



THE GROWING CONVERGENCE OF COMMUNITY SCHOOLS AND EXPANDED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

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Because Every Child Deserves Every Chance

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About the Coalition for Community Schools

The Coalition for Community Schools, housed at the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL), is an alliance of national, state and local organizations in education K–16, youth development, community planning and development, higher education, family support, health and human services, government, and philanthropy as well as national, state, and local community school networks. The Coalition advocates for community schools as a strategy to leverage local resources and programs, changing the look and feel of the traditional school structure to best meet the needs of children and families in the 21st century.

About the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL)

For a half-century, the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) has championed the need for leaders at all levels to shake off their institutional constraints and work across boundaries to address the needs of young people and their families. Bound by no constituency, IEL serves as a catalyst that helps policymakers, administrators, and practitioners at all levels bridge bureaucratic silos and undo gridlock to improve outcomes for all young people and their families. IEL's mission is to equip leaders to work together across boundaries to build effective systems that prepare children and youth for postsecondary education, careers, and citizenship.



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CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 2

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS 4

INTRODUCTION 5

 Community Schools 6

 Expanded Learning Opportunities 7

 Convergence of Community Schools and Expanded Learning Opportunities 8

 About the Study..... 9

FINDINGS 13

 Prevalence of Expanded Learning Opportunities in Community Schools..... 13

 Expanded Learning Opportunities is a Core Strategy for Community School Initiatives 13

 Community Schools Provide Expanded Learning Opportunity across all ELO Types 13

 Intentional and Structured School-Community Partnerships Support Expanded Learning Opportunities 15

 Best Practices of Implementing Expanded Learning Opportunities in Community Schools ... 16

 Community Schools Align with School’s Core Mission..... 16

 Community-Wide and School Site Leadership Structures Support a Comprehensive Expanded Learning Opportunities Strategy 20

 Quality is an Important and Shared Responsibility across Partners 21

 Community Schools Blend and Sustain Expanded Learning Opportunities Funding..... 22

CONCLUSION 23

REFERENCES 23

APPENDIX..... 24

 Appendix I: Data Sources 24

 Appendix II: Lincoln Case Study—Expanding Learning Opportunities through Partnership . 26

 Appendix III: Baltimore Case Study—Strategic Alignment of Community Schools and Expanded Learning Opportunities 35

 Appendix IV: Community Schools Superintendents Leadership Council..... 41

 Appendix V: Coalition for Community Schools Partners..... 42

ADDITIONAL COALITION RESOURCES 44

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

From statehouse to schoolhouse, interest in community schools and expanded learning opportunities (ELO) has grown. This report captures the interaction between these two mutually beneficial education reforms in local communities and draws important lessons that will help schools, districts, community partners, and others.

The Coalition for Community Schools sees expanded learning opportunities as multidimensional and involving *enriched learning experiences, school-community partnerships, and productive use of time*. Based on these principles, we developed an ELO typology (see Table 1). The typology captures a broad classification of time periods available for students and families to benefit from expanded opportunities. These ELO types are organized in four primary categories:

- ELO required for all students.
- ELO for some/all students to increase the number of school days.
- ELO for some/all students to increase time beyond the conventional school day.
- ELO for some/all students during the conventional school day.

The study illustrates the prevalence of expanded learning opportunities in community schools across the country. We found that expanded learning opportunities are a core component of the community schools strategy. Community schools are providing learning experiences across various time dimensions and provide intentional, structured, and coordinated partnerships at the school site that put children at the center of learning.

This study also highlights best practices for implementing expanded learning opportunities through the community schools strategy. Community schools have successfully aligned learning opportunities with the school's core mission and offer collaborative platforms at the community and school levels for crafting a comprehensive ELO strategy. Community schools also ensure the provision of high-quality ELO programs as a responsibility of all partners and sustain ELO efforts through innovative blending of funds.

As more localities continue to explore new ways for providing ELO for their students to prepare them for college, career, citizenship, and life, the community schools strategy will provide a vehicle and vision for creating and sustaining partnerships for successful learning opportunities. Looking into the future, it will be essential for community schools and expanded learning opportunities advocates and practitioners to work together.

Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELO) Typology	
ELO Required for All Students	
Expanded school day	Formally lengthens the school day for all students beyond the standard 6.5 hours offered in most public schools. <i>(In some cases, mandatory ELO may be targeted to only certain grades in a school.)</i>
Expanded school year	Formally lengthens the school year beyond the standard 180 school days for all students. For example, a revised school calendar may add days and rearrange school “breaks” or intersessions. <i>(In some cases, mandatory ELO may be targeted to only certain grades in a school.)</i>
ELO for Some/All Students to Increase Number of School Days	
Expanded school week (e.g., weekends)	Includes academic and non-academic supports and activities for some to all students on Saturdays and Sundays (either mandatory or voluntary).
Intersessions	Includes academic and non-academic supports and activities for some to all students during weekdays when school is not officially in session. Applies only to schools with an expanded-school-year model.
School breaks	Includes academic and non-academic supports for some to all students during school breaks such as days off for teacher professional development, one-day holidays, winter and spring breaks, and so forth (this does not include summer).
Summer	Includes academic and non-academic supports and activities for some to all students during summer. Does not apply to breaks in extended year models. Those are considered “intersessions.”
ELO for Some/All Students to Increase Time beyond Conventional School Days	
Afterschool	Includes academic and non-academic supports and activities for some to all students after the end of the conventional school day.
Before school	Includes academic and non-academic supports and activities for some to all students before the start of the conventional school day.
ELO for Some/All Students during Conventional School Days	
Expanded learning opportunities during the conventional school day	School partners provide academic and other learning supports (e.g., internships, service learning, linked learning, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) programs, and so forth) to young people and their families during the conventional school day.

Table 1. Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELO) Typology



PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Coalition for Community Schools thanks the many individuals who helped provide content for and offered comments on this report. The report embodies the stories we heard from practitioners and school leaders around the country, the thinking of our national and state partners, and the perspectives of community school leaders and our colleagues at The Wallace Foundation. Specifically, we thank the following individuals:

Our local partners in Baltimore, Maryland, and Lincoln, Nebraska, who participated in the two case studies highlighted in this report: Jonathon Rondeau and Julia Baez of the Family League of Baltimore City as well as Damien Johnson, Ellie Mitchell, Jane Sunduis, Jennifer McDowell, Christopher Mark Gaither, and Michael Sarbanes for the Baltimore Community Schools Initiative case study; and Lea Ann Johnson of the Lincoln Public Schools as well as Barb Bettin, Dayna Kranawitter, Dr. Steve Joel, Jodi Miller, Jeff Cole, Kathie Phillips, Kelly Schrad, and Rik Devney for the Lincoln Community Learning Centers case study.

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Finally, this report would not have been possible without our supporters and thought partners at The Wallace Foundation, including Nina Sonenberg, Hilary Rhodes, and Dara Rose.



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INTRODUCTION

Two important education reforms have been unfolding on parallel and sometimes interwoven paths in recent years. The first is the community schools strategy which focuses on providing opportunities and supports at the school site. The second reform includes all the various models of expanded learning opportunities (e.g., afterschool, extended day, and summer programs) that have emerged since the mid-1990s. Especially noteworthy for both fields was the authorization of the federal 21st Century Community Learning Center program in 1994. The 21st CCLC grants helped launch afterschool programs around the country as well as many community schools and continue to be a source of funding and convergence. Today, almost all community schools use expanded learning opportunity strategies and most expanded learning opportunities use school-community partnerships.

Recognizing the centrality of expanded learning opportunities (ELO) in community school initiatives¹ and the growth in scale and innovations across both community schools and ELO efforts, the Coalition for Community Schools (“The Coalition,”) wanted to learn more about the scope of ELO in community school initiatives. Our theory was that community schools and community school initiatives provide a vehicle for expanding learning opportunities and for aligning ELO with a school’s core academic mission.

Our theory built on the 2012 Child Trends report, *Expanding Time for Learning Both Inside and Outside the Classroom: A Review of the Evidence Base*, where the authors created an expanded learning time (ELT typology) wherein community schools operate

across time dimensions (during conventional school hours and out-of-school time), provide for learning expansion (school day and school year), and offer a range of program types (full-day kindergarten, expanded school day and year, and summer school). In short, the authors suggested that community schools represented every type of ELT.

Other literature pointed to an important connection between ELO and community schools as well. Writing about this relationship, the Center for American Progress said:

At the heart of both the community schools and expanded learning time models is raising student achievement by challenging the conventional school model. Implemented separately, each of these models has the potential to make dramatic gains in the lives and academic success of educationally disadvantaged students. Implemented in concert, however, they maximize the benefits and allow schools to address multiple factors in children’s lives, raise achievement, and strengthen the school and the community (Owen, 2010, p. 10).

Finally, we knew that ELO, especially afterschool programs, has always been an important part of the implementation of community schools across the country.² Many community school partners provide enrichment opportunities during out-of-school time. While we knew that ELO is prevalent in community schools, we could not identify much that had been written about the relationship between the two reforms. While we believed firmly that community schools help align and enhance ELO, we needed more evidence.

¹ A community school initiative refers to those districts, cities, or counties that are implementing community schools across multiple sites in a coordinated way.

² Other organizations, including the National Center for Community Schools in its “Building Community Schools: A Guide for Action,” conceptualize ELO as a core part of the community schools strategy.

To explore the relationship more deeply, we drew on several sources:

- Dialogue with our **national partners** focused on the relationship between the reforms
- A broad **survey** of local community schools networks
- A set of **case studies** on local community school initiatives deeply involved with ELO
- A series of **blogs** to highlight innovative ELO practices
- Dialogue with **superintendents** involved with community schools

This report synthesizes information from these sources to capture the nature of interaction between two mutually beneficial reforms in local communities and is intended to help the increasing number of policymakers, funders, and practitioners who are working at points of convergence between community schools and ELO.

We begin with brief descriptions of the reforms and their convergence, follow with a description of our data collection strategies, and then conclude with findings relevant to policymakers, funders, and practitioners interested in both reforms.

Community Schools

Community schools have a long history with deep roots in John Dewey’s idea of schools as social centers and in Jane Adams’s aspirations to provide social supports to those who most need them.³ Community schools have been experiencing significant growth over the last 15 to 20 years as school and community leaders recognize the need to address the

multiple factors involved in increasing student achievement and closing the opportunity gap.

The Coalition defines a community school as:

A place and a set of partnerships between the school and other community resources. Its integrated focus on academics, health and social services, youth and community development and community engagement leads to improved student learning, stronger families and healthier communities. Community schools offer a personalized curriculum that emphasizes real-world learning and community problem-solving. Schools become centers of the community and are open to everyone—all day, every day, evenings and weekends.

Using public schools as hubs, community schools bring together many partners to offer children, families, and communities, a range of supports and opportunities including expanded learning opportunities as well as engaging instruction, health and social supports, family and community engagement, youth development, early childhood development, and college and career readiness.⁴ Community schools are akin to smart phones where students and their families can access the opportunities and supports they need and deserve.

Across the country, more and more leaders in education (especially school district leaders), youth development, health and human services, the nonprofit world, business, and other sectors acknowledge that educating our children is a collective responsibility. School systems need the assets and expertise of community partners in order to meet our shared goal of helping students succeed.

³ To learn more about the history of community schools, see Rogers, J.S. (1998). *Community schools: Lessons for the past and present*. Flint, MI: Charles S. Mott Foundation; Blank, M.J. (2005). Reaching out to create a movement. In J.G. Dryfoos, J. Quinn, and C. Barkin (eds.), *Community schools in action: Lessons from a decade of practice* (pp. 243-258). New York: Oxford University Press.

⁴ The Coalition for Community Schools thinks about community schools just like smart phones. The opportunities and supports listed in the description are “apps” that are easily accessible to students and families, undergirded by a powerful operating system. Visit http://www.communityschools.org/aboutschools/what_is_a_community_school.aspx.

Community schools are one example of school and community partnerships that are taking hold in cities and districts. More than 80 initiatives across the country are working to scale up community schools in their communities,⁵ including those in Cincinnati (Ohio); San Francisco and Oakland (California); Tulsa (Oklahoma); Lincoln (Nebraska); and Baltimore (Maryland).⁶ See Figure 1 for an example of one community school initiative. In addition, Coalition partners (Appendix V) such as the United Way Worldwide, American Federation of Teachers, the principals and superintendents associations, and others endorse the role of school and community partnerships to support students, families, and communities.

Expanded Learning Opportunities

Expanded learning opportunities as an education reform strategy have also received increased attention over the past 15 to 20 years, and the variety of ELO types has grown. Central to the increased focus on ELO is the federal government’s 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) program. Originally aimed at supporting expanded learning opportunities for students and adults, the program now focuses on “academic enrichment opportunities during *non-school hours* for children.”⁷ After the Child Care and Development Block grant, 21st CCLC is the largest federal funding stream for out-of-school-time programming; its funding grew from \$40 million in 1994 to \$1.15 billion in fiscal year 2012. It has primarily funded afterschool and summer learning opportunities but is now starting to fund other ELO strategies (e.g., extended day) as well.

National, state, and local organizations,⁸ such as the Afterschool Alliance and the National

Summer Learning Association, have helped advocate for and support various types of ELO. New organizations have also recently emerged around pilot initiatives to develop other ELO strategies. In Massachusetts, for example, the National Center on Time and Learning supports the lengthening of the school day for all children and is now working to implement the strategy in five states.

Cincinnati, Ohio, Public Schools—Community Learning Centers (CLC)

Community schools, known as CLCs in Ohio, were an important strategy for the Cincinnati Public Schools \$1 billion Master Facilities Plan that started over 10 years ago. Public schools were built or renovated around a shared philosophy among school and community partners: schools are a hub of the community, and their purpose is to revitalize learning and transform the community. With local school board policy supporting such school-community partnerships, Cincinnati now boasts 35 CLCs across the city. Cincinnati represents but one example of a place that has adopted the community schools strategy as central to its education reforms.

Figure 1. Cincinnati Public Schools—Community Learning Centers (CLC)

⁵ To learn how communities are scaling up their community schools strategy across schools, visit <http://www.communityschools.org/ScalingUp/>

⁶ To learn more about where school and community leaders are implementing community schools, visit <http://www.communityschools.org/map.aspx>.

⁷ As defined by the U.S. Department of Education’s regulations for 21st Century Community Learning Centers.

⁸ These organizations are also partners of the Coalition for Community Schools. For a full list of the Coalition’s partners, please see Appendix V.

While superintendents we spoke with tend to think about ELO as out-of-school-time programming, the range of ELO initiatives has evolved. Policymakers and school leaders are now considering more broadly the various ways that learning can be expanded across various time dimensions. For example, the flexibility waivers under the U.S. Department of Education’s Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) have broadened the use of the 21st CCLC funding, previously limited exclusively to out-of-school-time programming, to support *both* increased learning time and enrichment opportunities during and beyond school hours. Other federal grant programs, such as the Race to the Top State and District competitions, Investing in Innovation (i3), Promise Neighborhoods, and School Improvement Grants, also broaden the definition of ELO. In an era of limited funding increases, the expansion of ELO types sometimes creates tension between advocates seeking the same funds. In addition to increased support from governments at various levels, major foundations have been investing heavily in various types of ELO.

Convergence of Community Schools and Expanded Learning Opportunities

From the perspective of the Coalition and its local partners, expanded learning opportunities are crucial components of a community school. Similarly, amid the growth in the types of ELO and their increased use, school-community partnerships are pivotal to providing high-quality expanded learning opportunities.

There seems to be a natural connection between the two strategies. Partnership is a core principle across both strategies. Both community schools and ELO tap the resources and expertise of community partners. Each strategy also relies on local-decision making with key stakeholders rooted at the community and school level working together.

And finally both seek common outcomes for students.

Based on these points of convergence, we see ELO as multidimensional and involving *enriched learning experiences, school-community partnerships, and productive use of time*. These experiences should allow children to explore their interests and talents, begin to discover what they want to become, receive extra academic support, and develop as individuals. For students to succeed, schools and community partners need to work together to provide these kinds of learning experiences by tapping into and restructuring a variety of time periods such as summer breaks or an extended school day.

Therefore, for purposes of this report, we use the following definition of ELO:

Expanded learning opportunities are activities that provide more time for academics and enrichment beyond the conventional school day (e.g., extended day, summer, and after school) and include efforts to provide learning and development experiences that enhance the school curriculum during the conventional school day (e.g., community-based learning, problem solving, linked learning). School staff, contracted providers, and/or community partners are responsible for providing more time and more opportunities.

Figure 2. Defining Expanded Learning Opportunities

To have the greatest impact, community school and ELO leaders and practitioners must deepen their focus on aligning their visions into a comprehensive results-focused strategy.

About the Study

This report afforded the Coalition an opportunity to examine more deeply the convergence of community schools and ELO through a number of strategies. The Coalition developed this report in order to capture the scope and nature of expanded learning opportunities in community school partnerships and to identify the state-of-the-art ELO practices that community schools are implementing. To deepen the study's focus, we first developed an ELO typology to help frame our definition of ELO.

Creating an ELO Typology

We initiated the study by engaging several ELO experts⁹ in discussions about ELO and the role of partnerships. Regardless of affiliation, these individuals suggested that several types of time periods may lend themselves to restructuring or expansion in order to provide students with enriching opportunities.

Partners told us to think about *all* the time periods in which students and families may benefit from expanded opportunities. Such periods include those not traditionally considered in discussions of ELO, such as teacher professional development days. The conversations led to the creation of a broader, more comprehensive ELO typology.

We then organized the typology into four primary categories:

- **ELO required for all students.** This category captures ELO types that are required for all students; it represents a “whole-school” reform of how time is used. ELO activities occur when schools formally lengthen the school day or year beyond the standard 6.5 hours or 180 school days required for

all students. In some cases, mandatory increases in the school day or year may be targeted only to all students in particular grades.

- **ELO for some/all students to increase the number of school days.** ELO includes academic or non-academic opportunities for some to all students on a voluntary basis during intersessions (including weekdays when school is not officially in session or on teachers' professional development days), school breaks such as one-day holidays, winter and spring breaks, and summers.
- **ELO for some/all students to increase time beyond the conventional school day.** ELO includes academic and non-academic supports and activities for some to all students *before* and/or *after* the end of the conventional school day. Similar to the previous category, participation is voluntary.
- **ELO for some/all students during the conventional school day.** The final category includes the restructuring of time during the conventional school day, or what some call “in school,”¹⁰ without adding time for all students. In many schools, and significantly in community schools, community partners provide academic and other learning supports (e.g., internships, service learning, linked learning, STEM, and so forth) to young people and their families during the conventional school day. While some may consider this category good school practice, we include it as a type

⁹ The Coalition conducted conversations with community school leaders and staff from the Afterschool Alliance, National Center on Time and Learning, National Summer Learning Association, Child Trends, and the National Center for Community Schools at the Children's Aid Society to develop a sense of possible ELO activities that we should capture.

¹⁰ We have chosen to use the term “conventional” when referring to the 6.5 hours typically employed by school districts. Others often refer to this time as the “traditional” school day.

of ELO because of the central role played by partners in community schools, even during the school day.

Within the four broad categories, we identified nine ELO types as noted in Table 1 (for an example of community school initiatives in each ELO type, see the blogs in Appendix I).

It is important to note that schools may draw on more than one category. For example, a school may choose to extend the school day formally for all students *and* provide additional afterschool learning opportunities for some to all students.

As we shared the typology with community schools representatives, ELO, and school leaders, they told us that it resonated with them and spurred them to broaden their thinking about ELO and what it encompasses. They found it helpful to think of how they can use both the time available during the school day and out-of-school time more effectively and efficiently to provide more and more engaging opportunities targeted to students' academic learning, enrichment, and development.

For example, the typology helped provide a platform for the superintendents in the Community Schools Superintendents Leadership Council (convened by the Coalition in June 2013; Figure 3) to discuss their perspectives on ELO. Bill Fetterhoff, superintendent of the Godwin Heights Public Schools (Michigan), represented the view of many when he said, "Time is the variable, learning is the constant." The council agreed that learning opportunities are essential to helping students succeed, and time is one variable that they can control. The primacy of *opportunity* over time is a key principle in our ELO typology.¹¹

The Community Schools

Superintendents Leadership Council is a network convened by the Coalition for Community Schools and the School Superintendents Association (AASA) to spotlight leaders and provide a peer support group for superintendents who are implementing the community schools strategy district-wide. The group was convened in June 2013 to discuss its role in expanded learning opportunities. A full list of Council superintendents and those attending the meeting is available in Appendix IV.

Figure 3. The Community Schools Superintendents Leadership Council



¹¹ We acknowledge that some may challenge the specific definitions or categories we have chosen. We hope that the typology is a useful tool for thinking more broadly about different types of ELO. We invite feedback as we continue to develop the idea of ELO types.

Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELO) Typology	
ELO Required for All Students	
Expanded school day	Formally lengthens the school day for all students beyond the standard 6.5 hours offered in most public schools. <i>(In some cases, mandatory ELO may be targeted to only certain grades in a school.)</i>
Expanded school year	Formally lengthens the school year beyond the standard 180 school days for all students. For example, a revised school calendar may add days and rearrange school “breaks” or intersessions. <i>(In some cases, mandatory ELO may be targeted to only certain grades in a school.)</i>
ELO for Some/All Students to Increase Number of School Days	
Expanded school week (e.g., weekends)	Includes academic and non-academic supports and activities for some to all students on Saturdays and Sundays (either mandatory or voluntary).
Intersessions	Includes academic and non-academic supports and activities for some to all students during weekdays when school is not officially in session. Applies only to schools with an expanded-school-year model.
School breaks	Includes academic and non-academic supports for some to all students during school breaks such as days off for teacher professional development, one-day holidays, winter and spring breaks, and so forth (this does not include summer).
Summer	Includes academic and non-academic supports and activities for some to all students during summer. Does not apply to breaks in extended year models. Those are considered “intersessions.”
ELO for Some/All Students to Increase Time beyond Conventional School Days	
Afterschool	Includes academic and non-academic supports and activities for some to all students after the end of the conventional school day.
Before school	Includes academic and non-academic supports and activities for some to all students before the start of the conventional school day.
ELO for Some/All Students during Conventional School Days	
Expanded learning opportunities during the conventional school day	School partners provide academic and other learning supports (e.g., internships, service learning, linked learning, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) programs, and so forth) to young people and their families during the conventional school day.

Table 1. Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELO) Typology



Data Collection

We collected data from a variety of sources and at several levels in order to capture the scope of ELO in community schools and identify best practices (see Appendix I for a detailed description of data sources). Data collection included:

- A broad **survey** of local community schools networks
- A set of **case studies** on local community school initiatives
- A series of **blogs** to highlight innovative ELO practices
- A dialogue with **superintendents** involved with community schools

The sample for the survey, case studies, and blogs included 45 high-implementing community school initiatives participating in the Coalition’s Community Schools Leadership Network.¹² These initiatives organize several community schools in a particular jurisdiction such as a district, city, or county and provide a platform for creating a vision and improving practices and policies across community school sites. The 45 community school initiatives in this sample have over three years of planning and implementation experience. The Coalition’s primary contact for each initiative completed the survey.

The survey focuses on both community school initiatives and individual community schools. We received responses from 31 community school initiatives (69 percent response rate), representing 706 community schools. The initiatives cover a wide number of participating schools—from 2 schools in Brooklyn Center, Minnesota; to 35 schools in Cincinnati, Ohio; to 109 schools in Chicago, Illinois. Seventy-one percent of initiatives are located in urban areas, 23 percent in suburban areas, and 6 percent in rural areas.

With respect to community school initiatives, we asked questions about their overall strategy such as their organization, vision, and leadership. In 86 percent of cases, institutions other than the school district spearheaded the community school initiatives, including community-based organizations, United Way chapters, and institutions of higher education. However, even when school districts do not lead initiatives, they play an important role in promoting and sustaining the community schools strategy. Respondents reported that school districts are partners in all of the initiatives. A total of 65 school districts are involved across the 31 responding initiatives.¹³

As described earlier, community school initiatives work with multiple community schools. In order to capture the extent and variation of ELO strategies within initiatives we asked communities to report on ELO at the school site level. For the school survey, 18 of the 45 initiatives responded with school-level data (40 percent of the total sample), including data on 394 schools in 34 school districts. The school sample includes more than 344 elementary schools (with a pre-kindergarten) and middle schools, 49 high schools, and one pre-kindergarten-to-12 school.

At the school level, leaders provided data for each community school within their community school initiative. We collected basic information about the school, such as grade levels served, number of years in operation as a community school, and type of coordinator on staff (e.g., a community school coordinator, an out-of-school time coordinator, or both). We also collected the following information for each ELO type listed in the typology: whether the school offered that type of ELO (schools could offer several types of ELO), the involvement of coordinators and community partners, the

¹² The Community Schools Leadership Network is a learning community of local community school initiatives. To learn more, visit <http://www.communityschools.org/csln/>.

¹³ The reason for more districts than initiatives is that some initiatives include several districts.

number of hours/days dedicated to that ELO type, and participation rates.

We used the survey responses to select two case study sites and sites to write blogs highlighting each ELO type.

FINDINGS

Drawing on data from the survey, case studies, and blogs, this section explores the prevalence of ELO activities within community school initiatives at several levels. It also describes the best practices of community schools implementing various types of ELO.

Prevalence of ELO in Community Schools

Our data indicated that ELO is a core strategy across community school initiatives. Community schools participate in a variety of ELO types, and intentional and structured school-community partnerships support ELO.

ELO is a Core Strategy for Community School Initiatives

Close to 90 percent of community school initiatives described the expansion and improvement of ELO activities as part of their community schools strategy. Approximately one-third of respondents indicated that at least half of their work focuses on ELO (compared to all other possible opportunities and supports, such as health services, mental health services, and family and community engagement). Baltimore, Maryland, provides an example of how community school initiatives have made ELO a central part of their work (Figure 4).

Community Schools provide Expanded Learning Opportunity across all ELO Types

The survey showed that community schools provide expanded learning opportunities across every ELO type and that each responding community school initiative provided at least two types of ELO programming. Similar to many schools across the country, community schools tend to focus

on afterschool (90 percent of responding schools) and summer (65 percent of responding schools) ELO activities (Table 2). However, over one-quarter of community schools offer extended school day and expanded learning opportunities during the conventional school day.

Baltimore, Maryland: Convergence of Community Schools and Expanded Learning Opportunities

Until last year, the Family League of Baltimore City, a nonprofit organization that manages funding for out-of-school-time programs and related child and family services for the mayor and school district, operated two separate funding streams: one for implementing community schools and one for afterschool programming. With a history of community schools, Baltimore is now relying on community schools as the underlying vehicle for all expanded learning opportunities, including afterschool activities and the ExpandedEd School Network that supports the extension and re-imagining of the conventional school day. Under this new approach, organizations may receive funding if they demonstrate the capacity to implement community schools and prioritize out-of-school-time programs as a major component of their work.

Jane Sundius of Open Society Institute in Baltimore sums up the convergence: “That’s what community schools are about—expanded learning opportunities, expanded health opportunities, expanded everything opportunities.”

Figure 4. Baltimore, Maryland: Convergence of Community Schools and Expanded Learning Opportunities

Similar trends emerge across grade levels. However, a much higher percentage of secondary schools (85 percent) versus elementary and middle schools (34 percent) reported that they offer before-school activities and expand the school week (22 percent for secondary schools compared to 10 percent for elementary schools). ELO within the conventional school day occurs more infrequently in secondary schools (10 percent) than in elementary schools (26 percent).



Broader ELO Typology	ELO Time Periods	Percentage of Schools in Each ELO Activity	Percentage of Schools in Each ELO Activity by Grade Level		
			Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 8 (344)	Grade 9 to 12 (49)	Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 12 (1)
		Total (394)			
ELO for some/all students to increase time beyond conventional school day	Afterschool	90%	90%	73%	100%
	Before school	31%	34%	85%	100%
ELO for some/all students during conventional school day	ELO in school	27%	26%	10%	
ELO for some/all students to increase number of school days	Summer	69%	68%	76%	100%
	School breaks	19%	19%	20%	
	Intercessions	7%	7%	4%	
	School week	12%	10%	22%	
ELO required for all students	Extended school day	27%	26%	31%	
	Extended school year	2%	1%	2%	

Table 2. Participation of Community Schools in Broader ELO typology and across all ELO activities



Boston’s Young Achievers Science and Mathematics Pilot School (Figure 5) provides an example of how community schools participate across a variety of ELO types, in this case, an extended school day and before- and after-school activities.

Boston, Massachusetts: Young Achievers—Extended School Day Redesigned

Young Achievers Science and Mathematics Pilot School is exploring whether an extended day may be an effective way to support at-risk youth. Young Achievers restructured its extended day to allow for student enrichment and professional development. The enrichment block includes “enrichment clubs” that give children access to both academic and non-academic learning opportunities during the school day while providing teachers with time for preparation and collaboration.

Close partnerships with the Boston Nature Center, Sports4Kids, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and the Mattapan Community Health Center, among other partners, have allowed Young Achievers to offer specials during the day and services before and after school. By involving community partners, Young Achievers has tapped into various time periods.

Intentional and Structured School-Community Partnerships Support ELO

Inherent in the community schools strategy are partnerships that support the core of the schools’ work, including ELO. More and more superintendents recognize that they need the involvement of community partners if they are to achieve desired change and results. During the Superintendents Leadership Council discussion, Teresa Weatherall Neal, superintendent of the Grand Rapids Public Schools (Michigan), highlighted the value of partnerships with local organizations. According to Weatherall Neal, partnerships with local organizations enabled the school district to engage more students than it could on its own and thereby provide various types of ELO targeted to students’ needs.

We asked each respondent to identify each ELO type made available by the school and to report whether the school relied on partnerships for the various ELO types. In at least 98 percent of reporting schools, respondents noted that partnerships are involved in ELO delivered after school, during summers, and during the conventional school day. Even at the lower end of the spectrum, 81 percent of schools that extend the school year and provide support during school breaks rely on community partners. Partnerships are clearly an important element in all ELO types.

Various types of school-community partners can help support ELO within a school. At Philadelphia’s Sayre High School, a University-Assisted Community School has partnered with the University of Pennsylvania to expand STEM learning opportunities for students (Figure 6).

Figure 5. Boston, Massachusetts: Young Achievers—Extended School Day Redesigned

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Partnership between Sayre High School and the University of Pennsylvania

[Sayre High School](#), located 20 blocks away from the University of Pennsylvania (Penn) in West Philadelphia, enjoys a strong partnership with Penn. Penn's [Barbara and Edward Netter Center for Community Partnerships](#) has sustained and supported the partnership.

Based on the [University-Assisted Community Schools](#) (UACS) model, the university has helped support school day instruction as well as afterschool and summer programming since 1996. Sayre demonstrates how community partners, particularly university staff, students, and faculty, can support teachers and school leaders by creating more engaging and enriching opportunities for students during and beyond the conventional school day.

The university has provided a range of STEM learning opportunities through [Academically Based Community Service \(ABCS\)](#) courses that involve university students and faculty in supporting public schools in West Philadelphia. Many ABCS courses are integrated into both the public schools' and the university's curricula, creating opportunities for educators and students at the university and school sites to collaborate. Both Penn's Netter Center and School of Nursing have focused on strengthening Sayre's STEM education.

Figure 6. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Partnership between Sayre High School and the University of Pennsylvania

Best Practices of Implementing ELO in Community Schools

Increasingly, school leaders and community partners face a range of challenges associated with a heightened focus on academics amid narrowed curricula, an increase in funding constraints, leadership transitions, and difficulties in measuring the quality of ELO. As evidenced by the survey data, case studies, and blog series, the experience of community schools practitioners demonstrates best practices that can help address some of the challenges in implementing ELO. They also suggest that community schools are ideal incubators for high-quality and locally supported expanded learning opportunities.

Community Schools Align with School's Core Mission

Superintendents we spoke with have increasingly reorganized the school day to ensure compliance with the testing and accountability requirements related to reading and mathematics. They acknowledge the need to eliminate some enrichment opportunities

(e.g., art and music) that used to be part of the curriculum. In addition to federal and state mandates, the constraints of time, funding, and space often limit superintendents' flexibility in offering a broad array of learning opportunities.

Superintendents recognize that ELO helps supplement and personalize learning, increase student motivation, and keep students engaged in school. However, they also report that they need to ensure that ELO is aligned with their schools' academic goals.

Community school partners help align ELO with a school's core mission at the level of both the community schools initiative and the individual school. At the initiative level, community school partners not only work closely with school districts to align strategies, but they also share and use student data in their decision making. At the school level, partners work to align the school's and principal's goals with the ELO offerings made available both during the school day and outside the school day.

Role of School Districts—Strategy Alignment

School districts may function as the supporting partners in a community school initiative or as leaders of the initiative; in some cases, they are only minimally involved. Representatives from each of the community school initiatives surveyed for the report indicated that school districts were at least a partner in and sometimes led the initiative.¹⁴ Schools and community partners work together with districts to integrate and align their efforts to provide learning opportunities for students. More than 80 percent of responding initiatives work with their district partners to align ELO activities with district priorities. Sixty-five percent of initiatives also collaborate with district staff on policies that support ELO activities.

Lincoln, Nebraska, provides an example of a district-led community schools strategy with a core focus on expanded learning opportunities (Figure 7).

Data-Driven Decision Making

Student level data help both community schools initiative leaders and leaders of individual schools target students for ELO, identify appropriate partners, and measure student outcomes that are useful in evaluating ELO partners. Eighty-four percent of community school initiatives work with districts to collect and share ELO-related data. Many superintendents, including Ramona Bishop of Vallejo City Unified School District (California), reported that data are essential for identifying student academic needs and creating and overseeing partnerships to address those needs.

Lincoln, Nebraska: Case Study—Alignment of Expanded Learning Opportunities

Lincoln, Nebraska, has a long history of out-of-school-time programming. Over the years, community-based organizations spearheaded most afterschool programs designed to provide child care services or spaces for students to complete homework. Often, though, the programs had no connection to the regular school day. In 2000, Lincoln Public Schools led the implementation of the Community Learning Centers (CLC) initiative, the district’s strategy for providing learning opportunities outside school and aligning the opportunities with district goals. Lincoln currently counts 25 CLCs. The CLC initiative is organized around an executive committee at the district level, CLC coordinators and school neighborhood advisory committees in each school, and a strong relationship between the district’s director of curriculum and instruction and the CLC curriculum specialist.

The sharp focus on alignment is producing increases in scores on the Nebraska state assessment. Since 2009, the percentage of 3rd, 5th, and 8th graders meeting or exceeding standards in reading has been steadily climbing. District data also show that those who attend ELO consistently outperform those who do not.

Figure 7. Lincoln Case Study: Alignment of Expanded Learning Opportunities

¹⁴ This is consistent with the history of community school initiatives that have been led by external partners. More recently, however, school districts have begun to take a greater role in funding, supporting, and leading community school initiatives.

Ramona Bishop uses data as a key component of her district's focus on student-centered decision making. The district's philosophy is "every student by name," the idea that each student is unique and that knowing each student will lead to better results. The district has created a data system of early warning indicators that provides the principal with a daily "hot list" of students identified for additional supports. The community school coordinator monitors the list and creates student support teams made up of all partners and charged with developing an individualized intervention plan for each student. In fact, it is school need that determines the various ELO types (e.g., afterschool programs, summer school, programs during breaks), and data on individual students provide insight into school need. The school district is the intermediary and helps organize community partners. Then, the school district and its community partners work together to write grants to support the various ELO strategies needed by each school.

The United Way of Greater New Haven provides an example of a community-school partnership that has established a system for conducting needs assessments and a yearly evaluation of ELO partnerships to address the needs of community schools (see Figure 8).

School Alignment: The Role of Site Coordinators Coordination is an important component of the community schools strategy that is aimed at aligning community resources to support student learning and development during and outside the typical school day.

Nearly all of the schools (99 percent) captured in the survey employ either a community school coordinator or an out-of-school-time coordinator who supports ELO.¹⁵

New Haven, Connecticut: Boosting Afterschool with Partners and Data for Results

In response to the vast disparities in the quantity and quality of academic and non-academic supports available to students in New Haven, the mayor and the superintendent established Boost! New Haven Community Schools. Together with the city, United Way, and other partners, the school district matched the needs of schools with community partners to provide high-quality opportunities.

In 2010, each of the five Boost! schools picked a Boost! coordinator and a multidisciplinary team to manage 30 to 50 partners. They evaluated existing programs qualitatively and looked closely at the available data. Every year, with support from the United Way of Greater New Haven, the Boost! team conducts a needs assessment and compares the team's needs to the assets of community-based organizations through a Request for Information (RFI) process. The team negotiates existing and new partnerships and sets forth expectations, purposes, and shared outcome measures for all parties.

At one high school, participation in afterschool opportunities tripled from 20 to 60 percent. As a result, the number of suspensions due to fighting decreased by half, and participating students increased their school-day attendance by 4 percent.

Figure 8. New Haven, Connecticut: Boosting Afterschool with Partners and Data for Results

¹⁵ The community school coordinator serves the entire community school, identifies and works with partners, participates in or runs school site meetings, and works closely with the principal. The coordinator is not solely responsible for out-of-school-time activities but rather for the entire community schools approach, which may include health and mental health services, social services, family engagement, and other aspects of comprehensive supports and services. However, the coordinator may be responsible for out-of-school time. An out-of-school-time coordinator is primarily responsible for ELO programming, not for community schools operations.

Sixty-two percent of schools in the survey utilize only a community school coordinator, 10 percent utilize only an out-of-school-time coordinator, and 27 percent utilize both types of coordinator (Figure 9).

With strong ties to school leaders and staff, as well as to community partners, coordinators are crucial in supporting ELO activities. Coordinators in 92 percent of schools play a role in providing ELO activities after school and during intercessions. Even when the school extends the school year for all students, 67 percent of reporting schools utilize a coordinator. For almost every other ELO type, coordinators support ELO activities when community partners are involved.

Of the community schools participating in expanded learning opportunities during the conventional school day (27 percent of total

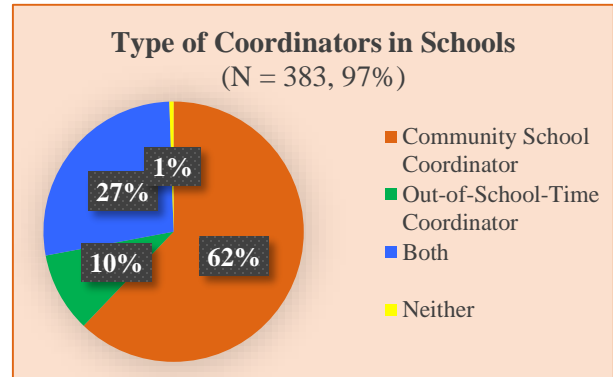


Figure 9. Type of Coordinators in Community Schools

schools), 73 percent utilize a coordinator, and 90 percent benefit from the involvement of community partners in supporting educators. Figure 10 shows an example of how partners and coordination play an important role in expanding learning opportunities during the conventional school day.

Hartford, Connecticut: Alignment between School Week and Weekend Programming

Hartford Community Schools, with support from the Hartford Public Schools, the city of Hartford, the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, and the United Way of Central and Northeastern Connecticut, provides students with learning opportunities, even during the weekends.

Community school coordinators at Alfred E. Burr Elementary School and Jumoke Academy Honors at Milner have designed weekend activities that differ from afterschool and summer offerings. The activities focus sharply on students who need additional assistance with academics to prepare for the Connecticut Mastery Test.

For the additional assistance to be productive, coordinators work closely with teachers, administrators, and partners to link the weekend and weekday curricula. The alignment between in-class academics and the extra programming allows teachers to make the weekend sessions productive.

Figure 10. Hartford, Connecticut: Alignment between School Week and Weekend Programming



Community-wide and School Site Leadership Structures Support a Comprehensive ELO Strategy

Ninety-four percent of community school initiatives are governed by a community-wide leadership structure. The structure brings together school districts, government, United Way chapters, institutions of higher education, and community- and faith-based organizations to provide a vehicle for a shared vision and goals for the initiative.

In several multidistrict community school initiatives, a collaboration among several institutions has helped sustain the initiatives, despite leadership turnover. For example, in Portland, Oregon, the SUN community school initiative has experienced leadership turnover in each of its six school districts. The collaboration among the city, county, districts, and community organizations helps sustain the initiative.

All community school initiatives in our study reported that at least one person represents the ELO community in the initiatives' community-wide leadership structure. The "ELO community" may include representatives of district offices with responsibility for ELO, ELO collaboratives and networks, or city ELO programs. Further, 72 percent of respondents indicated that their community-wide leadership groups supported specific ELO work groups or committees. ELO engagement provides a voice and focus for ELO when leadership groups make decisions about community school initiatives' vision, activities, and resources.

Community school initiatives also work closely with external ELO collaboratives (groups organized expressly to support ELO), such as afterschool networks, within the same neighborhood or community. Eighty-five percent of initiatives reported on ELO collaboratives in their communities. Of those, all but one had a community school

representative serving as a member of the external ELO collaborative. Furthermore, close to 90 percent of community school initiatives state that they enjoy strong or very strong relationships with ELO collaboratives. Such convergence is important for aligning strategies and resources and reducing competition.

Baltimore, Maryland: Convergence of Strategies Supported by Community-Wide Leadership Structure

In Baltimore, Maryland, the blending of funding and strategies around out-of-school time and community schools is undergirded by a community-wide leadership team called the steering committee, which is led by the Family League of Baltimore City. The steering committee has been in place for a year and includes out-of-school-time providers, funders, and school district personnel.

The steering committee operates with "mini-networks" that have developed around expanded learning opportunities with similar and aligned goals. The steering committee also works with other ELO networks in Baltimore, including the Maryland Out-of-School Time (MOST) Network, ExpandEd Schools Network, and the After-School Corporation.

Figure 11. Baltimore, Maryland: Convergence of Strategies Supported by Community-Wide Leadership Structure

At the school level, respondents reported that 90 percent of community schools have a collaborative leadership team. The team is an important part of the community schools strategy and typically includes educators, community school or out-of-school-time coordinators, community partners, families, and residents. The team plans, implements, and oversees the community schools strategy, including its ELO strategy. Cincinnati, Ohio, provides an example of how school-level leadership groups help support ELO (Figure 12).

Cincinnati, Ohio: Site Leadership Structures Support Before School

Each of Cincinnati’s Community Learning Centers (CLC) relies on [school-based partnership networks](#). Partners are organized into teams based on the various services they provide and are assigned a coordinating partner.

Cincinnati students’ challenges do not end when the school day concludes—and neither should their supports. To maintain continuity of support, Cincinnati’s CLCs have opened their school buildings to families, communities, and partners, even during school breaks. With partnership networks representing various ELO providers, Cincinnati coordinates and aligns its ELO activities at all its schools.

Figure 12. Cincinnati, Ohio: Site Leadership Structures Support Before School

Quality is an Important and Shared Responsibility across Partners

With school leaders responsible and accountable for student outcomes, they need to know that the partnerships providing ELO in their schools are helping them achieve their goals. They have to ensure that partners fulfill their commitments to goals such as homework support, reinforcing core classroom content, providing enrichment that engages students and encourages them to attend school regularly, and more. Superintendents we spoke with raised similar concerns about measuring the quality of the partnerships involved in delivering expanded learning opportunities. Quality is also a concern for partners’ own goals and objectives.

Community school initiatives are structured to ensure shared responsibility and accountability for maintaining high-quality ELO programs. Leaders of community school initiatives, other community partners, and/or the school district(s) share responsibility for

ELO rather than placing it solely on the shoulders of any one partner or school.

Community school leaders responded that supporting and measuring the quality of ELO activities is important to their initiatives. In 94 percent of responding initiatives, either the initiative or partners require training sessions or orientation for staff, formal review processes, or formal parent feedback. Sixty-nine percent of community school initiatives require all stakeholders to provide training sessions to ensure high-quality ELO. Among the less frequently encountered monitoring practices are low staff-to-youth ratio (31 percent), space for socializing (28 percent), and staff meetings (25 percent). San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) has outlined four practices to measure and oversee the partnerships that provide afterschool programming (Figure 13).

San Francisco, California: Restructuring District to Provide High-Quality Afterschool Opportunities

San Francisco Unified School District and the city of San Francisco have adopted a partnership approach to providing high-quality afterschool opportunities to nearly 75 percent of students in kindergarten through grade 8. Their city-wide approach is supported by the Afterschool for All Advisory Council, which includes leaders from SFUSD, city departments (including the mayor’s office), community- and faith-based organizations, independent schools, funders, and parents.

To support quality, they have:

- Developed “core competencies” for ELO staff with baseline expectations
- Provided professional development and technical assistance
- Used data to inform practice
- Monitored quality by using a quality monitoring tool

This was retrieved from a presentation by Guadalupe Guerrero, SFUSD deputy superintendent of instruction, innovation and social justice; and Hayin Kim, SFUSD director of community schools.

Figure 13. San Francisco, California: Restructuring District to Provide High-Quality Afterschool Opportunities

Community Schools Blend and Sustain ELO Funding

In an era of increasingly scarce resources school leaders focus their limited resources towards improving students' academic skills, moving resources further away from ELO. As much as limited funding constrains the efforts of schools and community partners, it provides an opportunity for the strategic integration of resources to provide both academic and enrichment opportunities for students across various types of ELO.

Both community-wide and site leadership teams provide a platform for school leaders and community partners to ensure the blending of private and public funds to help support ELO across various time periods. The survey shows that more than half of the initiatives are using funding for ELO from a variety of sources. For example, in Baltimore, the Family League of Baltimore City uses city and private funds to support high-quality afterschool programming. Ogden Community Schools (Utah) demonstrates how public and private funding can be blended to provide opportunities during the summer. A combination of district dollars and private funding through the Ogden School Foundation has permitted the delivery of several summer programs (Figure 14).



Ogden, Utah: Blending Funding and Partners to Discover Summer

Inspired by the progress at Mound Fort Junior High (supported by the 2008 Full Service Community Schools federal grant), Ogden School District created Ogden United in 2010 to improve opportunities for children and families by expanding community schools across the district.

By leveraging existing and new financial and organizational resources, school and community partners have created a huge range of new summer opportunities for Ogden's youth. A blend of Title I funds, School Improvement Grants, Full Service Community Schools grants, and the state's Gang Prevention and Intervention grants funds full-day programs in several schools. The programs focus on academics in the morning; later in the day, YouthCreate (funded by a grant from the Weber County Recreation, Art, Museums, and Parks [RAMP] program and by the Ogden School Foundation) supports recreational camps operated by community school partners.

Together, Ogden set a goal to increase the number of district youth served from 120 to 150 (25 percent) for summer 2012. In 2012, the first year of the RAMP project, it served an additional 172 unduplicated students.

Figure 14. Ogden, Utah: Blending Funding and Partners to Discover Summer

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that community schools are widely using and enhancing a variety of ELO strategies. At the local level, community school leaders and partners are working hand in hand with ELO leaders and providers to offer high-quality learning opportunities to students. The community schools strategy helps address the challenges of implementing, expanding, and sustaining learning opportunities for students. Community schools represent a whole-school reform model that goes beyond providing learning opportunities for students to address the needs of the whole child. As more localities continue to explore new ways to create opportunities for children across various dimensions of time, they will be well served to involve partners in the decision making, implementation, and evaluation of these opportunities.

The community schools strategy provides a vehicle for creating meaningful partnerships at the school site that put children at the center of learning. In the coming years, it will be imperative that leaders in ELO and community schools continue building bridges that align their work and lead to better outcomes for all children. ELO organizations have always been key Coalition partners and we are working with new ELO organizations and programs to deepen our partnerships.

We have a lot more to learn as these two strategies grow. While this study has shown that ELO is implemented widely in community schools, we have more to learn about funding sources, access for all students, how partnerships are working effectively, how decisions are made about ELO types at the school site, and more. We think the role of partners who provide ELO *during* the school day is a major topic that warrants deeper exploration.

We will continue to learn about the interdependence of these important and growing education reforms.

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APPENDIX

- I. Data Sources
- II. Lincoln Case Study—Expanding Learning Opportunities through Partnership
- III. Baltimore Case Study—Strategic Alignment of Community Schools and ELO
- IV. List of Superintendents in Community Schools Superintendents Leadership Council
- V. List of Coalition for Community Schools Partners

Appendix I: Data Sources

We fully described our survey methodology in the body of the report. Below, is a description of the data sources that informed the report:

Case Studies

The objective of the case studies was to explore in greater depth a few of the community school initiatives that completed the survey in order to offer context for the quantitative data. The case studies enable us to unpack how communities are thinking about a broad range of ELO possibilities and how they are organizing partners and educators to support more learning and development opportunities.

We used the survey to determine which sites best met our criteria for case study selection. We chose Lincoln, Nebraska, and Baltimore, Maryland, based on the following criteria:

- *Scope.* Is ELO a central part of the community schools initiative? Each site represented a progression in thinking about ELO as out-of-school time to a broader conceptualization of ELO across various time frames, as they grew their community school strategy.
- *Innovative practices.* Are community schools demonstrating innovation in their support of ELO at the system and school levels?
- *Collaboration with school district/ELO collaboratives.* What is the level of partnership/alignment with ELO activities led by the school district and/or ELO collaboratives (e.g., an after school network)? The sites vary in the level of collaboration with school districts and other ELO collaboratives.
- *ELO type.* What are the types of ELO activities employed by initiatives (see descriptions above)? The sites provide a range of ELO experiences across several schools.
- *Demographics.* The schools represent different regions of the country with different resources.

No set of case studies is perfect, and our findings may be unique in terms of circumstances and characteristics (e.g., urban settings). Our expectation, however, is that the case studies tell a story about how two places are using the community schools strategy to approach and sustain ELO and why they view the strategies as mutually beneficial and perhaps, even necessary for one another.

We worked with a lead contact in each site to identify subjects to interview, including community school intermediary leaders, school district personnel, principals, community school coordinators, partners, and/or representatives of ELO collaboratives.

Community Schools Superintendents Leadership Council

Finally, in partnership with AASA, the School Superintendents Association, we organized superintendents who support the community schools strategy into the [Community Schools](#)

[Superintendents Leadership Council](#). During summer 2013, we invited the council to Washington, DC, to participate in a discussion about ELO and the role of partnerships. We wanted to answer the following questions:

- What state-of-the-art ELO practices are you using to support your district’s goals?
- How are ELO strategies in community schools aligned and supportive of your district’s goals?
- What is the value added of community schools to districts’ ELO strategies?
- What challenges do superintendents face as they seek to incorporate ELO and community school initiatives into other reforms?

Blog Series

We also worked with initiative leaders who responded to the school survey and asked them to participate in a nine-week blog series. The blogs exemplify the different ways in which community schools foster innovation in expanded learning opportunities. The following are links to each blog, ordered by ELO typology:

ELO Type	Topic	City, State
Overview	Community Schools Are Scaling and Sustaining Innovative ELO Practices	
ELO Required for All Students		
Extended school day	Extended School Day Redesigned	Boston, Massachusetts
Extended school year	Experiment with School-Year Calendars Supported by Community Partners	Des Moines, Iowa
ELO for Some/All Students to Increase Number of School Days		
Expanded school week	Strengthening ELO Activities into the Weekend	Hartford, Connecticut
Intersessions	A Different School-Year Calendar: Continuous Learning, Enrichment, and Support When Extended-Year Schools Are on Break	Tulsa, Oklahoma
School break	Cincinnati Is Open for Business during School Breaks	Cincinnati, Ohio
Summer	Discover the Summer in Ogden	Ogden, Utah
ELO for Some/All Students to Increase Time beyond Conventional School Day		
Afterschool	New Haven—Boosting Afterschool with Partners and Data to Get Results	New Haven, Connecticut
Before school	Breakfast Buddies: Empowering Students in the Before-School Hours at Roosevelt Elementary Community School	Lehigh Valley, Pennsylvania
ELO for Some/All Students during Conventional School Day		
ELO during conventional school day	Innovating STEM Learning Opportunities with Higher Education Institutions	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Appendix II: Lincoln Case Study—Expanding Learning Opportunities through Partnership

“...This should be a staple of ESEA reauthorization. That’s the last piece to reforming America.”
- *Lincoln Public Schools Superintendent Steve Joel*

Every Thursday, customers line up in front of a teller with their deposit slips in hand. Frequent depositors can earn special gifts, such as ice cream coupons—a way to keep patrons coming back.

But this bank is not your ordinary branch location in Lincoln, Nebraska. It’s the Huntington Elementary Branch of Liberty First Credit Union. The customers are elementary students who have received some basic financial literacy lessons with the help of the Nebraska Council on Economic Education. The tellers—grade 5 students—received special training from an employee of the credit union during an afterschool club; in fact, the credit union is one of many community partners involved in providing programs to Huntington students as part of the school’s Community Learning Center (Lincoln’s term for community schools). In just six months, over 80 students saved a total of almost \$3,000, and 18 students were hired as junior tellers.

The banking program is just one example of how community schools can expand learning opportunities for students in ways that support the curriculum and build stronger connections between schools and their neighbors.

More than Child Care

For many years, Lincoln has offered out-of-school-time programs—afterschool programs and summer programs—provided by respected and established organizations such as the YMCA. But the community viewed the programs largely as child care programs without any connection to what was occurring during the school day. In addition, the afterschool staff had no idea as to which students might need support. Most afterschool programs merely provided time and space for students to complete their homework. Program providers marketed the programs as a way to keep students safe and occupied while their parents worked. Likewise, summer programs resembled day camps and did not necessarily align with the district’s learning goals.

But, when Lincoln began implementing its Community Learning Centers (CLC) initiative in 2000, leaders began to shift their perspective on the role of afterschool programs. They recognized that afterschool programs could support the overall mission of the schools while providing students with an engaging experience built around their interests. In fact, *the school district does not operate a separate afterschool program*. Instead, CLCs are the district’s strategy for providing learning opportunities outside the regular school day. “We have really tried to build on the strength and the capacity of existing providers in that area and work to connect those providers with the work of the CLCs,” says Lea Ann Johnson, director of Lincoln Community Learning Centers.

In turn, CLCs have enhanced the ongoing work of local afterschool program providers, says Barb Bettin, executive director of the YMCA of Lincoln, which was looking to expand its reach into inner-city neighborhoods at the time the CLCs were launching their initiative. In fact, the YMCA is now the lead agency at four schools. The YMCA’s board of directors and its volunteers welcomed the involvement of the CLCs, allowing the YMCA to fulfill its goals in the

areas of youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility. “The whole thing is real natural for us,” Bettin says.

The YMCA has even launched its own middle school in Lincoln, largely inspired by the CLC model, Bettin says. And at the 15 other schools where the YMCA runs afterschool programs, the services “mirror community learning centers” as much as is possible without a coordinator, she adds. “CLCs are the Cadillac approach,” she says. “Any time you can have someone there full-time dealing with the needs of the community and families, that’s a plus. If all schools were CLCs, it would be great.”

Lincoln’s 10 lead agencies are community-based organizations that implement the CLC initiative at one or more schools. The organizations hire the site coordinator and bring “a diverse set of skills and capacities which are aligned with the overall vision and goals of the CLC initiative,” according to the Lincoln CLCs’ description. In an effort to meet the needs of students, site coordinators build relationships with school staff, families, neighborhood residents, and local providers. They develop partnerships that serve children and families, making sure that all services, such as expanded learning opportunities, are aligned with the mission and goals of the school.

Deep Commitment to CLCs

Lincoln Public Schools Superintendent Steve Joel, Mayor Chris Beutler, and Barb Bartle, president of the Lincoln Community Foundation, make up the executive committee that leads the CLC initiative. By involving the school district, the city, and the foundation, the three-legged structure that makes up the executive committee keeps the initiative connected to the schools and to its community partners. When the initiative receives grants, “We are strategic in the decisions” about how the funds will be used, says Johnson. The strength of the initiative means that it has continued to grow through two changes in leadership in the mayor’s office and in the superintendent’s office.

Johnson’s position in the school district is supported by 21st CCLC funds. The school board recently approved funding that will support the CLCs’ leaders and an office manager and consultants as 21st CCLC are phased out. The eventual goal is to eliminate leadership positions’ dependence solely on grant funds. Johnson reports to all three members of the executive committee and, as former associate director for Family Service Lincoln—one of the CLCs’ lead agencies—she has been instrumental in building trust between community partners and the schools.

“Lea Ann really represented the community organizations’ voice and served as a confidence builder because she was one of them,” says Jeff Cole, associate vice president of school-community partnerships at the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation and network lead for the Nebraska Community Learning Center Network. “She has really worked over the years to show that the district did value the partners and wasn’t trying to take over.”

Along with the YMCA and Family Service Lincoln, nine community agencies serve as lead partners at the 18 elementary schools, 6 middle schools, and one high school that are CLCs. The

representatives of the agencies serve on a leadership council, which also includes university officials, city council and school board members, business leaders, and local funders.

Local control is a high priority in Nebraska. The state is one of only five that has not adopted the Common Core State Standards, and it has not enacted charter school legislation. Further, unlike their counterparts in many states, Nebraska lawmakers have not moved to tie student achievement scores to teachers' performance evaluations. Therefore, CLCs are not an attempt to "fix" failing schools. "We think the schools do a good job, but they can't do it alone," says Cole, who is also working to replicate Lincoln's successful structure for bringing partners into the schools in other areas of the state.

Instead, CLCs provide a strategy for removing barriers to learning, creating expanded learning opportunities, and addressing other needs typically associated with low-income families. In addition to expanded learning programs, Lincoln's CLCs offer a summer food program, send food home with in-need families on weekends, and offer the RestWise tenant education program for parents living in subsidized housing. Twelve sites provide behavioral health services. Other CLCs offer parenting classes, family literacy programs, tax preparation assistance, and green space projects.

"This is a university town. We are an all-American community. But when you get into our impoverished areas, we have the same problems they have in DC," says Joel. "If it were not for CLCs, we wouldn't have an 84 percent on-time graduation rate. I recognize that if America wants to mitigate the ravaging impacts of poverty, then we have to minimize the time that kids spend in terrible environments and maximize the time they spend in nurturing environments like CLCs. Our community gets this, too. Quite frankly this should be a staple of ESEA reauthorization."

District-Level Infrastructure

The close match between the district's goals for students and the expanded learning opportunities provided through CLCs begins with the infrastructure of the district office and helps explain why CLCs are helping students succeed. Part of this infrastructure includes action teams made up of principals, neighborhood and agency representatives, parents, and community members who focus on specific topics across the district, such as student learning, family engagement, or communications.

To monitor the quality of the CLCs, a local evaluator uses a site observation tool to collect data in a variety of areas, such as program administration and how staff members interact with families and partners. Use of the evaluation tool is limited only to programs delivered through the CLCs. The local evaluator also conducts an evaluation on an annual basis.

With the advent of CLCs, the district expected out-of-school-time programs to have what Lincoln Public Schools Director of Curriculum and Instruction Jadi Miller calls "a more academic bent." In response, the administration created a CLC curriculum specialist position, held by Kathie Phillips. Phillips served as a school-community coordinator at one of the first four CLCs before moving into the 25-hour-a-week district position. Her role is to reinforce how community schools can use after school hours to support what teachers provide during the school

day while giving students extra attention as needed. She also conducts observations at CLCs, monitors development in out-of-school-time policy across the country, and provides professional development for CLC staff on topics such as project-based learning or thematic instruction.

Opportunities for Alignment

The curriculum specialist position also allows for stronger connections between what happens in the classroom and how afterschool programs are able to take the content further. This year, Phillips became part of the curriculum council, which is made up of the district's 10 content-specific curriculum specialists. The group meets twice monthly to discuss topics that affect all subject areas, such as assessment.

“It just seemed incredibly logical to me as we connect those dots between day and extended day,” Miller says, adding that the district's disappointing performance on the first statewide science assessment is a curriculum area that the CLCs' expanded learning programs are addressing. Kirsten Smith, the district's science curriculum specialist, met with all the CLC coordinators to talk about learning challenges and to provide guidance on science lessons for children.

“What a perfect place for the CLCs to be an excellent partner,” Miller adds

Graduate students attending the University of Nebraska now run science clubs in elementary school CLCs, helping to nurture students' excitement for science through hands-on lessons. In partnership with 4-H, several schools also offer Lego robotics clubs as well as STEM-related opportunities in “GIS/GPS geocaching” and filmmaking and photography.

Whether the opportunities focus on science, language arts, mathematics, or any other subject, Phillips makes sure that expanded learning aligns with the district's respective standards before implementing a particular program in the afterschool hours. The district is also underscoring its emphasis on analyses of student data in order to focus instruction and to identify “power standards”—those essential goals that students must meet in their grade level. Expanded learning programs will target the same goals.

“This is an exciting challenge. We've never been there before,” Phillips says. “We have finite minutes and finite resources and we have to be strategic.”

Throughout the year, regularly scheduled professional development keeps partners involved in expanded learning opportunities—even if they work at non-CLC schools. Professional development opportunities allow the YMCA and other afterschool providers to learn best practices from CLCs and implement them at other schools where they run programs. Sometimes, providers at those other schools ask to borrow materials, such as microscopes, from a CLC resource room, indicating that they want to take their afterschool programs “to another level,” Phillips says. “We're always open to letting those materials go out the door.”

School-level Infrastructure

Lincoln Public Schools currently encompasses 25 CLCs. All of them are Title I schools, except for the two middle schools and the high school. At those 3 schools, however, at least 40 percent

of students still qualify for free or reduced-price lunch. For Miller, the CLCs are at 25 levels of implementation, but she adds, “They are all on an upward journey. We are raising the bar on our expectations, and they are meeting those.”

While each CLC demonstrates unique features and depends on particular partnerships, all the CLCs share some common features. In fact, Joel notes that the difference between expanded learning programs at CLCs and those at other schools is that they are part of a framework. “They have a rubric,” he says.

Each school operates with a school neighborhood advisory committee (SNAC) that includes the principal, the CLC supervisor, parents, local residents, and service providers. The SNAC advises as to the opportunities and programs members would like to introduce into in the school. While the principal and coordinator ultimately make the decisions about which partners to include as part of the CLCs, the SNAC provides considerable input.

The coordinator also helps make sure that expanded learning opportunities and other services provided through the CLC align with the school improvement plan. At Arnold Elementary, for example, Dayna Kranawitter—an employee of the Lincoln Housing Authority, the CLC’s lead agency—is a member of the school improvement committee, which includes teachers from each grade level. The committee reviews student data and focuses on “how we can use expanded learning opportunities to move kids along,” Kranawitter says. And, at Huntington, lead teachers from the expanded learning programs in the CLC attend grade-level meetings to make sure that their lessons and activities focus on what students need to be learning.

“Therein lies the difference between afterschool and the CLC,” says the YMCA’s Bettin. “The coordinator can make those connections. What is so great about the CLC is that it’s almost like an extra school staff person, interacting with teachers and the principal. They truly understand first-hand the goals and objectives of the school program.” Bettin’s staff members also benefit from well-designed training as well as from networking opportunities, which allow them to develop professionally and continually adjust their programs to students’ needs and curriculum goals.

Dinosaurs, Dogs, and Digital Photography

Many of the community agencies provided before- and after-school services before the advent of CLCs and therefore still charge fees for families using the program five days a week. However, the agencies offer scholarships for high-need families and accept Child Care Block Grant funds for eligible families. In addition, clubs and enrichment activities—such as Huntington’s bank teller club—are available for free to students (they are covered by 21st CCLC funds).

Opportunities emerge from students’ interests, academic needs, and the variety of experiences partners are able to provide. Sometimes, partners receive grants to organize a particular clubs.

Arnold’s Brain Boosters club targets underperforming students who have been referred by their classroom teachers for extra academic support. Other clubs range from a hand-bell choir and a dinosaur club to digital photography and even a fishing club (the school is located across the street from a lake). A Youth Ambassadors group gives students a chance to interact with elected officials, learn about their community, and develop leadership skills. While the clubs operate on

a first-come, first-served basis, part of Kranawitter’s job is to help identify students who have not yet had the opportunity to participate.

One of Huntington’s partners is a local resident with a therapy dog—a Labrador retriever named Barney—who is the star participant in a Mutt-i-grees club. The curriculum, which was created by the Pet Savers Foundation, Yale University School of the 21st Century, and the Cesar Millan Foundation, teaches social-emotional skills while promoting animal welfare. Rik Devney, Huntington’s principal, says that the program has been a good fit for students with “moderate to low-level” behavior problems, and teachers are seeing improvement in social skills in the classroom—demonstrating that alignment with the school day means not only focusing on academic performance but also helping students overcome obstacles that stand in the way of success.

Middle school CLCs face the added challenge that many of their students could go home instead of remaining at school for additional learning and enrichment time. Accordingly, the CLC supervisor “looks for staff that really wants to be there” and works to make the afterschool opportunities as engaging as possible, says Kelly Schrad, principal at Lefler Middle School. In addition to receiving tutoring support, students may try their hand at archery, martial arts, or the STEM-focused Roads, Rails and Race Cars club, created by the Mid-America Transportation Center and funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation. Engineering students from the University of Nebraska work with classroom teachers to lead the STEM-focused afterschool club. Lefler’s CLC coordinator also communicates regularly with teachers to make sure the expanded learning programs align with each month’s goals for students in core subject areas. “There’s been a total shift in the conversation,” Schrad says.

The intentional focus on alignment is yielding higher scores on the Nebraska state assessment. Since 2009, the percentage of 3rd, 5th, and 8th graders meeting or exceeding standards in reading has been steadily climbing. CLC students who attend expanded learning opportunities also consistently outperform those who do not attend those programs, according to district data.

District leaders are also more likely to turn first to CLCs when they want to pilot a program or provide an additional learning opportunity; they recognize that the CLC structure allows for smooth implementation. In addition to the organizations that were already providing afterschool programs, a variety of arts groups, STEM-related organizations, and other providers now seek out ways to partner with CLCs, reinforcing the difference between afterschool or other expanded learning programs at community schools and those at traditional schools.

In Lincoln, a peer tutoring program called “Learning Together” demonstrates how district leaders have chosen community schools over traditional schools. The program brings together struggling students with other students who are two grade levels below them—such as 4th graders tutoring 2nd graders and 8th graders assisting 6th graders. Now held at seven CLCs after school, the program provides students with additional reading support and creates leadership opportunities for the older tutors.

“The district said, ‘We believe in Learning Together, but we don’t know where we’re going to fit it in,’ “Johnson says. She also saw Learning Together as an additional opportunity to strengthen

the connections between schools' teaching staff and the staff of youth development organizations. In addition to training certified teachers to lead the tutoring groups, the partner agencies involve their employees in the program. "I don't believe that youth development workers always get high-quality professional development. Limited time and partner resources often make professional development difficult to provide. When we offer opportunities community-wide and systemically, it supports their efforts," Johnson says.

Expanded Learning during the Summer

At CLCs, the strong connections that have developed between afterschool partners and the instructional staff during the school year continue over the summer. At Huntington Elementary, for example, the school and its partners offer a 10-week summer camp that, in the morning, focuses on academics, especially reading, and is led by certified teachers. About 100 students attend the camp, representing about 35 percent of the school's enrollment, with all of the requests for program participation filled. The Family Service Association, the school's lead agency, keeps the program running until 6:00 p.m.—providing activities that support what the students worked on in the morning but also blending in field trips and other enrichment opportunities. When possible, staff members from partner agencies spend time in the classrooms in the morning both to support the classroom teachers and to improve their skills in classroom management.

Lefler Middle offers a two-week summer camp for incoming 6th graders, paid for through 21st CCLC funds, to help them make a smooth transition to middle school and build their leadership skills. Last year, the program targeted Lefler's lowest socioeconomic feeder schools but was later opened up to more families to help fill the enrollment. Creating a diverse mix during the summer, Schrad says, helps eliminate the barriers among students who enter middle school from different elementary schools.

Funding and Other Challenges

The greatest challenge faced by most community school initiatives is how to secure ongoing funding. In addition to 21st CCLC grant funds, CLCs receive financial support from the United Way, their partner organizations, private foundations, and Title I.

With grant funds gradually declining, however, Superintendent Joel and other city leaders have been working on plans to sustain the community school initiative. Joel said that he would like to place a tax referendum on the local ballot to support CLCs, but such an approach is not politically feasible. Still, from his statewide perspective, Cole believes that a "public sector financing option" is still a possibility, even as CLC leaders continue to work with existing funders to create a plan for sustainability. With about "a year of life left" with current funding sources, Joel says he could be forced to dip into the teachers' contract to maintain the level of services currently provided by CLCs. He said that, even though teachers are strong supporters of CLCs, such a move might test their loyalty.

"Sustainability is always an issue and always will be an issue," says Cole, but he adds that Lincoln's CLCs are funded and led by the entities noted above, indicating that the initiative is not dependent on any one sector for all of its funding. He contrasts this balanced approach to a community outside Lincoln whose community schools are entirely dependent on 21st CCLC

funds. When the money runs out, the community will not have the option of turning to a diversified funding stream.

Sometimes the variation in finances and programming across various lead agencies can be an issue. The district would like to see greater consistency in the prioritization of academics by partners. Joel says he would like to see a similar programmatic approach used at all the CLCs—“homework first and then activities.”

Johnson says that her role is not to “dictate” how CLCs structure their activities. “They need to offer services that meet the needs of the students based on the school improvement plan,” she says. Her role is to develop collaborative partnerships that ensure achievement of the community school initiative’s goals.

Another issue is whether some coordinators are stretched too thin. Five of them are responsible for two sites each, possibly preventing those CLCs from reaching their full potential. “It would be a golden nugget if we had enough resources to have a full-time coordinator in every CLC,” Devney at Huntington said. “When you’re sharing those leadership roles, you’re managing a program. But when you have a full-time leader, you are leading a program.”

Johnson does not believe that the CLCs that share a coordinator are short-changed as long as the coordinator works closely with the principal and community. “Coordinators that lead multiple sites must be experts at building relationships, creating trust, and casting the vision that many can get behind. “When they manage, it is very different than when they lead,” states Johnson.

What the Future Holds

Lincoln CLCs are clearly setting a model for the rest of the state in demonstrating how afterschool program providers and community schools can work in close partnership to help students succeed, Cole says. He added that the next step is to focus on early-childhood education to help eliminate the learning gaps often exhibited by young children even before they enter kindergarten. Some community school initiatives across the country have made preschool a strong component of their work with local partners.

Cole expects the Lincoln community’s support for CLCs to continue to grow, especially as the data begin to show the effectiveness of the program. “I think they [Lincoln Public Schools] are in a position to explain the impact” of CLCs, he said. He also expects parents to become more active participants in the future of CLCs. “Parents have emerged as big supporters, and I would envision that leg [parents] becoming stronger and more vocal,” Cole says. “They are an underutilized resource.”

What a Difference CLCs Make

Traditional afterschool programs still exist in Lincoln, but they largely resemble what schools offered before the advent of CLCs—safe and engaging activities but with few connections to what teachers are trying to achieve in the classroom. Non-CLCs may also offer summer programs, but they are “not necessarily linked and connected and aligned” with the school day, Johnson says.

While a long-term study has yet to investigate how Lincoln students in expanded learning programs at CLCs perform compared to other students, Johnson is beginning to collect the evidence. “We have data that is showing that when students and youth are involved in high-quality out-of-school-time programs, they do better on state assessments,” she says.

But personal stories matter, too. Miller uses her own children’s experience to illustrate the comparison between traditional schools and CLCs. She says that, while she was “lucky enough” to be the principal at two CLCs, her two teenage boys attended schools that were not CLCs. “Nothing was missing from their educational experience,” she says. “They were in a place that was safe, but it was just the minimum. They got their homework done, but it was nowhere near the comprehensive extended learning opportunity.”

Lessons Learned

Lincoln’s experience in expanding learning opportunities through community schools provides examples for other school districts, community school leaders, and program providers.

First, universities can be strong community school partners in providing expanded learning opportunities. They offer expertise in important content areas such as mathematics and science. At the same time, college students earn valuable experience in school settings.

Second, trust is essential in creating strong partnerships between community school leaders and community-based program providers. In Lincoln, Johnson has earned the trust of community agencies because she worked in one of them prior to working at the school district office. An atmosphere of trust, however, must also develop at the local level among site coordinators, program providers, school staff, and families.

Third, the involvement of an executive committee that represents the city, the school district, and the community keeps Lincoln’s CLC initiative connected to all three of those entities. This structure has helped guide the transition from traditional afterschool care to a well-designed CLC initiative that is aligned with the district’s goals.

Finally, opening professional development opportunities to all providers—even if the providers do not work in community schools—helps expand best practices to other sites. It also increases providers’ understanding of how to work in partnership with classroom teachers to focus on students’ learning goals.

Appendix III: Baltimore Case Study—Strategic Alignment of Community Schools and ELO

“That’s what community schools are about—expanded learning opportunities, expanded health opportunities, expanded everything opportunities.”

-Jane Sundius, Open Society Institute-Baltimore

Students in gifted and talented programs often have opportunities for enrichment that are not available to other students. Under the new community school structure at John Eager Howard Elementary School in Baltimore, however, all students may now take advantage of opportunities for enrichment. With the involvement of several community partners, *all* of Howard’s young “scholars” may learn French and Spanish during two hours of “cultural enrichment” time after school. They may even explore music by trying out the violin or stay physically active through karate and yoga.

“It’s all about exposure and access that they would not have had before,” says Jennifer McDowell, community schools coordinator at Howard and an organizer for Child First Authority, Inc.—the nonprofit organization that is the community school’s lead partner agency.

English classes for parents and the development of a neighborhood Girl Scout troop—something that most of the girls in this all-African American, 100 percent poverty-rate school wouldn’t typically participate in—are two other outcomes that have resulted from McDowell’s connections with local partners and her efforts to find out what parents and students want and need.

In addition to McDowell, two part-time staff members help link what happens during the school day to what happens after school. Child First’s program coordinator—a 5th grade teacher at Howard during the school day—makes certain that the afterschool academic and enrichment opportunities build on classroom activities. For example, an afterschool “green keeper” club—which includes activities such as mixing up homemade cleaning products—complements the regular school day’s “green” school activities. An academic coordinator (a 3rd grade teacher at the school) works to match STEM-related afterschool activities with students’ individual learning needs. “Afterschool is the number one strategy we are using to increase student achievement,” says McDowell, who worked as a community organizer for Child First before becoming a coordinator. “Now we have more opportunity to build the right partners that our schools need.”

Merging Community School and Afterschool Strategies

Howard Elementary is part of a new effort in Baltimore to merge the work of afterschool providers with the community schools strategy. Some, but not all, Baltimore City Public Schools (BCPS) locations have enthusiastically adopted the community schools strategy.

Until last year, the Family League of Baltimore, a nonprofit organization that funds programs aimed at reducing poverty in Baltimore and improving families’ health and well-being, operated two separate funding processes—one for local agencies involved in community schools and another for afterschool providers. Under its new approach, however, the Family League requires organizations requesting funds to demonstrate their commitment to community schools and then provide assurances that out-of-school-time programs represent a major component of their work. The Family League’s change in approach reflects the belief that a more integrated approach to academics, enrichment, health and social support, and family engagement will improve student success and contribute to stronger communities. Accordingly, organizations such as Child First

Authority, which had already been delivering afterschool programs throughout the district and was part of a well-established out-of-school-time sector, are now taking on new roles as lead agencies—or coordinating partners—in community schools.

Currently, BCPS accounts for 38 community schools—also called community resource schools—serving over 17,000 students and families, according to the Family League. Another 48 out-of-school-time programs deliver programming to over 3,700 students at those schools.

Previously, “Community schools were pigeonholed as a program,” says Michael Sarbanes, who is executive director of BCPS’s Office of Engagement but has a background in community advocacy work around issues such as housing and improving safety. Likewise, in many schools, afterschool programs were just something that took place “down the hall.” Now, Sarbanes says, there is “an overwhelming sense that schools should be open, should be connected to networks [of programs and services], and should provide value to the community.”

With Andrés A. Alonso recently retiring after six years as BCPS’s chief executive officer, responsibility will fall to interim superintendent Tisha Edwards and Alonso’s successor to maintain the commitment to the community schools vision. However, Sarbanes added that the school board also includes “strong community school advocates.”

The community school approach is also a central component of the district’s plans to remodel and rebuild many of its dilapidated schools. With the \$1.2 billion the district is receiving from the state for construction and renovation of schools over the next 10 years, leaders are considering how to create stronger “relationships with the community” in the design of the buildings, Sarbanes says.

To Ellie Mitchell, director of the Maryland Out-of-School-Time (MOST) Network, plans for remodeling and rebuilding schools translate into, for example, the opportunity to design storage space for materials and supplies belonging to community partners and to create spaces that are open to the community—such as libraries and health clinics—as long as the associated activities do not interrupt student learning or present a safety problem. “What a huge opportunity,” she says.

Jane Sundius, director of the Education and Youth Development Program at the Open Society Institute-Baltimore and a member of the Family League’s community and school engagement strategy steering committee, says that the marriage between community schools and out-of-school-time providers has enhanced the work of community schools, making them stronger than the city’s earlier versions of community schools. For example, Sundius notes that the staff members of afterschool programs often have more regular contact with children and families than do teachers and therefore are able to determine what health, behavior, or other issues might need attention from the community school coordinator or other partners.

Extending the School Day

Finally, Baltimore is one of three cities involved in the [ExpandedED](#) Schools Network, funded in part by [The After-School Corporation](#). As part of a larger movement to extend the school day by re-imagining it, ExpandedED schools create modified school schedules that extend the school day. Opportunities run from breakfast through dinner and build in additional time for science, the arts, and other enrichment activities provided by community partners. ExpandedED offers another

opportunity to combine a model of expanded learning with the comprehensive and collaborative approach of community schools.

Structure and Governance

Baltimore's community schools and efforts to expand learning receive funding from a variety of sources through the Family League, including the mayor's office, the Governor's Office for Children, and organizations such as the Open Society Institute, which also funded the Safe and Sound Campaign afterschool initiative. The school district also contributes to the Family League. BCPS is using a four-year grant from The Wallace Foundation to improve the quality of expanded learning programs through professional development and the use of data. The Collaborative for Building After-School Systems (CBASS) provides support for STEM-related afterschool and summer programs.

The steering committee, which brings together lead community school partners, out-of-school-time providers, funders, and school district personnel, has been in place for about a year. It is essential, Sundius says, for overseeing and guiding all of the Family League's work, but also to "spread the word" about the connections between community schools and expanded learning. "That's what community schools are about—expanded learning opportunities, expanded health opportunities, expanded everything opportunities," she says.

A separate committee focuses specifically on STEM learning. In addition, "mini networks"—similar to professional learning communities for out-of-school-time providers—have developed around specific issues such as expanded learning opportunities for middle and high school students, the use of data, and the support of students with special needs.

As compared to previous community school initiatives' steering committees, the recently formed steering committee seems, in Sundius's opinion, to have fostered a new climate as it focuses on out-of-school time. In the past, she said, committee members spent considerable time discussing "what community schools are supposed to be." Given the committee's large membership, however, she believes that it might be prudent at some point to create an executive committee.

It makes sense, she adds, that both community school partners and expanded learning program providers are tracking attendance as a key indicator of their effectiveness. Chronic absenteeism—whether during the regular school day or in afterschool programs—is a window into a variety of other problems, such as illness, poor behavior, or a family crisis. "Attendance is a way to fix many of the issues that kids have," she says.

Expanding Learning and Engaging Parents

At the local level, community school coordinators meet quarterly with providers to talk about needs in their schools and how to reach students who are not currently enrolled in any type of expanded learning activity. At Howard Elementary, principal Tamara Hanson and McDowell think about how to expand learning opportunities for students who cannot or do not attend the afterschool program. Every Friday for the last hour of the school day, Howard Elementary offers enrichment activities, such those provided afterschool, permitting students to try out a new talent or skill every six weeks. Local partners, such as a neighboring synagogue, help organize student lunch clubs that focus on a variety of interests, such as knitting, newspaper writing, and chess. "It's an informal time where adults from the community can share what they know and love with the kids," McDowell says.

The community school initiative at Howard Elementary is also creating a vehicle for parents to express and address their concerns. At parent meetings, for example, McDowell heard comments that, when the parents picked up their children after work, it was already dark outside, with no lights shining on the school field. In response, McDowell mobilized a team of parents for an evening mission to see if there were lights that could be turned on. Wearing safety vests and equipped with flashlights, they discovered that, in fact, there were field lights but that they had been turned off because there were no afterschool programs in the past. Within a week, the parents figured out who was responsible for setting the timer on the lights; the field was illuminated.

Action to address a relatively simple issue, McDowell says, has helped teach parents that their opinion matters and that they have an important responsibility to be part of the school. When McDowell started her new position, parents were not volunteering any time; now, they give more than 500 hours a month. McDowell also co-chairs the school's family engagement committee and has situated her desk in the school's front office, reinforcing the message that Howard Elementary's status as community school is "infused into who we are," she says. Ultimately, McDowell would like the community school to establish a governing committee, but building the connections with parents and partners, she says, is a step in that direction. "This work is relational. It's not coming in and saving the school. We really want to be a true partner," McDowell says. "It doesn't serve the community if we just bring in a bunch of programs."

Learning during the Summer

Given that community school coordinators work year-round, they are involved in organizing summer learning opportunities. A Read to Succeed program for rising kindergarten through grade 3 students is available at 18 sites—8 of which are community schools—for children needing extra reading support. In those 8 schools, the coordinator is on hand to address any other barriers that might keep students from succeeding, says Julia Baez, senior director of education initiatives at the Family League.

At Howard Elementary, which is not one of the 18 summer sites, McDowell uses her knowledge of what students enjoy during the enrichment times and lunch clubs to direct them into a variety of community-based camp opportunities available during the summer. Many of the out-of-school-time providers who partner with the community schools during the year also operate summer programs, and the relationships that have developed among coordinators, providers, and families help ensure that students are guided into meaningful summer opportunities.

Facing New Challenges

Despite Baltimore's widespread support for community schools, the new direction taken by the Family League poses some challenges. First, out-of-school-time providers and agencies that coordinate community schools used to be "battling for the same pool of money and were not working in a collaborative way," Baez says. "We've asked them to all be friends in this new strategy."

As a result, some afterschool advocates still have doubts about whether the new approach is in the best interests of children. For example, even though Mitchell at the MOST Network believes that locating afterschool programs in community schools will make the programs stronger, she has been troubled by the fact that the number of afterschool programs has dropped from 60 to 48. "These are things upon which reasonable people can disagree," she says, while acknowledging

that only a year has passed since the change in the Family Leagues' approach and that the number of programs may well increase. In most cases, however, OST providers that focused on one single enrichment became sub-contractors for a broader and more comprehensive implementation of the community schools strategy that continues to serve the same number of students.

Other concerns relate to the delivery of all expanded learning opportunities in the schools themselves such that community-based providers would be excluded from afterschool activities delivered in locations other than the schools. In fact, other facilities located near the schools have been involved in ELO. Howard Elementary, for example, is located adjacent to a city-run recreation center that serves about 50 students after school. The center director attends all of the community school staff meetings and works with McDowell to “design programs that fit our families’ needs.”

Nearby, a community-based afterschool care provider serves about 15 students. Until adoption of the new community schools strategy, however, the school did not have much of a relationship with that provider. McDowell now meets with that director once a month and says, “They are more involved in the work we are doing with families.”

Sarbanes notes that continuing to connect and align community schools with other services—such as health care, housing assistance, and nutrition—will be an ongoing challenge. “We have great riches out there, but there is poverty of access,” he says, adding, for example, that Baltimore has a strong arts community, but the artists, musicians, and other practitioners are “connected to schools very unevenly. [The partnerships] are intense in some areas and not in others.”

Another challenge—but also an opportunity—is that many partner agencies hire “day-school” classroom teachers to work during afterschool hours. Baez says that Family League, school and community leaders are just beginning to think about how to involve such teachers in community schools and expanded learning. For example, agencies are partnering with the Baltimore Teachers Union to raise awareness of how afterschool programs and other expanded learning opportunities can support their work. “We want teachers to demand to be in a community school, where someone is providing additional services,” Baez says.

Finally, Sarbanes adds that integrating the community schools philosophy into district operations creates practical challenges for principals who are in the midst of shifting to the Common Core State Standards. Moving toward a community schools philosophy, he says, creates the need to train principals in areas such as developing partnerships and engaging families. The district, in fact, is in the midst of redesigning evaluation frameworks for teachers and school administrators. Sarbanes says that the frameworks address various aspects of community schools implementation but adds that most evaluators “cut their teeth” at a time when most educators were not trained in or did not operate a community school.

The information on the new evaluation system that is available on the school district’s website says, for example, that school leaders “engage families and communities by providing safe, supportive learning environments; facilitating open communication and decision making; and integrating diversity into the school culture.” Nonetheless, only 38 of the district’s 194 schools currently operate with a community school coordinator; in other words, the principals at the other schools lack trained staff to carry out the community schools work, including ELO.

Supporting Community Schools with Professional Development

Another challenge related to the Family League’s new strategy is that some of the organizations that run community schools in Baltimore, such as the University of Maryland’s School of Social Work, are large and have the infrastructure to support community school coordinators in their new roles. But smaller, local providers may be stepping into coordinator positions without access to needed expertise. Accordingly, the Family League provides professional development to ensure that providers inexperienced in coordinating partnerships and services—such as those that formerly operated afterschool programs—are poised for success. “If they’re an arts-based program, but we know that they are challenged in teaching literacy, we’ll incorporate literacy activities into art and show how it links to academic achievement,” Baez explains.

Even though Mitchell would like to see the number of sites increase, she has been impressed with the Family League’s investment in technical assistance and professional development. Afterschool program providers also have opportunities for joint planning with community school coordinators to discuss issues such as student data and how expanded learning opportunities target students with the greatest needs, including the chronically absent. Family League also provides professional development during the summer.

Growth and Sustainability

At this point, Sarbanes says that it is unclear how funding sources for community schools will grow in the near future. Even though Baltimore can point to some strong organizations and foundations, the work of such organizations is not necessarily connected to community schools. The universities are active, but not quite to the level of funding a coordinator’s position, for example.

He adds that it is possible for some schools to expand their community school work without a full-time coordinator. In some instances, perhaps a university or other organization will decide to fund a coordinator who will work with multiple schools. In the absence of full funding of the state school finance formula, it is also possible, he says, for the district to receive more money from the state if the economy continues to improve. “I’m afraid,” he says, “it’s going to be patchwork for a while.”

Without expanded learning opportunities for children in poor communities—especially over the summer—Sundius is concerned that the achievement gap will grow wider. Both advocates and parents, she says, need to take a larger role in pushing for increased funding. “It is going to take the community saying, ‘I want this for my school, too.’”

Appendix IV: Community Schools Superintendents Leadership Council

The following is a list of superintendents in the Coalition for Community Schools Superintendents Leadership Council. An asterisk (*) indicates the superintendents who attended the council meeting in June 2013 to discuss expanded learning opportunities.

State	City/Town	Name	School District
Arizona	Tucson	Nicolas Clement	Flowing Wells Unified School District
California	Emeryville	Debbra Lindo	Emeryville Unified School District
California	Oakland	Curtiss Sarikey*	Oakland Unified School District
California	Hayward	Matt Wayne*	Hayward Unified School District
California	Los Angeles	John Deasy	Los Angeles Unified School District
California	Pasadena	Brian McDonald	Pasadena Unified School District
California	Redwood City	Jan Christensen	Redwood City School District
California	San Francisco	Guadalupe Guerrero*	San Francisco Unified School District
California	San Jose	John Porter	Franklin McKinley School District
California	San Rafael	Mike Watenpaugh*	San Rafael City Schools
California	Santa Rosa	Soccoro Shiels*	Santa Rosa City Schools
California	Vallejo	Ramona Bishop*	Vallejo City Unified School District
Connecticut	Hartford	Kelvin Roldan	Hartford Public Schools
Connecticut	New Haven	Sue Weisselberg*	New Haven Public Schools
Florida	Palm Beach	Keith Oswald	The School District of Palm Beach County
Illinois	Peoria	Grenita Lathan	Peoria Public School District
Indiana	Evansville	David Smith	Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation
Georgia	Gainesville	Merrienne Dyer*	Gainesville City Schools
Maryland	Baltimore	Jonathon Brice	Baltimore Public Schools
Maryland	Rockville	Joshua Starr	Montgomery County Public Schools
Michigan	Grand Rapids	Teresa Weatherall Neal*	Grand Rapids Public Schools
Michigan	Wyoming	Bill Fetterhoff*	Godwin Heights Public Schools
Minnesota	Brooklyn	Mark Bonine	Brooklyn Center Schools
Missouri	Kansas City	Jim Hinson	Independence Public School District
Missouri	St. Louis	Kelvin Adams*	St. Louis Public Schools
Nebraska	Lincoln	Steve Joel	Lincoln Public Schools
New Mexico	Albuquerque	Kristine Meurer	Albuquerque Public Schools
Ohio	Cincinnati	Mary Ronan*	Cincinnati Public Schools
Ohio	Toledo	Romules Durant	Toledo Public Schools
Oklahoma	Tulsa	Kirt Hartzler	Union Public Schools
Oklahoma	Tulsa	Keith Ballard	Tulsa Public Schools
Oregon	Portland	Sam Breyer*	Centennial Public Schools
Oregon	Portland	Don Grotting	David Douglas School District
Oregon	Portland	Karen Fischer Gray	Parkrose School District
Oregon	Portland	Carole Smith	Portland Public Schools
Oregon	Portland	Joyce Henstrand	Reynolds School District
Pennsylvania	Bethlehem	Joseph J. Roy	Bethlehem Area School District
Pennsylvania	Lancaster	Pedro Rivera*	School District of Lancaster
Pennsylvania	Bangor	Patricia Mulroy	Bangor Public Schools
Tennessee	Knoxville	James McIntyre	Knox County Schools
Tennessee	Nashville	Jesse Register	Metro Nashville Public Schools
Utah	Ogden	Bruce Penland	Ogden School District
Washington	Seattle	Susan Enfield	Highline Public Schools
Washington	Seattle	Jose Banda	Seattle Public Schools
Washington	Renton	John Welch	Puget Sound Educational Service District

Appendix V: Coalition for Community Schools Partners

21st Century School Fund
Afterschool Alliance
After School and Community Education Resource Network
Alignment Nashville, TN
Alliance for Children and Families
American Association of School Administrators
American Federation of Teachers
American Public Health Association
American Public Human Services Association
American School Counselor Association
American School Health Association
American Youth Policy Forum
America's Promise Alliance
Annenberg Institute for School Reform, Brown University
Annie E. Casey Foundation
Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
Association of New York State Youth Bureau
Bates College/Lewiston Public Schools, ME
Beacons Schools, Youth Development Institute
Big Brothers, Big Sisters
Birmingham Public Schools, AL
Boston Full Service Schools Roundtable, MA
Boys and Girls Club of America
Bridges to Success, United Way of Central Indiana (Indianapolis, IN)
Bridges to Success, United Way of Greensboro, NC
California Afterschool Partnership/Center for Collaborative Solutions
California Center for Community-School Partnerships/Healthy Start Field Office
California Department of Education
Camp Fire USA
Carnegie Corporation
CASEL (Collaborative for Academic Social and Emotional Learning)
Center for Community Change
Center for Health and Health Care in Schools, George Washington University
Charles Stewart Mott Foundation
Chatham-Savannah Youth Futures Authority, GA
Chelsea Community Schools, MA
Chicago Coalition for Community Schools, IL
Child and Family Policy Center
Child Welfare League of America
Children's Aid Society
Children's Defense Fund
City Connects, MA
Colorado Foundation for Families and Children
Communities in Schools
Community Achieves, Nashville, TN
Community Agencies Corporation of New Jersey
Community College of Aurora/Aurora Public Schools, CO
Community Schools, RI
Concordia LLC
Council of Education Facilities Planners International
Council of the Chief State of School Officers
Council of the Great City Schools
Development Training Institute
Developmental Studies Center
Dorcas Place Adult and Family Literacy Center, RI
Education Development Center
Education Leadership Beyond Excellence
Elev8
Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation
Families of Freedom Scholarship Fund
Family Friendly Schools, VA
Family League of Baltimore City
Forum for Youth Investment
Foundations, Inc.
Georgia Family Connection Partnership
Harlem Children's Zone
Illinois Community School Partnership/Voices for Illinois Children
Illinois Federation for Community Schools
Institute for Educational Leadership
Jacksonville Full Service Community Schools, FL
Jacksonville Partnership for Children, FL
JP Morgan Chase Foundation
KidsCAN! Mesa, AZ
KnowledgeWorks Foundation
Learning First Alliance
Milton S. Eisenhower Foundation
Minneapolis Beacons Project, MN
National Assembly on School-Based Health Care
National Association for Bilingual Education
National Association of Counties
National Association of Elementary School Principals
National Association of School Psychologists
National Association of Secondary School Principals

National Association of State Boards of Education
National Association of State Directors of Special Education
National Center for Family Literacy
National Center for Schools and Communities, Fordham University
National Child Labor Committee
National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities
National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education
National Collaboration for Youth
National Conference of State Legislatures
National Council of La Raza
National Education Association
National Governors' Association
National Human Services Assembly
National League of Cities
National Mental Health Association
National Parent Teachers Association
National School Boards Association
National School-Age Care Alliance
National Summer Learning Association
National Trust of Historic Preservation
National Urban League
National Youth Employment Coalition
Nebraska Children and Families Foundation
New Jersey School-Based Youth Service/ Department of Human Services
New Paradigm Partners, Turtle Lake, WI
New Schools/Better Neighborhoods
New Vision for Public Schools, NY
Office of Family Resource and Youth Services Centers, Frankfort, KY
Ohio Department of Education
Pacific Oaks College, CA
Partnership for Children and Youth, Oakland, CA
Police Executive Research Forum
Polk Bros. Foundation

RMC Research
Rose Community Foundation
Save the Children
School Linked Services Inc., Kansas City, KS
Schools of the 21st Century, Yale University
SCOPE (School and Community Organized to Provide Excellence)
Smart Growth America
Society of State Directors of Health, Physical Education and Recreation
State Education and Environment Roundtable
Stuart Foundation
Tennessee Consortium of Full Service Schools
The After-School Corporation
The Atlantic Philanthropies
The Educational Alliance
The Finance Project
The Harwood Institute
The Rural School and Community Trust
The U.S. Conference of Mayors
The Wallace Foundation
UCLA Center for Mental Health in Schools
United Way Worldwide
University of Alabama-Birmingham/Birmingham Public Schools, RI
University of Dayton/Dayton Public Schools, OH
University of Denver/Denver Public Schools, CO
University of Kentucky/Lexington Public Schools, KY
University of New Mexico/United South Broadway/Albuquerque Public Schools, NM
University of Rhode Island/Pawtucket Public School, RI
University-Assisted Community Schools
W.K. Kellogg Foundation
Washington State Readiness-To-Learn Initiative
YMCA of the USA

ADDITIONAL COALITION RESOURCES

The Role of Community Schools in Place-Based Initiatives: Collaborating for Student Success

*William R. Potapchuk
(Coalition for Community Schools,
PolicyLink, and the West Coast
Collaborative)*

This paper builds on a sample of local initiatives demonstrating that community schools are the vehicle for success in place-based initiatives such as Promise Neighborhoods and cradle-to-career initiatives.

Scaling Up School and Community Partnerships: The Community Schools Strategy

*Atelia Melaville, Reuben Jacobson, and
Martin J. Blank*

This report builds on both practice and research to describe the what, why, and how of system-wide expansion of community schools.

Community Schools Research Brief, 2013

Reuben Jacobson

This research brief synthesizes research on the impact of community schools on improving student and adult learning, strengthening families, and promoting healthy communities.

Financing Community Schools: Leveraging Resources to Support Student Success

*Martin J. Blank, Reuben Jacobson, Atelia
Melaville, and Sarah S. Pearson*

This report highlights the financing strategies of seven established community school initiatives as they leverage existing resources to avoid service duplication and to break down silos.

Growing Community Schools: The Role of Cross-Boundary Leadership

*Martin J. Blank, Amy Berg, and Atelia
Melaville*

This report highlights work in 11 communities where leaders are working together in new ways to "grow" community schools.

Community Schools across the Nation

Coalition for Community Schools

This report highlights a sample of local initiatives and national models of the community schools strategy.

Making the Difference: Research and Practice in Community Schools

*Atelia Melaville, Bela P. Shah, and Martin J.
Blank*

This report highlights evaluation data from 20 community school initiatives and synthesizes their combined results.

Community Schools: Promoting Student Success—A Rationale and Results Framework

Coalition for Community Schools

This report outlines a rationale for and defines short- and long-term results that community schools seek.

Coalition for Community Schools
Institute for Educational Leadership
www.communityschools.org

