**Community Schools:
A Strategy, Not a Program**

National Center
for
COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

The Children's Aid Society

Jane Quinn & Janice Chu-Zhu

A Strategy for What?

A strategy for organizing the resources of the school and community around student success...

**Patricia Harvey, Former Superintendent
St. Paul (MN) Public Schools**

Several well-known models:

- ◆ Beacons
- ◆ Bridges to Success
- ◆ Children's Aid Society Community Schools
- ◆ Communities in Schools
- ◆ Elev8
- ◆ Healthy Start
- ◆ Schools of the 21st Century (Yale)
- ◆ WEPIC (University of Pennsylvania)

New Research Supporting CS

New research from Chicago (Bryk *et al.*) found five essential ingredients:

- ◆ Principal: driver of change; inclusive leadership approach
- ◆ Real family and community engagement
- ◆ Ability to build professional capacity
- ◆ Student-centered school climate
- ◆ Coherent curriculum

Key Ingredients

- Education First
- Lead Agency as Partner, Not Tenant
- Full-Time Presence of Lead Agency
- Joint Planning (Particularly between Principal and CS Director)
- Integration of CS Staff into Governance and Decision-Making Bodies (e.g., School Leadership Team)

Key Program Components

- After-School and Summer Enrichment
- Parent Involvement
- Adult Education
- Medical, Dental, Mental Health and Social Services
- Early Childhood
- Community and Economic Development

Underlying Principles/Capacities

- *Comprehensiveness:* Responding as fully as possible to the documented needs of students and families
- *Coordination:* Structured and meaningful involvement of all stakeholders
- *Coherence:* Supports/services are aligned (integrated) with the core instructional program
- *Commitment:* Partners view CS as a long-term strategy, not a project, and do everything they can to make the partnership work

Lessons from 20 Years of Capacity-Building

- Many districts going to scale (Baltimore, Chicago, Portland) or incorporating underlying principles into district's strategic plan (St. Paul)
- Initiatives creating solutions to major challenges (e.g., sharing data; braiding resources; evaluating complex interventions)

Changes in CS Practice over the Past 20 Years

Where we were then:
- Co-Location
- CBOs as vendors
- Wrap-around (services, often around fixing kids)
- Program centered
- Time-limited project
- Innovators developing one or a few schools

Where we are now:
- Integration
- CBOs as partners
- SOS: Supports, services, opportunities
- Child centered
- Long-term strategy
- Developing systems of community schools

Results of CAS Community Schools

- Improved academic performance
- Higher attendance rates
- Positive school climate
- Improved school safety
- Greater parent involvement
- Improved student-teacher relationships
- Teachers able to focus on education

CCS Research Report '13

- ◆ Recent report from Coalition for Community Schools summarizes latest research
- ◆ Key results include improved academic performance, improved attendance, higher graduation rates, improved behavior, positive youth development, greater parental involvement

Funding Community Schools

- ◆ Started with private funding but moved to a 50-50 mix of public and private over ten years (now at 66-34 with OST)
- ◆ CAS now raises about $18 million per year for its 17 community schools and national technical assistance center
- ◆ Major private sources include foundations, corporations & individuals

Funding (continued)

- Major public sources include Medicaid and Child Health Plus(health and mental health)
- Early Head Start and Head Start (Federal grants) + Early Learn (NYC)
- 21st Century CLC (Federal money through State Ed. Dept.)
- NYS Advantage and Extended-Day
- NYC Out-of-School Time (general tax revenues)

Funding (continued)

- New Coalition guidebook offers multiples case studies and strategies for "braiding" funding from public and private sources
- Many districts and schools using Title I dollars for CS coordinators, parent/family engagement and other aspects of the work
- See *Financing Community Schools* at www.communityschools.org

Lessons about Leverage

- Non-education dollars from multiple sources can be leveraged to add value to the work of schools, in schools
- CS can add both human and financial resources to schools
- U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan calls CS "the most highly leveraged dollars I spent in Chicago"

Final Words: Our Four Mantras

- It's all about relationships
- Everything has to be negotiated—all the time
- This work focuses on getting the right partners doing the right work with the right students
- For community schools to work, the partners have to have the word "yes" written in their hearts