train and support talent” (see sidebar).

After some negotiation, he approved the plan, but the details of the project went unresolved for two months as final negotiations continued. With the boundless commitment and energy of CC9 members and the willingness of both the NYCDOE and UFT to continue bargaining, ultimately a deal was reached to launch the project.

In a significant gesture, the NYCDOE also agreed to keep the District 9 schools together as an instructional unit – the only network formed on the basis of the schools’ relationship with a community-based organization. “Basically, it was about sharing ideas and coming together to work,” says local instructional superintendent

Torres. “I thought it was important and lobbied hard to maintain the network to continue and nurture what we had.”

The relationships that contributed to the adoption of the Lead Teacher program continued in its implementation, as well. Lead teachers were first screened by UFT, CC9, and regional personnel, ensuring they met qualifications such as a minimum of five years of teaching experience and demonstrated teaching excellence. The screening was followed by a hiring process directed by a representative panel of teachers, parents, and the principal from each District 9 school.

Today, the project has thirty-six lead teachers placed in ten Bronx schools. A project evaluation report by the Academy for Educational Development found that the first year was a successful one:

- The Lead Teacher program was successful in developing a model that can be expanded to other districts in New York City.

Fact-Finding Panel Recommendation to Accept Lead Teacher Program

When the current collective bargaining agreement between the New York City Department of Education and the United Federation of Teachers was being negotiated in 2003 and 2004, an impasse was reached. In response, the New York Public Employment Relations Board appointed a fact-finding panel, which recognized the success of the Lead Teacher program in the Bronx and recommended expanding it into a citywide program.

▲ State of New York Public Employment Relations Board. Findings of Fact and Report and Recommendations of the Fact-Finding Panel. Report M2004-253, 268-279 New York (September 2005), p. 50. Can be downloaded at:

www.perb.state.ny.us/pdf/m2004-253.pdf

- The Lead Teacher program resulted in a higher teacher retention rate among teachers supported by the program.
- Those teachers experienced the Lead Teacher program as helpful to improving their practice.
- The significant increases in student achievement in the schools may have been aided by the Lead Teacher program.
- CCB (formerly CC9) played a critical leadership role as part of the Lead Teacher Coordinating Committee in guiding the first year of implementation.

According to Herb Katz, “We have developed or have, as part of who we are and what we care about, an ability to work through fights, both major and minor. Our motto is ‘Can you live with it?’ It’s simple and down-to-earth, and it works.”



New Settlement Parent Action Committee leaders speak with the media at the March for Safety in Schools

Looking Ahead

The CC9/UFT/NYCDOE collaboration has emerged as an important model for community and parental engagement in New York City, but it is not without critics. For example, CC9 members report that some educators and policy-makers outside of District 9 have been slow to embrace the level and kinds of participation demonstrated in the Bronx. There is no clear understanding that they have to collaborate to bring about educational success through the use of all resources and constituencies. As the engagement model spreads to other parts of New York, there remains a danger that the collaborative will continue to be seen as an aberration or a small pocket of innovation.

There is also skepticism about whether CC9 will shape education reform efforts and relationships in the philanthropic community. The skeptics see this limited impact not as a reflection of CC9’s work but, rather, of the difficult history reformers have had with collaboration, as opposed to competition.

However, a number of communities and community-based organizations in the city have begun their own reform and development processes informed by the CC9 model. Over the last two years, the Brooklyn Education Collaborative (BEC) has focused its organizing on improving middle-grade education in East Brooklyn, beginning with science education (see sidebar on page 63). In the fall of 2005, BEC won a commitment from the NYCDOE to provide science supplies to all forty-five schools with middle grades in the BEC districts. Currently, BEC is working with elected officials and foundations on an initiative to fund state-of-the-art science labs in the twenty-nine middle-grade schools in BEC districts that have no labs.

■ *Expand a successful engagement model to other parts of the city*

Veronica Rivera, a CC9 parent leader, explains that the collaboration is a way of channeling parents' aspirations for their children into meaningful action. "The system frustrated me. I felt alone and isolated," she says. "There are millions of parents who feel the same but have to realize that they are not alone and they are not powerless. Your child deserves the best. As a parent, you are unsure who is responsible and how to become responsible yourself. We do want to help other communities to empower themselves by seeing that it can be done. Parents can lead. Parents and teachers can work together. All they have to do is identify their own issues and work with others to develop solutions."

While the success of the initiative will ultimately be measured in student outcomes, changes in relationships and structures are also important to consider. However, members of the collaborative don't see their work as a reform model. Rather, they see it as a return to the ideals set forth at the founding of public schools. UFT representative Vincent Gaglione summarizes it this way: "This isn't reform. It is what school is supposed to be. It is idealized, but this is what was intended when we created public education. Everyone involved. Everyone invested. Once we get them out there, the barriers go down. Again, personal relationships are key. Familiarity eliminates contempt. Our work is only possible because you have a critical mass from each group willing to take the next steps."

Those steps will not always be visible to those outside of the engagement process, but they are substantial nonetheless. In response to critiques and questions about any lasting or far-reaching impacts of CC9, Herb Katz emphasizes the palpable sense of community and trust that has developed for members over the past two years and the ways the feeling continues to grow and become institutionalized in spite of the challenges. "You know how I know there's trust? There has been a flip in attitudes, because the UFT members, in negotiations with the NYCDOE, ask, 'How will this impact CC9?' That is a key shift."

Brooklyn Education Collaborative

The Brooklyn Education Collaborative is an advocacy coalition for middle school reform, representing parents and community groups from three school districts and the UFT.

▲ Bell, Natalie, "Brooklyn parent group to DOE: Move Forward on Middle School Reforms," *New York Teacher*, March 17, 2005. Available online at:

www.uft.org/news/teacher/reforms

▲ United Federation of Teachers, "Silent Concert Is Loud and Clear about Missing Courses," April 28, 2005. Available online at:

www.uft.org/parent/concert

Recent events suggest that the shift has already produced tangible results, not just for the individuals involved, but for the larger education system in New York City. Recently concluded contract talks between the UFT and the NYCDOE demonstrate that the collaborative has already had a long-term impact on the system. After two and a half years of contentious negotiations, the new contract expands one of the collaborative's predominant innovations, the Lead Teacher program.

Beginning in fall 2006, the NYCDOE will be hiring at least two hundred lead teachers to serve in struggling schools across the city at the chancellor's discretion and with input from school principals. As a result, the promise of the program has a chance to be more fully realized over the next two years. It remains to be seen the extent to which the change in attitudes, relationships, and structures will outlast the individuals involved and become part of the common culture in New York City schools, but the planned expansion of the project is strong evidence that the Lead Teacher program has gained purchase as a high-quality, high-impact reform in the city's leadership.

Beyond the spread of the program, for many who have been deeply involved in the collaboration, success is already at hand simply because people are invested in the success of all children. Veronica Rivera says, "We will get something done in the end. Not just *talk about* getting something done, or *plan* to get something done. We'll get it done. We want to change the system. That just propels and inspires you. There is a remarkable dedication and support that leads to a reinforcing of faith. Beyond differences in language, culture, and role, there is one agenda: the success of our kids."



Photos courtesy of New Settlement Apartments' Parent Action Committee (7)

CC9 (now CCB) leaders discuss proposals for action at a planning retreat

Engaging the Public in Education Reform:
What **Mayors** Can Do

“Civic capacity concerns the extent to which different sectors of the community – business, parents, educators, state and local officeholders, nonprofits, and others – act in concert around a matter of community-wide impact.”

Clarence Stone, “Civic Capacity and Urban Education,” 2001

The case studies in this volume show that municipal leaders can play key roles in engaging the public and building civic capacity around education reform. The mayors of these five cities made substantive contributions to school improvement in their communities by using the unique leverage of their office in strategic ways.

Successful Strategies: What Mayors Can Do

As the case studies show, mayors’ roles vary widely, depending on local circumstances. Laws, political culture, and community support for schools differ among cities, and the precise approach one mayor takes may not work for another. Nevertheless, these stories offer important lessons in public engagement for municipal leaders. They suggest effective approaches for mayors, identify minefields to avoid, and share reflections on the challenges of sustaining engagement.

The ways that the municipal leaders featured in this report have engaged the public and built civic capacity to support schools can be grouped into four broad strategies:

- **Help forge a common vision for educational equity and excellence.** Mayor John Hick-enlooper of Denver created a sense of urgency around the need to focus on Latino student achievement and convinced partner organizations that they could make a difference.
- **Form collaborative bodies to support and sustain the vision.** Mayors Ernie Kell and Beverly O’Neill of Long Beach built a civic partnership to ensure a “seamless” public education system from kindergarten through graduate teacher training.

- Expand services and supports for student learning and healthy development. Mayor Don Plusquellic of Akron spearheaded a successful initiative to rebuild all the city's schools as community learning centers by getting funding from Akron's voters and the state and then developing a partnership to implement the plan.
- Mobilize public and political will for quality schools. Mayor Bill Purcell of Nashville restored public confidence in the education system by involving the community in support and celebration of the city's schools. New York City mayor Michael Bloomberg established education as a high priority for the city, and community-based organizers formed a coalition to create and win widespread acceptance for an innovative lead teacher program.

Following is a more detailed description of the lessons learned about each of these high-yield strategies.

Help Forge a Common Vision for Educational Equity and Excellence

School systems in many cities were designed to be independent from city governments and other institutions – in part to shield schools from political wrangling. Yet, educators and policy-makers increasingly recognize that this independence has a price. Education reform requires the support and cooperation of a range of sectors within cities: *school-based constituencies*, consisting of parents, teachers, families, students, principals, and staff; *community-based constituencies*, such as public libraries, grassroots and faith-based organizations, social and human service agencies, neighborhood groups, and community residents, that provide extended

learning opportunities, public goodwill, and other supports, often aimed at individual schools; and *civic constituencies*, consisting of groups and leaders that have a citywide influence and affect multiple schools, such as government agencies, higher-education institutions, reform support organizations, local bargaining units, local funders, and corporations and local businesses.

Schools have little authority or opportunity to tap the resources of some of these sectors. Moreover, in many cities there is mistrust and hostility among various sectors: businesses and higher-education institutions, for example, often blame schools for failing to produce higher-quality graduates, while schools lament that parents fail to provide the home support necessary for students to learn.



Mayors are uniquely suited to build bridges across sectors within cities, help develop a shared understanding around education issues, and forge coalitions that can create and support education reform. In Long Beach and Denver, mayors called meetings to bring together leaders from various communities, in many cases for the first time. In Akron, a mayor-led initiative to rebuild the city's schools linked the city government and the schools.

In New York, a mayoral initiative cleared away an obstacle to collaboration. The community school boards that had run local school districts had been perceived as hostile to partnerships, but Mayor Bloomberg's successful effort to abolish the local boards and centralize authority created the space for innovations like the CC9 collaborative to flourish.



Form Collaborative Bodies to Support and Sustain the Vision

As important as it is, getting people to the table is not enough. To be effective, collaborations must be genuine. In many cases, the forced marriages mayors arrange, as in Long Beach, begin with the finger-pointing that traditionally characterizes relations among various communities. But this collaboration has worked because the participants – the school district and the two public higher-education institutions – were able to shift toward a posture of mutual support. They recognized that the goal of collaboration they all shared – improving education for all young people – was far more important than their institutional differences.

A history of collaboration also helps change these attitudes. In Akron, for example, city and school officials had worked together closely on the campaign for Issue 10, the initiative to raise taxes to create community learning centers. So, when they got together to implement the plan, they were able to work through disagreements more easily.

In addition to agreeing to work together cooperatively, effective collaborations also need to sort out issues over authority. In Akron, school officials accustomed to making decisions about the use of school buildings realized they needed to yield to city concerns when the buildings were opened to community use with financial assistance from the city. In Nashville, it took an initial period of working out roles and responsibilities between the mayor and the school district before educators felt comfortable with the mayor's highly publicized visits to the schools and his model of shared leadership.

In these cities, the collaborations have proven effective because the groups have,

through informal or formal means, laid out clear lines of authority. The mayors of Akron, Nashville, and Denver made clear that they had no intention of taking over the schools. And, in Akron, a joint use agreement hammered out by city and school officials explicitly states the expectations for each side.

To make collaboration sustainable, cities have created new institutions that bring together representatives of various sectors on a regular basis. In Long Beach, the seamless education partnership has lasted for a decade because leaders from the education institutions meet monthly, with staff support funded by the local business community. In Denver, Mayor Hickenlooper promised a follow-up meeting 100 days after the initial summit on Latino academic achievement and reconvened the summit's planning team to organize it.

Yet, even with an institutional structure, a collaborative will only work if all parties remain committed to it, and mayoral support is critical to maintaining that commitment. Long Beach officials point to the fact that Mayor O'Neill, in her speeches, regularly highlights the city's seamless education system as a key reason for its continuation.

Expand Services and Supports for Student Learning and Healthy Development

The positive development of young people should be the focus of all practice, reform, and innovation in an education system.

Development, as defined here, means not only the acquisition of academic knowledge and skills, but also healthy social, physical, and emotional development. The imperative is to educate each student successfully,

which may require different types and levels of support to ensure that all young people have equitable opportunities. Some of these learning opportunities and supports will be part of the formal school program; others will be provided by community and civic groups.

Currently, every community has the kinds of resources – museums, laboratories, hospitals, and other community-based settings – to provide this type of support, but not all youth have access to them. Furthermore, these resources are not always connected to schooling or organized into clear and coherent pathways to success for children and youth.

Mayors are in a unique position to link and help align different sectors of the community to support education. Mayor Plusquellic of Akron led the city in a bold initiative to convert all the city's schools into community learning centers (CLCs) that would bring the community and its assets into the schools and, at the same time, use the school facilities to serve the community's needs. He reached out to grassroots community organizations to support a hike in the local income tax to fund the CLCs, taking advantage of matching state funds. Following voters' approval of the funding, he engaged local community groups in a process of designing programs for each learning center.

Mobilize Public and Political Will for Quality Schools

Creating a community system of education is a challenge. Blame, rather than collective responsibility, often characterizes school-community relationships. Accountability focuses on test scores rather than wider

opportunities or outcomes. The legacies of race and class in shaping opportunities, individual and institutional power differentials based on gaps in status and access to resources, and preconceptions around appropriate roles and accountability all complicate partnering and the shared vision that makes a community education system possible.

The municipal leaders in the five case studies presented here have worked to ensure that *all* members of a community – not just the school personnel – have a stake in the success of students, a common vision, a sense of urgency, and a commitment to tackling critical challenges together.

Using Power, Influence, and Resources Strategically

Although the high-profile occasions on which mayors have taken control over local school systems have attracted national attention, in most cases mayors do not have direct authority over education systems in their cities. Nevertheless, mayors who have been successful in engaging the public around education reform have done so by using the power they have in creative ways.

Perhaps the most powerful tool in a municipal leader's toolbox is what Theodore Roosevelt called the "bully pulpit." When mayors talk, people listen. Not everyone may do what mayors say, but what they say does attract attention. When Mayor Hickenlooper of Denver called a summit on Latino academic achievement, the issue – which had attracted little public attention before – became a high priority for the city. Some of the most prominent leaders in Denver, such as former mayor Federico Peña, attended the event at Mayor Hickenlooper's invitation.

Similarly, when Mayor Purcell of Nashville launched the First Day celebration to call attention to the opening of school and encourage parents to accompany their children to class – and when he set the example by going to school with his daughter – he persuaded tens of thousands of Nashvillians to visit schools. As a result, a lot of the negative impressions city residents had about their schools melted away.

Mayors have also engaged the public by skillfully applying the legal authority they already possess. Even if they lack operational authority over schools, many mayors retain financial control over school budgets. Mayor Purcell, a strong supporter of education, was eager to increase the education budget but recognized that he could not gain backing for such an increase as long as city residents held schools in low esteem. Relying on his sense of timing, Mayor Purcell waited until after events such as First Day and the hiring of a new school director boosted public confidence in the system, then sought and won the budget increase.

Mayor Plusquellic of Akron went even further than seeking an increase in the school budget; he sought a *tax increase* for school improvements. Although his first attempt failed, his second won handily, in large part because he tailored the proposal to ensure maximum support. Rather than shy away from the issue, Mayor Plusquellic came right back after his first, failed attempt, seizing on a little-known provision in the state code that allowed him to use city income taxes for community learning centers.

Engaging Communities Authentically – Not Just "Selling"

Many leaders erroneously assume that engagement means *selling* – convincing other people to sign on to their ideas.

Leaders of effective engagement efforts know, though, that engagement needs to be *authentic*. It involves listening, as much as speaking, and understanding the perspectives and points of view of all members of the collaborative.

Denver's Latino Summit is a good example. Rather than present his ideas to the group, Mayor Hickenlooper invited a broad range of participants – including Latino community groups who had not had the ear of previous mayors – to make their own suggestions and come up with plans together.

The community groups in the CC9 collaborative, while they did present a formal proposal to the teachers union, were willing to consider the proposal as the *starting point* of the discussion – not a set of inflexible demands. The teachers, for their part, did not automatically reject elements they may have disagreed with but, rather, presented arguments and agreed to a pilot program.

Authentic engagement also involves enlisting influential people who will be listened to by others. In Long Beach, for example, one reason for the continuing success of the seamless education partnership is the sustained involvement of university presidents and the superintendent of schools. All of the institutions know that the partnership is a high priority.

Using Data

While engaging the public in education often involves appealing to people's beliefs in the importance of public education, data strengthens the case. Successful mayors have marshaled facts to bring people along to support schools.

At the Denver Latino Summit, for example, the organizers had compiled reports that

revealed to many people for the first time the size of the Latino school population and the challenges Latino students faced. At the same time, the meeting included presentations of successful examples that showed that improving Latino academic achievement was, indeed, possible. The CC9 collaborative in New York also prepared data to take to meetings, which helped make a convincing case for its Lead Teacher program.

Mayor Purcell's efforts to bring residents into Nashville schools was a shrewd use of data, showing people the positive aspects of schools that they may not have been aware of. Although the mayor did not shy away from the troubling statistics about achievement, these efforts provided the community with a more complete picture of the state of the schools. And, in 2005, five years after the launching of the community engagement campaign around First Day, data was used again – this time, to show significant student-achievement improvements at all grade levels in Nashville's schools, generating great pride within the community.



Photos courtesy of Denver Public Schools and the Mayor's Office for Education and Children, City and County of Denver (3)

The Challenge Cities Face: Sustainability

Engaging the public is not a one-time event. All the cities highlighted in this publication, along with many other cities, face the continued challenge of maintaining and strengthening support for public education over time.

Denver's mayor recognized this challenge early on. He knew that a meeting like the Latino Summit could fire people up for a short time, but the momentum could wane if the city did not follow up on the plans. The follow-up meeting he held 100 days after the summit laid out action plans for all constituent groups. The goodwill generated at the two meetings will help ensure that the work continues.

Maintaining support is particularly challenging in a time of financial constraint. In Akron, lower enrollment projections from the state could force the city and district to scale back their plans for rebuilding schools as community learning centers, since funding is based on student enrollment. Leaders are hopeful that residents will continue to back the plan even if fewer schools are rebuilt.

Inevitable changes in leadership also make sustaining engagement a challenge. In Long Beach, Mayor O'Neill is scheduled to step down in 2006 after twelve years as the leading champion of the city's seamless education partnership. But officials note that the partnership is not an issue in the election campaign; all the leading candidates support it. The partnership is now the way the city government and its education institutions do business. Nashville's mayor Purcell has decided not to seek a third term; in 2007 a

new mayor will be elected. The school board president is not worried, though. She believes that business leaders and the community would block an attempt to dismantle traditions that have built up around the first-day-of-school festivities.

Perhaps that is the best outcome for public engagement. When a community is so completely engaged in its schools that it cannot envision any other way, education – and the city – can only benefit. The five cities highlighted in this publication have shown some of the paths toward that goal.

Resources

for Municipal Leaders

The following pages offer a compendium of resources that can help municipal leaders engage their communities effectively in the work of improving local school systems and raising academic achievement. Included here are all the resources presented in the five city chapters, supplemented by additional relevant materials.

The section begins with a list of general resources on leadership and strategic actions applicable to school improvement. The rest of the resources are grouped according to the four high-yield strategies presented in the preceding chapter.

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Community Events	
Public Investment in School Improvements	
Family and Community Involvement	
Using Data	

General Resources for Promoting School Improvement

The resources in this section suggest a wide range of strategic actions and best leadership practices mayors can use to support healthy development and high-quality education for the children and youth of their communities.

Strategic Action

Action Kit for Municipal Leaders no. 5: Improving Schools

This toolkit from the National League of Cities (NLC), based on research and best practices from across the nation, contains ideas for practical actions that municipal leaders can take to support student achievement in their communities.

www.nlc.org/iyef/publications___resources/2181.cfm

A City Platform for Strengthening Families and Improving Outcomes for Children and Youth

This four-page platform, created by NLC's Council on Youth, Education, and Families, urges every city and town to take concrete steps on behalf of children, youth, and families. The platform identifies the "essential infrastructure" that is needed for sustained progress and offers a set of specific action steps that every community can take in each of seven issue areas.

www.nlc.org/iyef/publications___resources/5554.cfm

Responsibility of Mayors in School Success

Audrey Hutchinson, "The View from City Hall," *Voices in Urban Education*, no. 1 (Spring), 2003.

Mayors are increasingly taking leadership roles in education, recognizing that their constituents hold them accountable for

the success of schools in their cities. In this article, Audrey Hutchinson, program director for education and after-school initiatives at the NLC's Institute for Youth, Education, and Families, shows how the efforts of leaders in a number of cities are redefining educational accountability as a shared municipal responsibility.

www.annenberginstitute.org/VUE/spring03/Hutchinson.html

Strengthening America's Families: An Agenda for Municipal Leaders

This guide from NLC offers policy and program options and action steps for local officials seeking new ways of doing business that will lead to better outcomes for children, families, and neighborhoods.

www.nlc.org/iyef/publications___resources/5554.cfm

Strengthening America's Families: What Municipal Leaders Must Do

This is a position paper of the NLC's Council on Youth, Education, and Families.

www.nlc.org/iyef/publications___resources/5554.cfm

Stronger Schools, Stronger Cities

This NLC report profiles municipal leadership efforts in six cities with widely varying models of school governance. Each profile highlights strategies used by mayors and council members to stimulate and support progress in raising student achievement and improving public schools.

www.nlc.org/iyef/publications___resources/5551.cfm

Note: Web addresses change frequently as organizations update their Web sites. The URLs listed in this section were accurate as of June 2006; if a URL is no longer valid, please try the home page of the organization, which may feature search functions or links to resources or publications.

Mayor's Office Agencies

One way mayor's offices can effectively support education is to set up agencies with a specific focus on youth welfare, education, or civil rights.

City Commission on Youth and Children (Long Beach)

The Long Beach City Council created the city's first Commission on Youth and Children in 2003. The commission, consisting of ten adults and nine youths, serves as an advisory group to the mayor and city council on issues affecting youth and children.

▲ www.longbeachyouth.org/comoyouth.html

Mayor's Office for Education and Children (Denver)

The office, established in 1995, advocates for the children, youth, and families of Denver and serves as the city's liaison to Denver Public Schools. The office is committed to helping Denver children grow up with the strengths, knowledge, and skills necessary to become confident and successful residents, focusing on the first two decades of life.

▲ www.denvergov.org/Education/default.asp

Agency for Human Rights and Community Relations (Denver)

The agency, established in 1948, promotes equal opportunity and protects the rights of all Denver residents, regardless of race, color, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, or disability.

▲ www.denvergov.org/HumanRights/default.asp

Mayor's Office of Children and Youth (Nashville)

The office works in partnership with public and private entities to ensure that all Nashville's children are healthy, safe, successful in school, and connected to caring adults, allowing them the opportunity to contribute to the city's progress.

▲ www.nashville.gov/mocy/index.htm

Leadership

Leaders on Leadership

Proven leaders from administration, teaching, government, business, and community define effective, innovative leadership for education. Randy Kelly, mayor of St. Paul, Minnesota, discusses his creation of a cabinet-level position to build partnerships and of the Capital City Education Initiative.

- "Leaders on Leadership," *Threshold: Exploring the Future of Education*, Summer 2005.
www.ciconline.org/aboutcic/Publications/Archives/threshold_summer05.htm
(follow Leaders on Leadership link)
- Capital City Education Initiative
www.stpaul4schools.org/edu-initiative.html

Leaders in Learning

This program honors twelve leaders, including Dallas Mayor Laura Miller, who have demonstrated vision, innovation, action, and transformation in improving learning for young people. Mayor Miller has implemented a Mayor's Summer Reading Program, 5K Fun Run, and Back-to-School Fair.

- "Leaders for Learning," *Threshold: Exploring the Future of Education*, Summer 2005.
www.ciconline.org/aboutcic/Publications/Archives/threshold_summer05.htm
(follow Leaders on Leadership link)
- Mayor's Back to School Fair
www.dallascityhall.com/html/back_to_school_fair.html

Profiles in Leadership

Profiles in Leadership: Innovative Approaches to Transforming the American High School demonstrates that we know a great deal about how to educate every child to high

standards. It also shows that improving educational outcomes for America's secondary students is a complex task requiring a variety of methods and the dedication of individuals within and outside of the school setting. An essay by Ron Gonzales, mayor of San Jose, "Mayors Must Make Better High Schools a High Priority," describes some of the city's efforts to build partnerships, retain teachers, and provide financial and political support to high schools.

www.all4ed.org/publications/ProfilesInLeadership/index.html

Helping to Forge a Common Vision for Educational Equity and Excellence

Mayors are in a unique position to convene broad coalitions across different sectors of the community that will generate a common vision, political capital, and resources in support of public education in their communities.

Forging Partnerships

City–School System Collaboration

City and school officials clearly agree that the fortunes of cities and schools are closely linked. Perhaps even more striking is the extent to which municipal and school leaders also agree on many of the key challenges that lie ahead for public schools. City and school officials must move from a shared understanding of the problems to a common agenda and plan of action with shared accountability for results. Mayors and city council members are in an excellent position to engage the public, raise awareness of critical needs, and marshal the political will to address them.

- Donald J Borut, Anne L Bryant, and Paul D. Houston, "Conflict or Consensus? Why Collaboration Between Cities and Schools Is Key to Reform," *Education Week*, September 21, 2005, pages 38–40.
www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2005/09/21/04borut.h25.html (paid subscription or registration for limited free articles required)

Building Civic Capacity

Municipal leaders can play key roles in engaging the public and building civic capacity – concerted action by different sectors of the community – around education reform.

- Clarence Stone, "Civic Capacity and Urban Education," unpublished manuscript, University of Maryland, 2001.
www.bsos.umd.edu/gvpt/stone/prolo.html

How-To Guide for School-Business Partnerships

The Council for Corporate & School Partnerships offers this guide and accompanying worksheets to suggest effective strategies to school officials and business leaders who are interested in engaging in school-business partnerships. Since the vast majority of partnerships are initiated by schools, a number of the guidelines are written with the school perspective in mind.

www.corpschoolpartners.org/guide.shtml

New Relationships with Schools

This two-volume report from the Collaborative Communications Group contains three in-depth case studies and eight additional surveys of organizations that connect with schools, analyzing how these organizations translate their beliefs into action.

www.publicengagement.com/practices/publications/newrelationshipsmyr.htm

Promising Partnership Practices 2005

The eighth annual collection of promising partnership practices, published by the National Network of Partnership Schools at Johns Hopkins University, features eighty-six practices of school, family, and community partnerships that support students from preschool through high school to achieve academic success and lifelong well-being. Schools, districts, state departments of education, and organization partners in the National Network of Partnership Schools contributed to the 2005 collection.

www.csos.jhu.edu/p2000/PPP/2005/index.htm

Volunteer Programs

PENCIL Partners Program (Nashville)

PENCIL Partners are Nashville-area businesses, organizations, and faith communities who partner with a Nashville public school. PENCIL Partners volunteer time and other resources to help children achieve academically, develop life skills, and make a successful transition from school to career.

www.pencilfd.org/partners

Principal for a Day Program (Long Beach)

Principal for a Day, co-sponsored by the Long Beach Area Chamber of Commerce, the Long Beach Unified School District, and the Long Beach Education Foundation, brings community members from the Greater Long Beach area into every school in the district in the role of principal. Each “principal for a day” interacts with students, teachers, parents, and administrators through classroom visits, meetings, testing, and playground supervision, then makes recommendations

to school board members, district administrators, teachers, and student representatives. The program has generated hundreds of business and education partnerships.

www.lbusd.k12.ca.us/community/education_foundation/LBEFpfad.asp

Forming Collaborative Bodies to Support and Sustain a Common Vision

Forging a common vision for high-quality education among different sectors of the community is a necessary first step – but, to be sustained, that vision must be institutionalized. Resourceful mayors and communities have developed many kinds of partnerships and organizational structures to ensure that their hard-won reforms become a way of life.

Community Collaborations

Brooklyn Education Collaborative

The Brooklyn Education Collaborative is an advocacy coalition, representing parents and community groups from three school districts and the teachers union, for middle school reform.

- Natalie Bell, “Brooklyn parent group to DOE: Move forward on middle school reforms,” *New York Teacher*, March 17, 2005.
www.uft.org/news/teacher/reforms
- United Federation of Teachers, “Silent concert is loud and clear about missing courses,” April 28, 2005.
www.uft.org/parent/concert

Community Collaborative to Improve District 9 Schools (CC9)

CC9, at the time the data in this report was gathered,¹ was a community-led collaborative of parents, community members, community-based organizations, and other partners that organizes parents and neighborhood residents for school reform in the South Bronx, with support from the Community Involvement Program at New York University.² CC9 combined community organizing with developing relationships with the New York City Department of Education and the teachers union to design an innovative lead teacher program and transform the district into a model for how to improve a low-performing urban school district.

- Ocyntia Williams, “A Community-Led Reform: Improving Schools in the South Bronx,” *Voices in Urban Education*, no. 5 (Fall), 2004.
www.annenberginstitute.org/EKF/images/OcyntiaWilliamsVUE5.pdf
- “Community Matters in the Bronx”: Materials from Emerging Knowledge Forum 2005, convened by the Annenberg Institute for School Reform.
www.annenberginstitute.org/EKF/2005/Bronx.html
- Platform for Educational Improvement and Mission Statement
www.annenberginstitute.org/EKF/images/CC9_Platform.pdf
- Community Involvement Program
www.annenberginstitute.org/CIP/

Institutional Collaborations

Big Buildings, Small Schools

This report describes emerging efforts by communities such as Boston, Oakland, New York City, and Sacramento to convert large, comprehensive high schools

into “education complexes” made up of multiple, autonomous small schools under one roof. The implementation issues discussed include school-level autonomies, governance, leadership of high school reform at the district level, and the role of outside partners.

- Lili Allen and Adria Steinberg, *Big Buildings, Small Schools: Using a Small Schools Strategy for High School Reform*. Boston: Jobs for the Future, 2004.
www.jff.org (follow link to Knowledge Center/Publications and search on title)

A Call to Action: Transforming High School for All Youth

This 2005 publication from the National High School Alliance provides leaders at the national, state, municipal, district, school, and community levels with a common framework for building public will, developing supportive policies, and implementing practices needed to redesign high schools.

www.hsalliance.org/

Long Beach Education Partnership

The leaders of the city’s three largest educational institutions (California State University, Long Beach; Long Beach City College; and Long Beach Unified School District) began the partnership in 1994 after meeting to discuss how they could protect the education of young people in Long Beach’s worsening economic environment. The partners work together to increase achievement for all pre-kindergarten through graduate school students in a large, highly diverse, multi-lingual urban area, addressing problems

¹ The collaborative has since expanded its mission and changed its name to Community Collaborative to Improve Bronx Schools (CCB).

² Effective September 1, 2006, the Community Involvement Program is part of the Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University.

ranging from day-to-day operational barriers to complex intellectual issues such as shaping the major redesign of the undergraduate preparation of elementary teachers.

www.ced.csulb.edu/about/partnerships.cfm

Partnerships for Capital Projects

The Appleseed Foundation

This organization examines a variety of options for public-private partnerships in school facilities financing. Methods of structuring the debt and partnering for construction are illustrated with case studies. Issues with state and local governments are cited, along with ideas for creative occupancy partnerships and the prudent management of facilities created by these partnerships.

www.appleseeds.net

School Facilities Financing Options: Overview

This resource list of links, books, and journal articles from the National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities (funded by the U.S. Department of Education) provides an extensive and broad overview of issues and strategies for financing K–12 school buildings and grounds.

www.edfacilities.org/rl/financing_options.cfm

Ohio School Facilities Commission

The Ohio School Facilities Commission provides funding, management oversight, and technical assistance to local school districts for construction and renovation of school facilities to provide an appropriate learning environment for Ohio's schoolchildren.

www.osfc.state.oh.us

School-Construction Partnership in Akron

Imagine Akron Community Learning Centers is an aggressive, fifteen-year plan

to remodel or rebuild Akron Public Schools and transform the buildings into community learning centers. With joint funding from the state and local community, more than \$800 million is available for this program – the largest construction opportunity in the history of Akron.

www.imagineakronschools.com/content/whatis.htm

- Construction oversight
www.imagineakronschools.com/content/oversight.htm
- Joint use agreement
www.imagineakronschools.com/pdfs/coopagree.pdf

Expanding Services and Supports for Student Learning and Healthy Development

Supports for the healthy academic, social, emotional, and physical development of children and youth can be provided by community and civic groups as well as formal school programs. Mayors are in a unique position to link and help align these community resources to ensure that all youth have access to them and that they are connected to schooling and organized into clear and coherent pathways to success.

Community Learning Centers

Research and Practice in Community Schools

This report features twenty different community school models across America that help improve performance by mobilizing community resources in support of student learning. The report offers recommendations to all stakeholders involved with students, schools, families, and communities for creating and sustaining community schools.

- Martin J. Blank, Atelia Melaville, and Bela P. Shah, *Making the Difference: Research and Practice in Community Schools*. Washington, DC: Coalition for Community Schools, 2003.
www.communityschools.org/mtdhomepage.html

Redesigning Schools to Improve Learning

The concept of schools as community centers has been a hot topic for more than a hundred years. In this article, the author describes how to plan, budget, staff, design, and maintain community learning centers. This approach to principles of learning, curriculum, staffing, facilities, student as resource, parent roles, technology, staff development and more makes it possible to accomplish for all students three major goals of education: responsible citizenship, productive work, and lifelong learning. The Community Learning Centers program gives courageous school and community leaders the background and practical information to create high performance schools.

- Wayne Jennings, “Redesigning Schools to Improve Learning,” in *Bold Plans for School Restructuring*, edited by Sam Stringfield, Steven Ross, and Lana Smith. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Elbaum Associates, 1998. Reprinted by Design Share under the title “Community Learning Centers.”
www.designshare.com/articles/1/131-jennings/jennings-learn-ctr.pdf

Schools as Centers of Community

The KnowledgeWorks Foundation provides a systematic planning approach that can result in the successful development of schools as centers of communities. It outlines basic principles for designing

such schools and provides case studies of successful projects.

www.kwfdn.org/schools_communities/schools_centers

U.S. Department of Education: 21st Century Community Learning Centers

The 21st Century Community Learning Center program, a key component of President Bush’s No Child Left Behind Act, is an opportunity for students and their families to continue to learn new skills and discover new abilities after the school day has ended. The program provides expanded academic enrichment opportunities for children attending low-performing schools, as well as youth-development activities such as drug and violence prevention programs; technology education programs; art, music, and recreation programs; counseling, and character education to enhance the academic component of the program.

www.ed.gov/programs/21stcclc/index.html

Support for Vulnerable Students

BUENO Center for Multicultural Education, University of Colorado

The center is an integral part of the School of Education at the University of Colorado at Boulder. Through a comprehensive range of research, training, and service projects, the Center strongly promotes quality education with an emphasis on cultural pluralism. The Center is deeply committed to facilitating equal educational opportunities for cultural- and language-minority students.

www.colorado.edu/education/BUENO

Colorado Children’s Campaign

The Colorado Children’s Campaign has worked since 1985 to mobilize individuals and organizations to think and act on behalf of children, with particular

attention to the health, education, and safety of children most at risk.

- Colorado Children's Campaign
www.coloradokids.org
- Colorado Small Schools Initiative
www.coloradosmallschools.org
- Colorado Children's Campaign, *Denver's Latino Students: A Snapshot of Education and Opportunity*, October 2004. Can be downloaded from
www.coloradosmallschools.org/resources/cssiresearch.html

The Education Trust

The Education Trust is a national reform support organization that works for the high academic achievement of all students at all levels, pre-kindergarten through college, and to forever close the achievement gaps that separate low-income students and students of color from other youth. Its basic tenet is that all children will learn at high levels when they are taught to high levels. (See pages 15–16 for a description of The Education Trust's work in a Denver school.)

- The Education Trust home page
www2.edtrust.org/edtrust
- The Education Trust Annual Conference
www2.edtrust.org/edtrust/Conferences+and+Meetings

Escuela Tlatelolco

Escuela Tlatelolco is a community-based private school, developed in the late 1960s to provide an alternative education for young Chicanos, Mexicanos, and Raza Indigena, especially those who have not had success in traditional public school settings. The school aims to provide these

students with academic proficiency and instill in them cultural pride, confidence, and leadership.

www.escuelatlatelolco.org/

Long Beach Unified School District: 2003–2004 Winner, Broad Prize for Urban Education

The Broad Prize for Urban Education is a \$1 million prize awarded annually to the best urban school districts in the nation that make the greatest improvement in student achievement while reducing achievement gaps among ethnic groups and between high- and low-income students. Five urban school districts are selected as finalists each year. The winning district receives \$500,000 in scholarships for graduating seniors, and each finalist district receives \$125,000 in scholarships.

- More about Broad Prize on the Long Beach Unified School District Web site, "Did You Know?"
www.lbusd.k12.ca.us/district/didyouknow.asp

Reengaging Disconnected Youth Action Kit

This action kit from National League of Cities (NLC) contains policy and program ideas for municipal leaders and draws upon the latest research and best practices from the nation. It includes sections on education, workforce connections, transitions, and system building for disconnected youth.

- Available for download along with other Action Kits for Municipal Leaders
www.nlc.org/iyef/publications__resources/2181.cfm

Support for Teaching and Learning

Children First Reform Agenda (New York City)

The New York City Department of Education's Children First Reform Agenda grew out of a citywide series of community engagement meetings between Chancellor Joel Klein and his staff and thousands of parents, students, teachers, principals, department staff, community groups, education experts, faith-based leaders, and business groups. From the information and suggestions gathered and an analysis of best practices in New York City and other urban districts, the chancellor and mayor developed core proposals designed to give all New York's schools, teachers, and principals the resources and support they need to improve teaching and learning in individual schools and classrooms. www.nycenet.edu/Administration/Childrenfirst/CFAgenda.htm

- Gail Robinson, "Improving the Schools," *Gotham Gazette*, July 29, 2002. <http://gothamgazette.com/article/20020729/200/266>

Fact-Finding Panel Recommendation to Accept Lead Teacher Project (New York City)

When the current collective bargaining agreement between the New York City Department of Education and the United Federation of Teachers was being negotiated in 2003 and 2004, an impasse was reached. In response, the New York Public Employment Relations Board appointed a fact-finding panel, which recognized the success of the Lead Teacher program in the Bronx and recommended expanding it into a citywide program.

- State of New York Public Employment Relations Board. Findings of Fact and Report and Recommendations of the

Fact-Finding Panel. Report M2004-253, 268-279 New York (September 2005), p. 50.

www.perb.state.ny.us/pdf/m2004-253.pdf

New Teacher Compensation System (Denver)

Denver was a featured site at the Emerging Knowledge Forum on "smart school systems," convened by the Annenberg Institute for School Reform, St. Petersburg, FL, March 2005. This article discusses Denver's new teacher compensation system.

- "Equity Matters in Denver," Annenberg Institute, 2005. www.annenberginstitute.org/EKF/images/pdfs/Context_Denver.pdf
- Brad Jupp, "Creating Faculties that Support School Communities Smart Districts," *Voices in Urban Education*, no. 5 (Fall), 2004. Excerpt available at www.annenberginstitute.org/VUE/fall04/Jupp.html

Parents and Teachers Work Together to Improve Teacher Quality (New York City)

This article describes the collaboration between the CC9 community coalition in the Bronx and the teachers union to develop a lead teacher program.

- "A True Bronx Tale: How Parents and Teachers Joined Forces to Improve Teacher Quality," in *Philanthropy's Role in Fostering Partnerships: Collaborating with Unions, School Districts and Communities*, Grantmakers for Education, 2005. www.annenberginstitute.org/EKF/images/pdfs/CC9_Case_Study.pdf

Teacher-Education Program (Long Beach)

The Department of Teacher Education at California State University, Long Beach, offers a teacher-preparation (credential)

program for those desiring to become elementary teachers (K–8), course work for those preparing to be secondary or special education teachers, and graduate-level course work leading to master’s degrees, advanced credentials, and certificates.

www.ced.csulb.edu/teacher-ed/index.cfm

CityTEACH (Long Beach)

CityTEACH is a comprehensive academic and experiential teacher-preparation program at Long Beach City College for students who plan to become elementary school teachers. Students who successfully complete the CityTEACH program are eligible for priority transfer into the teacher preparation programs at Cal State–Long Beach and Cal State–Dominguez Hills.

<http://cityteach.lbcc.edu>

Extended Learning Opportunities

The Afterschool Hours

This article from the National League of Cities (NLC) highlights strategies and insights from the eight cities that participated in NLC’s technical assistance project on municipal leadership for expanding learning opportunities.

- Mark Ouellette, Audrey M. Hutchinson, and Nina Frant, *The Afterschool Hours: A New Focus for America’s Cities*. Washington, DC: National League of Cities, 2005.
www.nlc.org/content/Files/iyef-Lessons%20Learned%20Afterschool.pdf

Extending Opportunities to Learn

This Wallace Foundation report details the importance of surrounding children with high-quality opportunities to learn and grow in school, beyond the school day, and through engagement with the arts. REPORT ’04 profiles three examples

of these efforts: the New York City Leadership Academy which is pioneering new methods for training principals; plans by top leaders of Providence, Rhode Island, to provide children with more and better out-of-school learning opportunities; and the Children’s Theatre Company in Minneapolis, which has become a national beacon for providing young people with high-quality arts experiences.

www.wallacefoundation.org/WF/KnowledgeCenter/KnowledgeTopics/PhilanthropicIssues/WallaceREPORT04.htm

Mayor’s Early Childhood Initiatives (Denver)

The 5 By 5 Program, sponsored by the Mayor’s Office for Education and Children, aims to provide the city’s children with five cultural experiences before they reach the age of five. This free program, made possible through in-kind and financial support from the city’s cultural partners and corporate sponsors, is available to Denver Head Start families with children under the age of five. The program, building on Mayor Hickenlooper’s “Invest in Success” early childhood education summit, strives to introduce arts, culture, and play to spark imagination and stimulate creativity and learning.

- 5 By 5 Program
www.denvergov.org/dephome.asp?depid=1950
- Early childhood education summit press release
www.denvergov.org/Mayor/1688press1218.asp

Mayor’s Expanded Learning and Recreation Opportunities (St. Petersburg)

In St. Petersburg, Mayor Rick Baker introduced initiatives to expand learning and recreation opportunities for the city’s school children. These include using the

mayor's office to build stronger relationships between schools and local business and increasing access to school facilities for after-school use.

- Mayor's Mentors
www.stpete.org/mentors.htm
- "The Education Mayor," Editorial, *St. Petersburg Times*, April 20, 2004.
www.sptimes.com/2004/04/20/Opinion/The_education_mayor.shtml

Mobilizing Public and Political Will for Quality Schools

In most cases, mayors do not have direct authority over education systems in their cities. Many mayors have had success in engaging the public around education reform through using the power, influence, and resources at their disposal in creative ways. They can establish or encourage policies to support schools, appeal to a community's beliefs in the importance of public education, organize citywide events, campaign for public investment and involvement in schools, and marshal data to rally public support.

Policy

Family-Friendly Parental-Leave Policies (Nashville)

In 2000, Nashville's city government passed a civil service rule – Section 4.17 – to provide leave for city employees to visit their children's schools. Many private employers followed the city's example. The Mayor's Honor Roll recognizes businesses that allow and encourage their employees to take their children to school on First Day.

- Section 4.17: Parent Teacher Conferences
www.nashville.gov/moc/firstday_2004/section4.17.htm

- The Mayor's Honor Roll
www.nashville.gov/moc/firstday_2006/business.htm#honor_roll

Vanderbilt University Child and Family Policy Center

The mission of the Child and Policy Center is to develop, promote and implement public policy and community strategies that strengthen children and families through research, advocacy and education.

www.vanderbilt.edu/VIPPS/C&FPC/
www.familyreunion.org

Promoting Public Education

Practical Guide to Promoting America's Public Schools

This Learning First Alliance communications tool is designed to help educators, policymakers, and others promote the value of public schools to parents, the public, and your constituencies. The guide is based on an extensive analysis of new data on voters' values, their view of public schools' mission, and their vision of a good public school.

- Learning First Alliance home page
www.learningfirst.org
- Guide can be downloaded at
www.learningfirst.org/lfa-web/rp?pa=doc&docId=72

Telling Your Story: A Toolkit for Marketing Urban Education

This National School Board toolkit provides communication strategies to capture and share the success stories that are happening in schools with students, teachers, and principals. It is the product of the Council of Urban Boards of Education (CUBE) Communications Task Force Executive Group, whose mission is to help board members better communicate with their constituents by developing

strategies that build a more positive urban public school image and garners support in the community.

- Toolkit
www.nsba.org/site/docs/34700/34647.pdf
- CUBE
www.nsba.org/site/page_micro.asp?TrackID=&CID=80&DID=212

Community Events

Mayor's First Day Festival 2005 (Nashville)

The Festival features family fun, educational entertainment, and free school supplies and snacks. There are outdoor activities as well as live music in the park adjacent to the Gaylord Entertainment Center. The Web site has links to the mayor's Corporate Honor Roll and archives of past festivals.

www.nashville.gov/mocv/firstday_2005/

Mayor's Summit on Latino Academic Achievement (Denver)

Extensive documentation is available on the Web from the Mayor's Summit on Latino Academic Achievement held on October 20, 2004, including a message from Mayor Hickenlooper; the opening presentation by Kati Haycock, director of the Education Trust, about closing the achievement gap; the closing presentation by Federico Peña, calling the business community to action; a presentation; demographic information; a summary of the issues; a student mural; a video of the summit; conference proceedings; and results from the attendee evaluations. Approximately three hundred business, civic, and educational leaders attended the summit.

- Latino Summit Web site
www.denvergov.org/latinosummit

- Federico Peña's closing address
www.denvergov.org/LatinoSummit/template316582.asp

- Kati Haycock's keynote address
www.denvergov.org/LatinoSummit/template316572.asp

- Report: "Today's Latino Student: America's Future Human Capital," *Excelencia in Education*
www.denvergov.org/LatinoSummit/template316711.asp (follow link to Denver MayorSummit04.pdf)

About *Excelencia in Education*: Latinos are the largest and fastest-growing minority group in the U.S., yet lag behind other major racial and ethnic groups in higher-education attainment. *Excelencia in Education* aims to accelerate higher education success for Latino students by linking research, policy, and practice to serve Latino students and the institutions and programs where they participate.

www.edexcelencia.org

Public Investment in School Improvements

City Income Tax to Rebuild Schools (Akron)

Mayor Don Plusquellic, Superintendent Sylvester Small, and community leaders launched an all-out effort in 2003 to pass Issue 10, a proposed one-quarter-of-one-percent increase in the Akron city income tax with the goal of generating the matching funds needed to secure \$409 million from the state of Ohio to rebuild and renovate every school in Akron – without raising property taxes.

- "Issue 10 Kick Off," City of Akron News Release, March 31, 2003.
www.ci.akron.oh.us/News_Releases/2003/0331.html

- Laraine Duncan and Donna Loomis, “Funding and Rebuilding Schools as Community Learning Centers: Akron, Ohio,” *Voices in Urban Education*, no. 7 (Spring), 2005. Excerpt available at www.annenberginstitute.org/VUE/Spring05/Duncan.html

Community Design for New Community Learning Centers (Akron)

Mayor Don Plusquellic publicly noted that citizen involvement was the cornerstone of Issue 10. In one of the first steps in converting Akron’s public schools into Community Learning Centers (CLCs), representatives of the city, the schools, the consortium of architects that was retained to design the CLCs, and a consulting firm conducted a series of meetings to give the public the opportunity to help define, design, and build the first eight CLCs scheduled for construction in the initial phase of the largest capital expenditure program in the history of Akron.

- “Schools, City poised to take next step in shaping Akron’s future; Planning Teams will help define, design, and build first wave of Community Learning Centers,” City of Akron News Release, December 5, 2003. www.ci.akron.oh.us/News_Releases/2003/1205b.html

Property Tax to Fund New Incentive System for Teacher Compensation (Denver)

Denver voters approved a property-tax increase to finance a new compensation plan for Denver teachers – based on incentives rather than seniority – that attracted national attention. Bess Keller’s article describes the measure, which was designed by a district-union team and backed by the mayor, the city council, other business and civic leaders, and a

campaign war chest of more than \$1 million, mostly from foundations and businesses.

- Bess Keller, “Denver Voters Pave Way for Incentive Pay,” *Education Week*, November 9, 2005. www.edweek.org/agentk-12/articles/2005/11/09/11denver.h25.html (paid subscription or registration for limited free articles required)
- Brad Jupp, “Creating Faculties that Support School Communities,” *Voices in Urban Education* no. 5 (Fall), 2004. Excerpt available at www.annenberginstitute.org/VUE/fall04/Jupp.html
- ProComp: Denver Public Schools Professional Compensation System for Teachers <http://denverprocomp.org>

Sales Tax Referendum to Fund School Improvement (Ohio)

Summit Education Initiative: Issue 12 was a proposal for a one-half-percent sales tax that would have been distributed by a community improvement board to provide additional revenue for permanent improvements for Ohio school districts. Though the measure failed to pass, it helped pave the way for future efforts to generate local funds in order to access a state grant.

- Election Report 2002, Greater Cleveland Growth Association/Council of Smaller Enterprises http://intranet.cose.org/pdf/election_report_2002.pdf

Family and Community Involvement

Communities and Schools: A New View of Urban Education Reform

In this article, Mark R. Warren argues that if urban school reform in the United States is to be successful, it must be linked to the revitalization of the communities around schools. Warren identifies a growing field of collaboration between public schools and community-based organizations, identifying three different approaches: the service approach (community schools); the development approach (community sponsorship of new charter schools); and the organizing approach (school-community organizing). Warren discusses shared lessons across these approaches, and compares and contrasts the particular strengths and weaknesses of each.

<http://gseweb.harvard.edu/hepg/reprints.html>

Engaging Families at the Secondary Level

Contrary to popular belief, research indicates that teenagers want their parents and families involved in their lives. And, contrary to what many educators believe, research has found that parents – regardless of their economic status or background – want to be involved in their teenagers' lives. These two Web sites offer research-based advice and resources to help schools and districts foster successful parent involvement in secondary schools in ways that help improve student achievement.

- Southwest Educational Development Lab strategy briefs
www.sedl.org/connections/research-briefs.html

- *Meeting the Challenge: Getting Parents Involved in Schools*, August 2005 newsletter, Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement
www.centerforcsri.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=130&Itemid=5

Guide to Public Engagement and School Finance Litigation

This guide is intended to encourage community organizations to employ public engagement strategies in the context of school finance litigation taking place in their states. While litigation may at times seem daunting and complex to non-lawyers, there is much that community-based organizations concerned with education reform can do to become involved in the process. Organizations can help their constituent groups and the public become involved as well, working to ensure that the outcomes of the litigation reflect the interests of their respective communities.

www.publiceducation.org/pdf/publications/public_engagement/litigation_guide.pdf

Taking a Closer Look: A Guide to Online Resources on Family Involvement

Harvard Family Research Project has compiled and categorized the large body of information on family involvement in order to make it easier for practicing educators to access and use. The document contains Web links to research, information, programs, and tools from over 100 national organizations. It provides information about parenting practices to support children's learning and development, home-school relationships, parent leadership development, and collective engagement for school improvement and reform.
<http://gseweb.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/fine/resources/guide/index.html?pid=10625>

Using NCLB to Improve Student Achievement: An Action Guide for Community and Parent Leaders

This guide addresses the various provisions of No Child Left Behind. The guide highlights ways NCLB can be used to strengthen the public's voice in education, and to increase community and parental involvement in school-level and district-level operations and decisions.

www.publiceducation.org/pdf/nclb/NCLBBook.pdf

Using Data

2005 Kids Count Data Book

Data suggest national trends in child well-being are no longer improving in the rapid and sustained way they did in the late 1990s. Among the negative trends: the number of children who live with parents facing persistent unemployment grew to 4 million, an increase of more than 1 million since 2000. The state-by-state data contained in the 2005 Data Book are now part of an interactive database that allows you to generate custom graphs, maps, ranked lists, and state-by-state profiles; or, download the entire data set as delimited text files. The pull-down menus also allow you to read the book online or view the book in PDF.

www.aecf.org/kidscount/sld/databook.jsp

Alliance for Excellent Education

The Alliance for Excellent Education has provided all fifty governors with a statistical snapshot of high schools in their respective states. Each snapshot is offered as a quick state-by-state reference to essential statistics about high schools. Data includes funding, teachers' salaries, graduation rates, college readiness, and academic achievement. Statewide numbers are compared to the national average, and include national rankings where applicable.

- Press release
www.all4ed.org/press/pr_022205.html

BASRC Cycle of Inquiry

This guide includes the six steps of a school-level cycle of inquiry. The web site includes many other resources and tools for evaluating school improvement.

- BASRC home page (now Springboard Schools)
www.springboardschools.org
- Inquiry Tools page
www.springboardschools.org/tools_resources/coi_tools.html

Buried Treasure: Developing a Management Guide from Mountains of School Data

This guide provides a practical discussion of what is required to develop a school district "management guide," along with an actual guide built on evidence-based indicators. It begins with an imaginary discussion at Rebel Valley School District, during which a new superintendent leads his board through the guide. Indicators are discrete pieces of information, like water temperature or the Dow Jones Average, designed to alert leaders and members of the public about what is going on in large, complex systems. They provide warnings and hints about how well complex systems are functioning. They are, therefore, capable of alerting leaders to potential problems. Although they can help identify problems, they cannot provide solutions.

www.crpe.org/pubs/pdf/BuriedTreasure_celio.pdf

Education Counts Database

This database, maintained by Education Week, contains more than 250 state-level K-12 education indicators, as well as tools to create custom tables, graphs, and maps from a wealth of data. You can

select indicators on accountability, school finance, student achievement, and more, then create a table comparing states or look at year-over-year data.

www.edweek.org/rc/edcounts

Data Warehousing in School Districts

School districts have been upgrading technology, streamlining data collection, and addressing issues of data access and use in response to No Child Left Behind. But most districts have had little experience in data management, and there are few resources specifically designed to help district leaders use data effectively in their school-improvement programs. This Annenberg Institute report looks at eight districts that have used one promising technology – data warehousing – to make better school-improvement decisions.

- Tamara Mieles and Ellen Foley, *From Data to Decisions: Lessons from School Districts Using Data Warehousing*. Providence, Rhode Island: Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University, 2005.

www.annenberginstitute.org/publications/DataWarehousing.html

Making Data Work: A Parent and Community Guide

This guide shows you how to use data to achieve your goals. The guide answers the questions: Why is data important? Where can I get data? How can I use data to understand what is happening in my school/district? How can I use data to improve my school/district?

www2.edtrust.org/edtrust/images/dataguidefinal.pdf

A Policy-Maker's Primer on Education Research: How to Understand, Evaluate and Use It

This is a guide to help policy-makers and other interested individuals answer three big questions: What does the research

say? Is the research trustworthy? How can the research be used to guide policy? Answering these questions will help policy-makers make evidenced-based decisions about education policies, gain a better understanding of research methods, and become more informed consumers of research.

www.mcrel.org/PDF/SchoolImprovementReform/9713TG_SchoolImprovement_Primer6-04.pdf

SchoolMatters

Three years after a federal law required states to collect a host of education data, much of that information and more is available in one place. A public-private partnership posts test scores, school spending, student demographics, and other relevant data. The site features research tools that allow users to compare achievement across districts, track districts' and individual schools' progress in reaching student-achievement goals under the federal No Child Left Behind Act, and find schools and districts that may be outperforming others.

www.schoolmatters.com

What Works Clearinghouse

This site offers researchers and educators reviews of scientifically based programs and strategies to help them in their decision making.

www.whatworks.ed.gov