# Implementation Guide

## The Ohio Community Collaboration Model for School Improvement

Anderson-Butcher, D., Lawson, H., Bean, J., Boone, B., Kwiatkowski, A., et al. (2004). *Implementation guide: The Ohio Community Collaboration Model for School Improvement*. Columbus, OH: The Ohio Department of Education.

**For more information:** 1-877-OHIOEDU;
http://www.ode.state.oh.us/students-families-communities/community_learning_center_program/Ohio_Community_Collaboration_Model.asp

**Formal Citation:** Anderson-Butcher, D., Lawson, H., Bean, J., Boone, B., Kwiatkowski, A., et al. (2004). *Implementation guide: The Ohio Community Collaboration Model for School Improvement.* Columbus, OH: The Ohio Department of Education.

# *Table of Contents*

# Introduction

Educators, families and communities want to see their children succeed in school and have a successful transition to adulthood. They want children to reach higher academic achievement. They want them to stay healthy and drug free. And they want them to feel and safe supported in everything they do. No one wants Ohio's children to go hungry, to be afraid, or to feel like they are not capable of reaching their goals.

It takes educators, families and communities working together to do all these things. Educators alone cannot ensure higher academic achievement. They need families who are actively engaged in their children's education. Nor can families ensure their children feel safe and secure, especially when they are in school and away from home. Children's successes truly are products of concerted efforts by an entire community.

## Achieving academic success

Student achievement is at an all-time high in Ohio. An emerging consensus is that standards-based education is the foundation for this improvement. Without question, academic instruction and learning are the drivers for student achievement. The standards-based movement provides the operational detail for Ohio's vision for education - higher achievement for *all* students through a system of rigorous academic content standards, aligned curriculum and instruction, and testing and accountability measures that inform teaching and learning.

However, there are practical limits on how much the standards-based reforms can impact student academic success. For many of Ohio's students, the conditions for teaching and learning also must be right. If the conditions aren't right, learning, instruction and achievement are limited, and students will not learn what they need to know to succeed and graduate. For instance, if students are hungry, being bullied, doing drugs, etc. they are not likely to be engaged in the classroom and make the most out of their academic learning time. These "conditions" or non-academic barriers present real impediments to optimal student success, not only academically but socially and developmentally, as well.

Research shows that in schools with positive learning climates, students' social, emotional and ethical development are enhanced and academic performance and decision-making improves. Based on this research, the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) expanded its strategic plan to include two key pathways to higher achievement for all students: students receive high quality instruction aligned with academic content standards and students have the right conditions and motivation for learning.

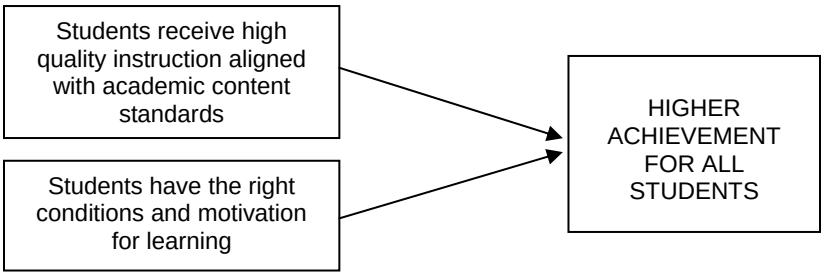



***Figure 1.1*** *Ohio Department of Education's Logic Model (Fall, 2004)*

Traditional school improvement models focus primarily on the first component, so in many schools, the second component gets little attention. Schools and communities must do both if students are truly to reach their fullest potential, ensuring high quality instruction and curricula alignment while simultaneously addressing the conditions that impact students' ability and motivation for learning.

## Traditional models for school improvement

Most of Ohio's schools, like their counterparts nationwide, rely on a traditional model of school improvement. In this model, educators and their site-based teams are the improvement leaders. Each team focuses on their own school, and each strives to improve essential components of their school's internal structures and operations.

Teams focus on implementing standards-based curriculum reforms, enhancing life in classrooms for teachers and students, promoting evidence-based instructional practices, ensuring that every student has access to qualified teachers administrators, and pupil service personnel, expanding parent involvement, improving the school's climate, and completing regular assessments and evaluations and then using the information to make good decisions. Clearly, these are the right priorities. Together they comprise the centerpieces for effective, successful school improvement planning.

## Limitations of traditional school improvement models

One of the most important limitations of traditional school improvement models is that they are oriented almost exclusively to what goes on inside a particular school. In other words, these models are "walled in" and "building-centered" improvement models. They do not take into account educators' influence over how students spend their out-of-school time.

For example, on average, students spend about 30 hours a week in school, and not all of this time is devoted to academic learning and achievement. Even when school improvement teams are successful in expanding in-school academic learning time, the fact remains that educators still have no impact on how students spend a substantial portion of their time doing things like extra-curricular activities, playing, watching TV, watching movies and listening to music, and hanging out with friends. Educators and school improvement teams are competing for students' time, attention and priorities.

Yet, educators are solely accountable for students' academic learning and achievement. Many educators worry that they'll be blamed if students' test scores don't improve. Some feel unprepared to address the non-academic learning barriers that a growing number of students bring to their classrooms. Some also worry about their own safety.

In brief, educators' work tends to be less satisfying and rewarding in these walled-in improvement models. This limitation is evidenced in the startling fact that approximately three out of every five teachers leave the profession within the first five years. At the same time, turnover among principals and superintendents is growing in Ohio and nationwide. This workforce crisis is important because the improvement of Ohio's schools depends fundamentally on the recruitment and retention of a high quality, stable workforce.

When walled-in, building-centered improvement models are in place, family and community resources for learning, academic achievement and healthy development are at least under-utilized, and sometimes they are untapped altogether. These lost opportunities are associated with a set of related problems:

- Teachers lack the ability to reach out to families and community leaders to address and prevent non-academic barriers to learning, success in school and healthy development. These barriers are nested in families, peer networks and community systems. Until these barriers are addressed effectively, many students will not come to school ready and able to learn.

- Students' non-academic barriers to learning and healthy development cause two other problems. First, these barriers often are the root causes of disruptive behaviors in classrooms. Moreover, these barriers and problem behaviors contribute to the development of unsafe, unhealthy school climates. Second, these non-academic barriers can diminish the learning conditions and performance of entire schools.

- When family and community resources are under-utilized and untapped, an important need isn't met. Parents, caregivers and families do not accept joint accountability for students' academic achievement and overall school effectiveness. In fact, in some school communities educators and families are at odds on important issues regarding students and schools. This is not a formula for success. Teachers, parents and other community leaders need to agree and work together.

## *Moving beyond traditional models of school improvement*

In identifying the two critical components leading to higher achievement, ODE developed an expanded model for school improvement that moves beyond traditional models. It is designed to address the limitations of walled-in school improvement models. At the same time, it builds on their strengths, and it enables educators, families and communities to fully develop the second component.

The Ohio Community Collaboration Model for School Improvement (OCCMSI) is designed to meet Ohio's needs and designed to close achievement gaps, increase graduation rates and improve the well being of Ohio's children. The model is fundamentally based on collaboration among people and partnerships among organizations. This new model makes school improvement a family and community priority.

With the focus on partnerships, the model will serve educators by providing them with much-needed assistance, supports and resources. Educators will no longer have to "do it all" or do it alone, as superintendents, school board members, teachers, pupil services providers and others structure essential services and supports that effectively address the most pressing non-academic barriers facing students and their families. Sharing responsibilities and accountabilities will make the work of teaching and administering in schools more effective, especially as these priorities strengthen and expand existing school improvement initiatives.

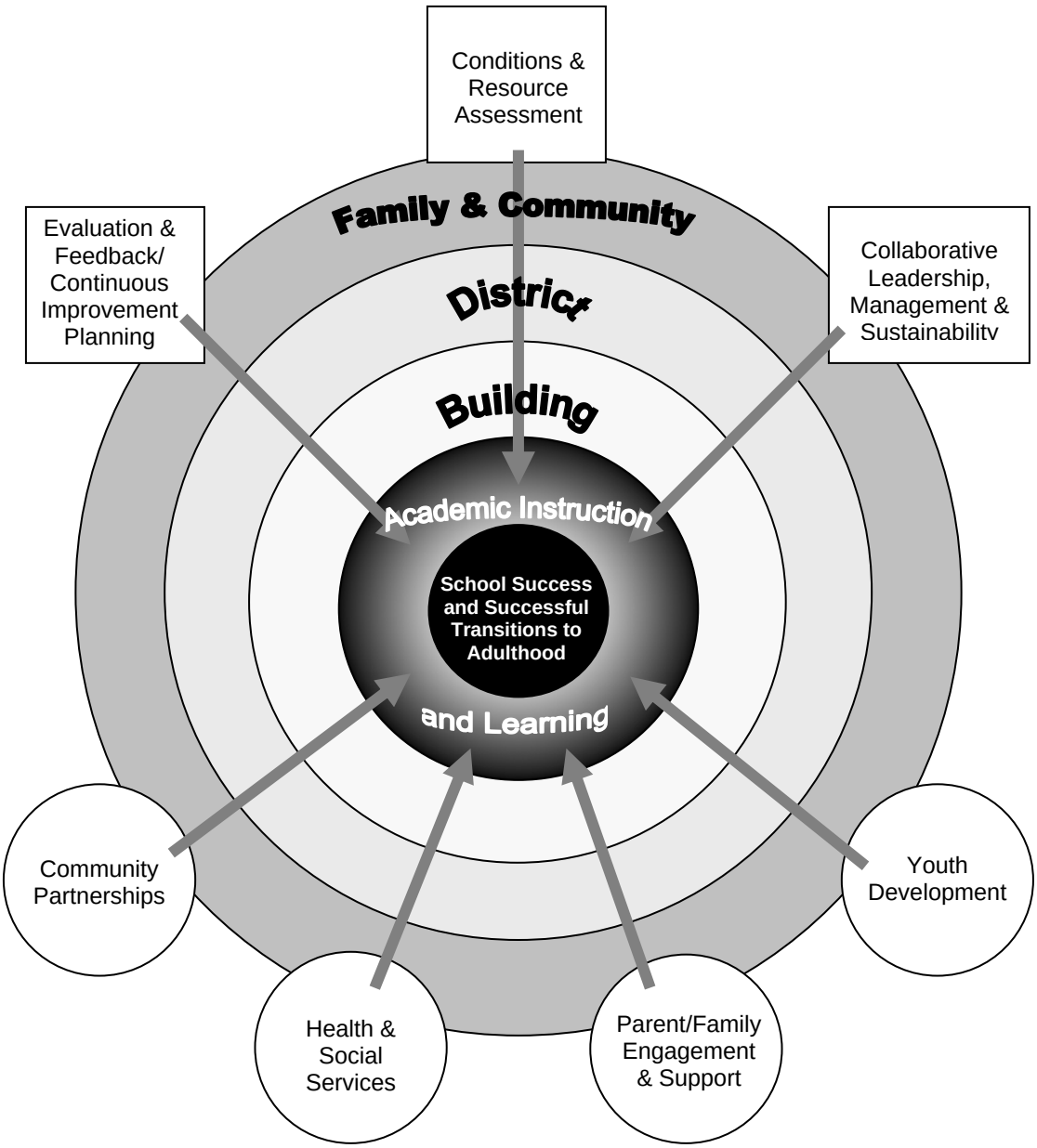



***Figure 1.2*** *The Ohio Department of Education's Expanded Model for School Improvement*

## The big picture of expanded school improvement

The OCCMSI has two aims: all children succeed in school and all children are prepared for a successful transition to adulthood.

The target of the model is student success – both in school and in successfully making the transition to adulthood - the central priority for every school. The outer ring designates family and community resources that need identified, mobilized and maximized in support of academic achievement, school success and successful transitions to adulthood.

Five circles designate core components and improvement priorities. The primary component is academic instruction and learning, which is addressed in traditional school improvement models. The other core components include community partnerships, health and social services, parent/family engagement and support, and youth development.

The three squares prioritize needs and resource assessment, collaborative leadership, management and sustainability, and evaluation and feedback/continuous improvement planning. These are the necessary "drivers" for learning, continuous improvement and accountability.

Details on these core components and drivers are provided in the next sections of this guide. For now, it's important to note they are inseparable. Together, they comprise a comprehensive, coherent, cohesive and feasible expanded school improvement model. In other words, this model amounts to more than the sum of its parts, i.e., its components and drivers.

The inner rings emphasize the relationship between district policies, priorities and needs, and those for specific schools. The model prioritizes both, also emphasizing that building-level improvement initiatives are inseparable from district-level initiatives.

In fact, family and community resources, once leveraged effectively, benefit both districts and schools. These benefits include economic benefits (e.g., eliminating duplication and fragmentation), social benefits (e.g., mobilizing support networks), and political benefits (e.g., the support networks help gain approval for school levies). Research has documented these benefits and others.

### Implementation – using the OCCMSI logic model

To accompany the big picture model, ODE developed a more detailed logic model, which identifies cause and effect relationships (i.e., the model's logic). More specifically, it identifies how educators and others in Ohio will use the OCCMSI will get from "here" (the present state of schools and students) to "there" (the improved, ideal state).

For example, start with the far right side of the figure. There you will find the same twin aims identified in the big picture: all children and youth succeed and school and are prepared for a successful transition to adulthood. These twin aims are the long term outcomes. Together they represent the improved, ideal state (the "there").

Now look to the far left side of the model. The first driver within the OCCMSI, the needs and resource assessment process, is identified. The bubble emphasizes assessments of school, student, family and community needs and conditions, including key gaps that need immediate attention and action. It also emphasizes untapped and under-utilized family and community resources. The focus is for leaders in each school community to do their own assessments and capacity analyses. Then they use this information to determine the current state (the "here") and to focus their improvement planning on needs, problems, gaps and untapped opportunities.

In response to important needs, conditions and gaps, and with an eye toward capitalizing on under-utilized and untapped family and community resources, the OCCMSI offers a collaborative, multi-faceted program and service model that will improve outcomes.

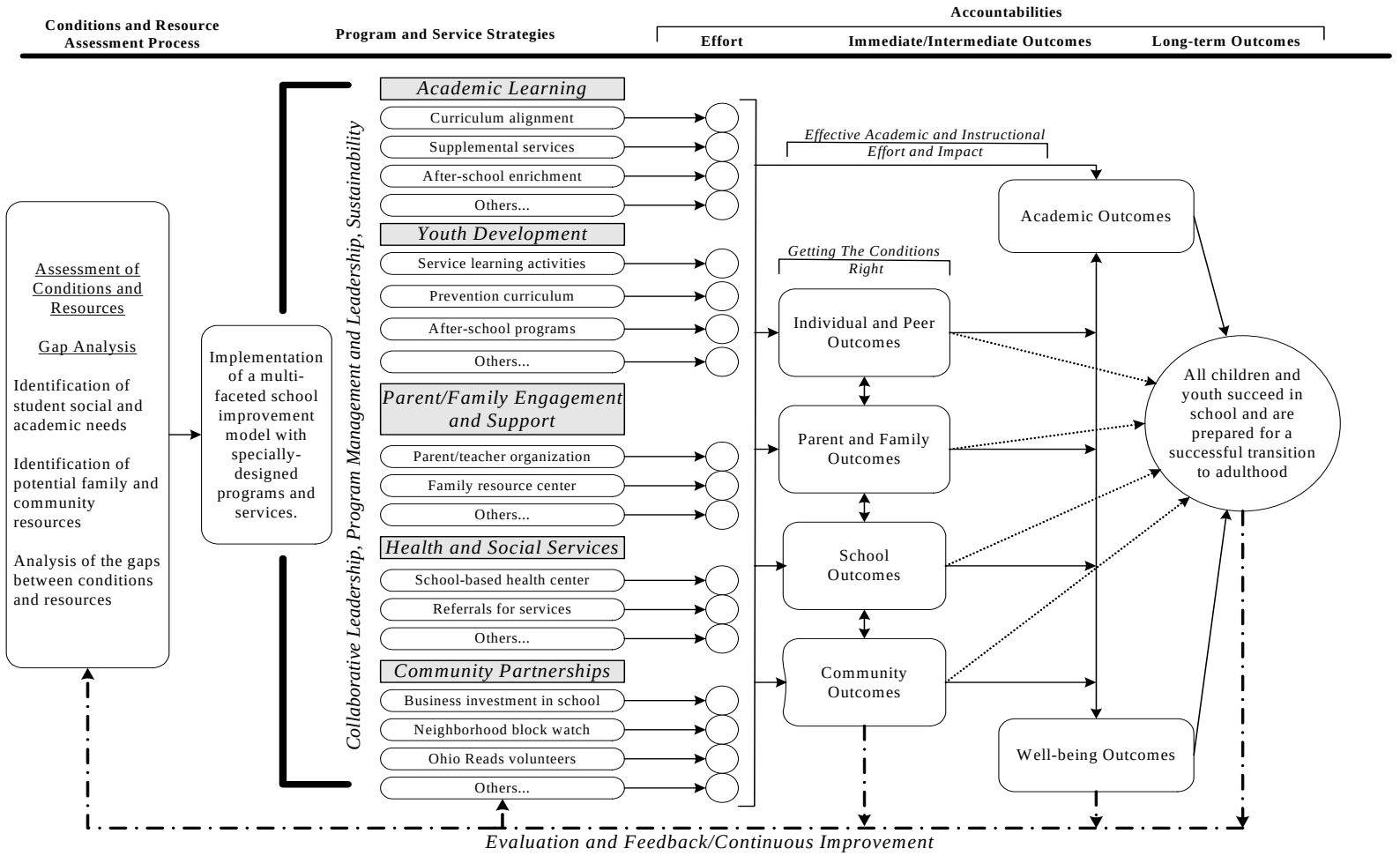



***Figure 1.3*** *The Ohio Community Collaboration Model for School Improvement Logic Model*

Additional OCCMSI drivers are listed in a bold font alongside the five core components, including Collaborative Leadership, Program Management and Leadership, and Sustainability. A third major driver, embedded evaluation and the feedback it provides for continuous improvement, is identified at the bottom of this logic model.

The question remains: How will your school community get from "here" to "there"? The middle sections of the model are structured to guide your school community to the answer, an answer that is designed to fit local conditions and circumstances. Five shaded bubbles highlight the model's core components: Academic Learning; Youth Development, Parent/Family Engagement and Support, Health and Social Services, and Community Partnerships. These core components emphasize cause and effect relationships between what your school community will do and the outcomes you'll achieve.

These improvement drivers and core components comprise some of the most critical features of this model. Your school community will need to emphasize them. That said, you'll need to figure out how best to adapt them to fit your local school communities.

Now turn your attention to the bubbles underneath each of the five core components. There you identify specific programs, services and activities that your school community can mount to improve. Focusing on local conditions, needs, gaps and untapped resources, your school community leaders are encouraged to consult the related research to help determine which programs and services will improve results, meet needs, bridge the gaps and improve local conditions.

Merely offering programs and services without attention to their quality will not yield the results school communities want and need. Effort, a key indicator of quality, matters; it's identified to the right of the core components. Included in this umbrella concept of effort are quality indicators such as sufficient resources, high quality staffing, enough time and intensity, implementation fidelity, accountability for results, and effective communications and connections with teachers, principals and others at each school.

When the programs and services are evidence-based and the effort is good, results will improve, needs will be met, gaps will be bridged, and local conditions will be enhanced. Above all, outcomes will improve. Accordingly, six categories of outcomes are emphasized in this logic model. These outcomes comprise the desirable "outputs" or "yield" from this model.

It's important that you notice the arrows that connect these six outcome domains. These connections also are critical to your school community's understanding and implementation of the OCC Model. Specifically, these connections indicate important relationships. Notably, improving outcomes in one domain often facilitates the improvement of outcomes in one or more of the others.

Furthermore, your school community can focus simultaneously on two or more outcome improvements as you complete your planning. Your school community's capacity to mount several improvements across multiple fronts—simultaneously— is one of the most important features of this school improvement model. This capacity for multi-tasking is in stark contrast to linear, one-at-a-time change strategies (often called "this year's new thing") associated with walled-in improvement models.

The logic model has two other important features. First, academic outcomes are related to, and inseparable from, well being outcomes. The underlying logic is important. When youth have high levels of academic achievement, but low levels of well being, neither they nor Ohioans are served. Furthermore, it's impossible for youth to have high levels of well being if they don't succeed and excel in school. Well being outcomes and academic achievement outcomes are interdependent.

Finally, all of the six outcome domains are connected to two long-term outcomes. The twin aims at the far right of the logic model comprise these two, long term outcomes. In this logic, the eight outcome domains are immediate (also called intermediate) benefits. They enable school community leaders to gauge progress. Important in their own right, these outcome domains are like stepping stones to the grand prize: All children and youth succeeding in school and prepared for a successful transition to adulthood.

## Implementation – using the OCCMSI Milestones

In Table 1.1 we present a milestone checklist that helps to demonstrate the flow of the model in practice. This milestone list was distilled from our practice in supporting schools and districts as they work to implement the OCCMSI. It may be helpful to you, as well, as you move forward with you expanded school improvement efforts. Please note that although the milestones are presented in a list format, this is not meant to be indicative of a linear process for implementation. In fact, we have found that comprehensive school improvement efforts involve the prioritization of multiple strategies simultaneously. In addition, some aspects within the milestones (such as engaging the school and community, developing and enhancing infrastructure, etc) may involve ongoing nurturing, monitoring, and prioritization throughout your school improvement efforts.

***Table 1.1 OCCMSI Milestones***

| | |
|---|---|
| ✓ | *Engage the school – develop strategies to ensure that the model is understood and accepted as a viable process for school improvement in the school itself* (A primary goal of the model is to support teachers in the classroom – teacher and staff understanding and acceptance of the model is critical to our success) |
| ✓ | *Engage the community – 'Build the Table' – establish a pilot team with broad school and community representation* (Start the process of partnering and the development of a positive culture for change both within the school and across the community) |
| ✓ | *Clarify Language* (Define what we mean by various terms and processes) |
| ✓ | *'Fill in the Boxes' – Current School and Community Practices Inventory* (Fill in the boxes in the CCMSI model to establish the local context for subsequent work – especially honoring prior efforts to do collaborative problem-solving) |
| ✓ | *Assess Conditions* (Identify the most pressing barriers to learning for students in the school) |
| ✓ | *Assess Resources* (Identify community resources available, available but insufficient, and/or needed to help address the most pressing barriers; Explore community assets and strengths, both formal and informal) |
| ✓ | *Analyze Gaps* (Identify resources that are needed but not available; or those that are available but aren't of sufficient quality and quantity, to address the most pressing barriers) |

| Table 1.1 OCCMSI Milestones | |
|---|---|
| ✓ | *Expand Continuous Improvement Planning Process* (Expand priorities to include strategies to address non-academic priorities; Foster more inclusive and comprehensive planning; Foster integrative planning across the school and the community; Use priorities established to guide action) |
| ✓ | *Develop and/or Enhance Resources* (Develop needed but unavailable or insufficient community resources; strengthen available resources) |
| ✓ | *Develop and/or Strengthen Key Partnerships* (Link community resources to barriers to learning; prioritize partnerships and relationships) |
| ✓ | *Develop and/or Enhance Infrastructure* (Develop and/or enhance collaborative leadership structures, single points of contact, and structural components in relation to the model and priorities; Prioritize linkages and connections across systems and components in relation to overall objectives; Develop and strengthen ongoing relationships, communication channels, service delivery systems, etc., between and among partners; Alter policies, procedures, roles, and responsibilities) |
| ✓ | *Develop and/or Enhance Programs and Strategies to Address Key Barriers* (Work with partners to decide what you are going to do to address barriers; Adopt best practices and evidence-based design principles, strategies and programs) |
| ✓ | *Develop and/or Enhance a Set of Program Logic Models to Elaborate All Program and Strategy Pathways* (Use logic models to develop the operational detail of programs and strategies) |
| ✓ | *Develop and/or Enhance Effort and Outcome Tracking Strategies* (Identify key data elements; develop data management, data analysis and reporting capacities) |
| ✓ | *Implement Program and Strategy Operation* (Implement programs and strategies with quality and fidelity) |
| ✓ | *Collect Data to Track Program Operation and Outcomes* (Implement a data system) |
| ✓ | *Implement Evaluation and Feedback Processes* (Ensure that data collected during the operation of programs and strategies links back to school and community decision-making – commit to continuous improvement) |

## *The goal of this guide - making it happen*

The goal of this implementation guide is to expand on the elements of the OCCMSI, providing you with research-supported design principles and strategies, highlighting best practices, and identifying barriers and related minimizing strategies.

We hope that by reading this document you will realize that this new model promises greater influence and control over how students spend their out-of-school time, especially new opportunities, supports, resources and assistance for their academic learning time. This is a huge advantage.

Its other major advantage follows suit: the model offers educators and others working in schools access to family and community resources. With this new model, for example, educators get help addressing non-academic barriers to learning and, at the same time, they gain access to learning opportunities and supports. With this model, the school is no longer an island in the community. Educators, especially teachers and principals, no longer have to work in isolation—with some worrying about being blamed when test scores don't improve.

## What the model should not do

In addition to these advantages, you and other school community leaders also need to keep four other considerations in mind. All indicate what this new model is not designed to do:

- First and foremost, it is not a competitor for your existing school improvement model. In other words, it's not "out with the old, in with the new." This model is intended to strengthen and expand each and every model in Ohio's schools. It's elastic and adaptable by design.

- Second, we are not suggesting that you disband your site based improvement team. Rather, we're suggesting that you'll want to add others to your team as you expand the boundaries of school improvement and gain access to family and community resources for learning, academic achievement, and healthy development.

- Third, we are not suggesting that you lose sight of the accountabilities and priorities established by the No Child Left Behind Act. To the contrary, this new model provides the means for achieving its priorities and for getting others in the community to take shared responsibility and accountability for school and youth outcomes.

- Finally, we are not suggesting that existing school improvement priorities are wrong-headed and displaced. This model will not succeed unless the typical priorities for school improvement planning—curriculum, instruction, school climate, school management, and continuous improvement efforts—remain top priorities.

Put another way, this new model fundamentally depends on site teams' success in getting the conditions right for learning, academic achievement and healthy development inside each school. As we get the conditions right, we are developing a vital pathway for success.

Importantly, it takes advantage of new technologies and opportunities associated with 'anytime, anywhere learning". This opportunity brings another: To bring the kinds of research-supported conditions for academic learning and achievement, which professional educators want and need, into out-of-school agencies, homes and contexts. In other words, the research-supported knowledge base about academic learning and instruction can be shared with family and community leaders to assist them in their work with children and youth.

This model's unique contribution is that it takes you and other educators outside each school's walls—in strategic, appropriate ways. It makes school improvement a family and community priority, and it enables the realization of multiple benefits for many different kinds of people and organizations, starting with students, educators and schools.

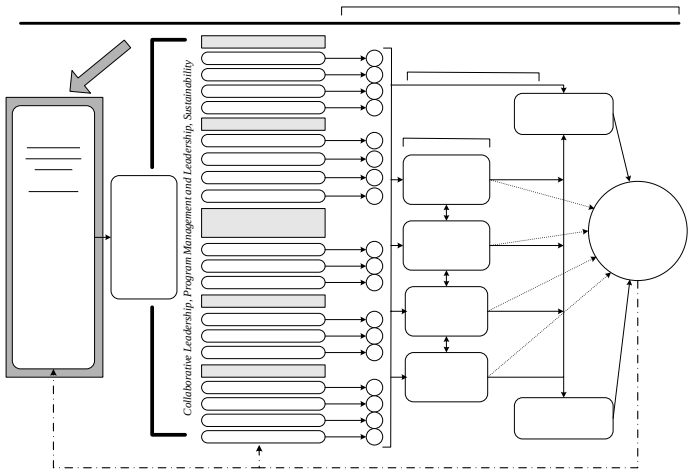
This model facilitates educators, families and communities working together so all children reach higher academic achievement, so all children can succeed in school and have a successful transition to adulthood.

## The guide's organization

We have structured the guide so it flows with the OCCMSI theory of change discussed above. For example, Chapter One presents a detailed discussion of the first step in the OCCMSI planning process – the conditions and resources assessment. Chapter Two goes on to discuss how to establish collaborative relationships and the overall importance of collaborative leadership. Chapter Three focuses on the practice of designing successful programs and services and the next few chapters (5, 6, 7, 8, 9) present guidance about how to address academic learning, youth development, family engagement and support, health and social services, and community partnerships, respectively. Chapter Ten explains the importance of evaluation and Chapter Eleven addresses the critical need for sustainability. Finally, Chapter Eleven provides some final comments and conclusions in relation to the overall implementation of the OCCMSI, and additional tools are provided in the Appendix. We hope you find the document helpful as you forge ahead in your expanded school improvement efforts.

# *Getting Started: Assessing Conditions and Resources*

This chapter is structured to prepare you to do your part in completing valid, useful assessments of local conditions and resources. As the logic model indicates, these assessments comprise the first priority in the Ohio Community Collaboration Model for School Improvement (OCCMSI).




## *What do we mean by conditions and resources?*

ODE justifiably emphasizes the importance of "getting the conditions right" for student learning (see Figure 1.1). In this document, "the conditions" encompass the needs you must address, the problems you must solve and the opportunities available to you—with special reference to unique, important local needs, problems and opportunities.

*Resources* encompass financial, human and political assets, especially community and family resources that are untapped or under-utilized. One of the model's most important advantages is that it enables leaders in your school community to tap and utilize formal and informal family and community resources for learning, academic achievement and success in school.

The importance of your school community's assessments cannot be over-stated. The data you'll collect will help leaders in your school community pinpoint the local needs you must address, the problems you must solve and untapped and under-utilized resources you have available. These data also will enable you to identify key outcomes you will prioritize, including the progress indicators you'll use to gauge your progress. Additionally, these data are critical to subsequent partnership and program development.

Unfortunately, these assessments of conditions and resources are typically ignored and neglected. When they are attempted, they are not completed in a thorough, comprehensive manner. We've structured this chapter to enable you and other leaders in your school community to initiate this important work.

Obviously, one short chapter cannot prepare you to complete every possible assessment. In this chapter, we emphasize three assessment priorities:

- An assessment of the conditions related to youth, families, schools and the community with an eye toward the barriers these conditions present to optimal learning, academic achievement and healthy development;

- An assessment of potential family, school and community resources that are available to help address the barriers you identify; and

- An analysis of "gaps" between barriers and resources, paying special attention to the resource development strategies your school community can initiate when current resources are scarce.

Using these three priority areas, we then present suggestions and recommendations about how you can craft a conditions and resources assessment process. This assessment process enables you to generate solid planning data necessary for partnership and program development. These data also are centerpieces in your comprehensive evaluation plan.

In short, when your conditions and resources assessment is done carefully and thoroughly, you will build a solid foundation for action in your school and also in your school-community partnerships. Your assessment data will drive your planning, everyday decision-making and evaluation aimed at continuous improvement. Thanks to these assessments, the data they provide and the advantages they yield, your school community will be positioned better to improve school, youth and family outcomes.

## *Why conduct a conditions and resources assessment?*

A conditions and resource assessment is the first step and a common denominator in every theoretically-sound, research-supported planning model (Witkin and Altschuld, 1995; Partnerships for Success, 2002; Chinmann, Imm, & Wandersman, 2004). This kind of conditions and resources assessment serves four basic purposes.

First, the information (henceforth called data) you collect about conditions will help identify and emphasize the uniqueness of your local community. You and other school community leaders thus can be assured that you're addressing your own needs, problems and opportunities—and that you're not inheriting those imported from another school community.

Second, the data you collect will guide your deliberations about the types of programs and services you need to engage or develop. The companion resources assessment will help you understand what is available (or not available) in your community to address critical conditions and needs. This information can inform your conversations with potential community partners or support your efforts to develop resources that are found to be lacking in the community.

Third, the data you collect will establish important initial conditions. These initial conditions, in evaluation language, comprise *a baseline*. A baseline is a beginning point - one you can use for multiple purposes as your work proceeds. As you continue to collect assessment data, your baseline data will help you make sense of them. For example, each new assessment and the data it provides can be compared to the baseline you established initially. In this way, you can gauge your progress in meeting needs and solving problems at the same time you determine whether you're achieving important school, youth and family outcomes.

Fourth, you can and should translate your conditions into desired outcomes. For example, if you find that 60 percent of the youth you serve are deficient in basic math skills, you may decide that your desired outcome – what you want to produce through your service or program effort – is to lower that number to 40 percent. Thus, your conditions form an important and essential point for comparison in subsequent evaluation activity.

To summarize, strategic, reliable and valid assessments of conditions and resources are critical components of school community improvement planning. These assessments enable your school community to achieve the four main purposes identified above. You also will find listed below additional reasons to complete strategic conditions and resources assessments.

For example, conditions and resources assessments enable your school community to:

- Identify where (e.g., school, neighborhood, family, etc.) conditions and needs are the most prevalent;
- Identify important groups requiring special attention, groups you will call "target populations;"
- Learn more about established conditions and uncover new conditions;
- Assess whether your school community is ready to respond to key conditions;
- Identify barriers that may be preventing learning and academic achievement and keeping youth and families away from needed programs and services (Chinman, et al., 2004; Ohio Department of Mental Health, 1983); and
- Address several of these barriers simultaneously through the mobilization and leveraging of family and community resources.

Last, but not least, conditions and resources assessments are consistent with the Ohio Department of Education's continuous improvement planning guide (ODE, 2000). In fact, this ODE Guide is useful reading for anyone considering doing a conditions and resources assessment in a school setting. It gives helpful examples of student performance data, of school process and quality learning environment data and

community data. The material presented in this section extends ODE's material by looking more broadly at the types of conditions and needs a school must address to effectively impact achievement.

## *Organizing your needs and resources assessment*

All data collection efforts benefit from careful thought, planning and organization. This is especially true in the conditions and resources assessment area. You will find there is an extensive amount of potentially useful data already available.

In other words, you don't have to become a researcher, and you don't have to start from scratch. You have the opportunity to gain access to data that others already have collected and you can use these data to inform your planning process (Bernhardt, 1999).

In fact, by involving key family and community stakeholders, some of which will become lasting partners, you will gain valuable assistance in getting and interpreting data. In return, you will help the stakeholders get access to existing school data and you will help them interpret and use these school data.

Once you gain access to these data, you may be surprised at the breadth and depth of information provided. To prevent "information overload," we strongly suggest that you develop and stick to a structured strategy for determining which data matter most, which data you need to collect yourselves (versus relying on others' efforts) and how you will use these data in your work. Such a plan for data collection, analysis and use will help you maximize the benefits of the recommended conditions and resources assessments, while avoiding problems associated with "collecting data for the sake of collecting data" and not knowing what they mean or how to use them to learn, improve and sustain.

There are a number of general community conditions and resources assessment models available to you (Witkin & Altschud, 1995; Chinmann, et al., 2004; Samuels, Ashan, & Garcia, 1995; Kretzman & McKnight, 1993). Also, in education, Bernhardt's (1999; 2001) comprehensive model of school improvement relies heavily on a conditions and resources assessment. Remember: The OCCMSI guides you toward both kinds of assessments, including the need to integrate school-wide and community-wide assessments.

The good news is that the best school assessment and community assessment models are wholly compatible. In fact, they identify the same, or similar, steps and procedures. We have summarized basic steps in and components of a conditions and resources assessment and describe them in the following sections.

### Step One: Convene a team of people

The OCCMSI framework relies foremost on school and district leadership, as it is designed to build upon continuous improvement processes already in place within schools. It also depends heavily on broad participation and partnerships for its success. The conditions and resources assessment process is an optimal place for schools and districts to begin developing an interest and investment in school improvement by a

broad range of stakeholders. As you begin planning your conditions and resources assessment strategy, identify and contact as many people as you can who have an interest in the school and community population you intend to serve. Be inclusive – try to find a broad representation of people who are willing to help such as

- Students
- Parents
- All types of school staff
- Local elected officials
- Public agency leadership
- Civic organizations
- Law enforcement officials
- Clergy and faith community members
- Local media representatives
- University faculty and representatives
- Business leaders
- Others…

Together, these key people and the organizations they represent are called "stakeholders" because each has "a stake in the action." One of the keys to successful school improvement is the ability to recruit and retain the right mix of stakeholders, including the ability to mobilize and leverage the resources they offer. Once "on board," these stakeholders will bring additional data to your school community initiative. Moreover, these other stakeholders will help your team better identify and interpret the conditions and barriers you need to address.

Finally, you will often find the conditions and resources assessment process is both an incentive and a reward for the stakeholders you want and need to recruit. Schools will want and need community data and vice versa. For example, health and social service providers and youth development organization leaders want and need access to data about their clients' and participants' progress and needs in school. You want some of their data; they want some of yours. In short, there's a mutually-beneficial relationship waiting to be developed - one that provides the foundation for sustainable, advantageous partnerships, which will benefit your school community, families and community agencies alike.

### Step 2: Develop a plan

Once your team is convened, carefully construct a work plan that details how you will conduct the assessment. The plan should include timelines, key tasks, team member responsibilities and anticipated products with deadlines. It is also important to identify a key person who will serve as the facilitator and/or coordinator of the work, as this single point person will "connect the dots" and balance the process and tasks associated with the development of the plan and its ultimate implementation. As with all good plans, this should be your blueprint for action.

Remember that all team members need to be engaged in the assessment process. In projects such as these, it is easy for some members to be become quickly overwhelmed by the process and marginalized in their roles and responsibilities. You need to be sure that all team members have a viable and contributing role. Meetings need to be planned and managed, and designed to ensure that all voices are heard. Develop a context that encourages trust and provide a forum for equally valuable contributions by all members of the team. Build each member's capacity to make important contributions.

Finally, the team needs to agree on some basic issues so that all members are operating out of a common framework:

- Use the OCCMSI framework as the basis for the conditions and needs assessment;

- Be clear that the information generated will inform the development of key programs and partnerships focused on impacting youth, families, schools and the community in ways that reduce barriers to youth academic and social achievement; and

- Be clear the data collected are available to other community initiatives.

### Step Three: Identify data sources and collect data from those sources

This is a large and complicated step with a number of important considerations. First, you need to carefully organize your conceptual approach to the types of data you will collect. You must be clear about what you mean by conditions and how those conditions represent barriers to student achievement. You also need to determine how the data will be collected, by whom, and how you will ensure it is collected regularly and deemed reliable and valid. Further, you need to decide how you want to think about resources – how narrowly or broadly you want to define those resources.

Once you have clarified what you mean by conditions and resources, you then need to identify or develop your data sources. It is imperative that you carefully map the data you think you need to represent conditions and resources to potential sources for that data.

### Step Four: Conceptualizing conditions

Remember: Your aim is to "get the conditions right" for student learning and academic achievement. To accomplish this aim, you'll need to think through three related tasks:

- You must be able to identify and describe the right conditions, i.e., what students need to learn, achieve and be successful in school—how would you know them if you saw them?

- You must be able to identify the barriers to the right conditions—how would you know them if you saw them?

- Then you must determine how you will remove and prevent these barriers in order to get the conditions right.

In essence, this is the work of "conceptualizing conditions." It's conceptual, to be sure, but it also involves concrete, practical decision-making aimed at school improvement.

You need to consider carefully two things as you conceptualize conditions. First, you need to be expansive in thinking about various conditions that impact student achievement. Using the school improvement framework as a guide, you need to consider an assessment of conditions that cover academics, overall youth development, parents and families, schools and the community. This expansive thinking is important because academics, overall youth development, family characteristics and the conditions of neighborhoods are related, and all influence learning, academic achievement and success in school.

Second, you need to be sure that the conditions that are the focus of the assessment actually link to student learning, achievement and success in school. Remember: One of the most important advantages of this new model is that it enables educators and others at the school to gain influence and control over what happens outside the school's walls during out-of-school time.

The other important advantage is that this new model helps you and other school community leaders address multiple needs simultaneously—without having to do it all, alone. Your conditions and resources assessment should proceed with these two advantages in mind.

Table 2.1 presents a list of important student, family, school and community conditions that have been empirically linked to student achievement. As noted previously, this list of conditions was distilled from a number of studies that have examined risk and protective factors and assets and social and emotional learning (Anderson-Butcher, in press; Benson, 1997; Dryfoss, 1990; Hawkins, Catalano, & Miller, 1992; Lawson & Anderson-Butcher, 2001; Jessor, Van Den Bos, Vanderryn, Costa, & Turbin, 1997; Payton, Wardlaw, Graczyk, Bloodworth, Tompsett, & Weissberg, 2000).

The conditions shown in Table 2.1 are written as positive statements, e.g., youth perform at grade level, schools have positive climates, parents have their basic needs met and the community is stable and supportive of families. These positive statements about conditions become barriers to student achievement when they are phrased as negative statements, e.g., youth do not perform at grade level, schools do not have positive climates, parents do not have their basic needs met and the community is not stable and supportive of families.

***Table 2.1: Conditions underlying student achievement***

| **1. Individual and peer behaviors and attitudes** | **Data sources** |
|---|---|
| Youth perform on grade level<br>Youth attend school regularly and on time<br>Youth experience sense of belonging to pro-social institutions or groups (i.e., faith-based organizations, youth organizations, etc)<br>Youth have social competence, self-esteem and self-confidence<br>Youth have effective social and life skills<br>Youth associate with pro-social peer groups<br>Youth have strong relationships with caring adult role models | Primary data sources<br>• Individual student-level data from teachers through a referral process<br>• Psycho-social and/or functional behavioral assessments from school social workers |

| | |
|---|---|
| Youth have values for honesty, integrity, caring and responsibility<br>Youth have a sense of purpose; feel personal control and empowered<br>Youth are easy going, flexible and have a sense of humor<br>Youth feel safe and secure<br>Youth have positive mental and physical health<br>Youth do not have potential or identified learning disabilities<br>Youth have their basic needs met (i.e., food, shelter, etc.)<br>Youth have opportunities for skill-building and learning via participation in pro-social activities (i.e., vocational experiences, extracurricular activities, hobbies, etc.)<br>Youth display pro-social behaviors (i.e., are substance free, abstain from gang involvement and sexual activity, etc.) | • IEP assessments<br>• Student surveys that you design and conduct<br><br>Secondary data sources<br>• Youth Risk Behavior Survey<br>• PRIDE Survey<br>• PPAUS Survey<br>• EMIS<br>• Other student-level surveys conducted by the school or outside organizations |
| **2. School conditions** | **Data sources** |
| Every student is taught by a qualified teacher<br>Every student has access to services of highly qualified, licensed pupil services personnel<br>Schools offer opportunities for students to be involved in pro-social activities<br>Schools and their staff reinforce student involvement in pro-social activities<br>Schools have positive climates<br>Schools have high expectations for students<br>Teachers and school staff are well trained and supported<br>Schools are safe and conducive to learning<br>Teachers, students and school staff are committed to the school<br>Relationships are strong among teachers and students<br>Schools are bully-free<br>Student turnover is low | District and school-level data<br>• Teacher recruitment, retention and qualifications information<br>• School portfolios including proficiency/achievement data, attendance data, suspension/expulsion data, ESL rates, free and reduced lunch rates, etc.)<br>• PTO/PTA<br>• Effective Schools Survey<br>• School and district records |
| **3. Family** | **Data sources** |
| Families have their basic needs met (i.e., food, shelter, clothing)<br>Parents and/or caregivers are well educated and have English proficiency<br>Parents and/or caregivers have stable housing and employment<br>Family child care needs are met<br>Families and parents and/or caregivers have functional management styles and communication patterns<br>Parents and/or caregivers are engaged in their children's schooling<br>Families are not experiencing grief and/or loss<br>Family members engage in pro-social behaviors presently and in the past<br>Parents and other family members have positive mental health histories<br>Families offer opportunities for children to be involved in pro-social activities<br>Families reinforce children's involvement in pro-social activities | Primary data sources<br>• Family-level data from teachers through a referral process<br>• Family information from psycho-social assessments from school social workers<br>• Family information from various school assessments<br>• Family surveys that you design and conduct<br><br>Secondary data sources<br>• Community level data from various administrative systems such as child welfare, drug and alcohol addiction, domestic violence, law enforcement, health and vital statistics, etc. |

| 4. Community conditions | Data sources |
|---|---|
| Residency and housing in the community are relatively stable (low mobility rates)<br>Communities have laws and norms that reinforce pro-social behaviors<br>Communities are substance- and gang-free<br>Communities have accessible, quality services and supports available for families<br>Residents and other stakeholders feel a sense of attachment to the community and experience collective efficacy<br>Communities are stable and supportive of families<br>Communities have informal social support networks embedded within their infrastructures<br>Communities provide opportunities for youth involvement in pro-social activities<br>Communities reinforce youth involvement in pro-social activities<br>Communities see youth as valuable assets<br>Communities have high expectations for youth | Primary data sources<br>• Community surveys that you design and conduct<br><br>Secondary data sources<br>• Community-level data from planning organizations (e.g., Partnerships for Success, Family and Children First Councils, Health Planning Organizations, Prevention Planning Organizations)<br>• Other community surveys or epidemiological studies |

Once again, the special advantage of the OCCMSI is that it provides educators with influence and control over the extra-school factors that influence and determine learning and academic achievement. Your conditions and resources assessments are tools for the realization of this important goal. And, as indicated above, there is a wealth of research that you can access (in part through this guide) to focus and facilitate your school improvement planning.

## Step Five: Conceptualizing resources and identifying stakeholders and potential partners

The resource assessment process will produce information about family, school and community resources for learning, academic achievement and success in school. You will need to resist the temptation to focus only on the usual partners (stakeholders) and the resources they provide. Remember, one of the main benefits of this new model is the net new resources it provides to your school community, starting with those resources that are under-utilized or untapped altogether. That is why a resource assessment is so vital to your work.

To reiterate, your main priority is mobilizing and leveraging school, family and community resources to address specific barriers to learning, academic achievement and success in school. Your aim is to get the conditions right through strategic resource development, and this aim should guide your assessments.

As you conduct your assessments, we also urge you to think expansively about potential resources. Too often people doing these assessments limit their thinking about what constitutes a resource. The usual trap is to focus on the traditional public sector service providers – mental health services, substance and alcohol addiction services and family services – as partners. Some assessments extend the resource pool to include faith and private sector services. We want you to think even more expansively by considering virtually any individual, family, school or community entity as a resource for the students

and families you serve. For example, businesses and corporations, colleges and universities and youth development organizations offer powerful resources, many of which are under-utilized and untapped.

We have embraced the community-building philosophy of Kretzmann and McKinght (1993). They make two important suggestions. First, look for strengths and opportunities, especially in places where it is customary to see only problems and deficits. Second, develop strategies aimed at finding and mobilizing all of a community's resources and blending them into a coherent, cohesive improvement strategy.

Table 2.2 presents a way you might organize your approach to a resource assessment. This organization helps you identify many types of resources in your community and the various services they make available for your students and families. (Please note that the list you create will be much more extensive than that shown in the example. If you really think expansively, communities have a tremendous variety of possible resources for you to approach as partners).

| ***Table 2.2: Resource categories*** |
|---|
| Individuals, parents, entire families and other local resident leaders |
| Youth- and family-serving neighborhood organizations |
| Colleges, universities and adult education organizations |
| Faith-based organizations |
| Social and health service agencies |
| Businesses and corporations |

Each of the above entities offers resources, some under-utilized and some untapped, that can be mobilized and leveraged to improve learning, academic achievement, healthy development and success in school. You will find relevant details in the chapters that follow.

### Step Six: Gaining access to and collecting primary and secondary data

Once you have decided how you want to approach conditions and resources, you then need to develop a data collection strategy that gets you the best information in a format you can use to plan.

Some of the most important data you want and need are already collected. These data are called secondary data because they are "second hand" (you did not collect them). Your job is to access these data, and then you will need to interpret and use them.

However, in some cases, you will find gaps in the data. When these gaps are present, you will need to collect your own data, securing help from others as needed. When you collect your own data, you will be gaining primary data.

Your best data strategy will be a combination of primary and secondary sources. In other words, you will want and need to rely on the efforts of others in as many instances as possible. At the same time, others often do not share your interests and priorities, and this is why you will often need to collect your own (primary) data.

### *Primary data on the conditions*

You can obtain information directly from students, parents, school staff and community members in a variety of ways. Samuels, et. al. (1995) have identified three methods for gathering primary data, and they have listed the advantages of each. These methods and advantages are listed in Table 2.3.

***Table 2.3: Primary information-gathering strategies***

| Strategy | Definition | Advantages |
|---|---|---|
| Focus groups | Series of public meetings to solicit opinions, anecdotes, experiences and impressions from community residents | • Are relatively easy to arrange<br>• Can be more efficient than other needs-assessment methods<br>• Build community identity by initiating discussion on community issues<br>• Develop community consensus through priority setting |
| Key informant interviews | Interviews with public official, administrator or staff member of health or welfare organization, health care provider, etc. | • Allow for detailed responses to questions<br>• Require minimal expenditure of resources<br>• Lend focus on specific issues to needs assessment effort<br>• Allow for clarification of questions and answers<br>• Ensure high response rate<br>• May establish communication lines among human service agencies represented |
| Community surveys | Formal, systematic surveys of defined populations in specified geographical areas to gather information on residents' health, social well-being and pattern of service utilization | • Provide anonymity to respondents<br>• Provide up-to-date data<br>• Have considerable design flexibility<br>• Can provide data on individuals with unmet needs and barriers preventing their access to services<br>• Can be broadly and inexpensively distributed by mail |

It is important that you understand each of these methods. Table 2.4, 2.5, and 2.6 therefore provide further information about each, documenting the steps necessary when planning for using each type of data collection method.

We begin with focus groups. Focus groups have become a popular method for collecting data directly from targeted groups. They are relatively easy to organize and provide an opportunity to explore perceptions in some depth.

Key informant interviews tap the opinions and knowledge of people who are good sources of information about conditions and barriers. Individuals from local social service agencies, schools, planning agencies and local government often have detailed experience with various conditions and barriers that can help frame responses.

### *Table 2.4: Planning for a focus group*

Prepare for the session
- Identify the major objectives of the meeting
- Carefully develop five or six questions (see next step)
- Plan your session
- Call potential members to invite them to the meeting

Develop questions
- Develop five or six questions
- Focus questions on conditions and barriers
- Remember that focus groups are basically multiple interviews

Plan the session
- Schedule – focus groups are typically one-and-a-half hours long
- Plan for comfort and refreshments
- Set up ground rules
- Develop an agenda
- Plan for recording the dialogue

Facilitate the session
- Introductions
- Explain purpose
- Carry out the agenda
- Ensure even participation
- Close the session with gratitude

Analyze and summarize
- Listen to tapes – review notes
- Summarize major findings – conclusions
- Provide feedback to group members, if promised

### *Table 2.5: Planning for a key informant interview*

Contact key informant
- Explain the purpose of the interview
- Explain how information will be used
- Be sensitive to busy schedules and time constraints
- Schedule a time to meet

Ensure reliability and validity
- Field test your questions
- If you use more than one interviewer, ensure they ask the same questions in the same way

Conduct the interview
- Stay within time limits
- Follow script and procedure carefully
- Allow for broader discussion, if warranted
- Keep careful notes – record discussion, if possible

Analyze and summarize
- Listen to tape – review notes
- Summarize major findings – conclusions
- Provide feedback to key informant, if promised

Community surveys provide the most extensive view of conditions and barriers from the perspectives of people who live in the community. Done correctly, results from a community survey can be disaggregated so the views of sub-groups or targeted groups are revealed.

Ideally, you will use all three methods - focus groups, key informant interviews and community surveys - in one way or another to collect conditions data. Such a strategy will allow you to capitalize on the combined strengths of the methods and would minimize the bias and short-comings of each.

For example, you might use a series of focus groups to obtain information about conditions and barriers from groups you especially want to understand (e.g., diverse cultural or racial perspectives). You could use a series of key informant interviews to tap the perceptions of key professionals who have an intimate understanding of both general conditions that affect youth and families and more specific conditions that are particularly an issue for sub-groups. Finally, your community survey would be designed to assess the wider views of the community residents about important conditions and barriers that affect them and their neighbors.

### *Table 2.6: Planning for a community survey*

Decide what information you want to obtain through the survey
- Conditions and barriers
- Respondent demographics for analyzing sub-groups
- Attitude questions about schools, education, parent responsibilities, etc.
- Knowledge about the community – problems, issues, resources, etc.

Choose a survey method
- Mail survey
- Telephone interview
- Face-to-face interviews
- Drop-off survey

Select a sample
- Determine sample size
- Develop a sampling strategy – random or purposive
- Obtain rosters, lists or records from which you can sample

Develop instruments
- Write questions that represent information needed
- Decide on question structure – true-false, Likert scale-type, open-ended, etc.
- Design and construct instrument and pilot – revise if necessary

Conduct the survey, as designed
- Put system in place to ensure good returns
- Develop incentives to participate (if need be)
- Construct instrument and pilot – revise if necessary

Analyze and summarize
- Develop and conduct analysis plan and procedures
- Summarize major findings – conclusions
- Develop reports

### *Collecting secondary data on the conditions*

Most communities collect, manage and analyze an extensive array data that can inform your conditions assessment. These data are generally not as "flexible" as your primary data; in other words, they are usually collected and reported for specific purposes that may or may not fit your needs. Often, however, secondary data provide important insights into the prevalence of conditions and barriers and how those conditions and barriers are distributed in the community. When coupled with your primary data, stable patterns of conditions will begin to appear.

Potential sources for secondary data are listed in Table 2.7. This list is a slightly modified version of a list developed by Samuels, et. al. (1995).

***Table 2.7: Potential secondary data sources***

| Source | Description |
|---|---|
| Public health | The public health system is charged with maintaining vital statistics – birth rates, death rates, birth weights, infant mortality, etc. The health department also collects and reports on morbidity and mortality information for special populations. These data are reported in aggregate form and may be analyzed by small area. |
| Public safety | Local police and fire departments and 911 lines keep information on the incidences of crime and crisis. These entities sometimes map this data to identify patterns of troubled areas. These agencies also may have building inspection data that can provide useful information on housing and the age and safety of local facilities. |
| Economic development/ Chambers of Commerce | The local department of economic development and/or Chamber of Commerce may have a plethora of "conditions" data. Since one of their primary functions is to market the local community to outside businesses, they are a useful source for positive indicators of community well-being. Working through the Chamber of Commerce may open up large amounts of privately collected data that is currently used by banks, insurance companies, marketing firms and other local businesses. |
| Religious institutions | The potential impact of religious institutions on their communities is enormous. Not only are they a resource for volunteers, monetary assistance and community meeting space, but their spiritual and philosophical beliefs often coincide with the beliefs espoused by the providers of support to children and families. Religious institutions are a valuable resource as a partner in community initiatives or perhaps as a provider of services themselves. Many are already a provider of services and may have useful data to contribute. |
| State and local planning departments | Planning departments have access to an abundance of census information on the number of children (organized into age categories), composition of families (listed by head-of-household), poverty status of families and children, employment status of adults, housing conditions (stock and value), adult educational attainment, earnings, family structure and ethnicity patterns in the community. This information is available in table form, organized by block, block group, census tract, as well as city and county-wide aggregates. |
| Schools | Local schools districts keep and collect data about student academic and school behaviors, attendance, discipline, suspensions and expulsions, and proficiency and achievement tests, etc. |
| Service providers | In every community, nonprofit organizations provide an array of services to families. Many of these service providers already possess an understanding of the challenges and concerns facing families of youth. Further, many maintain administrative information systems that collect and report on various characteristics of people served (Children's Services, Job and Family Services, Mental Health, Alcohol and Substance Abuse, etc.) |
| Other sources | State and community organizations may collect data concerning children and family well-being that could be included in the conditions assessment. Planning bodies, task forces and agencies' strategic planning units often collect data either periodically or to inform specific decisions. Additionally, organizations such as the local United Way and the state Kids Count data collector compile detailed, community specific data. |

You can see from this list the amount of secondary information available to you is staggering. In fact, the primary challenge in collecting and analyzing secondary data is to decide what is important and to focus your effort on getting those data. That task is made easier by your team composition.

### *Linking primary and secondary data*

We have linked both primary and secondary data collection strategies to the various categories of conditions underlying student achievement in Table 2.1. For example, in the individual and peer behavior and attitude category there are both primary and secondary sources available to you. For primary data, you may choose to conduct a student survey of your own design that measures various student-level conditions, or, instead, you may access secondary data through a survey administered by another organization such as the Youth Risk Behavior Survey. If an alternative data source has already measured and reported conditions of interest to you, it is certainly more efficient to use that secondary source.

For each area – youth, family, school and community – we provide suggestions about data sources. These suggestions, however, are not meant to be exhaustive. As you consider your data collection strategy, think creatively – you may find other sources that are viable and helpful.

### *Collecting primary and secondary data for the resources assessments*

Data sources for your resource inventory can be quite diverse. There is seldom a single organization or entity that has the responsibility to collect, manage and make available all the potential resources you might consider.

Resource and referral agencies come the closest to having that responsibility and should be your beginning place in the resource assessment. Local trade organizations, professional associations and clubs – e.g., church associations, hospital associations, unions, specialized clubs, etc. – also can be helpful in locating resources. Local planning and coordinating organizations such as the Family and Children First Council and Partnerships for Success also should have rosters of potential resources, especially resources from the public agency sector. Finally, be clever in developing resources. Think expansively and consider any “gift” that an individual, family or organization might have to offer as a legitimate potential contribution to the success of the youth and families you serve.

For each partner or stakeholder you identify, be sure to get specific information about what each has to offer and under what circumstances these services or programs will get offered.

Samuels, et. al. (1995) suggest the following information is important to have about a resource (these questions are typically fit better for a formal service provider, but can be modified slightly for any potential resource):

- Whom (broken down by gender, race and age) do they serve?
- What services do they provide?
- How many youth (and families) do they serve?
- When (which hours and days) do they provide services?
- At what site(s) do they provide services?
- What geographic areas do they serve?
- What is the composition of the staff (in terms of gender, race and training and education)?
- What are eligibility requirements for services?
- What is the cost of services for those served?
- What is the provider's maximum capacity?

In the end, two questions should guide this process:

1. Do the resources offered by a potential stakeholder (partner) promise to improve learning, academic achievement, healthy development and success in school?

2. What data do we need to mobilize and leverage these resources in support of school improvement?

### Step Seven: Assessing matches and gaps

Your step in this "getting started process" is to determine if there are gaps between the conditions and the possible resources available to address those conditions. Matching these two areas to make sure there are no gaps is not an exact science. As you work through the entire process you will find yourself re-examining conditions and discovering new resources. This is especially true as you conduct the process over time; that is, conditions and resources may shift or change periodically. The essential point to keep in mind is that you must make sure the most prevalent conditions faced by youth and their families are addressed by solid partnerships and responsive programs and services.

Table 2.8 presents an example of the process of matching resources to conditions. The conditions assessment in this example suggested that the youth in school had mathematics and reading deficits, limited adult role models, some mental health issues and poor connections to the community and needed general youth development. The school identified a set of individual, faith-based, private sector, public sector and other resources in the community that had an interest in the youth served, were available, and were willing to establish a partnership with the school. In this case, there were not any gaps in resources available in the community to help in the program.

| *Table 2.8: Matching conditions and resources* | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Resource** | **Service provided** | **Available** | **Willing to partner** |
| Individual or family | | | |
| 1. Jennifer Jones | Mentoring | Yes | Yes |
| 2. The Smith family | Reading tutoring | Yes | Maybe |
| 3. Kim Bean | Quilting: applied mathematics | Yes | Yes |
| Faith-based | | | |
| 1. Rev. Boone | Mentoring, counseling | Yes | Yes |
| 2. United Baptist Church | Field trips | Yes | Yes |
| 3. UCC Women's Club | Mentoring | Yes | Yes |
| Private sector | | | |
| 1. George's Chevrolet | Transportation | Yes | Yes |
| 2. Kroger | Making sense of prices | Yes | Yes |
| 3. CVS | Pregnancy prevention | Yes | Yes |
| Public sector | | | |
| 1. Mental Health | Depression counseling | Yes | Yes |
| 2. Substance and Alcohol | Prevention | Yes | Yes |
| 3. Family Services | Family counseling | Yes | Yes |
| 4. Directions for Youth | Youth development | Yes | Yes |
| Other | | | |
| 1. Kiwanis | Field trips, mentoring | Yes | Yes |
| 2. Chamber of Commerce | Reading assistance | Yes | Yes |
| 3. Harley Club of America | Mentoring | Yes | Yes |

Finally, your gap analysis may produce information helpful to community planning and organizing organizations. You may expect to make at least five possible discoveries in this gap analysis:

1. There is just the right match between the conditions and needs of schools, youth, families (i.e., the optimal scenario);

2. There is just the right match between the conditions and needs of schools, youth and families and community resources available to meet those needs; the main problem is they are not connected in a coherent, effective and systematic way;

3. There are not enough of the right kinds of programs and services to meet school, youth and family conditions;

4. There are enough programs and services; the main problem is they are fragmented and inefficiently and ineffectively duplicative;

5. There are too many programs and services available in relation to actual use; the main problem is in getting people in need to start using the available programs and services; and/or

6. The available programs and services are not linked systematically and effectively to schools and, more specifically, to experiences in classrooms.

The second discovery – there are service deficits – identifies a key gap. This gap should drive your school community toward mobilizing and developing resources in support of adequate programs and services. This discovery may prompt the difficult discussion about how to re-deploy resources or actually cut back on a particular program or service.

The third discovery indicates the need to convene community providers of programs and services and educators. They need to reach consensus on program planning, linkages and referral mechanisms, addressing the gaps and preventing fragmentation, duplication and unnecessary competition.

The fourth discovery requires leaders in the school community to get people in need into programs and services. After-school programs provide a prime example (as indicated in the youth development section of this guide). Hundreds, and sometimes thousands, of youth have needs for these programs, but they can't or don't access them. Meanwhile, the programs' futures are imperiled because they do not have enough participants. This is a huge, important gap that needs to be addressed. You will no doubt find others in your school community.

Finally, the fifth discovery will focus your attention on a critical gap – namely, the mechanisms and processes whereby family and community resources are connected to the school and especially how they improve the essence of the school-life in classrooms. This discovery requires attention to resources in support of intermediaries and connective mechanisms that bring together educators (and their resources) with both families and community leaders (and their resources). These mutually beneficial resource exchanges among schools, families and communities are a centerpiece in Ohio's new school improvement model.

## *Final thoughts*

As the preceding discussion indicates, assessments of conditions and resources are vital to school improvement. These assessments identify needs and problems – conditions – that give rise to barriers to learning, academic achievement and success in school. The resource assessments identify people and organizations – stakeholders and potential partners – that can help your school community with two related tasks. These stakeholders and partners enable the identification of gaps, including opportunities to close and bridge them, and also offer resources that can remove and prevent these barriers to learning.

The data provided by these assessments are vital to your school community. They are also important to the community and family stakeholders you will want and need to recruit, including some who will become formal, lasting partners. The good news is that much of the data you want and need already have been collected; they are waiting for you to access them. The same can be said of school-specific data you have; your community and family stakeholders want and need access to them.

In brief, both schools and their family-community stakeholders are able to benefit through the assessment process and the data they yield. The conditions and resource assessments thus set improved program and service designs and lasting, effective school-family-community partnerships. They enable your school community to get strategic about which local conditions you need to emphasize and how your local solutions get crafted in relation to these conditions.

In this fundamental sense, the Ohio Community Collaboration Model is merely a guide and not a "cookie cutter improvement model" that force fits problems and solutions on your school community. Rather, this improvement model guides your school community toward the identification of conditions and gaps and, subsequently, the mobilization and leveraging of family and community resources needed to get the conditions right for learning, academic achievement and success in school. With this approach, districts will vary, and so will some schools within the same district. In this approach, one size fits few.

Conditions and resource assessments are vital to the effectiveness of this new improvement model because they identify and accentuate ***local*** conditions, resources and solutions. These data pave the way for the development of important baselines against which you can gauge your progress. They also help you identify the outcomes you want and need for your school, families, youth and community agencies.

We close with two suggestions. First, figure out how you can make these conditions and resource assessments a regular part of how you do your school improvement business. For example, embed these assessments in your evaluation planning and in your continuous improvement planning. (We'll return to this point in the evaluation section of this guide.)

Second, we urge you not to make the conditions and resources assessment too cumbersome or unwieldy. Set realistic goals for the initial effort with the expectation that you will revisit conditions and resources on a regular basis and will make changes based on new data, if need be. For example, while it appears in our school improvement framework (refer again to Figure 1.3) that conditions and resources assessment happens once and starts the design process, we would like to emphasize the point that both student and family conditions, and school and community resources are dynamic. Therefore, each should be monitored periodically to increase the chance of a good match, addressing barriers to student learning, academic achievement and success in school.

## *References*

Anderson-Butcher, D. (2006). The role of the educator in early identification, referral and linkage. In R. J. Waller (Ed.), *Child and Adolescent Mental Health Issues in the Classroom*. Sage Publications.

Bernhardt, V. (1999). *The School Portfolio: A comprehensive framework for school improvement* (2nd ed.). Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.

Benson, P.L. (1997). *All kids are our kids: What communities must do to raise caring and responsible children and adolescents.* Minneapolis, MN: Search Institute.

Chinman, M., Imm, P., & Wandersman, A. (2004). *Getting to outcomes 2004: Promoting accountability through methods and tools for planning, implementation, and evaluation.* Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation.

Dryfoss, J. (1990). *Adolescents at risk: Prevalence and prevention.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Hawkins, J. D., Catalano, R. F., & Miller, J. Y. (1992). Risk and protective factors for alcohol and other drug problems in adolescent and early adulthood: Implications for substance abuse prevention. *Psychological Bulletin, 112*, 64-105.

Jessor, R., Van Den Bos, J., Vanderryn, J., Costa, F.M., & Turbin, M.S. (1997). Protective factors in adolescent problem behavior: Moderator effects and developmental change. *Developmental Psychology, 31* (6), 923-933.

Kretzmann, J. P., McKnight, J. L. (1993). *Building communities from the inside out: A path toward finding and mobilizing a community's assets*. Chicago, IL: ACTA Publications.

Lawson, H.A., & Anderson-Butcher, D. (2001). In the best interest of the child: Youth development as a child welfare support and resource. In A.L. Sallee, H.A. Lawson, & K. Brair-Lawson (Eds.), *Innovative Practice with Vulnerable Children and Families* (pp. 245-265). Des Moines, ID: Eddie Bowers.

*Partnerships for Success*. (2002). The Center for Learning Excellence and The John Glenn Institute, The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH.

Payton, J.W., Wardlaw, D.M. Gracyzk, P.A., Bloodworth, M.R., Tompsett, C.J., & Weissberg, R. (2000). Social and emotional learning: A framework for promoting mental health and reducing risk behaviors in children and youth. *Journal of School Health, 70*(5), 179-185.

Samuels, B., Ahsan, N., & Garcia, J. (1995). *Know Your Community: A Step-By-Step Guide to Community Needs and Resources Assessment.* (Revised 2nd ed.). Chicago, IL: Family Resource Coalition.

Ohio Department of Education. (2001). *Reference guide to continuous improvement planning*. Columbus, OH: Author.

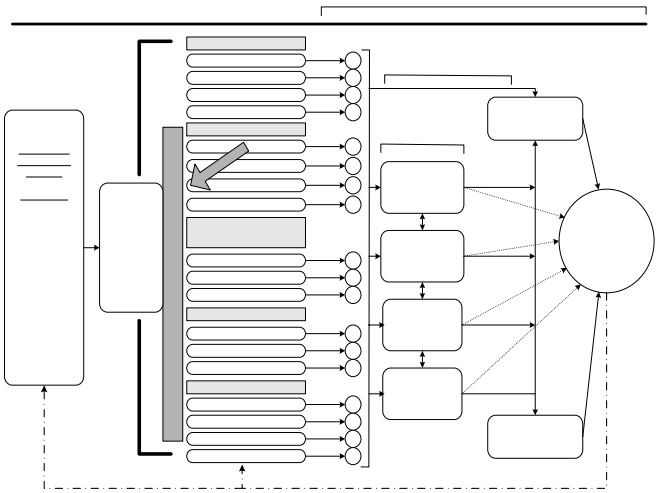
Ohio Department of Mental Health. (1983). *The mental health needs assessment puzzle: A guide to a planful approach.* (1983). Columbus, OH: Author.

Witkin, B., Altschuld, J. (1995). *Planning and conducting needs assessments: A practical guide.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

# Collaboration and Collaborative Leadership

## Introduction

The Ohio Community Collaboration Model for School Improvement (OCCMSI) relies on just that, collaboration among key people in your school community. This collaboration starts with new, improved relationships among all the people working at the school, and it encompasses new and improved working relationships with other key people and organizations in your surrounding community (i.e., leaders from youth development organizations, faith-based organizations, businesses, higher education, etc.).



Essentially, no longer is the school alone responsible for the academic success and the healthy development of youth. The responsibility for these achievements is owned by all community stakeholders, not just by educators. The main reason is individuals and groups from the community become aware they depend on children's academic success in school; at the same time educators learn they also depend on these outside individuals and groups. In a word, everyone involved in the new relationship – the collaboration – becomes aware they are interdependent; and so they work together to improve results.

This chapter is designed to help you create, organize and manage your school improvement efforts via collaborative leadership. We will discuss important concepts that will help you structure your relationships with individuals and groups outside your schools, as well as those that will help you manage and maintain these partnerships over time.

Collaboration is one concept emphasized. Collaborative leadership is another. Later in this guide, we also provide an additional section focused on building community partnerships, particularly in relation to the delivery of various programs and services.

We also draw on the growing amount of research that indicates how you and other school leaders can develop mutually-beneficial community partnerships, including how these new partnerships will improve outcomes for your school and the students and families it serves. We encourage you to become strategic in the partnerships you develop, ensuring that partnerships are integrated in school improvement planning.

## *What do we mean by collaboration and collaborative leadership?*

You and other school community leaders need to make important decisions about the kinds of relationships you want to develop with other people and organizations. For the sake of simplicity, we encourage you to think about relationships with people as "collaboration" and relationships with organizations as "partnerships." This differentiation is especially important, and it is reflected by the fact that we have devoted two chapters to it (i.e., collaboration and collaborative leadership and community partnerships).

At their most basic levels, both collaboration and partnership start with simple relationship-building. We provide you with a relationship continuum that may help guide your deliberations (Lawson, 2003; Torres & Margolin, 2003).

***Table 3.1: Types of relationships***

| Relationship type | Description |
|---|---|
| Networking | Networking is the most basic and informal way for individuals to work together. These relationships reflect a minimal level of trust, limited time availability and a reluctance to share turf. Networking involves exchanging information and ideas. It excludes working together on any activity or toward any goal beyond sharing information. |
| Communicating | Communicating is a more formal way for individuals to share information and ideas. Individuals share information and perspectives as they converse and talk through formal channels such as newsletters, letters, press releases, updates, etc. Little happens beyond the sharing of information through these formal mechanisms. |
| Coordination | Coordination involves synchronizing operations or activities in order to make services more accessible and less redundant. Coordination requires more trust than networking and greater time commitments from people, especially time for meetings and completing assessments and paperwork. It does not, however, require resource sharing and, all in all, involves integrating separate or independent operations. In some instances formal contracts are created (or memorandums of understanding) that serve as another level of cooperative relationship, one involving contracting. |
| Cooperation | Cooperation entails a much higher level of commitment and trust. It involves sharing. Resources, knowledge, staff, physical property; clients, money and reputation are just some of the resources organizations may share when they are cooperating. |
| Collaboration | Collaboration develops when entities recognize that none can succeed without the others. Each has special expertise or unique capabilities that the others need. It is characterized by trust, norms of give-and-take, shared responsibilities, consensus-building and conflict resolution mechanisms, shared power and authority and shared information and decision-making systems. |

Each type of relationship identified above has special requirements and demands. As you proceed from networking to collaboration, you take on more complexity, added commitments, and additional time and resource requirements. Each takes longer to develop and more supports and resources to sustain. Because of the required investments for relationship building, school leaders and others will want to think strategically about what types of relationships they may want and/or need.

### What types of relationships do you want and/or need?

Initially, you and other school community leaders will need to make important decisions about the kinds of relationships you want and/or need to develop with other people and organizations. You will also want to examine the different types of relationships that already exist within your school and community.

For example, your school probably already has an established student support or teacher assistance team and Individualized Education Plan (IEP) team. Perhaps your school also organizes teachers in teams, whether in the same classroom or in grade level teams. Furthermore, you no doubt already have working relationships of some kind with other organizations – for example, museums, zoos, the local library, businesses and colleges and universities.

When you build and expand these relationships among people and organizations, you should consider these four questions:

1. Which family and community entities offer the greatest contributions to school improvement, especially to academic learning and achievement?

2. Which family and community entities enable you to address the needs and gaps identified in your assessments?

3. What does the research indicate about which kinds of relationships are most likely to improve learning, academic achievement and success in school?

4. What kind of strategic relationship do you want and/or need to establish with each entity?

In short, you have the opportunity to address some important issues as you reach out to family and community resources. These four questions help guide your strategic planning for partnerships.

For each potential relationship you identify, you should consider how far you want to go in the partnership (i.e., networking, communicating, coordinating, cooperating or collaborating). Do not underestimate the importance of these choices; you will find that a “one size fits all approach” to partnership development may not serve you well.

For example, you may find that a coordinating relationship is satisfactory for linking social and recreational programs to youth in your school. Or you may find there are many youth in your school who experience mental health problems, and you know that your school has not had good experiences with the local mental health agency as a whole. In response to this need and the accompanying gap in services, you may need to move to a cooperative or collaborative relationship with a set of individual service providers in the community who actually collocate services to your school.

The point is you may not actually need to develop relationships that foster collaboration – interdependent relationships among the partners. To the contrary, when people and organizations communicate better, cooperate, coordinate their efforts and share resources, good things usually happen and benefits accrue.

Expect to develop different types of relationships initially with partners. Over time your goal should be to work toward what we call "a collaborative system" consisting of multiple partners, all of whom are focused together on your major school improvement goal – the academic success and healthy development of youth. At some point, you may even consider identifying a specific person the task of coordinating and managing ongoing relationships and partnerships.

Additionally, you will work to develop true, sustainable collaboration among the partners. When you are successful, they will see that when schools are successful, they are successful, and vice versa. They will "stay the course" with you, sharing responsibility for school outcomes and processes and sharing resources – because they are aware of their interdependence with your school.

### Collaboration and collaborative leadership

Collaboration is the most complex type of relationship. It requires the most resources and takes the most time to develop. In collaboration, people network, communicate and cooperate. They share information, harmonize operations and activities, share resources and enhance each partner's capacity (Gardner, 1999; Lawson, 2003; 2004: Lawson & Barkdull, 1999; Mattessich, Murray-Close, & Monsey, 2001). They also share power and authority; that is, they view themselves as equals ("all in the same boat").

Most importantly, participating entities realize they are interdependent. They learn they cannot achieve their missions and goals without the contributions of the others (Lawson, 2003; 2004). For this reason, collaboration is characterized by lasting relationships characterized by high levels of a reciprocal investment, focus, trust, mutual commitment and a strong sense of joint ownership of positive outcomes for youth and families.

The facilitation of collaboration requires new types of leadership styles and structures. Collaborative leadership styles distribute power, authority and responsibility across the group. Leadership fosters shared commitments, helps resolve conflicts, facilitates lasting relationships and stimulates effective action. Collaborations also require new leadership, management and governance structures. Collaborative leadership structures involve team approaches rather than single person approaches. Team members collaborate, and their

organizations develop firm partnerships in support of this new way of doing business (Rubin, 2002).

Essentially collaborative leadership offers a new way to solve old problems and take advantage of untapped opportunities. It mobilizes collective"know-how," clarifying problems, resolving conflicts and building consensus to act.

## *Outcomes associated with collaboration and other types of relationships*

Several researchers have documented significant benefits occurring as a result of collaboration, various types of relationships and school-family-community partnerships in general. Please note that school communities may be involved in several different types of relationships, partnerships and collaborations at the same time. Because these multiple strategies operate simultaneously, there are often contagion effects – also called ripple effects because they spread – that are not easily measured or attributed to one intervention or collaborative (Anderson-Butcher & Ashton, 2002). Nonetheless, collaboration and school-family-community partnerships have contributed to the following key outcomes.

***Table 3.2: Key outcomes associated with collaboration and other types of relationships***

| **Improvements in:** | **Reductions in:** |
|---|---|
| • Academic achievement<br>• Productive learning during out-of-school time<br>• Attendance in school<br>• School climate<br>• Psychosocial functioning<br>• Healthy youth development<br>• School safety<br>• Political gains (school levies are passed)<br>• Communication among providers<br>• Family-centered and -driven practices<br>• Job and life satisfaction for professionals<br>• More resources and better utilization of them<br>• Service integration, coordination and delivery<br>• Access to services; faster delivery of services | • Problem behaviors<br>• School suspensions<br>• Duplication and fragmentation of programs and services, including service and program gaps<br>• Feelings of isolation among agencies and people<br>• Student mobility (i.e., transience) |

From: Alameda-Lawson & Lawson, 2000; Anderson-Butcher & Ashton, 2002; Anderson-Butcher, Lawson, & Barkdull, 2003; Family Care Healthy Kids Collaborative, 1994; Gold et al., 2002; Hatch, 1998; Lawson & Briar-Lawson, 1997; Mooney, Kline, & Davoren, 1999; Lawson, Anderson-Butcher, Barkdull, & Peterson, 2003; Oppenheim, 1999; Shirley, 1997; Smith, Armijo, & Stowitschek, 1997; Surko, Lawson, & Muse-Lindeman, 1997.

## *Design principles and strategies for collaboration and collaborative leadership*

A great deal of research attention has been given to the study of collaboration over the past 25 years. In the following table, we have built upon Matttessich et al.'s (2001, p. 8-10) framework describing common factors essential to successful collaboration. These design principles and strategies describe key conditions, process and characteristics that link to successful collaborative relationships.

You will note the success factors are organized into seven categories – environment, structural considerations, process considerations, membership characteristics, communication, purpose and resources – that represent broad areas for attention. Within each of these categories, additional key factors influencing collaboration are provided.

While it may seem a little overwhelming at first, when you use these design principles and strategies, you will find they help you avoid barriers, false-starts and long-term disappointments. We recommend you think through the seven key themes: environment, structure, process, membership, communication, purpose and resources.

***Table 3.3: Design principles and strategies in collaboration***

| Principle and strategy | What this looks like |
|---|---|
| **Environment** | |
| History of collaboration | • The collaboration begins with stakeholders with whom you have had successful experiences in the past<br>• Collaboration members have past histories of relationships and trust |
| Legitimacy | • The collaboration team (and by implication members of the group) is competent and reliable, and has a solid reputation – at least as related to the goals and activities it intends to accomplish<br>• The collaboration is respected within the community; is recognized as a valuable group<br>• Collaboration members are credible (both professionally and personally) |
| Favorable political and social climate | • Political leaders, opinion-makers, persons who control resources and the general public support the collaborative<br>• The collaboration's goal fits well within the social and political climate (i.e., school improvement focus; education and youth are priorities in the community) |
| **Structure** | |
| Appropriate cross-section of members | • The collaboration receives input from the segment of the community who will be affected by its activities<br>• The collaboration team is comprised of the right mix of people, including a representative mix of organizations<br>• The collaboration team includes active involvement from residents and "clients" who benefit from the partnership (i.e., youth, families, etc.) |

| *Table 3.3: Design principles and strategies in collaboration* | |
|---|---|
| **Principle and strategy** | **What this looks like** |
| Multiple layers of participation | • The collaboration team is comprised of multiple levels of involvement, or multiple teams, that engage individuals of various levels in member organizations (i.e., upper management, middle management, operations)<br>• Partners at every level of partnering organizations are committed to ongoing involvement in the collaboration (i.e., agency directors, front-line staff, principals, teachers, etc.) |
| Development of clear roles, functions and responsibilities | • Collaboration members clearly understand their roles, rights and responsibilities.<br>• Collaboration members understand how to carry out their responsibilities<br>• Organizations and individuals take lead responsibility for certain aspects of the collaboration<br>• Accountability systems within the collaboration ensure organizations and individuals follow through on their responsibilities<br>• Ongoing tasks and activities are managed using clear agendas, action plans, and management systems |
| Intermediaries | • The collaboration team has an intermediary (or persons/organization) that serves as a go-between (i.e., United Way, Boys & Girls Clubs, Communities In Schools, etc.), providing facilitation within the collaboration<br>• The collaboration team's intermediary does the "leg work" associated with the facilitation of the partnership<br>• The collaboration team's intermediary is neutral and can do the work for others (i.e., the schools) without the politics, baggage, etc.<br>• The collaboration team has key organizations or individuals who serve as conveners, building collaborative partnerships throughout the process (especially at the start-up stage) |
| Leadership | • The collaboration team has an identified leader who is charged with overseeing and facilitating the process<br>• The collaboration team is led by individual(s) with effective organizational and interpersonal skills, and role(s) is (are) carried out with fairness<br>• Collaboration members grant respect or "legitimacy" to the leader<br>• The collaboration team leader(s) is the institutional worrier who oversees and makes sure all tasks are done in relation to the collaboration |
| **Process considerations** | |
| Adaptability | • Collaboration members are open to varied ways of organizing<br>• Collaboration members are open to varied ways of accomplishing their work<br>• The collaboration team alters its mission and goals based on changing conditions<br>• The collaboration team has the ability to sustain itself in the midst of major changes in goals, members, etc. |

| *Table 3.3: Design principles and strategies in collaboration* | |
|---|---|
| **Principle and strategy** | **What this looks like** |
| Appropriate pace of development | • The collaboration team's structure, resources and activities change over time to meet the needs of the group and the school community<br>• The collaboration team allows for changes to occur without overwhelming overall capacity<br>• The collaboration team structure nurtures the process, realizing that people and agencies have not done it well in the past<br>• Stakeholders are "ready" to collaborate; it makes sense |
| Balance between process and task orientations | • The collaboration team allows for time for group process, but not at the expense of getting to outcomes and tasks<br>• The collaboration team accomplishes its deliverables and outcomes, and relationships are simultaneously developed and nurtured<br>• The collaboration hosts effective and efficient meetings (time is not wasted) |
| Ability to compromise | • Collaboration members are able and willing to compromise<br>• Collaboration members understand that many decisions within a collaboration effort cannot possibly fit the preferences of every member perfectly<br>• Collaboration members are able to relinquish their special status, power and authority |
| **Membership characteristics** | |
| Mutual respect, understanding and trust | • Collaboration members share an understanding and respect for each other and their respective organizations<br>• Collaboration members share an understanding and respect for how they operate, their cultural norms and values, their limitations and their expectations |
| Interdependence | • Collaboration members understand their interdependence and that each relies on the other for results to occur<br>• Collaboration members realize that they can not achieve what they want and need without others |
| Self-interest | • Collaboration members believe they will benefit from their involvement in the collaboration<br>• Collaboration members experience the advantages of membership which are offset by the costs associated with involvement (i.e., loss of autonomy, turf)<br>• The collaboration strikes a balance between the interests of individuals and/or organizations and the interests of the group at large |
| Ownership and buy-in | • Collaboration members feel ownership of the way the group works<br>• Collaboration members share ownership of the results or products |
| **Communication mechanisms** | |
| Open and frequent communication | • Collaboration members interact often, update one another, discuss issues openly and convey all necessary information to one another<br>• The collaboration team establishes formal communication channels among partners<br>• The collaboration team is open to new membership |

| *Table 3.3: Design principles and strategies in collaboration* | |
|---|---|
| **Principle and strategy** | **What this looks like** |
| Open and frequent communication continued | • The collaboration team considers the opinions of other people and organizations outside the group within their decision-making process<br>• Leaders within the collaboration facilitate effective and efficient communication across the partners |
| Informal relationships | • Collaboration members establish personal connections, producing a better, more informed and cohesive group working on a common project<br>• The collaboration team encourages informal communication among members, allowing for the development of relationships and trust<br>• Collaboration members develop friendships with others involved in the process |
| Conflict resolution mechanisms | • The collaboration team establishes procedures and mechanisms for dealing with conflict<br>• Leaders within the collaboration understand that conflict is unavoidable<br>• Leaders develop consensus among participants regarding how they will work through conflicts as they arise in order to best prevent and deter escalation and crises<br>• Collaboration members are able to compromise and reach consensus as opposed to creating warfare<br>• The collaboration focuses on partner, school and community strengths as opposed to getting bogged down with deficits and problems |
| **Purpose** | |
| Concrete, attainable goals and objectives | • The collaboration has clear goals and objectives<br>• Collaboration members understand the goals and objectives<br>• The collaboration has goals and objectives that can be realistically attained<br>• The collaboration has focused goals and objectives |
| Shared mission and/or vision | • The collaboration has clearly agreed-upon mission and/or vision, objectives and strategies, and that mission and/or vision directs its work<br>• Collaboration members are involved in creating the mission and/or vision, objectives and strategies<br>• Collaboration members agree with and understand the mission and/or vision, objectives and strategies<br>• Leaders within the collaboration use consensus-building strategies to create a common direction and focus |
| Unity of purpose | • The collaboration has a mission that expands upon the mission, goals and/or approaches of the member organizations<br>• The collaboration is built upon consensus<br>• Collaboration members experience a unity of purpose<br>• Collaboration members understand how their commitment to the overall purpose will support their own interests<br>• Collaboration members are “on the same page” regarding goals and directions (i.e., school improvement and closing achievement gaps) |

| *Table 3.3: Design principles and strategies in collaboration* | |
|---|---|
| **Principle and strategy** | **What this looks like** |
| Results-oriented | • The collaboration focuses on outcomes<br>• The collaboration's decisions and plans are data-driven;<br>• The collaboration identifies and implements research supported plans for improving results<br>• The collaboration has systems in place that ensure member follow-through and accountabilities<br>• The collaboration is not too process-oriented (i.e., not a "feel good" partnership); tasks and deliverables are completed |
| **Resources** | |
| Sufficient resources | • The collaboration is adequately and consistently funded<br>• Collaboration members commit a sufficient amount of time in order to achieve goals and include time to nurture the collaboration (i.e., long-term investments)<br>• Collaboration members contribute resources to the larger group process |
| Shared resources | • The collaboration pools and shares resources, enabling schools and organizations to get help where they have resource shortfalls<br>• Collaboration members reallocate resources and blend resources in order to maximize programs and services and reduce duplication<br>• Collaboration members share in grant writing responsibilities<br>• Collaboration members support other members in relation to their own individual or organizational goals (and the collaboration's goal) |

From: Abramson & Mizrahi, 1996; Bronstein, 2002, 2003; Mattessich, Murray-Close, & Monsey, 2001; Mulroy, 2000; Lawson, 2003, 2004; Lawson, Anderson-Butcher, Barkdull, & Peterson, 2003; Robertson, Anderson, & Meyer, 2004; Rubin, 2002; Ryan, Tracy, Rebeck, Biegel, & Johnsen, 2001.

## *Other considerations*

This section provides additional direction related to the design and implementation of collaboration. Remember that collaboration involves interdependence among participants. In these relationships, collaborative members believe their overall success is dependent upon the work of others in their school community. In other words, educators and school leaders realize they can not accomplish alone their mission of ensuring all youth succeed in school. They realize they must expand the boundaries to school improvement to gain the assistance, support and resources provided by strategic collaborations among key people and strategic partnerships with community organizations.

One of the first questions you will want to explore is whether you are indeed "ready" for collaboration. We have developed a brief collaboration readiness checklist that will help you in the determining your readiness.

| *Table 3.4: Collaboration readiness checklist* |
|---|
| • You have determined through a comprehensive conditions and resources assessment that you need to partner with individuals, families and organizations to address youth and family needs<br>• You have found the right people and agencies – the right partners – who promise resources that will enable your school to close the achievement gap<br>• You have found the right mix of partners – at least initially – to address youth and family needs; if you have gaps between needs and resources, you have started to formulate a strategy to fill those gaps<br>• You have identified the types of partnerships – networking, coordination, cooperation, collaboration – you think you want to develop between your various resource providers<br>• In anticipation of moving to a true collaborative relationship between and among resources providers, you have consulted the potential collaborative partners about the design principles and strategies outlined in this chapter<br>• Your potential partners are open to a solid working relationship and are willing to work together toward a common goal of good youth and family outcomes<br>• Potential partners are willing to develop a clear relationship identifying roles, responsibilities, resources, goals and accountabilities and are willing to make this arrangement formal<br>• You have developed mechanisms and processes for reaching consensus (and regaining it)<br>• You have developed mechanisms and processes for resolving conflicts – and for harvesting the innovations that stem from productive conflicts<br>• You have identified intermediary people and organizations who will help steward and convene the partners<br>• You have cultivated shared leadership committed to the same outcomes and, in turn, to the success of the collaboration |

This last point is crucial to the success of your partnership efforts. Without good stewardship – leadership – you will find that relationships deteriorate over time. This leads to our next topic – collaborative leadership – the emerging science of managing the creation and maintenance of strong and effective partnerships within the Ohio Community Collaboration Model for School Improvement.

## Collaborative leadership structures: a team approach

Even the most gifted and talented superintendent, principal, school-family-community coordinator or after-school program coordinator will not be able to develop, operate, manage and sustain a successful collaboration and complex partnerships without shared, distributed leadership structures and process. Collaborative leadership is an ideal way to develop and advance innovative collaborations and partnerships.

Because both collaborations and partnerships – strictly defined as they are in this toolkit – are new, no one has all of the answers. Problems need to be solved by groups of committed people, power must be shared and everyone must delegate responsibilities to others. Above all, all the partners must communicate regularly, efficiently and effectively.

Furthermore, collaborations and partnerships require decisions and actions that go beyond any one job description, and these decision-making environments involve many organizational boundaries. Collaborative leadership enables you to manage and lead "across the boundaries." Flexible, joint leadership, shared decision-making, the ability to get along with other people with diverse views, power sharing and the ability to delegate responsibilities are thus practical necessities. These practical necessities associated with partnerships are among the defining features of collaborative leadership.

Essentially, collaborative leadership involves a team approach to leadership and management, rather than "a great person approach" (Rubin, 2002). The collaborative leader forms a team with key partners (e.g., parents, youth, other program and service providers), who are either designated or elected, to serve on the team. The team assumes responsibility for leadership (ensuring the right things are done), management (ensuring that things are done right) and governance (ensuring the collaborative or partnership remains on course toward a more desirable future). Essentially, the team ensures the work of the collaboration or partnerships as it:

- Encompasses every participant's mission;
- Meets the needs and addresses the gaps identified through the conditions and resources assessment;
- Remains focused on the implementation of programs and services that enhance school improvement efforts;
- Stays sufficiently comprehensive, coherent and integrated; and
- Remains driven by data (i.e., data are used for decision-making, learning and continuous improvement).

Clearly, these functions are related. But all are necessary as your team completes the following five tasks:

1. Identifies and capitalizes on school-owned and -operated and community-owned and -operated resources;

2. Identifies needs and gaps in school and community offerings; and then plans programs, services, strategies and activities to meet these needs and bridge these gaps;

3. Develops connective mechanisms that link people and organizations within your school community, including mechanisms for communications, referral and boundary crossing;

4. Ensures all work fits together (i.e., what results is a comprehensive, coherent and integrated system that yields the maximum number of benefits to the greatest number of people, including the achievement of your mission and progress toward realizing your vision); and

5. Determines who is responsible and accountable for what and delegates lead responsibilities to key people and agencies.

Next we examine several key structural considerations designed to help you accomplish these tasks. These factors are essential to the design and structure of a successful collaboration. They include role of the collaborative leader, the advisory board, the actual collaboration or working group and the concept of lead responsibility.

### *The collaborative leader*

Successful collaborations often start with one collaborative leader who identifies and convenes regularly a collaborative leadership team that focuses overall on school community improvement needs. This person, who is often a school principal, remains in charge, but delegates lead responsibility for each key school improvement priority to others.

It takes a special skill set in order to be an effective collaborative leader. The following set of skills and competencies seem to be consistently identified in the literature.

**Table 3.5: Characteristics of a collaborative leader**

- A collaborative leader has the ability to manage conflict, to compromise and to build trust between multiple constituencies
- A collaborative leader has the ability to network and build relationships between a wide range of community partners
- A collaborative leader has the ability to exercise non-jurisdictional power - the power of ideas, the power of the media and the power of public opinion
- A collaborative leader has the ability to help people reach consensus and resolve conflicts
- A collaborative leader is entrepreneurial (i.e., able to see and capitalize on opportunities to do good work and improve results)
- A collaborative leader has the ability to discover new ideas of agreement and opportunities to talk and listen
- A collaborative leader has the flexibility to react as circumstances change and opportunities emerge

Expanded from: Rubin, 2002.

These skills sets are critical as the collaborative leader begins assigning lead responsibility to others in relation to school improvement needs. For example, the collaborative leader may assign a school social worker the role of health and social services coordinator, a parent liaison the lead within family engagement efforts and an after-school staff person to oversee programs and activities related to youth development (Lawson, 2004). These key people and others designated by the collaborative leader become part of a collaborative team (i.e., the collaboration). This team provides the school, especially the principal, with the supports it has long wanted and needed. The school can then focus on the area where it has lead responsibility: academic learning and instructional leadership.

### *Intermediary people and organizations*

Mindful that both collaboration and partnerships involve committed relationships, and oftentimes the needed relationships involve strangers and even former adversaries, neutral parties often are needed. Intermediary people (i.e., social workers and others who cross professional and organizational boundaries) and intermediary organizations (i.e., the local United Way or local non-profit organizations) often are needed to facilitate partnerships and collaboration (e.g., Lawson & Barkdull, 2001; Moore & Sandler, 2004).

Intermediary people perform vital relationship-building, boundary-crossing, and agenda-setting functions in support of the collaborative leader. For example, they assume responsibility for cultivating awareness of interdependent relationships, developing equitable relations, resolving conflicts and facilitating resource sharing. They do the legwork and "behind the scenes work" associated with developing and sustaining partnerships.

Intermediary organizations often provide the organizational home for the collaboration. These special organizations are salient when safe, neutral settings are needed (i.e., organizational settings in which stakeholders can explore and benefit from their differences and resolve their conflicts). For example, your school may not be the best place for a collaborative leadership team to operate. The local United Way office or the Boys and Girls Club may provide a more suitable, neutral organizational home.

Outside, intermediary organizations like these are especially important when the school's facilities are limited; and when educators and others at the school already are feeling over-burdened. Oftentimes, these organizations also offer staff supports, which they provide at no cost – a considerable incentive for schools to work with them and use them. Carefully drafted Memorandums of Agreements (MOU) may help to solidify these partnerships. Last, but not least, the work of sponsoring and overseeing partnerships and collaborations is complex and demanding. When an outside agency assumes primary responsibility for it, the school can stay focused on its primary mission, goals and accountabilities. This serves educators, others at the school and, of course, the students.

### *Two examples of collaborative leadership structures*

Because collaborative leadership is new, it is helpful to ask and answer the following questions. How would you know it if you saw it? What kinds of team structures would you develop? We provide two examples for you in response to these important, practical questions.

**The advisory board**

Advisory boards are often created in successful partnerships and collaborations. They typically consist of representatives from education, social and health services, business, higher education, the school board, relevant coalitions and governments within the school community. In most cases, you'll want to engage top level leaders and management for your advisory board. In essence, this decision making group consists of persons considered to be "power and resource brokers."

Examples of members include:

- School board members
- Local city or town council members
- Parents and community members
- Business leaders
- Higher education faculty members
- District personnel (i.e., Title I coordinator; Safe and Drug-Free Schools coordinator; etc)
- Pupil service personnel (i.e., school social workers, counselors, etc)
- Partnerships for Success representative;
- Children and Family First Council representatives
- Executive directors from local youth development and family service organizations
- Administrators within local health and social service agencies
- Others

The Advisory Board meets quarterly. It is charged with resource development and coordination, policy development and change and overall governance. It makes sure the collaboration stays focused on results and accountabilities, helps the collaboration "work" the right political channels, guides relationships with the media, mobilizes resources and pushes for institutional change. Advisory Board members are actively involved in planning the direction for the collaboration and in getting resources, supports and assistance that make the collaboration and its programs and services sustainable over time.

**The collaboration: an expanded school improvement team**

Chances are your school already has a designated school improvement team. As you know, this team focuses on curriculum alignment, standards-based accountabilities, quality teaching and instruction and the school climate. As you implement the Ohio Community Collaboration Model for School Improvement, you will want to expand this school improvement team so it includes individuals external to the school, especially as you and other school leaders think through your resources and needs assessment.

As you add these new members, you will be changing the team's name and composition; it will become a school community improvement team. You and other school community team members will develop new and expanded partnerships and collaborations. These new working relationships will allow you and your team to successfully address the various needs, barriers, and conditions influencing student achievement in your school community and to take advantage of untapped opportunities and resources.

As a result, your actual collaboration might consist of leaders representing teachers, school social workers, counselors and psychologists, the principal, parents, youth, youth development specialists, health and social service providers, faith-based representatives, local government officials, higher education faculty and others. Basically, this team represents your most important partners, particularly the ones that do the "work" within your school improvement efforts (i.e., those that organize and implement the programs and services). Although the list of potential partners is in one sense limitless, you will want to identify members strategically, aiming for genuine collaboration.

This expanded school improvement team will oversee the "day-to-day" operations within your school improvement efforts. It meets regularly (as frequently as once a week at the outset). Essentially, this group coordinates the various programs, services and implementation phases within the model.

*Key activities.* Members develop a shared mission as well as consensus around a common purpose. They identify immediate, intermediate and long term outcomes (as indicated in the logic model). They assign responsibilities and determine roles and accountabilities. They collect and analyze the data within the needs and resources assessment. They design action plans for targeting identified needs. They design and implement the programs and services in relation to the identified needs. And they develop evaluation methods (Lawson, 2004; Rubin, 2002). Figure 3.1 indicates some essential representatives in the collaboration:

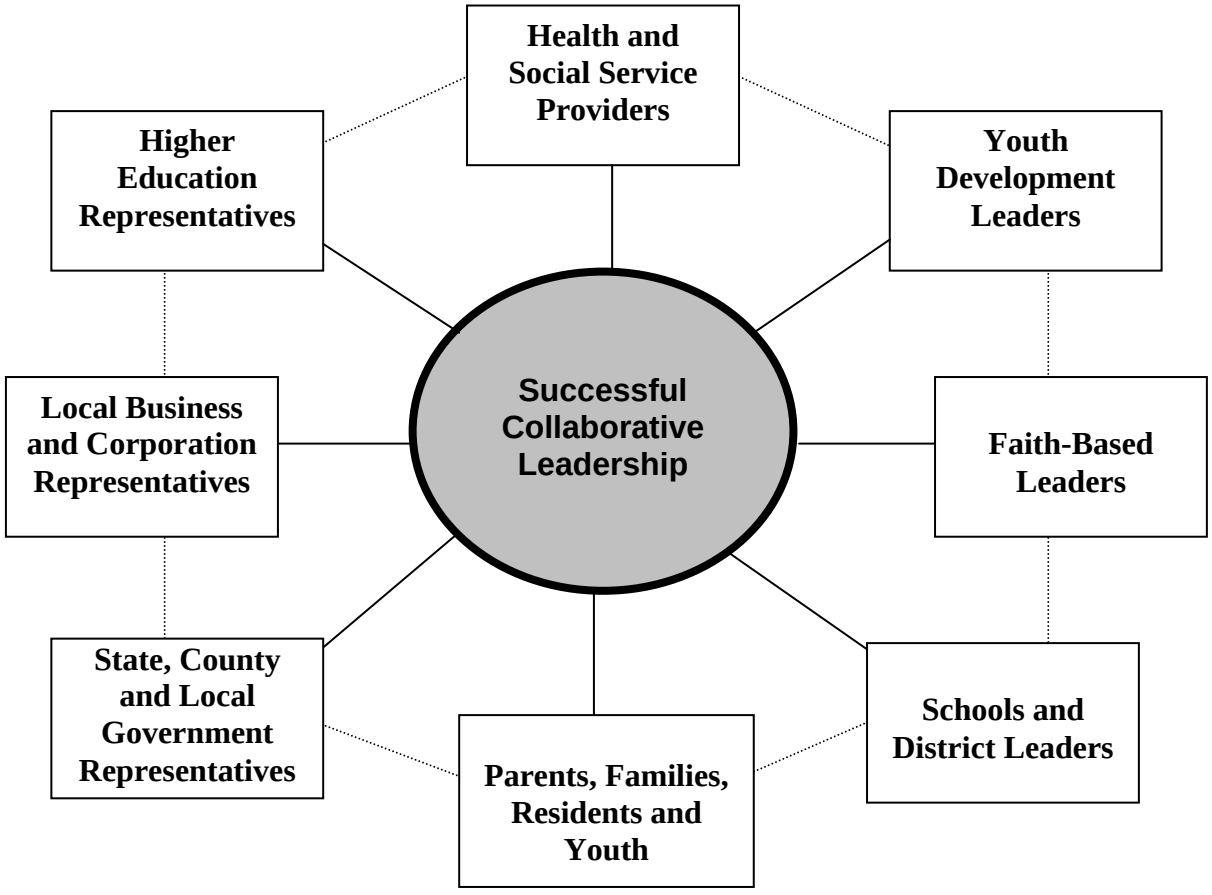



***Figure 3.1:*** *Essential partners within successful collaborations*

*The use of subgroups.* It is often helpful for the expanded school improvement team to be divided into core subgroups, arranged according to strategic targeted areas identified in the overall plan. For example, some collaboration teams have organized around key outcomes associated with the partnership: academic, family, community and youth conditions. Others might organize around program areas: academic learning, youth development, health and social services, family engagement and community partnership. Still others might create some blended format that is more focused on activity areas: assessment and evaluation, sustainability, youth program and services, family program and services and/or community activities. Figure 3.2 provides an overview of one way of organizing your collaboration and its expanded school improvement efforts into subgroups.

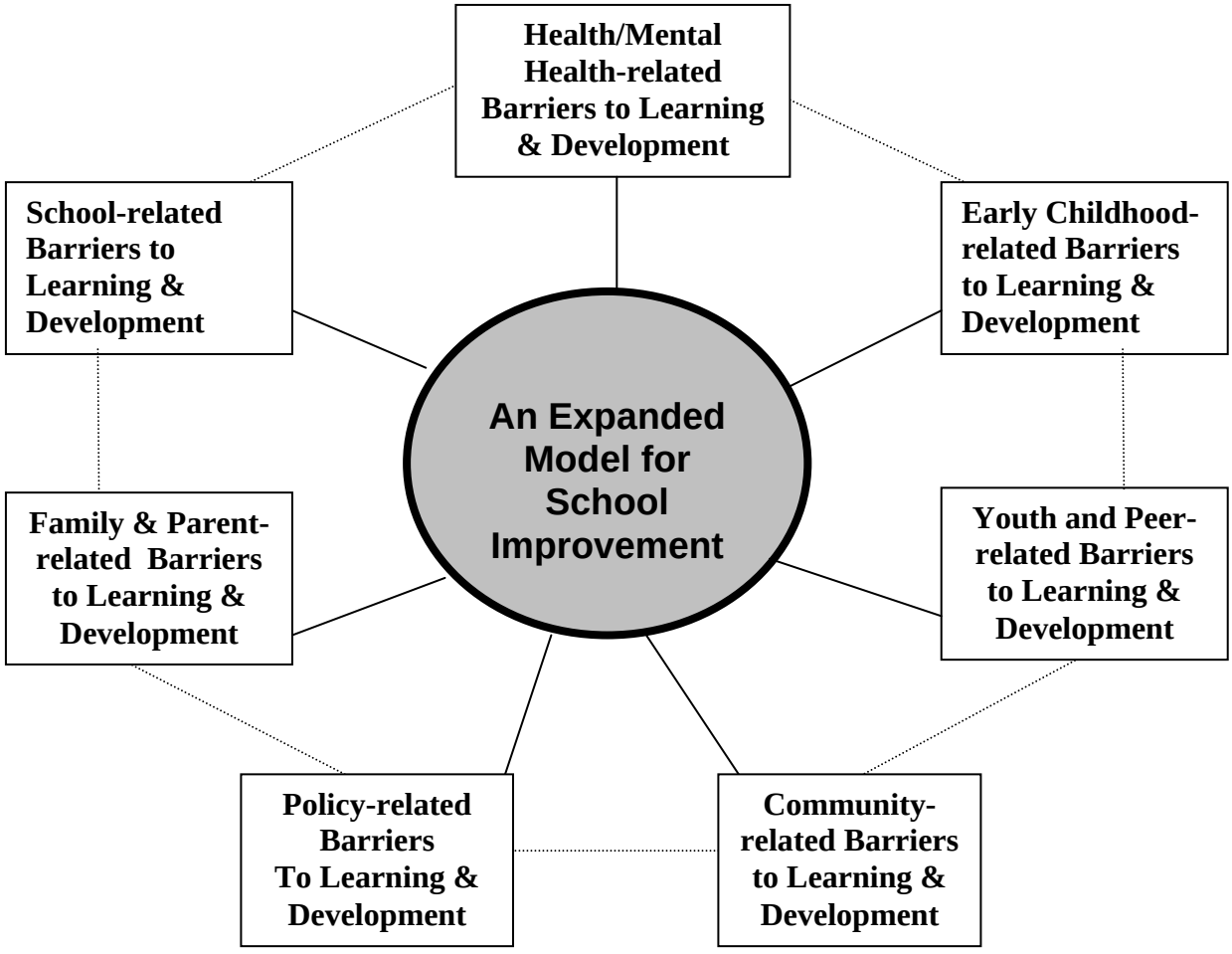



***Figure 3.2**: A layout of potential areas subgroups might address*

These core subgroups consist of the school improvement team members that are central to each targeted area. For example, the subgroup focused on academics might include teachers, Title I paraprofessionals, tutors, after-school program staff and curriculum specialists. The subgroup focused on family related issues might consist of family liaisons, school social workers, the parent teacher organization president, parents, representatives from local social service agencies that do family work, etc. A subgroup focused on after-school youth development might be comprised of representatives from local child care centers, youth development organizations, parks and recreation, community education and faith-based organizations. Essentially, the actual day-to-day "work" within the collaboration is done at the subgroup level.

*Lead responsibilities.* One key strategy for ensuring that this work gets done involves the assignment of lead responsibilities (Lawson, Barkdull, Anderson-Butcher, & Butcher, 1998). This strategy stems from this fundamental need: No school or agency can be "all things to all people" and, in essence, "do it all, alone." The collaborative school improvement team must "piece out" and delegate the work needing to be done. They assign people and organizations "lead responsibility" – meaning they will take the lead in getting it done.

In this fundamental sense, delegating responsibility is an essential part of collaborative leadership. Leadership for a given priority is given away, and the person or agency accepts the leadership responsibilities for this priority. These people then regularly update the advisory group and larger collaborative on activities, goals, and next steps. (Please note, however, if you are working in a small school, especially a small school in a rural community, you are already shaking your head as you review this. In small schools, especially small rural schools, one person, maybe two people, perform all of these roles.)

In the end, the school improvement team's subgroups, as directed by the person or agency with lead responsibility, move forward with the work of the collaboration by developing and implementing programs and services aimed to address identified conditions and needs within the school community.

These small working groups focused on the same kinds of barriers have the power to generate exciting innovations, take advantage of untapped opportunities and recruit other people and organizations for the school improvement initiative. For example, the people operating a school-operated tutoring program may cooperate with a school-based child care program to share snacks, supplies, space and other resources. Teachers may coordinate with youth development program staff, supporting the design and implementation of academic enrichment activities that are driven by the school curriculum. School social workers and counselors may coordinate services provided by multiple providers among families who have children on Individualized Education Plans. The school principal and the head of the local settlement house may collaborate by pooling together resources and sharing accountability and responsibility for the implementation of a family education class in the school community.

*An example*

Table 3.6 builds from Figure 3.2. This table provides a planning and implementation template, indicating how you and others on the school improvement team can "piece it out" and, at the same time, have control over the "whole" school improvement plan. This template also emphasizes one of the most important advantages and contributions of the model. It indicates that you and your school community improvement team can implement multiple improvements in several places, simultaneously. This capacity contrasts sharply with the typical linear, "one at a time" improvement strategies found in most walled-in school improvement models.

With these important benefits in mind, study the table and learn how you can develop the same kind of template. You will find the various subgroup target areas noted in the first column of the table. You will note there are seven subgroups focused on key barriers associated with academic achievement and healthy youth development – namely, barriers related to the school, youth and peers, family and parent, health and mental health, early childhood, community and policy.

Next note that each subgroup consists of key individuals whose work directly relates to the subgroup's purpose. In other words, the individuals and groups assigned to each barrier are the ones committed to, and accountable for, addressing them. For instance, the subgroup focused on school-related barriers is made up of principals, teachers, teacher liaisons, school-family-community coordinators, school social workers and counselors, university professors, tutors and attendance trackers. A key teacher in the school may be assigned lead responsibility for the facilitation of this subgroup's work.

The program and service strategies designed and implemented by subgroup members are then created based upon the resource gaps identified in your conditions and resource assessment. In the case of the school-related barriers subgroup, these strategies are focused on improved academic achievement, teaching and instruction, school climate and overall teacher satisfaction and retention. These strategies are then aligned with their targeted improvement area (i.e., reducing school barriers).

***Table 3.6: An example of a planning and implementation template***

| Barrier classification | Individuals involved and/or assigned lead responsibility | Example program and services strategies | Example improvement targets and/or conditions |
|---|---|---|---|
| School-related barriers | Principals, teachers, teacher liaisons, school-family-community coordinators, school counselors and social workers, university professors, tutors, attendance trackers | Professional development; curriculum alignment; classroom management; academic assistance (i.e., tutoring, enrichment, etc); gain assistance, support, and resources from parents, after-school staff, community | Academic achievement, improved teaching and learning strategies and methods, school climate, teacher efficacy and job satisfaction, staff retention |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Youth and peer-related barriers | School counselors and social workers, health and physical education teachers, coaches, after-school and youth development program staff, juvenile justice professionals, youth | Service learning; mentoring; after-school and youth development programs; sports and extracurricular activities; school-to-work; job training | Academic achievement, sense of connection to school and other organizations, child well-being |
| Family and parent-related barriers | Parent-family coordinators, principals, community- and school-based social workers, employment counselors, community organizers, parents | Parent-teacher organizations; parent education programs; employment support programs; family support groups, | Academic achievement, child and family well-being, stabilized, stronger families, less mobility |
| Health and mental health-related barriers | School and community health educators, safe and drug-free schools coordinators, school nurses, school counselors and social workers, health and social service providers, school-family-community coordinators | Health education, promotion and prevention programs; social and life skills programs; integrated services; nutrition and physical activity programs; school-based mental health; crisis response planning and intervention | Academic achievement, child and family well-being, improved service access and quality, reduced duplication in services, resource utilization and maximization |
| Early childhood-related barriers | Head Start coordinators, early childhood center staff, family support professionals, religious leaders, parent groups | Prenatal programs; birth-to-three initiatives; early childhood education programs | Academic achievement, school readiness, child and family well-being |
| Community-related barriers | School-family-community coordinators, community organizers and developers, police, juvenile justice officers, religious leaders, residents | Community and youth policing; family-to-family networking; small business development | Academic achievement, safer schools and neighborhoods, less isolation, social support, trust, social capital |
| Policy-related barriers | Superintendents, health and social services administrators, state and local governmental officials | De-categorized funding programs; incentive and reward programs for successful collaboration; levy passing; school funding policy work | Academic achievement, resource utilization and maximization, prioritization of child and family well-being |

A final word on this planning and implementation template and the exciting possibilities it offers you. The other chapters in this guide, especially the chapters on academic learning, youth development, family engagement, health and social services and community partnerships, provide frameworks, guidelines and concrete action steps that can guide your planning and implementation efforts. Table 3.6 is just one example of how your school community improvement team can structure, implement and advance its work.

This work is not without challenges. The reality is that when you bring multiple people and organizations together, all who have different identities, missions and/or visions and self-interests, multiple barriers exist. We have highlighted a few of these in the following, providing some minimizing strategies that should help you with resolving some of these issues.

## *Common barriers in collaboration and collaborative leadership*

Several barriers have been identified in the literature by those implementing and evaluating collaborations (Lawson 2003, 2004; Lawson et al., 2003; Mattessich et al., 2001; Rubin, 2002).

One of the most common challenges related to this work involves the failure of the collaboration and partnership to focus on results. People and organizations collaborate just for the sake of collaboration or partner just to say they are partnering. When you ask them what changes as a result of their collaboration or partnership, they will tell you they are collaborating and integrating programs and services. They do not tell you about improved results. They do not tell you about improved academic achievement, healthy development and overall success in school.

This is because collaborations and partnerships sometimes consume endless time and resources in relation to “getting to know you” and “what do we have in common" activities. Nothing concrete gets done, and people and organizations leave when the relationships are not focused on key outcomes and deliverables associated with school improvement.

Collaborations and partnerships will experience other barriers. A few are highlighted here, including challenges with political and social climates, problems with building trusting relationships, barriers in creating buy-in and value among members and struggles in reaching consensus.

### Barrier: Political and social climate

Sometimes timing may not be supportive of collaboration or of your collaborative’s mission and goals. Politics, the social climate and the power dynamics create many obstacles that prevent or deter collaboration.

***Table 3.7: Political and social climate barriers and minimizing strategies***

| **Barrier: Political and social climate is not conducive** | **Minimizing strategies** |
|---|---|
| • Public opinion may not support the collaborative mission<br>• Political climate may not be conducive to the mission (i.e., education, youth, coordination, partnership, etc.)<br>• Political climate encourages individualism and independence | • Collaborating participants should spend time up front "selling" the collaboration purpose and intention in order to create the best political climate possible<br>• If the right climate does not exist, collaborating participants should consider strategies and tactics for improving the climate – by changing public opinion, for example, to achieve the collaboration's goals<br>• Collaborative groups should set goals realistically to meet |

| | |
|---|---|
| • Economic and social climate emphasizes competition for resources<br>• Power dynamics get in the way of partnership<br>• Collaborative agenda may not fit the political and social climate of the day<br>• Others… | political and social requirements<br>• Do not be afraid to talk about sticky subjects<br>• Develop a resource coordinating team that focuses on addressing these issues<br>• Work with the media<br>• Use government contacts to gain support<br>• Ensure the "right mix" of people is involved<br>• Solicit and nurture support and buy-in from people with power<br>• Others… |

### Barrier: Relationships are not built

Relationships are at the core of any effective collaboration. People and organizations are often so busy accomplishing their own work and missions they do not have the time to build relationships and trust with others. Collaborations struggle when relationships are not built.

***Table 3.8: Relationships are not built barriers and minimizing strategies***

| **Barrier: Relationships are not built** | **Minimizing strategies** |
|---|---|
| • Relationships are not built among partners<br>• The time necessary to develop relationships is lacking<br>• Members do not respect each other and their organizations<br>• There are misunderstandings about what others do: missions, goals, etc.<br>• There is limited trust between individuals and organizations<br>• Members do not see how their work relates to others<br>• Turf issues get in the way of partnerships<br>• Organizations compete for the same funding streams, creating competition as opposed to cooperation and collaboration<br>• Others… | • At the very beginning of the effort, partners should temporarily set aside the purpose of the collaboration and devote energy to learning about each other<br>• Develop a collaborative leadership council<br>• Partners must present their intentions and agendas openly and honestly to bring out trust-building<br>• Reach consensus on norms for how members treat each other<br>• Emphasize learning about and improvement in relationships<br>• Partners must be willing to listen to and value others perspectives and agendas<br>• Building strong relationships takes time; collaborative groups should allow sufficient time for understanding and trust to develop<br>• Create communication networks and channels to assist with building relationships, trust, understanding, etc.<br>• Use intermediary organizations and people who are neutral, facilitating partnerships and connections<br>• Others… |

### Barrier: Members do not see value

Collaboration depends upon mutuality and interdependence. In essence, members must get their own agendas met while simultaneously supporting the collaborative mission. This is difficult to do, and many times members to not see the value of being involved in the partnership.

| *Table 3.9: Members do not see value barriers and minimizing strategies* | |
|---|---|
| **Barrier: Members do not see value of collaboration** | **Minimizing strategies** |
| • Individuals and organizations do not see how collaboration can help them<br>• Individuals and organizations struggle to see how their own self-interests are met via the partnership<br>• Individuals and organizations see themselves as specialized experts<br>• Members do not see their work as interdependent with others' work; they do not see how collaboration can help them do their work better<br>• Others… | • Always make clear what member individuals and organizations stand to gain from the collaboration, and those expectations should be built into goals so they remain visible throughout the life of the collaborative effort<br>• Emphasize, where possible, interdependent relationships – no one can achieve their missions and goals without others<br>• Make linkages and connections for people and organizations so they can see how they fit into the larger picture<br>• Incentives for individuals and organizations to get involved and to stay involved should be built into the collaborative effort, and those incentives should be monitored to see if they continue to motivate members<br>• Identify and communicate the benefits of being involved in the collaborative, as well as the costs of not being involved<br>• Others… |

### Barrier: Difficulty in reaching consensus

Creating a consensus in direction and focus, as well as sticking to the direction and focus, is difficult, especially when multiple stakeholders from different perspectives and organizations convene together over a period of time. Creating and keeping consensus is one of the most difficult barriers to address when forming and maintaining collaboration.

| *Table 3.10: Difficulty in reaching consensus barriers and minimizing strategies* | |
|---|---|
| **Barrier: Difficulty in reaching consensus** | **Minimizing strategies** |
| • Group is unable to reach consensus<br>• Members are unwilling to compromise<br>• The collaborative lacks focus and direction, and is easily side-tracked off target<br>• Relationships are not built among members so there is little willingness to give and take<br>• Roles, responsibilities and expectations are not clear within the collaborative<br>• Some members believe their "vote" counts more than others<br>• Members bring multiple competing goals and directions to the collaborative<br>• Members "come and go" and membership changes over time<br>• Collaborative leaders do not have the skills to facilitate consensus building<br>• Others… | • Spend time building consensus around a shared vision and mission<br>• Develop a coherent model with strategies that are focused on results<br>• Ensure all partners see themselves and their own self-interests in the model and plan<br>• Participants must have some latitude in working out agreements among partners; rigid rules and expectations will render collaboration unworkable<br>• Collaborative members should allow time to act deliberately and patiently when reaching decisions<br>• Collaborative members must know when to seek compromise or common ground and to amicably negotiate major decisions in situations where members do not share the same opinion<br>• Build on participants' awareness that they are interdependent; demonstrate that none can achieve their missions and goals without the others<br>• Focus on results needing to be improved, including how this work will help each participant do so<br>• Others… |

## *Final thoughts*

In the end, collaboration and partnerships entail a new way of doing business. The most important priority for you to keep in mind is that these new ways of doing business yield improved results for schools, families, community agencies and youth.

New ways of doing business also require new ways to lead, manage and govern, and collaborative leadership is the answer to these needs. As the boundaries of school improvement expand, the school improvement team adds new members representing families, community agencies, businesses, neighborhood organizations, and, where applicable, colleges and universities. These new team members join with existing members to share responsibility and accountability for school improvement processes and outcomes.

These collaborative leadership teams, structures and processes are vital when multiple programs and services are being implemented simultaneously in several places and involving many organizations and people. This distinctive advantage of the Ohio Community Collaboration Model – the ability to affect multiple improvements simultaneously – also highlights the limitations of "one person leadership and management."

In this new model, the principal or the superintendent simply does not have to do it all, alone (and simply can't). Collaborative leadership teams and structures enable coordinated and harmonized leadership, management and governance that cross the boundaries of schools and communities.

These new working relationships respond to the needs of principals, teachers, service providers, youth development leaders and others in your school community. All know first hand the problems they encounter individually in trying to be all things to all people. Collaboration, partnerships and collaborative leaderships thus offer new supports and resources for each person, promising to maximize their effectiveness, prevent burnout and improve worker retention.

Last, but far from least, children, youth and families will be better served, especially when their representatives are included in collaborative leadership teams. The other benefits are no less important. Collaboration and partnerships promise to eliminate fragmentation, duplication and competition that often prevent participation. Furthermore, this new way of doing business promises to address heretofore unmet needs, including program and service gaps. As these needs are met, and as the gaps are bridged and filled, children, youth and families will benefit, and, in turn, school communities will see improved results.

## *References*

Abramson, J., & Mizrahi, T. (1996). When social workers and physicians collaborate: Positive and negative interdisciplinary experiences. *Social Work, 41*, 270-281.

Alameda-Lawson, T., & Lawson, M. (2000, September). *Facilitating consumer-run school community initiatives*. Paper presented at the New Century Child Welfare and Family Support Conference, Snowbird, UT.

Anderson-Butcher, D., & Ashton, D. (2004). Innovative models of collaboration to serve children, youth, families, and communities. *Children & Schools. 26*(1). 39-53.

Anderson-Butcher, D., Lawson, H.A., & Barkdull, C. (2003). An evaluation of child welfare design teams in four states. *Journal of Health and Social Policy*. *15*(3/4), 131-161.

Bronstein, L.R. (2002). Index of interdisciplinary collaboration. *Social Work Research, 26*(2), 113-123.

Bronstein, L.R. (2003). A model for interdisciplinary collaboration. *Social Work, 48*(3), 297-306.

Bruner, C. (1991). *Thinking collaboratively: Ten questions and answers to help policy makers improve children's services*. Washington, DC: Education and Human Services Consortium.

Family Care Healthy Kids Collaborative. (1994). *Interviews with key participants*. San Fernando, CA: Author.

Gardner, S. (1999). *Beyond collaboration to results: Hard choice in the future of service to children and families.* Tempe and Fullerton: Arizona Prevention Resource Center and the Center for Collaboration for Children, California State University.

Gold, E., Simon, E., & Brown, C. (2002). *Strong neighborhoods, strong schools: The indicators project on education organizing.* Chicago: The Cross City Campaign for Urban School Reform.

Hatch, T. (1998). How community action contributes to achievement. *Educational Leadership, 55*(8), 16–19.

Lawson, H. (2003). Pursuing and securing collaboration to improve results. In M. Brabeck and M. Walsh (Eds.), *Meeting at the hyphen: Schools-universities-communities-professions in collaboration for student achievement and well being* (pp. 45-73). The 102nd Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education Yearbook. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lawson, H. (2004). The logic of collaboration in education and the human services. *The Journal of Interprofessional Care. 18*, 225-237.

Lawson, H., Anderson-Butcher, D., Peterson, N., & Barkdull, C. (2003). Design Teams as learning systems for complex systems change: Evaluation data and implications for higher education. *Journal of Human Behavior and the Social Environment*. 7(1/2), 159-180.

Lawson, H., Barkdull, C., Anderson-Butcher, D., & Butcher, C.D. (1998). *Developing caring communities for children and youth: Unity of purpose for strong families, schools, community health and social service agencies, and neighborhood organizations.* A facilitators guide prepared for the Missouri Department of Education, Springfield, MO.

Lawson, H. A., & Barkdull, C. (2000). Gaining the collaborative advantage and promoting systems and cross-systems change. In A. Sallee, K. Briar-Lawson, & H. A. Lawson (Eds.), *New century practice with child welfare families.* Las Cruces, NM: Eddie Bowers.

Lawson, H., & Briar-Lawson, K. (1997). *Connecting the dots: Progress toward the integration of school reform, school-linked services, parent involvement and community schools.* Oxford, OH: Danforth Foundation and the Institute for Educational Renewal, Miami University.

Mattessich, P. W., Murray-Close, M., & Monsey, B. R. (2001). *Collaboration: What Makes It Work (2nd ed.).* Saint Paul, MN: Amherst H. Wilder Foundation.

Mooney, J. F., Kline, P. M., & Davoren, J. C. (1999). Collaborative interventions: Promoting psychosocial competence and academic achievement. In R.W.C. Tourse & J. F. Mooney (Eds.), *Collaborative practice: School and human service partnerships* (pp. 105–136). Westport, CT: Praeger.

Mulroy, E.A. (2000). Starting small: Strategy and the evolution of structure in a community-based collaboration. *Journal of Community Practice, 8*(4), 27-43.

Oppenheim, M. (1999). The critical place of community development in school transformation: The story of the Vaughn Family Center and Pacoima Urban Village. *Teachers Education Quarterly*, *26*(4), 135–158.

Robertson, D.C., Anderson, J.A., & Meyer, R. (2004). Individual focus, systemic collaboration-The current and potential role of schools in the integrated delivery of mental health services. In K. Robinson (Ed.), *Advances in school-based mental health interventions: Best practices and program models* (pp. 5-1 – 5-10). Kingston, NJ: Civic Research Institute.

Rubin, H. (2002). *Collaborative leadership: Developing effective partnerships in communities and schools.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.

Ryan, S.D., Tracy, E.M., Rebeck, A.C., Biegel, D.E., & Johnsen, J.A. (2001). Critical themes of intersystem collaboration: moving from a "can we" to a "how can we" approach to service delivery with children and families. *Journal of Family Social Work, 6*(4), 39-60.

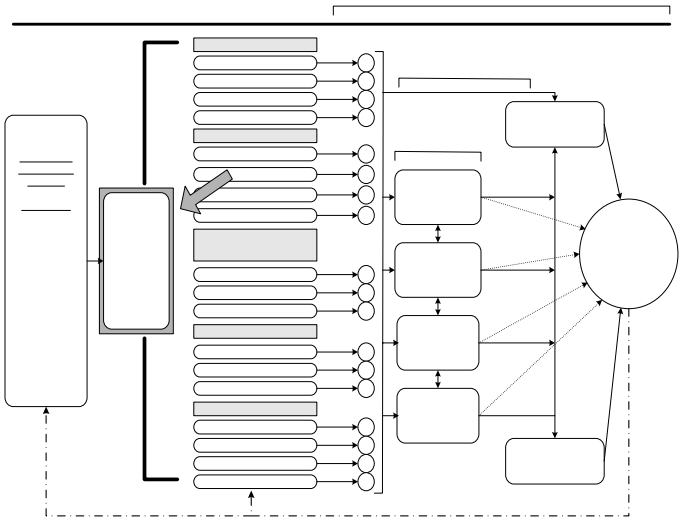
Smith, A. J., Armijo, E. J., & Stowitschek, J. (1997). Current approaches of case management in schools to improve children's readiness to learn. *Journal of Case Management, 6*(3), 107–115.

Surko, M., Lawson, H.A., & Muse-Lindemann, E. (1999). Launching a journey analysis of a community school collaborative. *Universities and Community Schools. 6* (1-2), 25-48.

Torres, G. W., & Margolin, F. S. (2003). *The collaboration primer: Proven strategies, considerations, and tools to get you started.* Chicago, IL: Health Research and Education Trust.

# Designing Successful Programs and Services

## Introduction



As a result of your conditions and resources assessment, you have identified individual, family, school and community conditions that potentially represent barriers to student achievement, healthy development and success in school. Together with your partners, you also mapped out the various resources available in your school community and identified potential gaps in programs and services. In this chapter, and in subsequent chapters, we talk in detail about how you can design successful programs and services with your partners that address the conditions underlying student learning. This is a critical component within the Ohio Community Collaboration Model for School Improvement (OCCMSI).

Five core program and service components are the defining features of (and the drivers for) the Ohio Community Collaboration Model for School Improvement (see Figure 1.3). A growing amount of research supports their individual and collective contributions to school improvement. These core components are:

1. Academic learning: models, strategies and practices involving classroom instruction, tutoring, school climate interventions, academic enrichment and curriculum alignment;

2. Youth development: models, strategies and practices including after-school programming, mentoring, leadership groups, social recreation and other youth programs;

3. Family engagement and support: models, strategies and practices including parent education classes, parent/teacher organization activities, family resource centers and support for learning at home;

4. Health and social services: models, strategies and practices such as mental health, primary care, health and nutrition education, physical education and related supports; and

5. Community partnerships: models, strategies and practices targeting higher education, faith-based organizations, business partnerships, service learning and other community building strategies.

Each component is described in some detail in a special chapter. Each chapter follows the same developmental progression. We define each component. We then present research-supported design principles and strategies. Then we identify predictable barriers to implementation, and we also provide "barrier busting strategies" (i.e., strategies you can use to minimize their effects).

Clearly, each component is different and even unique; and that is why we devoted a special chapter to each. On the other hand, these five core components are alike in this fundamental way: Some of the same theoretically-sound, research-supported principles serve as drivers for their success. In other words, these five core components rest on a common conceptual and empirical foundation. Key program design principles and strategies comprise part of this common foundation. This chapter presents these common concepts and principles for quality programming.

## *Overarching design principles and strategies for successful programming*

Essentially, quality programming is quality programming. Identifiable, generic principles and strategies apply to all five components: academic learning, youth development, family engagement and support, health and social services, and community partnerships. The design principles and strategies presented in this chapter are derived from a growing body of research on programs of all kinds. Most of this research focuses on programs that work – programs that produce good, predictable results and do not yield unintended, undesirable consequences.

You will want to use these principles and strategies and practice them in your present programs and services in schools, community agencies and neighborhoods. When you are successful at implementing these strategies, the school, students, parents and families will benefit. In today's accountability-rich environment, this kind of success is not only important, it is vital to your continuing support and resources.

Table 4.1 lists research-supported design principles and strategies for successful, results-oriented programs. You will see similar tables in several of the chapters that follow.

***Table 4.1: Overarching design principles and strategies for successful programming***

| Principle | Definition |
|---|---|
| **Structural considerations** | |
| Results-oriented | • Programs are tailor-made to achieve specific results with targeted populations; staff know that merely offering programs and services is not enough and hold themselves accountable for desired results |
| Logical | • The best programs benefit from strong, solid intervention logic; they work to assure that needs are related to services and outcomes |
| Comprehensive | • Programs address risk factors, strengths and aspirations, while simultaneously building competencies |

| ***Table 4.1: Overarching design principles and strategies for successful programming*** | |
|---|---|
| **Principle** | **Definition** |
| | • Programs target multiple systems (i.e., families, schools, communities and peers) and reinforce consistent messages across settings<br>• Programs develop linkages and communication networks across systems (school-to-home, family-to-school, etc.)<br>• Programs use multiple strategies to accomplish their goals |
| Evaluation-driven | • Evaluation methods and frameworks guide the program from the start, data-based decision making is the norm and data are used for learning, development and continuous improvement |
| Theoretically-sound and research-supported | • Program designers consult relevant theory and research when they make program decisions; as a result, programs have strong theoretical justifications, are supported by research and, where warranted, represent an evidence-based, best practice<br>• Staff may adopt model programs and curricula that are already known to be effective at addressing the identified needs |
| **Implementation considerations** | |
| Varied teaching and learning methods | • Programs involve varied, research-supported learning experiences and teaching methods that are interactive, experiential, engaging and address multiple learning styles<br>• Lessons also provide opportunities for direct application of newly learned skills within real-life settings |
| Sufficient dosage | • The program's frequency, intensity and duration are sufficient to achieve desired results<br>• Follow-up booster sessions are included as needed |
| Implementation fidelity | • The program is implemented in the way in which it was originally designed; for example, the program's time requirements (how much time, how time is distributed) are not altered, and program staff know they cannot make random changes without risking results |
| Well-trained staff | • Staff support the program and ensure implementation fidelity<br>• Staff are well-trained, valued and supported<br>• Staff meet highest qualification required for licensure in their respective professions |
| Shared ownership and leadership | • Participants have a genuine "say so" in program design, implementation, and improvement; they're viewed as partners, not as dependent, ignorant clients, and they become the program's best advocates, recruiters and supporters |
| **Targeted and strategic** | |
| Personalized to meet individual needs | While programs often target groups or populations, each individual receives special treatment and has access to special opportunities as needed; every person feels special; no one is lost in the crowd |
| Appropriately timed and placed | • Programs are started early enough to have an impact, are sensitive to |

| ***Table 4.1: Overarching design principles and strategies for successful programming*** | |
|---|---|
| **Principle** | **Definition** |
| | the developmental needs of the participants (i.e., age, stage of life cycle, etc.) and are offered by the right providers and in the right places to facilitate participation |
| **Underlying values** | |
| Culturally competent | • Programs are tailored to the cultural norms and values of the participants, and staff make every effort to include targeted persons in planning, implementation and evaluation<br>• Programs take into account the special features of the local neighborhood community and the sponsoring organization |
| Family-supportive and -centered | • Programs are designed to support and strengthen families and in recognition of their needs and aspirations<br>• Programs for kids operate in close consultation with parents, and staff make special efforts to recruit, involve and engage parents as participants and partners |
| Self-determination and minimal intrusion | • Programs do not decrease the likelihood that people will help themselves and each other, nor do they interfere with parents' efforts to raise their children<br>• Program providers strive for the "least intrusive intervention" (comprehensive enough to meet needs, but selective and limited to the needs and problems at hand) |
| Empowerment-oriented | • Programs help develop the capacities of individuals, groups and families to help themselves and each other, and to gain access to the services, supports and resources they want and need |
| Strength-based | • Program builds from participants' strengths and assets, incorporating strategies that allow participants to experience success and esteem |
| **Relationships and affect** | |
| Positive relationships and bonding | • Programs promote strong interpersonal relationships among participants, staff, volunteers, etc.<br>• Programs promote bonding and connections with others and institutions in order to facilitate the adoption of positive norms and values |
| Meaningful and enjoyable | • Programs need to be enjoyable (as viewed through the eyes of the participants)<br>• Programs also include meaningful activities that are valuable to the participants both inside and outside the program<br>• Important incentives such as food, entertainment, lotteries, games, etc., should be included to help recruit and retain participants |

| *Table 4.1: Overarching design principles and strategies for successful programming* | |
|---|---|
| **Principle** | **Definition** |
| Engaging staff | • Staff have qualities essential for effective programming such as genuineness, empathy, communication skills in presenting and listening, openness, willingness to share and help, ability to make participants feel welcome and included, dedication, flexibility, humor, accountability and credibility |

From: Catalano, Berglund, Ryan, Lonczak, & Hawkins, 2002; ash & Anderson-Butcher, in press; Anderson-Butcher, in press; Greenberg, Weissberg, O'Brien, Zins, Fredericks, Resnick, & Elias, 2003; Hawkins et al., 2002; Nation et al., 2004; Kumpfer & Alvarado, 2003; Roth, Brooks-Gunn, Murray, & Foster, 1998; Weissberg et al., 2003.

| *Table 4.2: Check list of overarching design principles and/or strategies for successful programs* |
|---|
| ☐ Program is designed to create intended results |
| ☐ The logic behind the program makes sense as the services link to outcomes |
| ☐ Program uses multiple strategies to accomplish its goals (comprehensive) |
| ☐ Program is evaluation-driven and continuously improved upon |
| ☐ Program is research-supported and theoretically-sound |
| ☐ A variety of teaching and learning strategies are used |
| ☐ There is sufficient dosage |
| ☐ The program is implemented the way it was originally designed |
| ☐ Staff are well-trained in the program design |
| ☐ Participants have a "say so" in how the program is structured and implemented |
| ☐ Program is tailored to meet individual needs |
| ☐ Program is appropriately timed and located |
| ☐ Program is implemented in culturally competent ways |
| ☐ Program is family-centered and -supportive |
| ☐ Strategies foster self-determination and personal control |
| ☐ Participants are empowered |
| ☐ Participants' strengths are built upon in the program |
| ☐ Positive relationships and bonding are created |
| ☐ Program activities are enjoyable and meaningful to participants |
| ☐ Staff are engaging |

## *Researched-based programs*

You need to consider adopting and implementing model programs that have been identified through research to be effective at producing intended outcomes for youth and families. There has been a trend towards the adoption of evidence-based programs and strategies within various settings that support youth and families. As such, several lists have been generated that overview model or effective programs which have been

researched extensively and found to be effective at creating outcomes. The theory is that outcomes for youth and families will be more likely to occur if something that is shown to work is implemented.

When you attempt to use research-based programs and strategies, you will quickly learn that you need to adapt them to fit your local participants and settings. As you review the other programs and curricula, including the research related to them, you will need to keep four things in mind: (1) Understand which components of the programs have been empirically tested and have resulted in positive outcomes; (2) If a certain program does not meet your populations' needs, look for another theoretically-sound, research supported program that does or contextualize the program to meet your needs; (3) Ensure the program or curriculum is implemented with fidelity; and (4) Evaluate your program to determine your needs for learning and improvement and also whether you are able to achieve the outcomes you want and need.

### *Table 4.3: Places to find model, research-based programs*

- Blueprints Violence Prevention
  http://www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints/
- Youth Violence: Surgeon General's Report
  http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/youthviolence/report.html
- Preventing Crime: What Works
  http://www.ncjrs.org/works/
- Safe and Drug-Free Schools: Department of Education
  http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/9900statereport/index.html
- HIV/AIDS Prevention Research Synthesis: Centers for Disease Control
  http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/pubs/hivcompendium/HIVcompendium.htm
- SAMHSA Model Programs
  http://modelprograms.samhsa.gov/template_cf.cfm?page=model_list
- National Registry of Effective Programs
  http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/publications/allpubs/SMA04- 3906/ii.asp
  Safe and Sound: An Education Leader's Guide to Evidence-Based Social and Emotional Learning Programs
  http://www.casel.org/progrevfr.htm
- What Works Clearinghouse
  http://www.w-w-c.org/
- Council for Excellence in Government
  http:///www.excelgov.org/displayHybrid.asp?keyword=prppcsHome&keywordMult=prppcsInterventions
- Promising Practices Network
  http://www.promisingpractices.net/
- International Campbell Collaboration
  http://www.campbellcollaboration.org/Fralibrary.html

## *Using program logic models*

Logic models have emerged as very helpful tools in planning effective programs. A logic model is a plausible and sensible organizing device for your planning and implementation. A logic model helps you identify all of the essential parts of a program, how they fit together and how participants in your program will benefit, i.e., what they had and needed when they first joined the program and the outcomes yielded by the program in relation to participant "inputs."

A logic model is a simple graphic representation of the content, structure and flow of your program strategy designed to address a community condition. Included are assumptions, intentions, inputs, activities, outputs and desired immediate, intermediate and long-term outcomes. They require some intensive thought and work. However, the benefits they yield justify the front-end investments they require.

For example, they help you organize your thinking and incorporate relevant research. They guide you through the process participants will follow and they require you to identify progress indicators (intermediate/immediate outcomes) and desirable, longer term outcomes. They also require you to think through the conditions and principles needing to be in place for the program to be effective. Most logic models include the following components:

### Conditions and resources assessment

You'll want to identify the social and academic conditions your program will address. (See the conditions and resources assessment chapter.) You should consider student and family strengths and weaknesses and available or potential program, school and community resources available to address student and family needs and conditions. Your conditions and resources assessment should help you answer the following questions:

- Who do we need to serve?
- Why does this population need programs and services?
- Do you need to accommodate different sub-sets of the population in need?
- Are there special groups in your population that may need different services?
- How will the participants be different as a result of the programs and services?

### Program assumptions

Then you'll identify the theoretical assumptions you are making to support your program activities. In this component, you need to be explicit about why you think your program activities will lead to desired outcomes by answering the following questions:

- What does the research say about what type of program meets the needs of this population or problem?
- Does the program logically meet the needs of the clients?
- Is the program designed around the best practices that are known to be effective?

### Program resources

Here you'll identify the resources you will need to run your program. Resources here are broadly defined and may include things like finances, staff, settings, volunteers, equipment, supplies and contracted services. You also may need to consider any constraints that may limit or circumscribe your program such as ethical issues, laws, regulations and funding requirements.

### Program activities

You'll then want to describe program activities. These are the things you do, the services you offer or the links you make to services for students and their families. For example, you may conduct tutoring sessions, provide recreation opportunities, conduct home visits, provide in-service training about educational enrichment to teachers, etc.

It is important to understand the above four steps and components are the ingredients of your program – they form the basis of your daily actions and activities. The next four components help you define your program accountabilities. They will help you know if you did what you intended to do and if you reached your intended results:

### Program outputs

Outputs are the direct products of service activities and are usually measured as volumes. These measures are sometimes referred to as process measures and might include things like the number of tutoring sessions you provided, the number of recreation opportunities provided, the number of home visits conducted, the number of in-service training sessions to teachers provided, etc.

### Program outcomes

*Immediate outcomes* are those produced closest to the service. They may include student or parent gains in knowledge, changes in attitude, acquisition of skills, revised values or modified intentions that are directly linked to the your program strategy.

*Intermediate outcomes* are the sustained behavioral impacts of your program effort. Sustained behavioral change is crucial to producing good long-term outcomes.

*Long-term outcomes* are generally measured at the school or community level. In the OCCMSI, long-term outcomes would include measures of children succeeding in school and being prepared for a successful transition to adulthood.

Once again, developing a program logic model has many benefits. It helps to structure your critical thinking about program assumptions, intent, structure and accountabilities. It helps to communicate about your program with staff and stakeholders, and helps to keep you focused. Finally, it is indispensable in the identification of the evaluation data you need to collect.

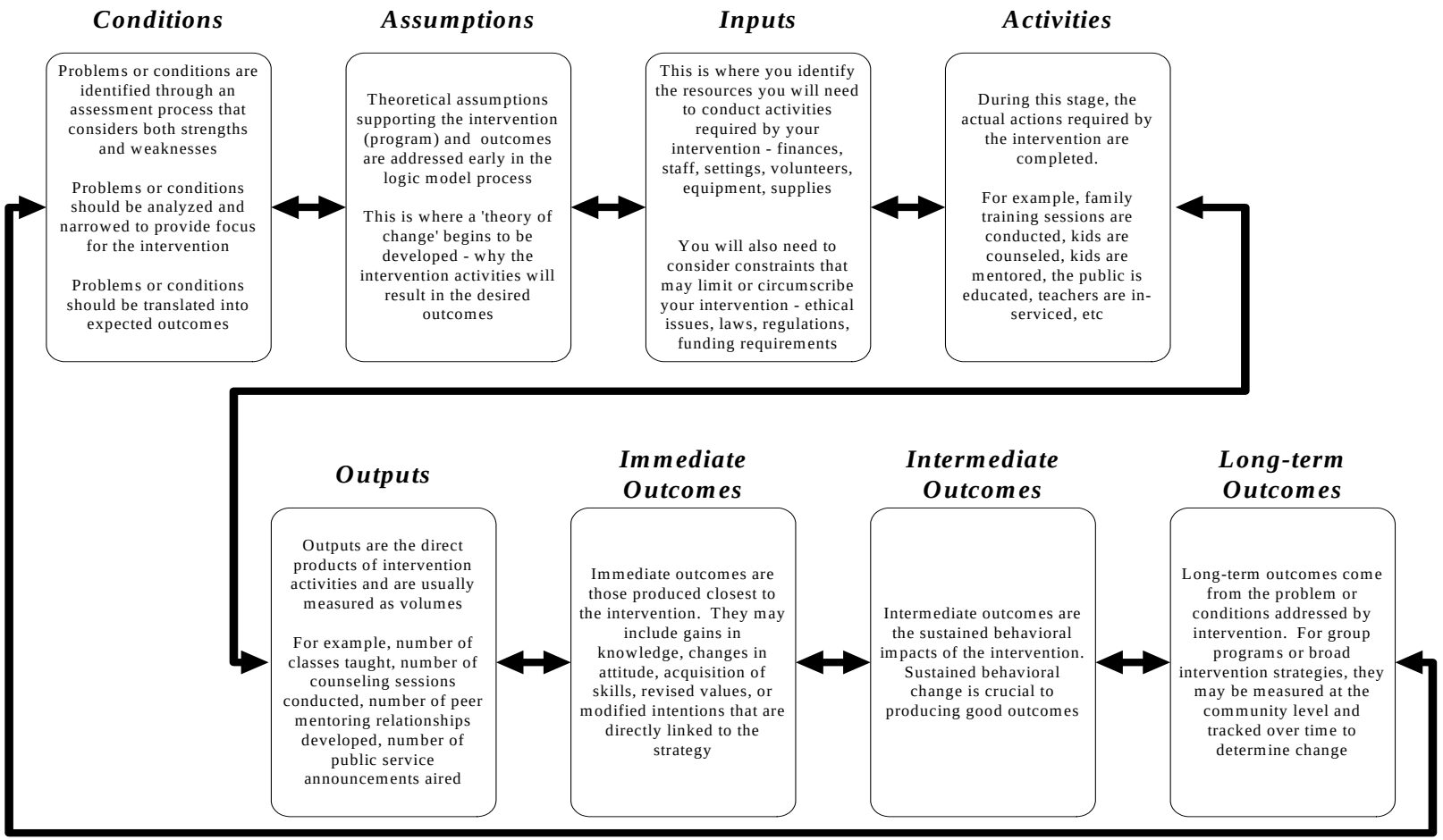



***Figure 4.1**: Basic logic model components*

Figure 4.2 presents an example of an actual program logic model developed in a school. The model has been recast slightly to fit the school improvement framework and some of the detail from the original has been dropped due to space considerations. The program reflected in the model is a mentoring program. It was developed in response to two needs – a low percentage of second graders reading at grade level and high-school students in a career-tech program that have poor attendance and also struggle with reading. A key assumption underpinning the model is that high school students can actually improve their own reading skills by working with younger students.

The model also shows how various resources combine to support the program. It uses 21st Century Community Learning Center funds plus matching funds from area business. It also includes a partnership with Big Brothers/Big Sisters to provide training and supervision for the mentors. Further, details about how the program will be provided are identified. It is a 24-week program with a one-on-one meeting between mentors and mentees occurring once per week for 45 minutes. The high school students keep a journal about their experiences and the elementary students have reading progress checked every six weeks.

Various levels of outcomes are shown. Both the mentors and mentees are expected to gain in reading skills and proficiency. Further, it is expected that both groups will have improved attitudes toward reading. Finally, all of these efforts are aimed at school success for both groups and a successful transition to adulthood for the older students.

## *Activity oriented programs vs results oriented programs*

Programs may be categorized into a two-part classification: (1) Activity-oriented programs and (2) Results-oriented programs. Most of your time and effort must be directed toward results-oriented programs.

Activity-oriented programs typically involve free and directed play at all levels. The focus is on the activity rather than on the results that you expect from the activity. Activity-oriented programs include basketball, family events, school assemblies, community festivals and arts and drama. These activity-oriented programs are fun and enjoyable for the participants.

Results-oriented programs target improvements or changes in the participants' knowledge, attitudes, awareness and/or behavior. Programs are designed to help participants learn, improve and change in positive ways. Results-oriented programs are intentional interventions with anticipated outcomes. Research provides the program's rhyme and reason. The main idea behind results-oriented programs is to make sure the program and the strategies and activities you are providing correspond to the problem you are trying to solve.

Moving from an activity-oriented perspective to a results-oriented one will require intentional planning and thoughtful implementation by program leaders. The key is to strike a good balance between results-oriented programs and activity programs.

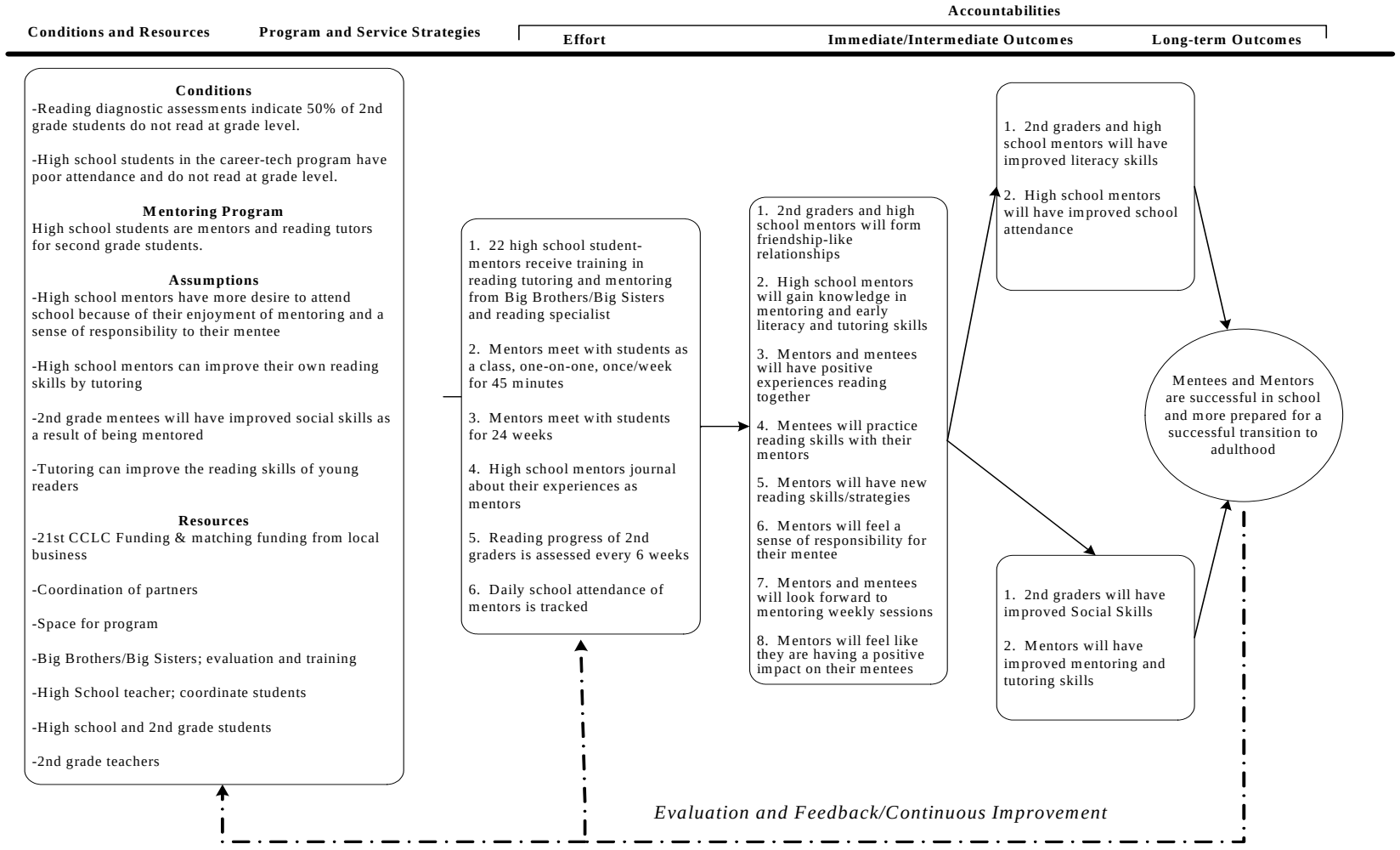



***Figure 4.2**: Example of a program logic model*

## *Attracting and retaining participants*

It is important that you also pay critical attention to designing strategies within your programs that focus on the successful recruitment and retention of participants. Participants are unlikely to benefit from quality program designs if they are not present enough to reap program benefits.

### Successful recruitment

Every program designer faces this question: How will we attract and recruit the participants who will benefit from our programs and services? Program magnets are the attraction and recruitment mechanisms for participants (Lawson, Anderson-Butcher, Barkdull, & Byrnes, 2000). They get "people in the door," a fundamental first step in developing every successful program. Common program magnets include:

- Activities offered are of interest;
- Program fits personal goals (i.e., want to discipline my child more appropriately, need to belong. have a desire to help others);
- Friends attend;
- Have some already established relationship with the program staff;
- Program participation is a requirement (i.e., parent requires youth attendance, child welfare system requires parent attendance);
- Support for program involvement (i.e., teachers encourage student involvement, employer provides time-off for community service); and
- They receive a referral to the program.

### Successful involvement and engagement

Unfortunately, attendance at the program's first session does not necessarily mean individuals will continue to participate on an ongoing basis. Once individuals have been successfully recruited, it is essential that program leaders understand how to engage and retain participants once they have started the program.

Program *hooks and glue* anchor participants to the program and keep them there (Lawson et al., 2000). *Program hooks* are retention mechanisms that also engage participants. *Glue* refers to the social bonding mechanisms that keep participants coming back for more (i.e., relationships with others, social networks, etc). Common program hooks and glue include:

- Relationships with others involved in the program (i.e., participants and staff);
- Participants experience a sense of belonging to a peer group or institution (i.e., social bonding; "feels like family");
- Program activities are engaging;
- Program continues to fit personal needs and goals;
- Program is a safe and fun place to be; and
- Receive continued support for involvement via encouragement, incentives and rewards (i.e., teachers encourage involvement; employers offer paid time-off).

When participants keep coming because they are "hooked" and "bonded," the program already has started to have some beneficial effects. For example, youth often need to be involved in any program that is meaningful and enjoyable, and some need to develop friendships with other participants. Most activity programs are designed with these needs in mind.

Results-oriented programs require additional strategies and mechanisms to achieve desired outcomes. Many have detailed specifications regarding what you need to do to get these outcomes. The outcome production mechanisms and strategies are vital to your success. Our general design principles described earlier in this chapter, in fact, reflect some of these important outcome production mechanisms and strategies. For example, results-oriented programs pay strict attention to things like staffing skills and credentials, the amount of program exposure necessary to increase the likelihood of positive impact (dosage), personalization of the experience with a strengths-based orientation and the use of personalized teaching and learning technologies that match a student's unique needs in program design.

## *Obstacles to recruitment and retention*

There are common issues related to the design, management and implementation of programs that often impact recruitment, retention and quality programming. Essentially, program staff must ask the questions: Did we make mistakes when we designed and implemented this program? Have we implemented the program in accordance with the research and the program's specifications? These *design flaws* (Lawson et al., 2000) will deter participants from engaging in your program.

***Table 4.4: Barriers and minimizing strategies***

| **Barrier: Common design problems** | **Minimizing strategies:** |
|---|---|
| • Lack of clear vision<br>• Unclear roles and responsibilities for staff and others involved in the program (i.e., principals, teachers, etc.)<br>• Inappropriate expectations for staff and others involved in the program (i.e., principals, teachers, etc.)<br>• Pay and benefits for staff<br>• Sustainability<br>• Program is not implemented in the way it is designed to operate<br>• Ineffective or non-existent training for staff<br>• Lack of communication and coordination<br>• Individuals involved do not truly understand the program's purpose or intent | • Design programs in response to identified needs and desires; "know where you are going and what is going to get you there"<br>• Be clear and realistic about roles, responsibilities and expectations for stakeholders<br>• Secure stable financial support for the programs<br>• Provide additional incentives and rewards for staff (i.e., flexible work schedule, etc.)<br>• Create program logic models<br>• Provide training and support for staff in program design and implementation<br>• Hold program staff accountable for program implementation and effectiveness<br>• Ensure programs are coordinated and communication channels exist<br>• Socially market the program, its goals and expected outcomes |

## *Final thoughts*

This chapter was structured to provide you with generic building blocks for successful programs. In addition, the section on logic models provided a practical way of designing results-oriented programs. Designers of successful, solid programs follow a results-oriented planning sequence, they incorporate research-supported design principles and strategies, they use activities to get to results and they have systems in place that help engage and retain the participants.

Finally, as we discussed in the introduction, we describe in some detail the critical components necessary for our approach to school improvement: *academic learning, youth development, family engagement, health and social services and community partnerships.* Each of the following five chapters follows the same developmental progression. First, we define each component. We then present research-supported design principles and strategies. Finally, we identify predictable barriers to implementation, and we also provide "barrier busting" strategies – strategies you can use to minimize their effects.

In the appendix, we also provide you with a self-assessment tool that helps guide your thinking about designing and implementing successful programs and services. These core components will serve as key building blocks within your school improvement efforts.

## *References*

Anderson-Butcher, D. (2006). Building effective family support programs and interventions. In C. Franklin, M. Harris, & P. Allen-Meares (Eds.). *School Social Work and Mental Health Worker's Training and Resource Manual*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cash, S.J., & Anderson-Butcher, D. (2006). Supporting at-risk youth and their families in the community. In C. McCauly & P. Pecora (Eds.).*Enhancing the well-being of children and families through effective interventions: UK and USA evidence for practice*. London & Philadelphia: Jessica Kingsley.

Catalano, R.F., Berglund, M.L., Ryan, J.A.M., Lonczak, H.S., & Hawkins, J.D. (2002). Positive youth development in the United States: Research findings on evaluations of positive youth development programs. *Prevention & Treatment, 5*.

Greenberg, M.T., Weissberg, R.P., O'Brien, M.U., Zins, J.E., Fredericks, L., Resnik, H., & Elias, M.J. (2003). Enhancing school-based prevention and youth development through coordinated social, emotional, and academic learning. *American Psychologist, 58*, 466-474.

Hawkins, J. D., Catalano, R. F., Kosterman, R., Abbott, R., & Hill, K. G. (1999). Preventing adolescent health-risk behaviors by strengthening protection during childhood. *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine, 153*(3), 226-232.

Kumpfer, K.L., & Alvarado, R. (2003). Family-strengthening approaches for the prevention of youth problem behaviors. *American Psychologist*, *58*(6/7), 457-465.

Lawson, H.A., Anderson-Butcher, D., Barkdull, C., & Byrnes, E.C. (2000). *The Learning Plus evaluation, Phase 1: Assessing implementation dynamics, documenting progress indicators and achievements, clarifying key program features and interventions, identifying needs and lessons learned, and paving the way for an outcomes evaluation.* Salt Lake City, UT: Salt Lake City School District.

Nation, M., Crusto, C., Wandersman, A., Kumpfer, K., Seybolt, D., Morrisey-Kane, E., & Davino, K. (2003). What works in prevention: Principles of effective prevention programs. *American Psychologist*, *58*, 449-456.

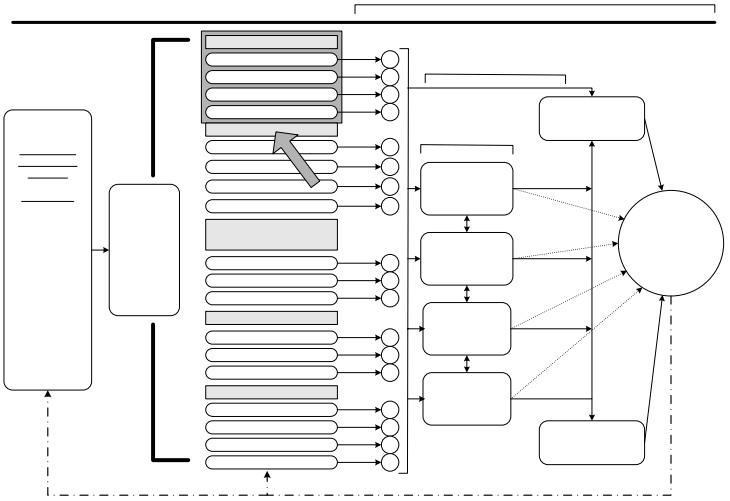
Roth, J., Brooks-Gunnn, J., Murray, L., & Foster, W. (1998). Promoting healthy adolescents: Synthesis of youth development program evaluations. *Journal of Research on Adolescence, 8*(4), 423-459.

Weissberg, R.P., Kumpfer, K.L., & Seligman, M.E.P. (2003). Prevention that works for children and youth: An introduction, *American Psychologist. 58*(6/7), 425-432.

# Academic Learning

## Introduction

The Ohio Community Collaboration Model for School Improvement (OCCMSI) is offered to you and other school community leaders with three main advantages in mind. The model:




- Provides schools and educators with influence and control over traditional school hours as well as out-of-school time;
- Mobilizes school-related resources, supports and assistance networks in families and communities; and
- Creates new opportunities for learning and, at the same time, implements strategies for addressing non-academic barriers to learning. In brief, this new school improvement model effectively expands the boundaries of school improvement.

It is important to remember, however, that this new model will not succeed unless the typical priorities for school improvement planning – curriculum, instruction, school climate, school management and continuous improvement efforts – remain top priorities. Simply stated, school communities can not and should not lose sight of these priorities and their relationship with the accountabilities established by the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act.

This chapter is structured to enable you and other school community leaders to develop firm connections between traditional school improvement planning and the new model's approach to improvement planning. Academic learning, which we define below and operationalize throughout this chapter, is one such connection.

Aiming to make you and other school community leaders aware of important connections between the two school improvement models, we begin with an appreciation of traditional models.

## Appreciating traditional school improvement models

There are countless reform initiatives, and some schools are implementing more than one. Thus, it is risky to reduce, simplify and categorize them. Nevertheless, this is the easiest way to introduce and justify our key claims about their common limitations and strengths.

Essentially, there are four types of school improvement:

- Subject-specific initiatives;
- Comprehensive, or whole school, initiatives;
- District and state-wide initiatives; and
- Alternative prototypes for schools and schooling.

These four types are not mutually exclusive; many schools are implementing two or more. Table 5.1 provides more details.

| ***Table 5.1: An overview of traditional school reform initiatives*** |
|---|
| 1. Subject-centered and other instructional improvement initiatives. For example:<br>• Strategies and models for mathematics and science<br>• Strategies and models for literacy and language (e.g., writing across the curriculum)<br>• Strategies and models for other special subjects (e.g., social studies, health education)<br>• Strategies and models for educational technology<br>• Strategies and models for educators' collaboration and "de-privatizing practice" |
| 2. Comprehensive school improvement initiatives (whole school reform planning). For example:<br>• Models stemming from the Effective Schools Research<br>• National school reform models (e.g., Success for All, The Coalition of Essential Schools, James Comer's School Development Program, Accelerated Schools, Atlas Schools, Edward Zigler's Schools for the 21st Century, Project Zero Schools) |
| 3. District-wide improvement initiatives. For example:<br>• Alternative school management frameworks<br>• District and state-wide P-16 articulation plans (aimed at ensuring a smooth progression with needed supports and resources, beginning at Preschools and culminating in a college or university degree)<br>• "Families" or clusters of schools as planning units with special attention to supporting students' transitions from one school to another<br>• Partnerships with education schools, colleges and departments in universities and colleges; partnerships for simultaneous improvement and renewal (e.g., Holmes Group Partnerships, National Network for Educational Renewal Partnerships) |
| 4. Breaking the mold: alternative prototypes for schools. For example:<br>• Charter schools<br>• Magnet schools<br>• Small(er) Schools<br>• Turning Points Schools (Middle schools founded on youth development principles)<br>• Community-based and neighborhood-based and -run schools |

Risking over-simplification, all of the above school improvement designs have three commonalties.

- *Ultimately, all improvement initiatives are aimed at creating and maintaining safe schools and supportive classroom environments in which every child has access to a qualified, caring and competently performing teacher who implements a standards-based, research-supported curriculum.* Arguably, this is the centerpiece of every school improvement initiative – past, present and future. It is the primary determinant of students' learning, academic achievement and success in school, and, if this piece is not in place, schools can be viewed as barriers to students' learning, academic achievement and healthy development.

- *All, or nearly all, are aimed at collecting information (data) about students' learning, development and academic achievement and then using this information to make solid, defensible decisions (data-based decisions) about instruction and overall improvement planning.* Fueled by NCLB, this common element nevertheless preceded this legislation. Like the first commonalty, it is a mainstay in future improvement initiatives, and it is a practical necessity in today's accountability-rich environment. Evaluation-driven and data-based decision-making also are vital to successful schools, and this is why they are emphasized later in this guide.

- *All, except James Comer's School Development Program and Edward Zigler's Schools for the 21st Century, approach improvement planning in essentially the same way. One school is the planning unit.* Educators are the improvement experts, and they consult their school's site-based team in this improvement planning. Because these educators and teams are the main change agents, only a few improvements can be attempted each year; linear, one-at-a-time, change strategies are commonplace. Above all, educators and site teams focus their improvement planning on priorities inside the school and within its immediate jurisdiction. In short, all promote building-centered, or walled-in, school improvement.

You can appreciate the OCCMSI in relation to these three commonalties. Basically, it draws on the strengths and contributions associated with the first two commonalties and it compensates for the limitations of building-centered, or walled-in, school improvement. Furthermore, this new improvement model provides an expanded focus on academic learning, one that prioritizes the development of solid connections among schools, families and community agencies.

In brief, we when talk about academic learning – with a special eye toward closing the achievement gap – we have in mind many of the same priorities your school community leaders are addressing now. Conventional academic learning strategies, coupled with practices aimed to foster the necessary conditions for learning, are vital for students' academic learning, achievement, and overall school success. The OCCMSI builds on the strengths of these conventional strategies and school improvement models.

Importantly, this new model takes advantage of new technologies and opportunities associated with "anytime, anywhere learning." This opportunity brings another: to bring the kinds of research-supported conditions for academic learning and achievement, which professional educators want and need, into out-of-school agencies, homes and contexts. In other words, the research-supported knowledge base about academic learning and instruction can be shared with family and community leaders to assist them in their work with children and youth. Details follow.

## *What do we mean by academic learning?*

As the above introduction indicates, when we refer to academic learning, we have in mind the kind of learning that improves academic achievement, paves the way for successful school completion and sets the stage for a successful transition into productive adulthood. Few priorities are more important for Ohio's children and youth. In Ohio and elsewhere in the nation, success in school is the key to healthy development and a successful transition to adulthood.

Academic learning is our shorthand for several, inseparable components of powerful learning and development. These components include:

- Content mastery, especially in core subject areas;
- Learning process skills and abilities, especially learning how to learn;
- Learning enrichment skills and abilities, especially knowing where and how to get new knowledge and skills;
- Learning enhancement skills and abilities, especially the capacity to reflect on personal learning experiences and, on the basis of this reflection, to correct weaknesses and build on strengths;
- The ability to engage in self-directed learning, including the ability to persist when challenges are present; and
- The ability to teach others and, all in all, help them learn.

We emphasize in this chapter the preconditions and conditions needed to develop this kind of powerful, multi-faceted academic learning. In other words, we aim to help you help others to get the conditions right for academic learning.

You will find research-supported guidelines in the following analysis. These guidelines are, in our view, generic; they have universal application. We make this claim mindful of competing theories of learning and teaching in all three locales: schools, homes and community agencies. Now that these competitions have been acknowledged, you will find no more of it. The summaries and syntheses provided for you in the following pages are prime examples of the most important, shared elements needed for powerful academic learning. These elements cut across many of the competing theories and approaches.

This guide does not provide subject-specific preconditions, conditions and guidelines. For example, it does not venture into "the reading wars," including which teaching method is best, and it does not offer research-supported guidelines for teaching mathematics and

science. It does emphasize the need for qualified teachers and related services providers/student support services staff, especially persons who know the content, know how to teach it, understand studentss and know how to operate in schools, homes and community agencies. It also emphasizes the need for safe, secure, health-enhancing learning environments, starting with the school's climate (Ohio Department of Education School Climate Guidelines, 2004).

Also note that we make no claims that we have incorporated every research-supported model and strategy documented in the school improvement literature (this would take books). What we have done, however, is indicate the top priorities for walled-in school improvement, reasserting their significance and indicating how you can take these same improvement priorities, techniques and strategies and use them for improvement in community agencies and homes. Academic learning, wherever it occurs, has many benefits.

## *Outcomes associated with academic learning*

Strategic academic practices and programming are vital in schools, community organizations and homes. The main idea is to harmonize and coordinate academic learning and the conditions needed to support and reward it – in all of the places where youth learn and develop. This means that everyone, including you, is committed to, and a partner in, school improvement. It means that everyone, including you, is responsible and accountable for academic learning and achievement.

A great deal of research has pointed to the importance of academic learning time and opportunities. Research has documented significant improvements in important outcomes as well as reductions in problem behaviors. The table that follows provides the most important examples of both.

***Table 5.2: Outcomes associated with academic learning***

| **Improvements in:** | **Reductions in:** |
|---|---|
| • Grades<br>• Scores on proficiency tests<br>• Increased attendance<br>• Positive school climate<br>• Behavioral and emotional functioning<br>• Student interest and value of subjects<br>• Self concept and esteem<br>• Social skills<br>• Positive attitudes toward school<br>• Quality of relationships between students and educators<br>• Teacher morale and support | • Special education referrals<br>• Disruptive and aggressive behaviors<br>• Drop out<br>• Truancy<br>• Absenteeism<br>• Teacher turnover |

From: Borman, Hewes, Overman, & Brown, 2002; Cohen, Kulik, & Kulik , 1982; Husbands & Beese, 2001; Holdzkom, 2002; Knoff & Batshe, 1995; Gambrell et al., 1999; Plucker, Simmons, Lim, Patterson, Wooden, Jones, et al., 2004; Slavin & Madden, 1995, 2001; Sterbinsky, Ross, & Redfield, 2003; Stringfield, Millsap, & Herman, 1997; Wallace, 1993; Wasik & Slavin, 1993; Wheelock, 1994; Wright, Horn, & Sanders; 1997.

## *Key design principles and strategies for academic learning*

Several key design principles and strategies contribute to successful academic learning. Predictably and understandably, most of these principles and strategies focus exclusively on schools. You can adapt them to other family and community contexts with an eye toward harmonious, coordinated relationships with schools.

These principles below have been identified repeatedly in research in the areas of educational practice, best practices in academic and behavioral interventions, school improvement studies and psychology of learning and behavior.

***Table 5.3: Design principles and/or strategies for academic learning***

| Principle and strategy | What this looks like |
|---|---|
| Federal and state standards | • Schools implement state and federal standards for performance and performance reporting<br>• Educators measure students' performance against standards<br>• Educators use student learning and performance data to improve learning and instruction, while maintaining high expectations for all students<br>• Educators develop specific progress targets for subgroups such as children who are poor, have limited English proficiency, etc.<br>• The state has rewards and sanctions in place to hold public schools and districts accountable for making yearly progress<br>• School and district report cards document data indicators and progress<br>• Schools on the emergency list and the "at risk of emergency list" develop and implement school-wide improvement planning<br>• Educators and other school community leaders publicize the importance of academic achievement standards and advocate for community-wide initiatives aimed at closing the achievement gap |
| Assessment | • Educators use multiple methods of evaluation and assessment (e.g., pre-assessments, diagnostic, standardized, curriculum-embedded, informal tests, etc.)<br>• Educators use assessments that are both formative (during learning) and summative (after learning)<br>• Assessment results are available in a timely manner<br>• Assessments are aligned with curriculum content<br>• Assessments examine student performance on individual items, not just through total scores (content gaps are identified)<br>• Assessments measure students' abilities to answer questions acceptably and use problem solving methods<br>• Educators make accommodations for individual students based on student needs<br>• Educators use technology to adapt to student individual needs<br>• Educators receive time, assistance, technical supports and resources needed to interpret assessment data and use these data in their instructional planning<br>• Educators design follow-up interventions, instruction and assignments in response to identified unlearned concepts |

| *Table 5.3: Design principles and/or strategies for academic learning* | |
|---|---|
| **Principle and strategy** | **What this looks like** |
| Assessment continued | • Districts, schools and members of the school community use assessment results to adjust programs, policies, curriculum, instruction and teaching<br>• Professional development programs are readily available for educators needing help with assessments, data interpretation and the translation of data into instructional and school improvement planning |
| Focus on academic learning and achievement | • Districts, schools and members of the school community establish specific, challenging achievement goals for the school as a whole<br>• Districts, schools and members of the school community establish specific goals for student performance and benchmarks for meeting these goals (for groups of students and individual students); accountability structures exist for students so they learn responsibility and experience goal accomplishment<br>• Schools adopt a clear and consistent focus on academics, instruction and student achievement; there is a student-focused environment<br>• Districts, schools and members of the school community establish and prioritize clear and coherent achievement targets (short and long term); districts and schools engage in strategy development processes to support decision making and resource allocation<br>• District and school policies, decisions and expenditures clearly support teaching and learning<br>• District and school implement a systemic planning process in place that prioritizes academics<br>• Educators use coherent instructional plans to guide their teaching (e.g., standards-based assessment maps, rubrics, activity banks, etc.)<br>• Educators use standards-based units as teaching plans to organize and focus learning activities and assessments around grade-level indicators and essential concepts |
| Continuous improvement | • School and district continuous improvement plans include missions, visions, measurable goals, objectives and performance indicators<br>• Educators provide students with opportunities to display learning and improvement that reflects the outcomes of instruction and hard work<br>• Districts, schools and members of the school community implement evaluation plans that provide feedback for continuous improvement<br>• Districts, schools and members of the school community rely on assessment and evaluation data when they make decisions<br>• Educators and other school leaders have access to professional development opportunities related to data-information management and data-based decision-making |
| **Curriculum and instruction** | |
| Effective, research-supported strategies | • School and district operational principles, curriculum, instruction and leadership are research supported<br>• School practices are driven by theories of child development, incorporating approaches that demonstrate beneficial effects on children's learning<br>• Schools and districts have effective, research supported strategies in place to address the conditions that relate to safe and supportive learning environments |

| *Table 5.3: Design principles and/or strategies for academic learning* | |
|---|---|
| **Principle and strategy** | **What this looks like** |
| Effective, research-supported strategies continued | • Strategies are implemented with fidelity<br>• Schools and districts have developed infrastructure supports for retrieving and using research, including key people who translate research for practitioners<br>• Educators and others at the school are encouraged, supported and assisted in completing action research focused on their own practices and student performances |
| Curriculum | • The school's and the district's recommended curriculum is research-supported<br>• Curriculum content is aligned with state and national standards, test content and instruction<br>• District leaders and principals ensure that curriculum standards are aligned across schools and that students enjoy transition supports when they move from one school to the next<br>• District leaders and principals ensure school and school district standards are aligned with the admission requirements for community colleges, four year colleges and universities<br>• Educators identify and communicate the content considered to be essential<br>• Educators focus instruction on specific content and purposes (not miscellaneous topics/content)<br>• Educators ensure the essential content is addressed in the time available for instruction<br>• Educators balance the breadth of topic coverage with depth; providing more in-depth coverage of topics instead of a lot of topics |
| Quality instruction | • District officials and principals ensure that instruction is aligned with curriculum, test content and state and national standards<br>• District officials and principals ensure that research-based, instructional strategies are used and implemented with fidelity |
| Achievement expectations | • Schools and educators believe all students are capable of learning; high expectations and standards are set for all students (i.e., all students will progress sufficiently to the next level)<br>• Students realize schools, educators, parents and others expect them to succeed; students have high expectations for themselves<br>• Students are taught to see relationships between effort and achievement<br>• Educators are capable and feel responsible for student learning (educators believe they do well at their job)<br>• Strategies are in place to teach and re-teach students in a variety of methods and figure out ways in to support all students in their learning |
| **Leadership and school staff** | |
| Collaborative leadership | • District and school leaders establish and reinforce clear goals, focus, values and operating rules<br>• District and school leaders foster a positive school climate and sense of community; leadership has buy-in and support from faculty, district administration, staff, community, etc.; there is full support for reform |

| *Table 5.3: Design principles and/or strategies for academic learning* | |
|---|---|
| **Principle and strategy** | **What this looks like** |
| Collaborative leadership continued | efforts; cooperation and initiative are encouraged<br>• The superintendent is an effective advocate for the needs of students, individual schools and the school district<br>• District leaders and principals strike a balance between centralized and decentralized decision making<br>• District leaders and principals are knowledgeable about curriculum, instruction and assessment<br>• District leaders and principals collaborate in the allocation and reallocation of resources to improve students' learning and academic achievement<br>• District leaders, principals, educators, parents, social-health service providers, youth development specialists and other leaders share responsibility for students' learning, academic achievement and success in school<br>• Superintendents and district staff collaborate with top level leaders and middle managers in youth development agencies and health-social service agencies to maximize opportunities for students during the non-school hours<br>• Principals and their designated representatives establish sustainable connections with leaders of after-school programs, youth development agencies and social-health service providers to gain their support and resources in support of students' development, learning and academic achievement<br>• Principals and their designated representatives establish sustainable connections with leaders of community technology centers<br>• Educators are involved in the design and implementation of decisions and policies<br>• Principals, educators and their designated representatives engage parents and families as genuine partners in school community leadership |
| Principal leadership | • Principals foster a sense of community and cooperation in the school<br>• Principals establish and enforce a set of operating procedures and routines for the school<br>• Principals are effective leaders who are actively engaged in school operations (understand how to run a school)<br>• Principals ensure educators are aware of most up-to-date theories and practices; protect educators from issues that would detract from their focus<br>• Principals are effective advocates for the needs of students and spokespersons for the school; celebrate successes and acknowledge failures<br>• Principals are willing to and actively challenge the status quo; monitor school effectiveness and will change direction if needed<br>• Principals are knowledgeable about instructional practices, curriculum, etc. |
| Effective professional development | • School and district professional development strategies are supported by research<br>• School and district professional development strategies are aligned |

| *Table 5.3: Design principles and/or strategies for academic learning* | |
|---|---|
| **Principle and strategy** | **What this looks like** |
| Effective professional development continued | with curriculum, technology and other identified needs<br>• District leaders and principals support educators and their professional development goals<br>• Educators, paraprofessionals and supportive service staff are encouraged to continuously improve and refine their practices<br>• Educators and other school personnel's needs, priorities and interests weigh heavily in professional development planning and implementation<br>• Professional development opportunities are connected to district goals and student needs and are relevant and useful<br>• Principals, educators and student support staff at the school receive professional development experiences aimed at enabling them to utilize family and community resources for learning and academic achievement<br>• Principals, educators and student support staff receive professional development experiences aimed at effective connections with community health and social service providers |
| Qualified staff | • Educators are certified and credentialed in the content areas they teach; in other words, the staff meet state requirements<br>• Principals, superintendents and administrators are competent in their jobs and are effective leaders<br>• Student support personnel are effective at their jobs and are certified and credentialed in their respective areas |
| **Level of priority** | |
| Readiness, fit and commitment | • There is a fit between school improvement strategies and other programs and services underway at the school<br>• Improvement planning proceeds routinely with assessments of possible conflicts, duplication and signs of fragmentation and competition<br>• District leaders, principals, educators and other stakeholders commit over time for long-term work in relation to school improvement<br>• Expectations are realistic and stakeholders realize schools will not change overnight<br>• Improvement models and strategies fit with the local context, school community and culture<br>• Improvement planning routinely involves consensus-building among all of the key stakeholders at the school, including educators, parents, social and health service providers and after school staff |
| Adequate and effective resources | • Schools and districts enjoy adequate resources (e.g., staff, time, funding, etc) to support planning, professional development and the implementation of quality instruction<br>• School funds are allocated in accordance with the school improvement plan<br>• School and community funds are blended and braided to maximize health and social services and learning supports for students<br>• Funding at the local, state and federal level supports schools<br>• Community resources are brought to the school in support of school missions and needs |

| *Table 5.3: Design principles and/or strategies for academic learning* | |
|---|---|
| **Principle and strategy** | **What this looks like** |
| Adequate and effective resources continued | • Family and community resources are mobilized and leveraged to provide learning and health-enhancing opportunities for students during the non-school hours<br>• Staff assignments are utilized effectively to accomplish school goals |
| Cultural responsiveness | • Diversity and multiculturalism are valued and practices are culturally responsive<br>• Strategies are culturally responsive and value diversity<br>• Educators are aware of their own cultures, traditions, values and cognitions and realize how these impact their everyday practices<br>• Schools value inclusion<br>• Schools and educators recognize and use cultural resources that students bring with them to school and the classroom<br>• Targeted attention is paid to achievement gaps |
| **School environment considerations** | |
| School climate | • School-wide discipline rules and procedures that guide general student behavior are fair and effective<br>• The schedule and structure of the school maximally supports learning and positive behaviors (clusters, schools within schools, small schools, block periods, etc.)<br>• Youth help form school policies and procedures<br>• Students have opportunities to develop and display positive behaviors; students are taught self-discipline and responsibility<br>• Positive student behaviors are reinforced and rewarded<br>• Schools and educators ensure that academic learning time is maximized<br>• Systems are in place for the early detection of real and perceived threats to safety and security (i.e., facilities and equipment are safe and secure)<br>• Classroom/school atmospheres and practices convey a warm, welcoming and caring school environments; students feel a sense of “belonging” in the classroom and to the school<br>• Students are valued as a part of a cohesive learning environment<br>• School-wide discipline rules and procedures are consistently enforced in classrooms<br>• Appropriate consequences for violations of rules and procedures are established and enforced<br>• There are high-quality food service supports for students and families<br>• There are high quality student support services (i.e., school social workers, psychologists, nurses, counselors) available onsite each day |
| Collegiality and teacher support | • Schools and school districts promote positive norms of behavior and conduct that foster professionalism<br>• Schools and school districts promote the development of professional learning communities among educators, including opportunities for mentoring, coaching and team teaching<br>• The school’s governance structure allows for teacher and staff involvement in decision making and policy creation<br>• There are sufficient resources, services and supports for educators and |

| *Table 5.3: Design principles and/or strategies for academic learning* | |
|---|---|
| **Principle and strategy** | **What this looks like** |
| Collegiality and teacher support continued | school personnel<br>• Student and teacher assistance teams, intervention assistant teams, etc., operate effectively and efficiently<br>• Policies are in place to support employee assistance for staff in need of special services |
| **Family and community considerations** | |
| Family involvement | • Parents, other adults and family members monitor, supervise, assist and encourage students as they practice skills and complete homework<br>• Parents are full partners in the decisions that affect children, families and the school<br>• Parents and other caregivers are welcome in the school, and their support and assistance are sought<br>• Parents and families have high expectations for their children<br>• Parents effectively communicate these expectations to children<br>• Parents have effective parenting styles (i.e., authoritative) that provide warmth, non-punitive punishment, and consistency; parenting skills are promoted and supported<br>• The communication between home and school is regular, two-way and meaningful<br>• Social and health service providers and other parents are mobilized, as needed, to support and assist families with special needs<br>• Principals, educators and student support staff engage in professional development experiences aimed at forming, improving and sustaining effective school-family partnerships |
| Community involvement | • School and district policies ensure there are multiple ways for parents and the community to be involved in day-to-day school operations<br>• School and district policies ensure there are effective, regular communications among the home, community and school<br>• Community and home resources are maximized in support of schools and children; community and home have commitments to education<br>• School and district policies ensure that efforts exist to improve public relations between the school and community (i.e., community forums, etc.)<br>• School and district policies ensure that community philosophies and attitudes are represented through community-elected school boards who govern policy and that community and parents have voice in key decisions about schools<br>• Strategies are in place to determine the requirements, expectations and preferences of stakeholders and markets, ensuring the relevance of the educational process<br>• Principals, educators and student support staff receive professional development experiences aimed at forming, improving and sustaining effective school-community partnerships<br>• Community recognizes the contributions of youth; community provides service opportunities for youth<br>• Formal school-community partnerships enable the provision of comprehensive services for students and staff |

| *Table 5.3: Design principles and/or strategies for academic learning* | |
|---|---|
| **Principle and strategy** | **What this looks like** |

From: Apthorp, Bodrova, Dean, Florian, Gaddy, Goodwin, et al., 2001; Baldrige National Quality Program, 2004; Beck, 2001; Borman, Hewes, Overman, & Brown, 2002; Brophy, 1999; Gay 2000; Husbands & Beese, 2001; Marzano, 2003; Marzano, Pickering, and Pollock, 2001; Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003; Learning First, 2002; Ohio Department of Education, 2004; Searl, 2004; Walberg & Paik, 2000; Walter, 2001; Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003; WestEd 2004.

| *Table 5.4: Ohio's School Climate Guidelines* |
|---|
| • Operational principles are grounded in academic achievement research and are espoused by the families and community<br>• School and community partnerships exist to provide comprehensive services to students and staff<br>• Regular and thorough assessments and evaluations are conducted for continuous improvement<br>• High-quality staff development and administrative support is available for program improvement<br>• Real and perceived threats to safety and security are addressed to permit educators to focus on instruction and students on learning<br>• A student's sense of belonging or connectedness to school encourages student participation, positive interactions with staff and peers, and is directly related to improved achievement<br>• Parent engagement maximizes the potential for effect instruction and student achievement<br>• Engaging youth in forming school policy integrates an essential perspective into proposed solutions<br>• High-quality food service supports improvements in academic achievement and behavior |

From: http://www.ode.state.oh.us/students-families-communities

| *Table 5.5: Ohio and K-12 standards* |
|---|
| Ohio Academic Content Standards<br>http://www.ode.state.oh.us/academic_content_standards/<br><br>http://ims.ode.state.oh.us/ODE/IMS/ACS/Grades_ContentAreas/Default.asp<br><br>Operating Standards for Ohio's Schools<br>http://www.ode.state.oh.us/school_improvement/Standards/Default.asp<br><br>K-12 Education Compendium of Standards<br>http://www.mcrel.org/standards-benchmarks/ |

## *Other considerations in academic learning*

This section highlights some of other considerations that need to be taken into account discussing academic learning. It begins with an exploration of time and how academic learning time can be maximized in schools.

Specifically, it focuses on key design principles and strategies central to quality instruction by educators in classrooms. It then follows with the examination of extended learning time by examining tutoring practices, the role of homework, academic enrichment activities, and the linkages among these with youth development. All strategies are critical to ensuring academic learning, student achievement and healthy development and overall school success.

### Academic learning time

Not surprisingly**,** research consistently shows that one of the most important factors contributing to improved achievement is the amount of time students spend engaged in academic activities (Aronson, Zimmerman, & Carlos, 1998; Cotton, 1989; Lauer et al., 2004). Schools, educators, after-school staff and others should plan to maximize the amount of time students spend in academic learning.

#### *The issue of time*

Time in school can be thought about in several different ways. For instance, students may think about time in relationship to when the first and last school bell rings. Educators may think about the amount of time they need for delivering a key lesson. Administrators may wonder how much time students spend on recess, in play and/or recreation or at lunch. Policymakers may wonder how many snow or vacation days took away from student time in classrooms.

The issue of time is complicated. The terms allocated time, engaged time and academic learning time may provide clarity to all stakeholders (Aronson et al., 1998; Cotton, 1990).

*Allocated time* refers to the total amount of time students are required to attend school. This is typically divided into instructional time and non-instructional time. Instructional time is time students spend in class; whereas non-instructional time is the time students spend at lunch, recess, transitioning between classes, and in other non-classroom activities.

*Engaged time* is the time when students are actually participating in learning activities. This is sometimes referred to as “time on task.” It does not include “dead time” or time where there is nothing students are expected to be doing and the teacher is not managing student behaviors.

Although students may be engaged in learning activities, this does not necessarily mean they are learning new concepts and/or skills. *Academic learning time* refers to the time when learning occurs. It is the time when students are working on tasks that are appropriately aligned with their readiness. It does not include the time students spend engaged in tasks that are too easy or difficult.

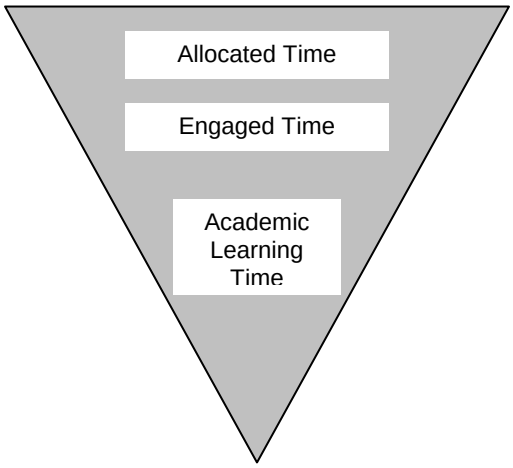



***Figure 5.1***: *From Aronson et al, 1998*

Research suggests that there is little relationship between allocated time and student achievement; some relationship between engaged time and achievement; and a large relationships between academic learning time and achievement (Cotton, 1990). Therefore, it is essential that educators and others maximize the amount of time students spend in academic learning time.

Two strategies for engaging students in academic learning time are discussed in the following, including maximizing teaching and instruction and providing extended academic learning time.

## Maximizing teaching and instruction

Researchers have established that high quality educators are an essential factor for improving the academic achievement of low achieving and at risk children. In fact, school improvement research shows educators influence student achievement more than any other variable (Marzano, 2003; Wright, Horn, & Sanders, 1997).

The most important factor impacting student achievement is the teacher (Sanders, 1997; Sanders & Horn, 1994; Wright, Horn, & Sanders, 1997). We will not have better schools and better achievement outcomes until such time as we provide supports for good teachers and teaching. With the new school improvement model, these teachers and their teaching also includes homes and community organizations. “Educators” also means persons who teach students in homes and community-based organizations.

You will find below an overview of effective design principles and strategies for teaching and instruction. Specific techniques also are identified. Using these techniques will ensure high quality, effective instruction, regardless of what is being taught (i.e., math, reading comprehension, sports, music, etc).

***Table 5.6: Checklist of overarching design principles and/or strategies for successful programs***

- ☐ Program is designed to create intended results
- ☐ The logic behind the program makes sense as the services link to outcomes
- ☐ Program uses multiple strategies to accomplish its goals (comprehensive)
- ☐ Program is evaluation-driven and continuously improved upon
- ☐ Program is research-supported and theoretically-sound
- ☐ A variety of teaching and learning strategies are used
- ☐ There is sufficient dosage
- ☐ The program is implemented the way it was originally designed
- ☐ Staff are well-trained in the program design
- ☐ Participants have a "say so" in how the program is structured and implemented
- ☐ Program is tailored to meet individual needs
- ☐ Program is appropriately timed and located
- ☐ Program is implemented in culturally competent ways
- ☐ Program is family-centered and -supportive
- ☐ Strategies foster self-determination and personal control
- ☐ Participants are empowered
- ☐ Participants' strengths are built upon in the program
- ☐ Positive relationships and bonding are created
- ☐ Program activities are enjoyable and meaningful to participants
- ☐ Staff are engaging

***Table 5.7: Design principles and/or strategies for teaching and instruction***

| Principle and strategy | What this looks like |
|---|---|
| **Time and opportunities** | |
| Learning opportunities and exposure | • Every student enjoys access to qualified educators with instructional and subject matter competence<br>• Educators maximize academic learning time (i.e., "time on task") during the school day (i.e., time designed around instructional goals is maximized)<br>• There is a high degree of exposure to content; activities/assignments have intention (i.e., clear goals and objectives)<br>• Transitions between periods, lessons, lunch/recess, etc., are kept short; students are immediately engaged in the next activity; lessons and classes begin and end on time<br>• Educators encourage students to generalize their learning to other contexts and settings; in other words, content is applied to real world settings outside the classroom |

| *Table 5.7: Design principles and/or strategies for teaching and instruction* | |
|---|---|
| **Principle and strategy** | **What this looks like** |
| Learning opportunities and exposure continued | • The school provides technology linkages and supports for "anytime, anywhere learning" in homes, technology centers, libraries, faith-based institutions, and other community organizations<br>• Educators use effective classroom management techniques that limit the amount of time spent on behavior problems<br>• Additional, engaged academic learning time occurs during the non-school hours via youth development programs and in students' homes (i.e., students participate in academic enrichment activities that build upon classroom content)<br>• Extended day programs at school and community-based after-school programs reinforce additional participation in academic activities; classroom educators help structure these activities so they align with academic curriculum |
| Practice and application | • Students are engaged in activities that involve real world issues, concerns, examples, problems (i.e., students are given taste of what it's like in the business world - use local businesses to do so, etc.)<br>• Educators create opportunities for problem based learning<br>• Educators engage students in assignments/activities that provide opportunities to practice what they are learning; in other words, there is the practical application of skills within meaningful settings<br>• Students practice under guided supervision of educators and then have opportunities for independent practice once content is more fully mastered<br>• Educators and students set aside time to independently practice and apply information learned within a variety of contexts<br>• Educators assign homework that allows students the opportunity to practice and apply newly learned skills; feedback is provided on all assigned homework<br>• Homework is realistic in length and at a difficulty at level where students can do the work independently<br>• Students use technology to explore real-world problems and open-ended questions, to conduct research and to manipulate data<br>• Students' home, school, and community environments are conducive to homework completion |
| **Student characteristics** | |
| Student motivation | • Students are involved in tasks and activities that are engaging, meaningful, and relevant to everyday life<br>• Students have opportunities to develop their own long-term projects, formulate questions, and collect information<br>• Educators encourage self assessment where students link efforts to their achievements<br>• Educators serve as facilitators and resources<br>• Educators make learning new concepts and skills interesting and relevant<br>• Educators allow for student-driven learning and base the lessons on student interests, their suggestions and the questions they ask in class<br>• Students have opportunities to plan and monitor classroom activities<br>• Students understand their motivations and how they affect their effort in school<br>• Students see the value in what they are learning as important for success in life in the future |

| *Table 5.7: Design principles and/or strategies for teaching and instruction* | |
|---|---|
| **Principle and strategy** | **What this looks like** |
| Student motivation continued | • Educators provide students with feedback on their progress which in turn enhances student motivation for future work<br>• Educators ensure that students know what whey they are supposed to learn and why it is important (i.e., clear objectives and purpose)<br>• Assignments/activities are challenging, but not threatening; they allow students to achieve high rates of success when they make reasonable efforts<br>• Students find that their assignments and learning activities are interesting and engaging; there is minimal "drill, skill, and no thrill"<br>• Students are intrinsically motivated (i.e., from within) to learn and achieve<br>• Students have some control over learning; in other words, youth are engaged in their learning<br>• Educators encourage students to generate and test hypotheses (i.e., problem solving, exploration, analysis, etc.) |
| Students' background and knowledge | • Students are involved in activities that directly enhance the quality of their life experiences<br>• Students' backgrounds and prior knowledge determine teaching and instruction<br>• Educators link new content to students' prior knowledge<br>• Students master activities/concepts before moving on to new lesson/unit<br>• Educators make strategic decisions about what content to cover first based on needed prerequisite skills (e.g., provide direct instruction in vocabulary terms that are important to subject matter first)<br>• Educators ask students to describe what they know about a topic prior to the presentation of new content<br>• Educators gear instruction to the ability and background of students; there is a match to the readiness of students<br>• Educators adapt their methods to meet individual student needs and ability levels<br>• Educators use technology to adapt lessons and activities to individual student needs<br>• Students develop vocabulary related to units of study; students are involved in reading programs that emphasize vocabulary development<br>• Students enjoy opportunities for mentoring and other out-of-school experiences, and these opportunities promote the expansion of background knowledge |
| **Expectations and competencies** | |
| Expectations for students | • The school has, as part of its mission, high expectations for students<br>• Every teacher has high expectations for students<br>• Students have high expectations for themselves<br>• Educators use consistent strategies when completing recurring activities (dealing with transitions, turning in homework, allocated reading time, etc.)<br>• Educators implement activities/assignments that challenge students (as opposed to those that protect them from failure)<br>• Students are aware of what is expected of them and know how to accomplish it<br>• Students learn how to set their own goals and keep track of their progress<br>• Educators establish clear, consistent rules and expectations for students' attitudes and behavior |

| ***Table 5.7: Design principles and/or strategies for teaching and instruction*** | |
|---|---|
| **Principle and strategy** | **What this looks like** |
| Teacher qualities | • Educators accept responsibility and accountability for students' learning<br>• Educators believe students are able to learn and that they can teach them<br>• Educators find ways to ensure students learn curriculum (if students don't learn it the first time, they teach it again, teach it differently, etc.)<br>• Educators understand the central concepts as they relate to the Ohio Core Curriculum Content Standards<br>• Educators create a professional learning communities, which emphasize important concepts and expectations<br>• Educators show they care about students and their learning<br>• Educators show enthusiasm and a passion for learning<br>• Educators understand how children develop and learn and provide opportunities that support the developmental needs of all students<br>• Educators understand that children learn in diverse ways and adapt and modify instruction accordingly<br>• Educators use effective verbal, nonverbal and media communication techniques |
| **Instructional strategies** | |
| Teaching and instructional methods | • Educators implement research-supported and evidence-based methods<br>• Educators explain to students the value of what they teach and expect students to learn<br>• Educators explain what to do, how to do it, and when and why to use the information being taught<br>• Educators use rehearsal strategies and repeat material being taught so students remember it more effectively; students practice over longer periods of time so content is more likely to be remembered<br>• Educators use elaboration strategies by describing content in "user-friendly" ways (i.e., paraphrasing, reframing, etc.) and relating content to prior knowledge and concepts<br>• Educators spend time summarizing or reviewing lessons before moving to the next activity<br>• Educators offer students opportunities to practice newly learned skills<br>• Educators ensure that homework's primary purpose is to practice skills and build relevant knowledge related to classroom priorities<br>• Educators employ organizational frameworks to assist in material recall (i.e., outlines, figures, advance organizers, sequential steps, review material frequently, reflection at the end of a lesson, etc.)<br>• Students take and review notes to assist with learning<br>• Educators monitor which strategies work and those that don't, as well as understand which ones create anxiety and decrease focus<br>• Educators model how to do the assignment/activity being taught and use "self-talk" to guide the students through problem solving (i.e., cognitive modeling); use of role plays<br>• Educators strike a good balance between the breadth and depth of content<br>• Educators make good decisions regarding when to emphasize depth of understanding versus breadth<br>• Educators check in with students to see if they understand what has been taught by asking them to repeat it to the educators or to classmates<br>• Educators frequently ask students to provide samples of work, including the assigning, collecting and grading of homework regularly |

| ***Table 5.7: Design principles and/or strategies for teaching and instruction*** | |
|---|---|
| **Principle and strategy** | **What this looks like** |
| Teaching and instructional methods continued | • Educators use a variety of teaching strategies (lecturing, shared reading, note-taking, hands-on activities, cooperative learning groups, etc.)<br>• Educators use teaching strategies that match a variety of student learning styles (verbal, visual, dramatic, etc.)<br>• Educators effectively balance direct instruction, guided instruction and independent learning<br>• Educators encourage students to create nonlinguistic representations of content (i.e., pictures, mental images, graphs and models, etc.) |
| Mastery learning and targeted intervention | • Educators focus their instruction on the individualized needs of students (as opposed whole class teaching)<br>• Type of instruction is matched to meet students' individualized needs (i.e., learning styles, content gaps, small learning communities, etc.)<br>• Educators adapt lessons and activities for individual students/small groups based on needs and ability levels<br>• Educators coordinate instruction with other professionals to support student learning<br>• Students master activities before moving on to new lessons/units<br>• Educators use assessments to determine the mastery of learning, and students needing additional instruction are targeted with strategic interventions |
| **Content considerations** | |
| Classroom curriculum design | • Educators present new content multiple times using a variety of instructional strategies<br>• Educators identify the specific focus of a lesson or unit, addressing what students will learn ahead of time<br>• Educators inform students of the skills they need to master and those they do not<br>• Educators present content in groups that demonstrate the critical content area as a whole<br>• Educators involve students in a variety of tasks that require students to address content in different ways |
| Coherent sequencing and pacing of content | • Educators structure the sequence of events in classrooms logically, and relationships among concepts are clear; connections are made among important ideas (i.e., chunking)<br>• Schools implement strategies that allow for logical sequencing between grades in order to avoid excessive review<br>• Educators create meaningful learning experiences as they connect content with real life applications<br>• Educators present new information in small steps and build from students' previous knowledge; finish with review and next steps<br>• Educators connect new skills with previously learned ones as opposed to practicing them apart from rest of curriculum; links are made with materials previously studied<br>• Educators and other school staff support students as they transition from school-to-school, school-to-work, school-to-college, etc. |

| *Table 5.7: Design principles and/or strategies for teaching and instruction* | |
|---|---|
| **Principle and strategy** | **What this looks like** |
| **Other strategies used by educators** | |
| Establishing learning orientations | • Educators provide students with a preview of the lesson, goals and purposes, knowledge of why lessons are important and teacher expectations<br>• Educators use anticipatory sets to get students engaged (i.e., exciting examples in the beginning of a lesson that shows the importance of the content; mental set that encourages student focus on what will be learned)<br>• Educators encourage the use of organizers and systems to support student learning |
| Scaffolding | • Educators include explanation, modeling and coaching in the initial stages of instruction (i.e., explain work and overview practice examples prior to assigning work and then monitor progress)<br>• Educators use guided practice in beginning stages<br>• Educators allow for broad meanings and many varieties of applications of concept or skill<br>• Teacher support and instruction fades as students increase their expertise (i.e., zones of proximal development)<br>• Educators allow for independent practice and facilitate application to new examples<br>• Students actively self regulate their own engagement and improvement, especially over time as knowledge and skill develops |
| Thoughtful discourse | • Educators use questions to stimulate higher order thinking, problem solving, decision-making, debating and application<br>• Educators encourage thinking and reflection<br>• Educators integrate different questions for a variety of purposes: explanation/clarification, summary, extension and reflection<br>• Educators allow students plenty of time to reflect on a question and respond<br>• Educators listen carefully to student responses to questions and provide positive feedback<br>• Educators strike a balance between teacher- and student-led discussions<br>• Educators implement interactive lessons and discussions, especially when discussing newly learned content (rather than didactic lectures and presentations)<br>• Educators address questions to the entire class and ample time is allowed for processing responses<br>• Educators use open-ended questions and encourage students to apply, analyze, synthesize and evaluate<br>• Educators provide activities/assignments that encourage the identification of similarities and differences (i.e., making comparisons, classifications, etc.) |
| Feedback | • Educators provide feedback to students based upon content that is learned<br>• Educators provide informative feedback so that it helps students assess problems and correct errors (as opposed to evaluative)<br>• Educators provide feedback that helps students assess their own performance and correct their errors<br>• Educators provide students with immediate feedback |

| *Table 5.7: Design principles and/or strategies for teaching and instruction* | |
|---|---|
| **Principle and strategy** | **What this looks like** |
| Feedback continued | • Educators provide feedback that is related to specific knowledge and skills among specific students<br>• Educators provide feedback that is given in such a way to not disturb other students<br>• Educators praise students verbally for quality work; effort and progress toward learning is recognized and celebrated<br>• Educators evaluate students based on the task, not in comparison to others<br>• Educators consistently check for understanding to determine that students understand the concepts |
| **Classroom structure and environment** | |
| Classroom management | • Educators maximize academic learning time in classrooms.<br>• Students feel welcome and supported in their classrooms and school; educators and students have effective, caring relationships<br>• Class sizes and student to teacher ratios maximize student learning<br>• Educators and students jointly establish clear rules and behavioral norms for classroom behavior, and everyone shares responsibility for enforcing them<br>• Educators and students communicate these rules and behavioral norms to parents and youth development specialists, aiming for consistency among school, home and community environments<br>• Educators use a healthy balance between rewards and punishments<br>• Educators use strategies to reinforce appropriate behaviors and provide consequences for inappropriate behaviors<br>• Educators balance the use of control/dominance strategies versus cooperative ones<br>• Educators quickly and accurately identify problems and act on them (i.e., "with-it-ness")<br>• Educators incorporate classroom management practices with emotional objectivity<br>• Educators establish an inclusive classroom environment in which special needs students are integrated in learning and instructional activities |
| Use of others | • Educators develop parent and family programs and activities aimed at supporting home environments conducive to homework completion, learning and academic achievement<br>• Parents directly reinforce and encourage children to succeed in school<br>• Educators maximize the use of paraprofessionals and teacher aides in support of individualized student instruction and targeted intervention<br>• Volunteers assist in strategic ways in the classroom to assist with behavior management, individualized instruction, etc.<br>• Educators assist in the identification of student needs and make referrals to social and health service providers, youth development specialists and after school program leaders<br>• Educators work closely with social and health service providers to ensure that classroom environments and requirements are consistent with service plans for special needs students<br>• Educators actively seek and utilize the assistance of other significant adults (e.g., service providers, parents) when they are planning instruction and learning for "hard-to-reach students" |

| *Table 5.7: Design principles and/or strategies for teaching and instruction* | |
|---|---|
| **Principle and strategy** | **What this looks like** |
| Cooperative learning | • Students learn interdependent skills where learning goals are in place so that individuals are not able to succeed unless the group does<br>• Educators provide opportunities for students to work in pairs or small groups, increasing the value of instructional content and encouraging social interactions<br>• Students have more chances to talk in small groups than in whole class activities<br>• Educators partner students with others to encourage the expression and explanation of problem solving strategies<br>• Students get to practice and learn skills in meaningful learning experiences through social settings<br>• Educators ensure that individual students in each group are held accountable for group goals and cooperation<br>• Educators work with youth development specialists to help them build cooperative learning environments in their agencies |

From: Aronson, et al., 1998; Beck, 2001; Bennett, 1968; Brophy, 1999; Cotton, 1991; Daniels & Bizar, 1998; Elias, 2002; Ericson, 1998; Johnson & Johnson, 1999; Kounin, 1983; Lappan, 2000; Marzano, 2003; Marzano & Kendall, 1996; Marzano, Pickering, and Pollock, 2001; Marzano, Whisler, Dean, & Pollock, 2000; Metzger, 1998; Ngeow & Kong, 2001; Ohio Department of Education, 2004; Rosenshine & Meister, 1992; Slavin, 1993; Stevenson & Carr, 1993; Strong, Silver, & Perini, 2001; Sutton & Krueger, 2000; Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003; Walberg & Paik, 2000; WestEd 2004.

**Designing a Lesson (Rosenshine & Stevens, 1986)**

1. **Review** of previous learning
2. State **goals** for lesson
3. Present **new concept/skill** in small steps, with practice after each step; incorporate previously learned content
4. **Guide** students during practice
5. Provide **feedback** during guided practice
6. Encourage **independent practice and application**

## Providing extended academic learning time

One of the most important contributions of the OCCMSI is to provide extended academic learning opportunities in the non-school hours (beyond the traditional school day). There are the three primary types of activities that extend academic learning time for students:

- Tutoring programs;
- Homework activities; and
- Academic enrichment opportunities.

Worthwhile in their own right, all three are more powerful especially when they are combined with research-supported youth development principles, strategies and practices (as outlined in the youth development chapter of this guide).

### *Tutoring and supplemental services*

NCLB has important policy changes in relationship to student intervention. States and local districts must provide supplementary education services, including tutoring, remediation, and other academic instruction, to low-income students in Title I schools that do not show adequate yearly progress. These supports are known to have positive outcomes in relation to student achievement, self-confidence and overall motivation for learning (Cohen, Kulik, & Kulik, 1982; Lauer, Akiba, Wilderson, Apthorp, Snow, & Martin-Glenn, 2004; Merrill, 1995; Morris, Shaw, & Perney, 1990; Topping & Whitley, 1990; Wasik, & Slavin, 1993).

The following table overviews the key design principles and strategies identified in the literature that are critical within effective tutoring and related remediation programs.

***Table 5.8: Design principles and/or strategies for effective tutoring***

| **Connections with classrooms** |
|---|
| • Tutoring is coordinated with state and district curriculum and state standards<br>• Classroom educators work with tutors to develop programs and activities for individual students<br>• Tutors provide regular feedback to classroom educators about student progress<br>• Classroom educators serve as tutors, ensuring instruction is tied to classroom learning<br>• Classroom educators serve as teacher liaisons who focus on linking the extended day programs to the classrooms<br>• Tutors provide structured sessions that are intentionally focused on teaching certain content<br>• Tutors use scripts when correcting errors |
| **Support and training for tutors** |
| • Support and supervision is provided for tutors and instructors<br>• Quality, effective, responsible tutors implement the programs<br>• Tutors are motivated and committed to the tutoring program<br>• Tutors and instructors are provided with intensive and ongoing training on content necessary for instruction<br>• Tutors and instructors are provided with training in developing interpersonal skills and having patience<br>• Tutors and instructors are provided with training in reinforcing and correcting responses |
| **Individualized** |
| • Tutors structure their support relative to the individual needs of students<br>• Tutoring is one-on-one, if possible<br>• Individual students are targeted who are in need of additional supports (referrals from educators, recruitment strategies, etc.)<br>• Tutors monitor and reinforce student progress<br>• When one-on-one tutoring is not an option, tutees are grouped according to their readiness, skill level, learning styles or interests<br>• Tutors provide reading supports to younger students, but provide math supports for older ones (research suggests these strategies are more beneficial)<br>• Tutors provide instruction that is understandable to the students |

| *Table 5.8: Design principles and/or strategies for effective tutoring* |
|---|
| **Practice and application** |
| • Tutors move from more structured guidance to allowing students to engage in independent work<br>• Tutors engage students in opportunities that allow for the practice and application of content |
| **Dosage** |
| • Tutoring sessions are frequent and regular (2 to 3 times per week)<br>• Tutoring sessions are of sufficient length; and not too long (60 minutes maximum)<br>• Tutoring supports prevent loss of information (during summers, long school breaks, etc.) |
| **Youth development** |
| • Tutors develop social competencies and life skills among students<br>• Tutors establish relationships with students (mentorship role)<br>• Students receive counseling and mentoring in addition to tutoring<br>• Students have opportunities to engage in social recreation simultaneously<br>• Students are motivated to attend the sessions (social recreation, extra credit options) |
| |
| • Programs have adequate resources, materials, instructional space, etc.<br>• Programs have adequate technology to incorporate computer assisted instruction into their designs |

From: Anderson & Weiner, 2004; Caplan & Calfee, 1998; Cohen, Kulik, & Kulik, 1982; Jenkins & Jenkins, 1987; Juel, 1996; Lauer, et al., 2004; McArthur, Stasz, & Zmuidzinas, 1990; Reisner, Petry, & Armitage, 1990; Searl, 2004; Slavin, 1993; Snow, 2003. Venezky & Jain, 1996; U.S. Department of Education, 1997; Warger, 1991; Wasik & Webb, 1989.

A recent meta-analysis examining tutoring programs found that tutoring is most effective when it is one-on-one (Lauer et al., 2004). Other research has called attention to the role of peers in tutoring and mentoring. This appears to be an effective strategy; one that supports academic learning among tutees or mentees while also providing important meaningful youth development experiences and results for the tutors or mentors (Cohen, Kulik, & Kukik, 1982; Kalkowski, 2001; Webb, 1989).

### *Homework*

Homework is an effective strategy designed to enhance learning time for a multitude of reasons, the primary one being that students have the opportunity to review and practice the skills they have learned in the classroom. For younger students, homework completion has been directly linked to the development of organizational and study skills; whereas homework is directly connected to student achievement among older students (Cotton, 1991).

**Purposes of homework (Paulu, 1998)**

- Allow students to practice nearly learned skills
- Prepares students for the next day's lesson
- Develops time management, organizational and study skills
- Provides opportunities for students to use outside resources
- Allows for more in-depth examination of certain topics
- Encourages student application of material

Too often it is the case that homework assignments do not match students' abilities and skill levels. Homework assignments that are supposed to complement academic learning time end up being huge frustrations for students, parents and others who support student homework completion. Simply stated, these significant others become "educators" who don't always have the necessary skills, background knowledge or time to instruct and correct youth on various homework assignments which students are not prepared to complete. In the end, no one benefits, as students often return back to school with incomplete and/or incorrect homework.

To prevent these problems, several guiding principles and strategies should guide the design and assignment of homework.

***Table 5.9: Design principles and/or strategies related to homework***

- Educators assign homework that is relevant to learning objectives
- Educators assign homework that allows students to apply what they learned at school with tasks at home
- Educators assign homework regularly
- Educators assign homework in reasonable amounts (some suggest 10 minutes per night for each grade level; i.e., 1st graders get 10 minutes)
- Educators do not assign homework as punishments (students' motivation is significantly decreased)
- Educators explain homework assignments
- Educators collect and review all homework assignments
- Educators design homework so it provides feedback on where students are with their learning
- Educators create homework for younger students that focuses on the development of study and organizational skills
- Educators design homework for older students as it directly relates to achievement
- Parents support their children's completion of homework assignments
- Students are motivated to complete homework assignments
- Parents, after-school program staff and others charged with supporting homework completion have some knowledge of the skills students are working on in classroom
- Educators inform parents of homework expectations
- Educators assign homework with appreciation of parents' time and skill sets
- After-school program staff structure homework completion time so that students maximize learning and application time
- After-school program staff organize students according to grade or skill levels so they work together on homework assignments

From: Caplan & Calfee, 1998; Cooper, 1989; Cotton, 1991; Forum for Youth Investment, 2003.

## *Academic enrichment and youth development*

Importantly, this new school improvement model takes advantage of new technologies and opportunities associated with 'anytime, anywhere learning." This opportunity brings another; to bring the kinds of research-supported conditions for academic learning and achievement, which professional educators want and need, into out-of-school agencies, homes and contexts. In other words, the research-supported knowledge base about academic learning and instruction can be shared with family and community leaders to assist them in their work with children and youth.

When the above-mentioned, a harmonious relationship (involving academic learning in homes, community agencies, and schools) is established, two important goals are achieved:

- Because students experience academic programs, activities and experiences in homes and community agencies, they come to school ready and able to learn; and

- Because schools implement research-supported programs and activities—and build on what students bring to school—educators and schools are ready for the learning and academic achievement of all students.

These two goals are opposite sides of the same coin; each defines success. In brief, when you and your colleagues attain these twin goals, you are well on your way to school improvement, and you're also making progress in closing the achievement gap.

As such, individuals working with youth in various contexts in the community (i.e., Boys & Girls Clubs, school-based child cares, faith-based organizations, homes, etc.) can and should utilize the aforementioned design principles and strategies for teaching and instruction within the programs they offer, thus enhancing students' academic learning experiences outside of the traditional school day.

In addition, individuals within communities can also maximize extended academic learning time by offering high quality enrichment activities in the out-of-school hours. These enrichment activities typically have three major qualities (Academy for Educational Development, 2004).

First, quality enrichment activities are well-integrated with the academic content hat is presented in classrooms. These activities explore ways in which math, literacy, science, citizenship, etc., can be applied in fun, engaging settings. The application of the academic content truly becomes the core reason for doing the activity; as opposed to the fun or engagement. In this case, learning becomes part of the process of the activity. This doesn't mean that the activity serves as the reward or incentive for learning (i.e., students can go to the zoo if they complete their final project on animals). It means that learning happens within the activity itself (i.e., students learn about animals when they are at the zoo). Students learn that learning is fun.

Second, quality enrichment activities are built upon the development and nurturance of quality relationships. Youth participants develop strong positive relationships with caring adult leaders. The adults who implement these programs must be invested and committed to students' healthy development and success. Relationships and trust are keys to these investments. Quality enrichment activities also provide youth with opportunities to meet and hang out with peers who have positive attitudes and beliefs about school and life. Youth may develop relationships with older youth who may serve as mentors, program leaders or volunteers. They also might develop friendships at these programs that serve as important recruitment and retention mechanisms.

Finally, quality enrichment activities also provide youth with opportunities to make decisions and display leadership. As described later in the youth development chapter, enrichment activities build initiative. Essentially, youth take ownership of the activities and make real decisions about programming. Youth participants determine what happens in the activity, what the outcomes are and what action steps are taken to get from here to there. An example is noteworthy.

Daryl Siedentop, a leader in youth sport and physical education, developed the sport education model to guide physical educators in their planning and teaching. In this model, physical education content and teaching is integrally linked with academic content in classrooms. It also is grounded in meaningful experiences for youth.

Specifically, lessons center around a specific sport, say basketball. Students determine what types of roles and responsibilities are necessary for the successful implementation of a basketball league. The class organizes the basketball league, its drafting process, the end of the year tournament and all other organizational aspects within the activity. Students take on meaningful roles within the league as referees, news reporters and statisticians, coaches, tournament organizers, public relation specialists and concession stand operators. By giving youth meaningful roles, and allowing them to make decisions, students feel they have a say in the activity, take pride in their work and know they contributed to the final product in an important way. They also have the chance to apply important math, writing, science, decision making and social skills within this targeted activity.

Remember to examine the design principles and strategies for youth development which also may provide guidance here

There are three additional things to consider when linking academic learning with youth development.

### *Incentives and rewards for attendance*

For students who are struggling during the school day to meet expectations, it is essential that programs directly reinforce their participation in additional academic activities. Especially for older students who are likely to have long histories of academic failure (or, many years of receiving the message they are not doing well enough or "don't measure up"), youth development components give those students an initial reason to attend because, in many instances, parents have difficulties enforcing attendance.

Token economies (i.e., students earn something that can be exchanged for something desirable, such as free time, small prizes or fun activities) and paid wages also have been shown to be effective in increasing student attendance and, in turn, learning. Incentives can be helpful in getting students to the program, but the learning environment must then be reinforcing, which is the main reason students will return and make a commitment to the program.

#### *Blending academic learning and youth development strategies*

As highlighted in the program and services overview chapter, enjoyable, activity-oriented youth development strategies are primary recruitment and retention mechanisms. Without relationships with caring adults, opportunities to belong, meaningful applications of skills, social recreation, etc., youth will have very little incentive to show up and participate in any program after school. Within extended academic learning times, you'll want to strike a good balance between academic rigor and youth development if you want to get and keep youth engaged.

#### *Creating connections and linkages*

The design and implementation of quality extended academic learning activities requires that schools, home and community-based organizations are working together and understand what the other is doing in relationship to student learning. This is particularly true for teachers, as they must communicate and connect strategically with these outside supports if they are to maximize the impact these stakeholders can have in relation to student learning. For example, teachers can communicate with parents about student academic learning needs, allowing parents to encourage and support additional practice in targeted areas identified as in need of improvement. Teachers also can refer targeted students in need of extra academic support to extended academic learning and youth development programs. The staff in these programs can in turn work with students in identified areas using resources and materials guided by the teachers' input. Student learning will be enhanced as the classroom's academic learning is incorporated and reinforced in these other settings.

## *Addressing barriers in academic learning*

No one ever said promoting academic learning among all students was going to be easy. In fact, several barriers emerge as schools and communities wrap their arms around academic learning. The following section examines some key challenges and highlights specific strategies for minimizing the impact of these various barriers.

### Barrier: Teaching and instruction and the diversity of student needs

In essence, academic learning is the primary mission of schools. Ensuring that all students learn and succeed in school, however, is an enormous challenge, especially given the multiple needs students bring with them to school. Finding ways to address the diversity in student needs, experiences, backgrounds and perspectives is indeed the true test.

| *Table 5.10: Teaching and instruction and the diversity of student needs barriers and minimizing strategies* | |
|---|---|
| **Barrier: Teaching and instruction and the diversity of student needs**<br><br>• Students have different background knowledge<br>• Students have different skill sets<br>• Students have different past experiences and histories<br>• Students have language barriers<br>• Students have different learning styles<br>• Students have physical or mental disabilities that prevent or deter learning<br>• Students have various non-academic barriers that prevent or deter learning<br>• Educators are challenged to individualize instruction to meet all students' needs/levels<br>• Educators are ill-equipped to deal with non-academic barriers to learning<br>• Classrooms are overcrowded and a majority of students are in need of teacher's attention<br>• Consistency within district-wide curriculum and instruction causes challenges for decentralization and individualization<br>• Others… | **Minimizing strategies**<br><br>• Utilize a variety of teaching methods (lecturing, visual aids, classroom discussions, activities, small groups, movies, hands on activities, use of multiple senses<br>• Anticipate the diversity by being prepared with various levels of homework or assignment sheets which cover same material/content<br>• Provide modifications of assignments for those who require it<br>• Effectively implement IEPs and 504 plans and the accommodations that go with them<br>• Provide classroom volunteers (parents, community members, key stake holders)<br>• Promote peer teaching/tutoring in the classroom<br>• Maximize academic learning time<br>• Design smaller ability groups<br>• Empathize with your families and students; challenge yourself to explore stereotypes and cultural biases you make be harboring<br>• Provide targeted interventions to certain students in the after-school hours<br>• Provide resources and activities to tutors and after-school program staff to coordinate their activities with classroom materials<br>• Coordinate with after-school program providers to assist in classroom and reinforce content in after-school hours<br>• Provide small group work where educators can monitor groups in larger classroom<br>• Coordinate team teaching (two educators combine classrooms that match ability groups; use multidisciplinary teams)<br>• Others… |

### Barrier: Multitude of non-academic barriers

Students also have diverse needs and non-academic barriers that deter their learning and achievement. Teachers, schools and communities will struggle with gaining control over these conditions for learning.

> Remember to examine the health and social services chapter for more highlights related to addressing non-academic barriers.

| *Table 5.11: Multitude of non-academic barriers barriers and minimizing strategies* | |
|---|---|
| **Barrier: Multitude of non-academic barriers**<br><br>• Student outcomes are influenced by variables other than academic learning<br>• There are community conditions that influence student outcomes<br>• There are family conditions that influence student outcomes<br>• There are peer conditions that influence student outcomes<br>• There are individual skills, competencies, and assets that influence student outcomes<br>• Some students have a many co-occurring problems or conditions that compact and deter student learning<br>• Educators and school personnel are not trained in addressing non-academic barriers<br>• Educators, principals, and health and social service providers are not highly qualified in their respective professions<br>• Educators, principals, and health and social service providers are not knowledgeable about strategies for addressing conditions to learning<br>• There are turf issues present among educators, principals, health and social service providers, etc.<br>• Others… | **Minimizing strategies**<br><br>• Educate teachers and school staff on how to identify and assess early signs and symptoms of risk and problem behaviors<br>• Utilize and brainstorm with school social worker/counselor for strategies to address non-academic barriers<br>• Educate teachers and school staff on how to effectively and efficiently link students and families to supportive service staff and other health and social service providers<br>• Create referral systems and supports for educators<br>• Develop a continuum of care that starts in the school and feeds to resources in the community<br>• Create effective communication channels between supportive service staff/community service providers and teachers and classrooms<br>• Teachers develop relationships with supportive service staff and community service providers professionals to work through barriers<br>• Become familiar with out of school program services offered and make links and referrals when appropriate<br>• Pair up with mental health providers to support students' needs<br>• Work with families to ensure students' needs are met; partner with parents/families to determine possible solutions and resources needed<br>• Break down turf issues by developing relationships and trust among various professionals<br>• Develop case management and student assistance teams that address various needs and issues<br>• Others… |

## Barrier: Resources and time

Another key barrier involves limitations in resources and time. Academic learning is maximized when there are resources, both human and financial, that are committed to the process. More resources can also be used to ensure that time spent in academic learning time - whether it is in schools, the community or in the home - is maximized.

| *Table 5.12: Resources and time barriers and minimizing strategies* | |
|---|---|
| **Barrier: Resources and time** | **Minimizing strategies** |
| • There are limited quality materials, books and resources for learning<br>• There is a lack of space, desks, rooms, etc.<br>• Educators do not have time in their days for planning and designing individualized interventions<br>• Targeted interventions are based on eligibility and not all students qualify for the services that are offered (i.e., earmarked funds can only be spent on certain "types" of students)<br>• Lack of time to get through all of lessons necessary to fulfill state standards within school day/year<br>• Time in classrooms is not maximized<br>• Educators struggle with maximizing time on task due to other challenges in the classroom (behavioral management, diversity in student needs, etc.)<br>• Teachers and schools have trouble gaining control over students "time," especially time in the out-of-school hours<br>• Others… | • Expand your definition of funding source and get creative<br>• Utilize community stakeholders who can donate resources and receive positive PR and tax deductions for help<br>• Restructure the funding allocated to support school improvement plan<br>• Educators receive training, professional development, and on-going support in effective teaching and instruction, as well as in classroom management<br>• Provide classroom volunteers (parents, community members, key stake holders)<br>• Promote donations from local business sector<br>• Have community drives (community supports the school through various fund raising projects)<br>• Promote parent volunteers to teach cultural traditional things (art, music, beadwork, history, etc.) along with certified teacher<br>• Organize community members/ businesses to come in and teach electives (bank representative teach finance, etc.) with certified teacher<br>• Coordinate with after-school staff and educators to have them continue and reinforce lessons learned in class<br>• Promote quality and engaging assignments and homework<br>• Utilize tutoring (peer, classroom volunteers, teacher, after-school staff, etc.)<br>• Utilize effective classroom management strategies<br>• Provide creative lessons that relate to real life experiences and engage learners (will keep kids interested)<br>• Minimize transition time between activities<br>• Actively engage students in exciting activities—educators teach with a passion and enthusiasm for teaching<br>• Structure activities and transitions tightly and have 'equipment' necessary to go through lesson so students don't have down time<br>• Others… |

### Barrier: Classroom management

One way to maximize time, as well as to ensure that educators have more time to spend on academic learning, is through addressing classroom management and behavior problems.

| *Table 5.13: Classroom management barriers and minimizing strategies* | |
|---|---|
| **Barrier: Classroom management** | **Minimizing strategies** |
| • Students display distracting behaviors which take away from instructional time<br>• Time on task not maximized due to student problem behaviors<br>• Educators do not use proactive techniques and strategies that deter the onset of problem behaviors<br>• Educators are not trained in classroom management<br>• Rules and policies are not well known<br>• Rules and policies are not consistently enforced<br>• Youth are bored or uninterested in classroom work and choose to provide their own entertainment<br>• Youth have excessive 'down' time where activities are not structured<br>• Youth do not have clear expectations guiding their behaviors<br>• Others… | • Anticipate problems before they arise<br>• Ensure that rules in classroom coincide with and enforce school wide policies<br>• Ensure that rules are posted, well known and consistently enforced<br>• Have students decide classroom rules and consequences for behaviors<br>• Make sure that natural consequences are given for inappropriate behaviors (the consequence matches the behavior)<br>• Provide a demonstration of the model behavior and have peers also reinforce desired behavior<br>• Promote and reinforce appropriate behaviors<br>• Communicate with parents and others when students are doing well<br>• Develop an awareness of external factors that impact students behaviors and the types of behaviors these may solicit<br>• Know how to appropriately work with students who display certain types of problem behaviors<br>• Promote relationships between teacher and students prior to punishment if possible<br>• Put strategies in place to maximize academic learning time (see above)<br>• Others… |

## *Conclusion*

The school improvement strategies vital to the Ohio Community Collaboration Model are centrally designed around promoting academic learning in classrooms, in schools, in families and in the community.

Priorities for school improvement planning, including curriculum alignment, quality instruction, standards-based accountabilities, school climate, continuous improvement efforts, etc., are central to ensuring academic learning and student achievement. Here we have highlighted the top priorities for walled-in school improvement, reasserting their significance and value for ensuring overall school success. These research supported design principles and strategies are essential to effective quality instruction, extended academic learning programs, and school-wide reform efforts in general.

We've also taken these same improvement priorities and highlighted how these same strategies can be used for enhancing academic learning in homes and in community agencies. This allows schools to expand their reach by galvanizing additional resources in support of academic learning, as well as in relation to ensuring students have the right conditions for learning in their homes and communities.

In the end, you can appreciate the Ohio Community Collaboration Model for School Improvement because it is ultimately grounded in the strengths and contributions associated with the effective school reform efforts. It then compensates for the limitations of traditional school improvement strategies by expanding the focus by fostering the necessary conditions for learning that are vital for students' academic learning and achievement.

## *References*

Academy for Educational Development. (2004). *What is an enrichment activity?* Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved on September 20, 2004, from http://www.afterschool.org/aea/

America Reads challenge resource kit: *Evidence that tutoring works*. (1997). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved September 20, 2004, from http://www.ed.gov/inits/americareads/resourcekit/miscdocs/tutorwork.html

Anderson, L.M., & Weiner, L. (2004). *Early implementation of supplemental educational services under the No Child Left Behind Act: Year One Report*. Washington, DC: Policy Studies Associates.

Apthorp, H.S., Bodrova, E., Dean, C.B., Florian, J.E., Gaddy, B.B., Goodwin, B.R., Lauer, P.A., & Snow-Renner, R. (2001). *Noteworthy perspectives: Teaching to the core-reading,writing, and mathematics*. Aurora, CO: Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning.

Aronson, J., Zimmerman, J., & Carlos, L. (1998). *Improving student achievement by extending school: Is it just a matter of time?* San Francisco, CA: WestEd.

Baldrige National Quality Program. (2004). *Education criteria for performance excellence.* Gaithersburg, MD: Author.

Beck, Charles R. (2001, Summer). Matching teaching strategies to learning style preferences. *Teacher Educator*. *37*(1), 1-15.

Borman, G. D., Hewes, Gina M., Overman, L.T., & Brown, S. (2002). *Comprehensive school reform and student achievement: A meta-analysis.* Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University and Howard University: Center for Research on the education of Students Placed At-Risk. Baltimore, MD.

Brophy, J. (1999). *Teaching: Educational practices series, n° 1,* Geneva, Switzerland: International Academy of Education and International Bureau of Education. Retrieved August 9, 2004, from http://www.afterschool.org/aea/

Caplan, J., & Calfee, C.S. (1998). *Strengthening connections between schools and after-school programs.* North Central Regional Educational Laboratory and Learning Points Associates. Retrieved September 9, 2004, from www.ncrel.org/21stcclc/connect/index.html

Cohen, P.A., Kulik, J.A. & Kuklik, C.L.C. (1982). Educational outcomes of tutoring: A meta-analysis of findings. *American Educational Research Journal, 19*, 237-248.

Cooper, H.M. (1989). *Homework*. New York: Longman.

Cotton, K. (1989). *Educational time factors.* Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. Retrieved July 24, 2004, from http://www.nwrel.org/scpd/sirs/4/cu8.html

Daniels, H. & Bizar, M. (1998). *Methods that matter: Six structures for best practice classrooms*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers.

Elias, M. (2002). *Academic and social-emotional learning*. Educational Practice Series, 11. International Academy of Education. Geneva, Switzerland: International Bureau of Education.

Ericson, L. (1998). *Concept-based curriculum and instruction: Teaching Beyond the Facts*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.

Forum for Youth Investment. (2003). *Inside the black box: Exploring the "content" of after-school.* Washington, DC: Author.

Gambrell, L.B., Morrow, L.M., Neuman, S.B., & Pressley, M.(1999). *Best practices in literacy instruction*. New York: Guilford. Retrieved September 10, 2004, from http://www.reading.org/pdf/1055.pdf

Gay, G. (2000). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice*. New York: Educators College Press.

Gambrell, L.B., Morrow, L.M., Neuman, S.B., & Pressley, M. (1999). *Best practices in literacy instruction: What is evidence-based reading instruction?* New York: Guilford. Retrieved September 3, 2004, from http://www.reading.org/pdf/1055.pdf/

Goodlad, J.I. (1994). What schools are for (2nd ed.). Bloomington, IN: Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation.

Jenkins, J.R., & Jenkins, L.M. (1987, March). Making peer tutoring work. *Educational Leadership*, 64-68.

Johnson, D. & Johnson, R. (1999). Making cooperative learning work. *Theory into Practice, 38,* (2), 67-73.

Juel, C. (1996). What makes literacy tutoring effective? *Reading Research Quarterly, 31*(3), 268-289.

Kalkowski, P. (2001). *Peer and cross age tutoring.* Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. Portland, OR: Retrieved on September 25, 2004, from http://www.nwrel.org/scpd/sirs/9/c018.html

Kounin, J.S. (1983). *Classrooms: Individual or behavior settings? Micrographs in teaching and learning*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University, School of Education. [ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. 240 070]

Landes, S., Merrill, D.C., Merrill, S.K., & Reiser, B.J.(1995). Tutoring: Guided learning by doing. *Cognition and Instruction, 13*(3), 315-375.

Lappan, G. (2000). A vision of learning to teach for the 21st century. *School Science and Mathematics, 100*(6), 319-326.

Lauer, P.A., Akiba, M., Wilderson, S.B., Apthorp, H.S., Snow, D., & Martin-Glenn, M. (2004). *The effectiveness of out-of-school time strategies in assisting low-achieving students in reading and mathematics: A research synthesis*. Aurora, CO: Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning.

Learning First alliance. (2002). *Major changes to ESEA in the No Child Left Behind Act*. Washington, DC: Author.

Learning First Alliance. (2000, May, Draft). *Every child learning: Safe and supportive schools*. Washington, DC: Author.

Lauer, P. A., Akiba, M., Wilkerson,S. B., Apthorp, H. S., Snow, D., & Martin-Glenn, M. (2004). *The effectiveness of out-of-school time strategies in assisting low-achieving students in reading and math: A research synthesis.* Regional Educational Laboratory. U. S. Department of Education.

Marzano, R.J. (2003). *What works in schools: Translating research into action.* Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Marzano, R. & Kendall, J. (1996). *A comprehensive guide to designing standards-based districts, schools, and classrooms*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development; Aurora, CO: Mid-continent Regional Educational Laboratory.

Marzano, R.J., McNulty, B., Waters, T. (2003). *Balanced leadership: What 30 years of research tell us about the effect of leadership on student achievement.* Aurora, CO: Mid-Continent Regional Educational Laboratory.

Marzano, R.J., Pickering, D.J., & Pollock, J.E. (2001). *Classroom instruction that works*: *Research-based strategies for increasing student achievement.* Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Marzano, R.J., Whisler, J.S., Dean, C.B., & Pollock, J.E. (2000). *Effective instructional practices*. Aurora, CO: Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning.

Metzger, M. (1998). Teaching reading: Beyond the plot. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 80(3), 240-246.

*Morris, D., Shaw, B., & Perney, J. (1990, November).* Helping low readers in Grades 2 and 3: An after-school volunteer tutoring program. *Elementary School Journal, 91,* 133-150.

McArthur, D., Stasz, C., & Zmuidzinas, M. (1990). Tutoring techniques in algebra. *Cognition and Instruction, 7,* 197-244.

Ngeow, K., & Kong, Y. (2001). *Learning to learn: Preparing teachers and students for problem-based learning*. ERIC Digest #163. Retrieved online April 20, 2003: http://eric.indiana.edu/ieo/digests/d163.html

Ohio Department of Education. (2001). *Elementary and secondary schools operating standards for Ohio's schools*. Columbus, OH: Author.

Ohio Department of Education. (2004). *Ohio school climate guidelines*. Columbus, OH: Author. Retrieved on July 12, 2004, from http://www.ode.state.oh.us/students-families-communities/PDF/Ohio%20School_Climate_Guidelines_9-27-04.pdf

Paulu, N. (1998). *Helping your students with homework. A Guide for Educators*. Washington, DC: US Dept of Education.

Plucker, J.A., Simmons, A.B., Lim, W., Patterson, A.P., Wooden, O., Jones, M.H., et al. (2004). *Comprehensive school reform: Effect on educators and teaching in three states.* Naperville, IL: Indiana Education Policy Center and North Central Regional Educational Laboratory. Retrieved August 23, 2004, from http://www.ncrel.org/csri/resources/ncrel/iepc.pdf

Reisner, E.R., Petry, C.A., & Armitage, M. (1990). *A review of programs involving College students as tutors or mentors in grades K-12.* Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education.

Rosenshine, B., & Meister, C. (1992). The use of scaffolds for teaching higher-level cognitive strategies. *Educational Leadership*, 26-33.

Rosenshine, B., & Stevens, R. (1986). *Teacher functions.* In M. C. Wittrock (Ed.). Handbook of research on teaching (3rd ed., pp. 376-391). New York: Macmillan.

Sanders, W.L., & Horn, S.P. (1994). The Tennessee value-added assessment system (TVAAS): Mixed-model methodology in educational assessment. *Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education, 8,* 299-311.

Searle, M. (2004). *Standards-based instruction for all learners: A treasure chest for principal-led building teams in improving results for learners most at-risk.* Columbus, OH: Ohio Department of Education.

Sizer, T.R. (1997). The meanings of "public education." In J.I. Goodlad and T.J. Mcmannon (Ed.). *The public purpose of education and schooling* (pp. 33-40). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Slavin, R. (1993). Ability grouping in the middle grades: Achievement effects and alternatives. *Elementary School Journal*, 93, 535-662.

Slavin, R.E., & Madden, N.A. (2001). *Success for All and comprehensive and school reform: Evidence-based policies for urban education*. Baltimore MD: Success for All foundation.

Snow, D. (2003). *Noteworthy perspectives: Classroom strategies for helping at-risk students.* Aurora, CO: Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning.

Steinberg, A. (2001). *Coming of age in 2001: A position paper on effective learning environments for 15-24-year-olds.* Boston, MA: Jobs for the Future.

Sterbinsky, A., Ross, S., & Redfield, D. (2003). *Comprehensive school reform: A multisite replicated experiment.* Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association. Chicago, IL.

Stevenson, C. & Carr, J. (1993). *Integrated studies in the middle grades: "Dancing through walls*." New York: Teachers College Press.

Stringfield, S., Millsap, M. & Herman, R.(1997). *Special strategies for educating disadvantaged children: Results and policy implications.* Washington, DC: Department of Education.

Strong, R., Silver, H. & Perini, M. (2001). *Teaching what matters most: Standards and strategies for raising student achievement*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Sutton, J. & Krueger, A. (2000). ED Thoughts: What we know. Aurora, CO: Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning.

Topping, K., & Whitley, M. *(1990).* Participant evaluation of parent-tutored and peer-tutored projects in reading. *Educational Research, 32*(1), 14-32.

Walberg, H.J., Paik, S.J. (2000). *Effective educational practices*: *Educational practices series*, n° 3, Geneva, Switzerland: International Academy of Education and International Bureau of Education.

Wallace, T. (1993). Chicago Public Schools: Evaluation of the 1987-88 Paideia program. In D.R. Waldrip, W.L. Marks, & N. Estes (Ed.). *Magnet school policy studies and evaluations* (pp. 477-515). Houston, TX: International Research Institute on Educational Choice.

Walter, F. (2001). *District leaders' guide to reallocating resources.* Portland, OR: Educational Laboratory.

Waskik, B.A., & Slavin, R.E. (1993). Preventing early reading failure with one-to-one tutoring: A review of five programs. *Reading Research Quarterly,* 179-200.

Waters, J.T., Marzano, R.J., & McNulty, B.A. (2003). *Balanced leadership: What 30 years of research tells us about the effect of leadership on student achievement.* Aurora, CO: Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning.

Warger, C.L. (1991). *Peer tutoring: When working together is better than working Alone.* Reston, VA: Council for Exceptional Children.

Webb, N. M. (1989). Peer Interaction and Learning in Small Groups. In N.M. Webb (Ed.). *Peer interaction, problem-solving and cognition: Multidisciplinary perspectives* (pp. 21-29). New York: Pergamon Press.

WestEd. (2004). *Key elements of the comprehensive school reform demonstration program.* San Francisco, CA: Author. Retrieved July 15, 2004, from http://www.wested.org/csrd/guidebook/elements.htm

Wheelock, A. (1994). Chattanooga's Paideia schools: A single track for all – and it's working. *The Journal of Negro Education, 63,* 77-92.

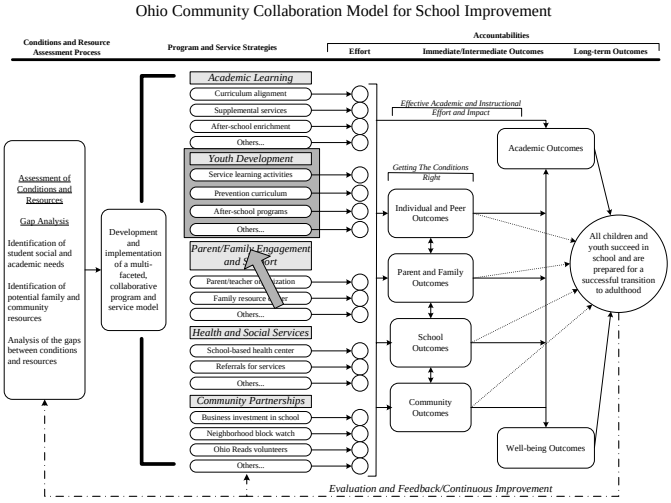
Wright, S.P., Horn, S.P., & Sanders, W.L. (1997). Teacher and classroom context effects on student achievement: Implications for teacher evaluation. *Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education, 11,* 57-67.

U.S. Department of Education. (1997). *America Reads challenge resource kit: Evidence that tutoring works.* Washington, DC: Office of the Under Secretary, Planning and Evaluation Services, U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved July 5, 2004, from http://www.ed.gov/inits/americareads/resourcekit/miscdocs/tutorwork.html

# Youth Development

## Introduction

This section is structured to provide you with a comprehensive overview of successful youth development programs, including school-based and -linked after-school programs. This program and service strategy is a core component within the Ohio Community Collaboration Model for School Improvement (OCCMSI). You will learn about the important outcomes these programs yield, including their contributions to school improvement and family support. You will learn about key design principles and strategies needing to be implemented for these outcomes to be achieved. You also will learn about the potential barriers to successful programs and how to address them. Finally, you will learn a simple vocabulary, which will facilitate your planning and decision-making.




## What do we mean by youth development?

Youth development refers to a wide variety of programs and services. After-school programs, mentoring, peer counseling, social recreation, arts, sports, values education, service learning, community service, volunteerism, leadership development, extracurricular activities, conflict resolution, life skills programs, youth employment, career counseling/job skills training, academic enrichment, and prevention programming all fit under the umbrella name of “youth development.”

Youth development also describes their primary aims. All such programs and services are designed to ensure that kids enjoy healthy development, succeed in school, and grow up to be productive, adult citizens.

To achieve these aims, youth development leaders rely on research-supported design principles and youth development strategies. They use these principles to design programs and services. Youth development strategies refer to the activities and methods implemented in programs and services. For example, one of the most important youth development strategies is to create the conditions whereby each youth enjoys one-on-one interactions with a caring adult. Other key strategies involve group activities that provide youth with active, experiential learning activities and supports and blending non-academic, engaging activities with academic activities.

Youth development programs and services often are oriented toward problem behaviors and risk factors. As important as this work is, youth development programs must do more than ensure that kids are free of problems (Pittman, 1999).

In fact, the best programs and services have a dual focus. While they address problems and risk factors, they also are designed to build youths' strengths and assets (Benson, 1997; Dryfoss, 1990; Hawkins, Catalano, & Miller, 1992; Lawson & Anderson-Butcher, 2001; Jessor, Van Den Bos, Vanderryn, Costa, & Turbin, 1997; Payton, Wardlaw, Graczyk, Bloodworth, Tompsett, & Weissberg, 2000). These strengths and assets also are called "protective factors" and "developmental assets." Both are indicative of healthy development, and both strengthen youths' resilience. Regardless of what they are called, essentially these factors are the conditions that underlie healthy youth development and successful achievement.

The main idea is to strengthen these factors to promote healthy development and, at the same time, eliminate and prevent risk factors associated with problem behaviors and negative outcomes. Table 6.1 presents many of the most important competencies, strengths, assets and related conditions. All are important qualities or attributes that youth need to succeed. In short, adults working with youth should target these factors, developing them when they do not exist and strengthening the ones that do.

In essence, these competencies, strengths, assets and related conditions work in something like a "banking system." The more youth "bank," the better they are equipped to deal with daily life challenges and stressors. The key is to help all youth develop and experience these competencies, strengths and assets. The more they have, the more they are prepared at the "front-end" of life. In other words, they have the competencies, skills and supports to be successful in school and life. Successful youth development programs, services and strategies are the delivery system for these important outcomes.

***Table 6.1: Competencies, strengths, assets and related conditions***

- Youth have social competence, self-esteem and self-confidence
- Youth have effective social and life skills
- Youth have problem solving skills (able to ask for help when needed; able to resist pressures; have refusal skills; able to problem solve non-violently, etc.)
- Youth associate with pro-social peer groups
- Youth have strong relationships with caring adult role models
- Youth have values for honesty, integrity, caring and responsibility
- Youth have a sense of purpose; feel personal control and empowered
- Youth are easy going, flexible and have a sense of humor
- Youth are optimistic (see the positive)
- Youth feel safe and secure
- Youth have a strong sense of identity
- Youth are linked to a faith-based organization (spirituality)
- Youth are involved in community service opportunities
- Youth feel a sense of personal responsibility
- Youth have self-regulation skills (able to identify emotions, etc.)
- Youth have empathy (able to see things from other people's perspectives; show respect and

| *Table 6.1: Competencies, strengths, assets and related conditions* |
|---|
| concern for others)<br>• Youth do not have potential or identified learning disabilities<br>• Youth have their basic needs met (food, shelter, etc.)<br>• Youth are engaged in school; value education; are motivated to do well; experience positive school climate<br>• Youth have opportunities for skill-building and learning via participation in pro-social activities (vocational experiences, extracurricular activities, hobbies, leadership experiences, etc.)<br>• Youth experience a sense of belonging to pro-social institutions or groups (school, sport team, youth organizations, club, family, community, etc.)<br>• Youth display pro-social behaviors (are substance free, abstain from gang involvement and sexual activity, etc.)<br>• Youth receive recognition and reinforcement for involvement in pro-social activities from school, family, community, etc.<br>• Youth feel that the school, family and community have high expectations for them and that they view youth as valuable assets |

From: Anderson-Butcher, 2004; Benson, 1997; Dryfoss, 1990; Hawkins, Catalano, & Miller, 1992; Lawson & Anderson-Butcher, 2001; Jessor, Van Den Bos, Vanderryn, Costa, & Turbin, 1997; Payton, Wardlaw, Graczyk, Bloodworth, Tompsett, & Weissberg, 2000.

## *Outcomes associated with youth development*

A great deal of research has documented the need for specially designed youth development programs, services and strategies. In other words, youth development programs, services and strategies are not all alike, and they are not inherently beneficial. Important choices are involved; and, each choice has some bearing on whether you will achieve the outcomes you want and need.

Research has documented significant outcomes that stem from theoretically sound, research-supported programs and services. More specifically, research has documented improvements in desirable outcomes and reductions in problem behaviors and bad outcomes.

| *Table 6.2: Outcomes associated with youth development* | |
|---|---|
| **Improvements in:** | **Reductions in:** |
| • Grades<br>• Attendance at school<br>• Interpersonal skills and social competence<br>• Quality of peer and adult relationships<br>• Self-control and problem solving<br>• Mental health<br>• Commitment to school<br>• Effort in school | • Drug and alcohol use<br>• School misbehavior<br>• Aggressive behavior and violence<br>• Truancy<br>• High risk sexual behavior<br>• Smoking<br>• Unsupervised time |

From: Catalano, Berglund, Ryan, Lonczak, & Hawkins, 2002; Durlak & Wells, 1997; Greenberg, Domitrovich, & Bumbarger, 2001; Hawkins, Catalano, Kosterman, Abbott, & Hill, 1999; Roth, Brooks-Gunn, Murray, & Foster, 1998; Leffert, Saito, Blyth, & Kroenke, 1996

## *Key design principles and strategies for youth development*

You probably will not achieve these desirable outcomes unless you implement the key design principles and strategies that yield them.

Several key elements and strategies contribute to the success of positive youth development programs. The following design principles and strategies build from the overarching design principles and strategies discussed in the programs and services introduction section. That said, the following principles and strategies shown in Table 6.3 and Table 6.4 are specifically tailored to youth development programs and services.

***Table 6.3: Checklist of overarching design principles and/or strategies for successful programs***

- ☐ Program is designed to create intended results
- ☐ The logic behind the program makes sense as the services link to outcomes
- ☐ Program uses multiple strategies to accomplish its goals (comprehensive)
- ☐ Program is evaluation-driven and continuously improved upon
- ☐ Program is research-supported and theoretically-sound
- ☐ A variety of teaching and learning strategies are used
- ☐ There is sufficient dosage
- ☐ The program is implemented the way it was originally designed
- ☐ Staff are well-trained in the program design
- ☐ Participants have a "say so" in how the program is structured and implemented
- ☐ Program is tailored to meet individual needs
- ☐ Program is appropriately timed and located
- ☐ Program is implemented in culturally competent ways
- ☐ Program is family-centered and -supportive
- ☐ Strategies foster self-determination and personal control
- ☐ Participants are empowered
- ☐ Participants' strengths are built upon in the program
- ☐ Positive relationships and bonding are created
- ☐ Program activities are enjoyable and meaningful to participants
- ☐ Staff are engaging

***Table 6.4: Key design principles and/or strategies for youth development****

| Principle and strategy | What this looks like |
|---|---|
| **Interpersonal∞ skill development** | |
| Relationships | • Programs help develop relationships and connections among youth and healthy adults<br>• Programs' staff promotes positive relationships with peers<br>• Programs seek to promote positive relationships with school and community<br>• Youth have opportunities to connect with their culture |
| Relationships Continued | |

| *Table 6.4: Key design principles and/or strategies for youth development** | |
|---|---|
| **Principle and strategy** | **What this looks like** |
| | • Staff is warm, caring and supportive<br>• Staff provides guidance and responsiveness to youth and families attending the program<br>• Youth learn proper communication skills<br>• Staff is involved in on-going professional development relative to building relationships with and among program participants |
| Belonging | • Programs seek to provide opportunities for meaningful inclusion, regardless of one's gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation or disability status<br>• Programs promote identity formation through inclusion, participatory, meaningful activities<br>• Programs' activities show support for cultural and bicultural competence<br>• Youth can actively participate in programs' activities and events<br>• Programs offer activities where youth can make positive contributions<br>• Activities youth engage in offer opportunities for youth to experience positive social exchanges |
| **Competencies** | |
| Pro-social norms | • Programs and staff encourage youth to develop clear standards and rules for their own and others' behaviors<br>• Values, morals and obligations for service are promoted by program<br>• Youth are encouraged to develop clear and explicit standards for behavior that minimize health risks<br>• Youth experience pro-social involvement with peers, school, community and family |
| Cognitive competence | • Staff seeks to influence cognitive abilities, processes or outcomes<br>• Youth attending the program improve academic achievement, decision-making, planning and goal setting skills<br>• Programs promote logical and analytic thinking and problem solving skills<br>• Youth engage in activities that offer skill promotion in self-talk skills |
| Social and self-regulatory skills | • Youth learn developmentally appropriate interpersonal skills such as communication, assertiveness, refusal strategies, conflict resolution and negotiation tactics<br>• Youth learn interpersonal negotiation strategies and how to use them with peers and adults<br>• Youth develop skills for identifying feelings, managing emotions and frustrations and empathizing with others<br>• Youth develop skills for identifying and managing emotional reactions or impulses<br>• Programs provide training and rehearsal strategies for practicing these skills |
| Behavioral competence | • Staff teaches skills and provides reinforcement for effective behavior choices<br>• Staff teaches and reinforces pro-social behaviors through verbal strategies and through non-verbal strategies |

| *Table 6.4: Key design principles and/or strategies for youth development** | |
|---|---|
| **Principle and strategy** | **What this looks like** |
| Moral competence | • Youth learn empathy and respect for others as promoted by the program<br>• Youth engage in pro-social rules and/or norms<br>• Youth develop a sense of right and wrong through activities offered by the program<br>• Youth develop a sense of social justice via the program |
| **Intrapersonal$^{\Delta}$ development** | |
| Self-determination | • Youth experience genuine empowerment in the program<br>• Youth are educated to be autonomous and independent thinking<br>• Programs and staff promote youth decision-making and self-advocacy<br>• Youth make choices and serve in leadership roles<br>• Youth gain ability to live and grow by self-determined internal standards and values |
| Beliefs in the future | • Programs and staff promote optimism in youth attending the program<br>• A belief in one's future potential is embedded into program activities<br>• Youth create long-range goals and options<br>• Youth are provided with opportunities to plan for their future such as college visits |
| Identity | • Youth develop a healthy identity and sense of self<br>• Youth are encouraged in positive identification with social or peer groups<br>• Programs and staff seek to assist youth in positive identification of cultural groups |
| Spirituality | • Programs promote the development of beliefs in a higher power or internal reflection or meditation<br>• Youth feel supported in exploring a spiritual belief system<br>• Programs and staff support youth in identifying a sense of spiritual identity, meaning or practice |
| Self-determination and empowerment | • Programs and staff help youth build positive beliefs about self and one's abilities through empowerment-oriented practices<br>• Staff offers youth-based programming that includes enabling strategies, activities that promote responsibility, and meaningful challenges<br>• Programs' staff respect youth and take their views seriously<br>• Programs focus on achievement, improvement, goal setting and mastery<br>• Youth engage in activities that make a real difference in their community<br>• Staff engages in practices that focus on improvement rather than on relative current performance level |
| Resilience | • Programs and staff encourage adaptive coping responses to stress<br>• Psychological flexibility and capacity are promoted |
| Recognition and reinforcement of positives | • Programs and staff rewards, recognizes and reinforces involvement in pro-social behaviors and activities |

| *Table 6.4: Key design principles and/or strategies for youth development** | |
|---|---|
| **Principle and strategy** | **What this looks like** |
| **Structural considerations** | |
| Physical and psychological safety | • The programs operate in safe, secure and health-promoting environments<br>• Youth have opportunities for safe and healthy interactions with peers and others |
| Opportunities | • Youth are offered positive activities in which they can actively participate and to which they can make contributions<br>• Youth have opportunities to experience positive social exchanges<br>• Programs offer opportunities to learn physical, social, cognitive and emotional skills<br>• Youth are exposed to new intentional learning experiences<br>• Programs provide opportunities for youth to practice and rehearse newly-developed skills |
| Structure | • There are clear and consistent rules, expectations and boundaries<br>• Programs' staff has a clear understanding of the need to establish boundaries and limits, and boundaries and limits are implemented<br>• Programs and staff provide continuity and predictability<br>• Age-appropriate and developmentally-appropriate monitoring occur in all sites and activities |
| Integrates school, family and community efforts | • Programs create connections and synergy among all the various systems related to healthy youth development including family, school and community<br>• The "whole child" is valued<br>• Comprehensive supports are developed in response to identified early needs<br>• Youth and family are linked to additional resources as appropriate |
| Fun and enjoyable | • Programs engage youth "where they are"<br>• Youth engage in activities that are fun and enjoyable<br>• Activities that are youth-oriented are promoted by program and staff |
| Outcomes oriented | • The programs are designed to improve results and specific skills and outcomes are developed<br>• Programs use fun, meaningful activities in strategic ways to recruit, engage and retain youth and improve results (for example, playing basketball is not necessarily the only outcome - the physical, social and emotional skills that are developed from playing basketball matter most) |

From: Anderson-Butcher, Lawson, Fallara, & Furano, 2001; Catalano et al., 2002; Eccles & Gootman, 2002

[∞]Interpersonal indicates the ability to relate to others on a personal level. It is between people.
[Δ]Intrapersonal is associated with those abilities and characteristics within a person.

As the above inventories indicate, you have the opportunity to make many important choices. The outcomes you will achieve hinge on the choices you make. However, you do not have to choose one principle or strategy at the expense of the others.

In fact, you should implement as many principles or strategies as possible, at the same time ensuring they are tailored to your needs and conditions. For example, Catalano and colleagues (2002) found that the more of these design principles incorporated into the program the better the outcomes. After reviewing all of the effective programs, these researchers concluded that effective programs had addressed a minimum of five of these design principles. Furthermore, these researchers found that three design principles seemed to stand out as critical within effective programs:

- They develop skills and competencies;
- They help students feel confident about themselves and their abilities; and
- They promote positive pro-social norms and values.

The fact remains, however, that, where youth development is concerned, one size does not fit all. There is no getting around the need for informed choices. As you make these choices, you will need to take into account all the important features of the youth you serve, your agency and the local environment. As Eccles and Gootman (2001) suggest, these design principles often vary across programs in order to meet the goals of the agency, within the constraints they face, and with the population of youth served in mind.

## *Other considerations in youth development*

This section highlights other considerations in youth development that need to be taken into account. First, you will learn about the need for understanding how, when and why you may use "targeting strategies," i.e., designing specific programs for specific types of youth. For example, some students need one type of program, whereas other students have completely different needs, and these needs may fluctuate over time.

Then you will learn about the roles and functions of after-school programs in youth development. You will be presented with key concepts for creating effective programs, including initiative building activities and motivators for youth engagement.

Remember to incorporate model programs overviewed in the program/services overview chapter into your youth development strategies.

## Planning programs for specific populations: after-school programs as an example

*Targeting Strategies* need to be taken into account when you are working with a diverse group of individuals. Targeting strategies are employed when it is helpful to identify special sub-populations who share needs, problems and aspirations. The main idea is to plan programs for entire groups of people who have enough in common to justify a special program, including tailored strategies and activities.

This targeted planning usually proceeds on the basis of regular, accurate assessments of the students' needs, problems and aspirations. For example, students at risk of early school failure may be targeted for after-school programs. Students at risk for dropping out may be targeted for career development programs. Students in the child welfare system and the juvenile justice system may be targeted for mentoring programs. Students with substance abuse and mental health problems may be targeted for life skills groups. Latchkey kids who are home alone may be targeted for child care programs. Youth in families receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) may be targeted by youth development and school staff for family engagement activities.

Once these examples of programs for special populations are provided, four program planning reminders become important for after-school leaders:

1. Even with extended day and other after-school programs, most schools can not meet the needs of all such targeted populations. School-linked programs in the community are a practical necessity;

2. When organizations (e.g., schools, boys and girls clubs) offer specialized programs that cater to some populations of students (e.g., chronic juvenile offenders, gang members), other populations may shy away from the program and the sponsoring organization;

3. Some "at risk" populations will prefer community-based programs, especially ones that provide opportunities for youth-led programs and regular access to social and health service providers; and

4. Some populations will have the resources and supports to engage in private or fee-based community programs.

The lesson is that "cookie cutter" approaches to youth development do not work. In other words, one size truly does not fit all.

You will need to target different types of youth for different types of programs and activities. Some programs will be for ALL youth; others may be for certain targeted groups. For example, many different "types" of youth will participate in extracurricular activities, but then specific opportunities for targeted kids like those with Limited English Proficiency (LEP), those with anger management needs, those needing extensive tutoring, or those needing homework time, may be designed accordingly.
In essence, quality youth development programs individually meet the needs of each and every youth by creating engaging and diverse pro-social opportunities.

### After-school programs

After-school programs are one of the most important kinds of youth development programs and services. These programs provide supervision for youth during the working hours, provide essential family support, and contribute to overall school improvement efforts. Because they are so critical to youth, families and schools, you will need to know how to design and improve them.

After-school programs respond to many important needs. For example, in-school time often is insufficient to close the achievement gaps. Moreover, many youth are left alone and unsupervised between the hours of 3 and 7 P.M. When youth are alone, the stage is set for a predictable cluster of problem behaviors such as delinquency, early sexual activity and substance abuse, as well as less obvious problem behaviors like sedentary lifestyles associated with obesity and the failure to complete homework assignments.

In brief, healthy youth development and academic achievement often decline together. Therefore, if schools hope to boost academic achievement, they also need to *promote healthy youth development*. After-school programs are an ideal place to emphasize and improve both.

In addition, after-school programs also *meet valuable family support needs*, particularly child care needs. After-school programs have met those needs by providing affordable "child care" in the after school hours. Essentially, when the school and after-school programs support families, they make a huge contribution to school improvement. Strong, stable families served by the school are more likely to be connected to it. They are less likely to move or to choose another school. The immediate impact is less student turnover; or, more positively stated, a more stable, healthier student population.

Furthermore, highly successful after-school programs also effectively *expand the boundaries of school improvement*. These programs and their leaders help recruit others, including youth, parents, community program leaders and social-health service providers, to help with school improvement priorities. The efforts of these stakeholders contribute greatly to school improvement, as outlined in the table below.

| *Table 6.5: After-school programs' contributions to school improvement* |
|---|
| • They provide more academic learning time, along with access to alternative teaching and learning methods, tutoring and homework assistance<br>• They support classroom teachers by providing additional resources for their students' learning and academic achievement<br>• They provide targeted interventions to those in need of additional time<br>• They provide safe, secure, health-enhancing places where kids spend their out-of-school time constructively<br>• They encourage associations with other kids who are committed to healthy development and success in school<br>• They develop a sense of connection to school<br>• They contribute to a more positive school climate<br>• They make contributions to the prevention and reduction of problem behaviors such as substance abuse, delinquency and depression<br>• They strengthen kids' protective factors, resilience and developmental assets<br>• When they cater to parents and families, they strengthen families, improve home supports for learning and reduce student and family transience or mobility<br>• They provide for youths' and parents' career development opportunities, promoting the value of school experiences<br>• When programs include involvement of teachers, knowledge of their students in the community is gained by the teachers<br>• When higher education institutions are involved as partners, they help kids and parents understand what it takes to get into a college or university and how to plan for their futures in higher education<br>• When programs are community-based, they make schools hubs of family support and community development – literally, the centerpieces of neighborhoods |

After-school programs, at school and elsewhere in the community, can be powerful influences on youth and vital components in school improvement. Thanks to research, there is a growing stock of knowledge about successful after-school programs. Examples of the most important components of quality after-school experiences follow.

### Balancing academic learning and achievement outcomes with other youth development outcomes and needs

Success in school and high academic achievement are youth development outcomes and strategies. When youth succeed in school and are connected to it, problem behaviors are prevented and developmental assets and protective factors are strengthened. The key is to balance the academic components with the non-academic components. Otherwise, many youth, especially those who may need after school programs the most, will not attend. And, even if some attend, they will not stay because they experience "more school" instead of a blended experience that helps with school, but that is fun and meaningful as well.

### Make sure you have the resources not to just do the job, but to do it well

Sometimes there is a tendency in these programs to provide more activity-oriented programs that serve the masses as opposed to serving fewer youth in results-oriented programs that create outcomes (see program services introductory chapter). Remember, you need to have enough human and financial support in order to implement a quality activity. Otherwise, the program will not do what it is intended to do, and dosage effects

will not be present. As such, you will want to ensure that you monitor the staff-to-youth ratios and keep them as reasonable as possible. If staff-to-youth ratios are high, you will want to develop ways in which volunteers and/or older, expert youth can help in the leadership of the program. It also is possible to train and employ parents, older youth and other community members to help you.

### Involve teachers in after-school programs

The direct benefits related to academic achievement and overall success in school that after-school programs can yield do not happen automatically. They are maximized when classroom teachers are both beneficiaries and contributors to students' after school experiences.

Teachers are able to benefit and contribute when they are involved in planning academic and non-academic experiences for their students (also see the academic learning chapter). These teachers do not have to show up after school. However, they *do* need to help after-school program leaders plan what students need to work on and do. In brief, regular, effective communications between teachers and program providers is vital. In many successful after-school programs, at least one person's job description focuses on making connections and communicating with classroom teachers, serving them and students at the same time.

***Table 6.6: Ideas for linking after-school programs with schools and teachers***

- Attend school staff meetings and present on the agenda
- Eat lunch in the teachers' lunchroom
- Attend parent-teacher conferences and other events at the school
- Provide babysitting supports during parent-teacher conferences
- Have an after-school bulletin board
- Hire liaisons that interact with school staff
- Work with the principal to establish regular meetings times
- Use e-mail and voicemail to relay messages and communicate with teachers
- Make friends with the custodians and kitchen staff
- Help the school by monitoring recess, halls and/or lunch room
- Communicate changes seen in student achievement and behavior
- Create newsletters
- Work together with teachers to assess student progress at the end of each marking period
- Provide tracking and monitoring of students' attendance, homework completion and grades
- Get information from teachers (i.e., state curriculum, local standards, and what is taught in the classroom)
- Have teachers present in-service training for program staff
- Incorporate lessons into the after-school program that build upon what is happening in the day time
- Teachers provide activities for students to do in homework time, etc.
- Teachers include after-school program participation in student plans such as individualized education plans (IEPs)
- After-school staff helps in classrooms and with school field trips
- Clearly define in writing the days and times particular spaces in the school will be used
- Use language such as "we" and "our" to express shared goals and needs
- Let teachers know what will happen in their classrooms

| *Table 6.6: Ideas for linking after-school programs with schools and teachers* |
|---|
| • Invest in storage cabinets on wheels<br>• Decide what will happen if something is damaged<br>• Check in regularly with teachers to see how things are going<br>• Express appreciation to school staff members who support the program |

## *Building initiative*

Quality youth development programs focus on building initiative (Larson, 2000). Youth with initiative are goal directed, intrinsically motivated, and willing to put forth effort over time. Larson (2000) writes that programs that develop initiative have three qualities. They need to be:

- Youth-oriented—youth are motivated intrinsically;
- Have a temporal arc of effect—the youth must become engaged over time and do whatever it takes to be successful; and
- Have their "eye on the prize"—there is a meaningful end product or outcome that results.

For example, if youth are interested in playing the piano (intrinsic motivation), they will practice over time to increase their skills (temporal arc of effect), and finally they will perform their piece at a recital or some other similar venue (prize or end product). Other youth development strategies are related to the concept of initiative.

### Other key strategies underlying initiative building activities

You and other program designers interested in building initiative need to create programs that are *responsive* to youth. This means the programs are designed to *meet youths' interests*. Good program designers find out the types of activities in which youth are motivated to participate and try to understand what types of things get youth excited and engaged. As mentioned in the program/services overview chapter, you must determine important magnets, hooks and glue, as well as barriers to program participation, and design youth development programs accordingly.

It also means that programs should be designed to *address unmet needs*. For instance, youth may have anger management problems or difficulties in making friends. Programs can be designed to develop competencies, skills and assets that address these identified areas of improvement.

You also want to give youth a "say so" in how programs are structured and how activities are offered. Youth may serve as leaders, mentors, and even be co-designers of the programs. Take a moment to stop and try to see things from the *youths' perspectives*. Look at the activities, the related choices, and relevant life issues from youths' points of view. This will help determine solutions and strategies are meaningful to youth, and will allow youth to better generalize their newly learned skills to new settings and

environments. In essence, by being *youth-centered* and *youth-led*, there is a greater likelihood of promoting interpersonal and intrapersonal development and competencies.

Youth also need to be provided with *choices*. The child development literature supports the notion that when children are presented with choices, they develop decision making skills, feel like they have options, and are more often willing participants in the activity. By providing youth with choices and opportunities for leadership, programs are helping youth learn *self determination* and become *intrinsically motivated*.

### Key motivators

Several key motivators also assist in fostering intrinsic motivation and involvement among youth (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2001, 2002). You can view these "motivators" as indicators of program quality, emphasizing the ones you already have in place and developing the missing ones.

*Relationships with staff and adult volunteers* are central motivators and connectors for youth. More specifically, Katz (1994) notes that when youth have a positive adult role model or friend in their life, they are more likely to have second chance opportunities presented to them which can help them develop more resiliency and can promote positive youth development.

Conversations with youth point to some key qualities of staff. It is important to have *staff with specific expertise in certain content areas*. For instance, staff may have expertise in wrestling or drama, or teachers may be most effective at offering academic enrichment activities because they have content expertise and understand the curriculum. Staff also should be *actively involved in all aspects of the program*, as opposed to standing on the side in supervising roles. Youth feel respected, empowered and valued as adults join with them in programs and activities. Furthermore, it is important to ensure there is *diversity within the staff*, so the youth can identify with individuals who are similar to themselves, as well as interact with others who may be different.

Program designers also should help youth develop *positive peer friendships.* Youth often attend youth development programs either to make new friends or to "hang out" with their current friends. Programs should help youth build interpersonal skills so they learn how to be a good friend and can model these skills with other youth.

*Social and recreational activities* also serve as important motivators, initially recruiting and later retaining youths' involvement. These activity settings also can be great mediums for teaching interpersonal skills. For instance, important life skills such as cooperation and teamwork may be reinforced during ultimate frisbee activities, basketball or in various tag games.

*Learning new skills and competencies* also are important motivators for youth involvement. In addition, youth are motivated to attend often because they are provided with opportunities to be involved in activities to which they otherwise would not have been exposed. Exposure is one component of learning, and the more positive events to which you can expose the youth, the better.

> Remember to examine the program/services overview chapter for more highlights related to successful recruitment, retention and engagement.

## *Addressing barriers in youth development*

In designing and implementing youth development programs, there are always barriers that must be overcome. The following section highlights specific barriers and also provides minimizing strategies, solutions or "barrier busters" in order to help you overcome these challenges.

Many barriers in youth development center on a common *mindset* that exists within the field. This mindset involves several interrelated *tensions* (Lawson, Anderson-Butcher, & Barkdull, 2002; Anderson-Butcher, Midle, Hansford, Fallara, & Grotevant, 2004), including but not limited to the following:

1. **Quantity versus quality**: Do we want to serve more youth with fewer programs or serve less youth with more quality programming?

2. **Safe haven versus comprehensive youth development**: Are we mostly concerned with keeping youth supervised and safe or do we truly desire to develop important skills, assets and competencies among participants?

3. **Unstructured versus structured**: Do we have a loosely knit, free-play, unstructured program or a strict, predictable and structured one?

4. **Academic versus social/recreational**: Do we focus only on structured academic programming, especially academic achievement, or focus on social, recreational and enrichment?

5. **Activity-oriented versus results-oriented**: Is our intent to provide activities in which youth will engage or to provide intentional programs that are designed to create outcomes?

### Barrier: Common mindset and related tensions

Individuals working within youth development will approach their work with varying degrees of these aforementioned mindsets. Too often, however, it seems youth development programs are focused on the masses, safe havens, mostly unstructured, social/recreational, and activity-oriented (e.g., Anderson-Butcher et al., 2004). Table 6.7 presents common mindset and related tension barriers and makes suggestions about how to address them.

***Table 6.7: Common mindset and related tensions - Specific barriers and minimizing strategies***

| **Barrier: Common mindset and related tensions** | **Minimizing strategies** |
|---|---|
| • Tendency of staff to implement "activities" as opposed to focusing on creating outcomes<br>• Programs serve as "holding pens," where the perception is that programs are successful as long as youth are busy, supervised and having fun<br>• Programs attempt to do "everything" and do nothing really well<br>• Programs are too academic, are truly extended school days and many youth will not come | • Provide high quality, results-oriented programs<br>• Use logic models to link program activities to intended outcomes<br>• Define the purpose for each program and activity (program with intention)<br>• Focus on developing skills, competencies and assets within all programs and activities<br>• Do not forgo quality of programming just to serve more youth<br>• Provide a balance between activity-oriented and results-oriented programs; use social and recreational activities to recruit youth into other more outcomes-focused programs<br>• Work with licensing agencies and resource/referral networks to support quality improvement efforts |

### Barrier: Recruitment and retention

Many times these mindsets and related tensions are grounded in issues around recruiting and retaining youths' involvement in programming. For instance, if programs are too structured and academic, youth simply will not attend. Conversely, if programs are too social/recreational, then outcomes will not occur. Likewise, youth often self-select into these programs. If programs are not designed to meet youths' needs and interests, they simply will not be motivated to participate. Table 6.8 presents common recruitment and retention barriers and makes suggestions about how to address them.

| *Table 6.8: Recruitment and retention - Specific barriers and minimizing strategies* | |
|---|---|
| **Barrier: Recruitment and retention** | **Minimizing strategies** |
| • It is hard to attract different "types" of youth<br>• Youth feel "required" to attend<br>• Youth do not feel they have a say in what types of programs are offered; programs are implemented by staff "to the kids"<br>• Youth self-select and are not "attracted" to certain types of programs<br>• Programs use "one size fits all" approaches<br>• Attendance is sporadic and not regular<br>• There are many opportunities, both pro- and anti-social that compete for youths' time<br>• Programs are not located where youth can access them | • Design program so participants have choices, "say so" and control<br>• Plan programs and activities with participants<br>• Use social/recreational activities to recruit youth<br>• Develop relationships among youth, staff and peers to increase motivation for involvement<br>• Design fun, engaging and meaningful programs<br>• Ensure cultural sensitivity and appreciate diversity; use inclusive language<br>• Counteract social norms and labels<br>• Ensure there are programs that meet multiple needs<br>• Have multiple activities arranged simultaneously so youth can choose<br>• Individualize programs to meet identified youth needs<br>• Provide specific programs for aggregate groups of youth with common characteristics, needs or desires (i.e., gender-specific programs; have a 4-H Club, Boy Scouts, and/or dance classes within an after-school program) |

## Barrier: Behavioral management problems

Another common barrier or challenge within youth development programming involves behavior management and discipline issues. Sometimes youth simply act out and are non-compliant. It truly is difficult to create positive outcomes for youth when participants are uncooperative and taking attention away from programming. Table 6.9 presents common behavioral management problem barriers and makes suggestions about how to address them.

| *Table 6.9: Behavioral management problems - Specific barriers and minimizing strategies* | |
|---|---|
| **Barrier: Behavioral management problems** | **Minimizing strategies** |
| • Youth display inappropriate behaviors that take staff away from the program and attention away from other youth and the program activity<br>• Time within the programs is not maximized<br>• Youth have a lot of unstructured, undirected time in programs | • Anticipate problems before they arise rather than waiting for a crisis to occur<br>• Enhance "time-on-task" or time that youth are actively engaged in a program activity (as opposed to sitting and waiting)<br>• Use appropriate tone and inflection when talking with youth<br>• Reduce time where youth are inactive or in unstructured activities (i.e., provide activities for youth to do when they first arrive to the program) |

| *Table 6.9: Behavioral management problems - Specific barriers and minimizing strategies* | |
|---|---|
| • Transitions between programs and activities are not well thought out<br>• There is no consistent schedule of activities so youth do not know what is coming next and act out<br>• Staff often focus on the negative and related consequences<br>• Youth are bored because activities are not developmentally or skill-level appropriate<br>• Rules are not well known and consistently reinforced<br>• Programs do not have extra staff who can address acting out behaviors<br>• Staff are not well trained in preventing and de-escalating problem behaviors | • Provide consistency within the program through regular schedules and activities that happen each time<br>• Have enough equipment/supplies to enhance the number of youth engaged in the activity (i.e., 10 basketballs for 30 youth as opposed to 1:30)<br>• Instead of having one activity for the entire group, break into several smaller groups to do the same activity (i.e., have three kickball games as opposed to one)<br>• Prepare youth for transitions ahead of time by reminding them there is 5 minutes left<br>• Maximize while simultaneously containing space (ie., use cones for boundaries in games; enforce that certain activities are in certain rooms and wandering is not allowed)<br>• Provide at least five positive comments for every one negative comment<br>• Use precision commands that direct youth to choose the "right" behaviors<br>• Provide age-appropriate, individualized and engaging programs<br>• Use and reinforce school rules or guidelines to provide youth with consistent messages |

## Barrier: Funding

It might be easier for you and other youth development workers to implement quality, results-oriented programs, attract and retain all youth, and prevent behavior problems if there were endless financial and human resources available to programs and staff. *Funding* is a very real challenge that often times drives many of our program planning decisions. Table 6.10 presents common funding barriers and makes suggestions about how to address them.

| *Table 6.10: Funding – Specific barriers and minimizing strategies* | |
|---|---|
| **Barrier: Funding** | **Minimizing strategies** |
| • Programs are under-funded<br>• Programs and organizations have their funding cut during hard economical times<br>• Funding streams for specific types of programs are non-existent<br>• It is hard to find funding for administrative overhead, but administration is essential to the implementation of quality and | • Ensure the services you are providing relate to the outcomes toward which you are working<br>• Evaluate programs and document success stories and outcomes<br>• Make sure you are in compliance with the requirements of your funding source<br>• Develop strong working relationships with current and potential funders<br>• Collaborate with other partners to maximize program opportunities (i.e., work with the school to secure low-cost |

| ***Table 6.10: Funding – Specific barriers and minimizing strategies*** | |
|---|---|
| accountable programs<br>• Inadequate funding contributes to low pay and high turnover rate for staff | space)<br>• Use volunteers to support program operations<br>• Develop partnerships with local businesses and others who can contribute resources/supplies<br>• Find ways to blend funding streams to support<br>• Support, listen to and value staff<br>• If you do not have extra money to pay staff, then develop other ways to show them they are appreciated<br>• Encourage staff to be creative, have fun and be challenged |

Remember to examine the sustainability chapter for more highlights related to funding.

While there are numerous barriers, if you follow the key design principles and strategies, you can eliminate many of these barriers from the out-set. Keep these barriers in mind when you are completing your strategic plan or organizing activities and events.

## *Conclusion*

Clearly, youth development programs and services, including after-school programs at schools and in the community, have the potential to benefit youth, schools and families. Unfortunately, in too many schools, communities and neighborhoods this enormous potential remains untapped. When these programs' potential is untapped, the desirable outcomes identified in the previous discussion are not achieved. No one is served under these circumstances.

Thus, the key is to unleash the potential of existing youth development programs and services and to develop new ones as well. After-school programs, both school-based and school-linked, are especially important. In fact, after-school programs have the potential to enhance school improvement initiatives, while simultaneously fostering healthy youth development.

This important work requires dedicated, informed youth leaders. These leaders must know which outcomes they want and need to achieve as well as how to implement theoretically-sound, research-supported design principles and program strategies to achieve them.

These leaders also must know how to adapt their programs and services in response to the local conditions and populations needing to be served. They especially must know how to engage youth as co-designers and co-leaders. Moreover, they must know to how anticipate, identify and address common barriers to success.

This section has been designed to prepare you for such youth development leadership, enabling you to help unleash the enormous potential of youth development programs and services. It has been structured to build on the experiences and strengths you bring to this important work while at the same time emphasizing best practice principles, strategies and quality indicators of successful programs and services. It particularly explores the critical need for stronger linkages between schools and these youth development opportunities. Finally, it has identified common barriers and ways you can address them.

## *References*

Afterschool Alliance. (2004). *America after 3 p.m.* Washington D.C.: Author.

Anderson-Butcher, D. (2006). The role of the educator in early identification, referral, and linkage. *Child and Adolescent Mental Health Issues in the Classroom*, Sage.

Anderson-Butcher, D., Lawson, H.A., Fallara, G.,& Furano, G. (2002). Eliciting theories of change from youth care workers and youth participants. *Journal of Child and Youth Care Work, 17*, 130-151.

Anderson-Butcher, D., Midle, T., Hansford, C., Fallara, L., & Grotevant, S. (2004). Raising the bar. *School-Age Review, 7*, 4-12.

Benson, P.L. (1997). *All kids are our kids: what communities must do to raise caring and responsible children and adolescents.* Minneapolis, MN: Search Institute.

Caplan, J., & Calfee, C.S. (1998). *Strengthening connections between schools and after-school programs.* North Central Regional Educational Laboratory and Learning Points Associates. Retrieved September 20, 2004 from http://www.ncrel.org/21stcclc/connect/index.html

Catalano, R.F., Berglund, M.L., Ryan, J.A.M., Lonczak, H.S., & Hawkins, J.D. (1999). Positive youth development in the United States: research findings on evaluation of positive youth development programs. Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Retrieved April 10, 2002 from http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/PositiveYouthDev99/

Catalano, R.F., Berglund, M.L., Ryan, J.A.M., Lonczak, H.S., & Hawkins, J.D. (2002). Positive youth development in the United States: research findings on evaluations of positive youth development programs. *Prevention and Treatment*, 5.

Dryfoss, J. (1990). *Adolescence at risk: prevalence and prevention.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Durlak, J.A., & Wells, A.M. (1997). Primary prevention mental health programs for children and adolescents: a meta-analytic review. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, *25*, 115-152.

Eccles, J., & Gootman, J.A. (2002). *Community programs to promote youth development.* Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

Greenberg, M.T., Domitrovich, C., & Bumbarger, B., (2001). The prevention of mental disorders in school-aged children: current state of the field. *Prevention & Treatment*, 4.

Hawkins, J.D., Catalano, R.F., & Miller, J.Y. (1992). Risk and protective factors for alcohol and other drug problems in adolescent and early childhood: implications for substance abuse prevention. *Psychological Bulletin, 112,* 64-105.

Hawkins, J.D., Catalano, R.F., Kosterman, R., Abott, R., &Hill, K.G. (1999). Preventing Adolescent health-risk behaviors by strengthening protection during childhood. *Archives of Pediatrics &Adolescent Medicine, 153* (3), 226-232.

Jessor, R., Van Den Bos, J., Vanderryn, J., Costa, F.M., & Turbin, M.S. (1997). Protective factors in adolescent problem behavior: moderator effects and developmental change. *Developmental Psychology, 31* (6), 923-933.

Katz, M. (1997). *On playing a poor hand well: insights from the lives of those who have overcome childhood risks and adversities.* New York: Norton.

Larson, R. (2000) Toward a psychology of positive youth development. *American Psychologist, 55* (1), 170-183.

Lawson, H.A., & Anderson-Butcher, D. (2001). In the best interest of the child: Youth development as a child welfare support and resources. *Innovative Practice with Vulnerable Children and Families*, 245-265.

Lawson, H.A., Anderson-Butcher, D., & Barkdull, C. (2002). *Cross-cutting findings from ten schools and recommendations for improvement: A phase three evaluation report.* Salt Lake City, UT: Salt Lake City School District.

Leffert, N., Saito R., Blyth, D. and Kroenke, C. (1996). *Making the case: measuring the impact of youth development programs.* Minneapolis,MN: Search Institute.

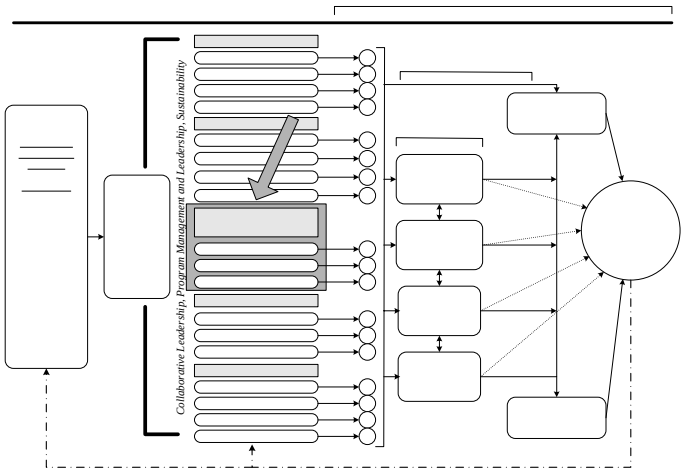
Payton, J.W., Wardlaw, D.M., Gracyzk, P.A., Bloodworth, M.R., Tompsett, C.J., & Weissberg, R. (2000). Social and emotional learning: a framework for promoting mental health and reducing risk behaviors in children and youth. *Journal of School Health, 70* (5), 179-185.

Pittman, K. (1999). The power of engagement. *Youth Today, 8* (8), 63.

Roth, J., Brooks-Gunnn, J., Murray, L., &Foster, W. (1998). Promoting healthy adolescents: synthesis of youth development program evaluations. *Journal of Research on Adolescence, 8* (4), 423-459.

# Family Engagement and Support

## Introduction




A growing body of research suggests school practices are powerful influences on parent and family engagement and support (Eccles & Harold, 1996; Epstein, 2001; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997). This research also indicates that parents and families are among the most important influences and determinants of children's learning, healthy development and success in school. Furthermore, this research suggests that parents and families are interested in becoming involved, and they desire to know about their child's progress in school (Delgado-Gaitan, 1992; Goldenberg & Gallimore, 1995, Mapp, 2003). As such, family engagement and support is a critical core component within the Ohio Community Collaboration Model for School Improvement (OCCMSI).

Partnerships among families and schools are essential for two basic reasons. First, children spend the vast majority of their time throughout their lives outside of school, and families heavily influence this out of school time. Second, families are some of the most important determinants of children's attitudes, learning, behavior, healthy development and overall well being (Epstein, 2001). In short, it is important to get the conditions right for mutually beneficial relationships between schools and families.

The two primary aims for this chapter also are the primary aims for educators, parents and families, and schools. Educators, parents and entire families must share responsibility for students' learning, academic achievement and healthy development. They also must develop and sustain solid school-family partnerships.

In one perspective, when a child comes to school, their family comes with them. In a related perspective, educators also want the school practices and learning to go back home with students. A two-way relationship already exists in some form. The key is to make this two-way relationship stronger, mutually beneficial and permanent. Details in relation to family engagement and support follow.

## What do we mean by family engagement and support?

Family engagement and support occur in schools (school-based) and in homes (home-based). For example, parents support schools as they volunteer in classrooms, serve in decision making/leadership roles, and attend parent-teacher conferences and other school events. Parents also provide home environments that are supportive of classroom instruction, encourage their children's learning at school, and communicate regularly with teachers about what happens with their child. "Parental engagement is a desire, an expression, and an attempt by parents to have an

impact on what actually transpires around their children in schools and on the kinds of human, social and material resources that are valued within schools" (Barton, Drake, Perez, St. Louis & George, 2004, p. 11).

Family engagement and support also involves schools supporting families. For example, parents may engage in schools through their involvement in family support groups, parent education classes, GED and adult literacy programs, or ESL classes. They may develop vital skills and competencies as a result of expanded parent roles within schools. They also may receive support through linkages to emergency assistance and other vital services in school community.

In this chapter, the term "parents" refers to adult family members, including parents, step parents, grand parents, and other caring adults who parent children and youth. The term "family" refers to the students' family system; all of the people with whom a student has close family relationships. Henceforth, instead of referring to both parents and families, we use the term "family" as a kind of shorthand.

"Engagement" refers to several types of parent and family involvement, including school-family partnerships. For example, parents are engaged by schools as supporters, advocates, co-teachers, communicators, decision makers and learners (Moles, 1993).

The concept of "support" implies a new role for educators and schools. When support is emphasized, a two-way relationship between schools and families develops. Specifically, educators and others at the school, especially social and health service providers, help meet the needs of families at the same time that they ask families to meet their children's and the school's needs. You will find more details in the social and health service chapter.

No doubt you have encountered other terms that describe what we are calling family engagement: parent involvement and parent empowerment are just two of the alternatives. Additionally, you may have encountered detailed inventories, which describe different kinds of parent and family initiatives (e.g., Epstein, 2001). In this chapter, we will simplify our language and refer to "family engagement" so as to maximize understanding and fully integrate all these strategies into one all encompassing concept.

## *Outcomes associated with family engagement*

The outcomes children and youth experience from their families' engagement extend from birth through grade 12 and beyond. What families *do* to support learning and healthy development matters for every kind of family.

In fact, what families actually do to become engaged in their children's learning, school experiences and healthy development is a better predictor of school success than the family's status (Ho Sui-Chu, 2004). More specifically, when families are engaged, the benefits persist, regardless of the family's economic, racial, ethnic and educational background.

When exploring benefits, research has documented significant improvements in desirable outcomes and reductions in undesirable outcomes. Table 7.1 highlights key outcomes associated with family engagement.

| *Table 7.1: Key outcomes associated with family engagement* | |
|---|---|
| **Improvements in:** | **Reductions in:** |
| ▪ Academic achievement<br>▪ Completion of homework<br>▪ Participation in classroom learning activities<br>▪ Aspirations for postsecondary education<br>▪ Enrollment in challenging high school curriculum<br>▪ Successful transitions from special education classes to regular classes<br>▪ Successful transitions from one school to another<br>▪ Motivation for learning<br>▪ Social competence<br>▪ Positive student-teacher relationships<br>▪ Positive peer relationships, language, self-help, meaningful youth and adult connection/ relationships, and strong peer and adult role models<br>▪ Family cohesion and adaptability<br>▪ Supportive home environments<br>▪ Parent-child interactions and communication<br>▪ Adult learning<br>▪ Parenting styles and family management practices | ▪ In-grade retention<br>▪ Dropout rates<br>▪ Truancy<br>▪ Absenteeism<br>▪ Turnover or transience in the student population<br>▪ Discipline referrals<br>▪ Suspensions<br>▪ Placements in special education<br>▪ High-risk behavior<br>▪ Behavioral problems<br>▪ Family conflict<br>▪ Family instability |

From: Adams & Christenson, 2000; Buckman, 1976; Comer & Fraser, 1998; Eccles & Harold, 1996; Epstein, 2001; Epstein, Simon, & Salinas, 1997; Faires, Nichols, & Rickelman, 2000; Fischer, 2003; Gettinger & Guetschow, 1998; Henderson & Berla, 1994; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Ho Sui-Chu & Willms, 1996; Keith & Keith, 1993; McNeal, 1999; McKay & Stone, 2000; Palenchar, Vondra, & Wilson, 2001; Quigley, 2000; Sanders, 1998; Shaver & Walls, 1998; Reynolds, Temple, Robertson, & Mann, 2001; Shaver & Walls, 1998; Trusty, 1999.

## *Key design principles and strategies in family engagement and support*

As researchers and evaluators have studied effective family engagement and support programs, they have identified and described the key components that account for their success. These key components comprise design principles and strategies. These design principles and strategies tell you what to look for and what to develop in your school community's parent and family initiatives. In other words, these design principles, or key components, are indicators of quality; and they account for success. Tables 7.2 and 7.3 highlight these key design principles and strategies.

| *Table 7.2: Check list of overarching design principles and/or strategies for successful programs* |
|---|
| ☐ Program is designed to create intended results |
| ☐ The logic behind the program makes sense as the services link to outcomes |
| ☐ Program uses multiple strategies to accomplish its goals (comprehensive) |
| ☐ Program is evaluation-driven and continuously improved upon |
| ☐ Program is research-supported and theoretically-sound |
| ☐ A variety of teaching and learning strategies are used |
| ☐ There is sufficient dosage |
| ☐ The program is implemented the way it was originally designed |
| ☐ Staff are well-trained in the program design |

| *Table 7.2: Check list of overarching design principles and/or strategies for successful programs* |
|---|
| ☐ Participants have a "say so" in how the program is structured and implemented |
| ☐ Program is tailored to meet individual needs |
| ☐ Program is appropriately timed and located |
| ☐ Program is implemented in culturally competent ways |
| ☐ Program is family-centered and -supportive |
| ☐ Strategies foster self-determination and personal control |
| ☐ Participants are empowered |
| ☐ Participants' strengths are built upon in the program |
| ☐ Positive relationships and bonding are created |
| ☐ Program activities are enjoyable and meaningful to participants |
| ☐ Staff are engaging |

| *Table 7.3: Key design principles and/or strategies for family engagement and support* | |
|---|---|
| **Principle and strategy** | **What this looks like** |
| **Structural considerations** | |
| Results-oriented | • Family engagement strategies are aligned with the school's continuous improvement goals<br>• Family engagement strategies are adapted to reach targeted families and students<br>• Family engagement activities aim for more than "head counts;" genuine, lasting partnerships are prized<br>• Family engagement activities are connected to students' learning, achievement and well-being |
| Whole family orientation | • The school's programs and services are oriented toward the whole family, not just one child<br>• Educators view that the well-being of the parents and the support provided to the family is critical to the developmental progress of the child<br>• The school's engagement strategies target fathers, grandparents and other caregivers, not just mothers<br>• Engagement strategies are not limited to educators and bound by school walls; community leaders, including other families, help develop family engagement<br>• Supports are provided across feeder patterns (i.e., elementary, middle and high school cone system) to integrate services for siblings and entire families<br>• Parents and educators help secure social and health services for families at risk |
| Family-centered and strength-based | • Engagement strategies develop consensus among families, educators and students regarding shared aspirations and needs<br>• Engagement strategies are strength-based, solution-focused, and oriented toward helping families support their children and get involved in their schooling<br>• Families identify own needs and wants<br>• Families are joined "where they are at"<br>• Educators and other professionals think the best about parents and families without passing judgment<br>Professionals start "doing with" instead of "doing to" parents |

| ***Table 7.3: Key design principles and/or strategies for family engagement and support*** | |
|---|---|
| **Principle and strategy** | **What this looks like** |
| Quality and longevity (dosage) | • Sustainability is a top priority; the commitment to family-school partnership is held over many years<br>• Programs are of sufficient intensity and duration to create effects<br>• Whole family engagement policy guides planning and implementation of programs and services<br>• Programs are based in sound research and local context<br>• Programs are implemented with fidelity<br>• All family engagement and support programs are based in sound research |
| **Timeliness** | |
| Preventive and proactive | • Educators and service providers assess early warning signs; they do not wait for a problem or a crisis to occur to engage families<br>• Programs are offered early on so problems are addressed before chronic<br>• There is a broad focus on the prevention of problems involving the child, parent, family and school<br>• Educators and service providers target families with young children because it addresses issues early in their development<br>• Staff provide early referrals and linkages of families to supports in communities |
| Readiness and fit | • Family and school strategies are designed to support the developmental demands created by physical, cognitive, emotional and social growth of the child<br>• Educators recognize the developmental needs of families and work with others to support these needs in order to get families engaged<br>• Family engagement strategies are tailored depending on needs and readiness of families (i.e., those in crisis may not respond)<br>• There is a match between family engagement strategy and targeted parent or group of parents<br>• Families help determine the strategies that work best with them |
| **Implementation considerations** | |
| Team approach | • Educators, service providers and other professionals view parents and families as genuine partners in planning and decision-making<br>• Families, staff and administration work together to plan and implement programs and services<br>• Families are empowered to have equal status with other team members<br>• There is a focus on the links with the community for supporting education and families |
| Adequate leadership and support | • Specific school improvement structures allow parents a voice in key school decisions<br>• Administrators assign importance to family engagement<br>• Educators and parents share a commitment to family engagement and have a comprehensive plan<br>• Priorities within the school community are made in relation to family engagement (i.e., a single point person is designated as the lead facilitator of family and parent work; space is allocated for families in schools, etc.)<br>• The school provides leadership opportunities for families |

| ***Table 7.3: Key design principles and/or strategies for family engagement and support*** | |
|---|---|
| **Principle and strategy** | **What this looks like** |
| Adequate leadership and support continued | • The school commits resources (time, funding, space, personnel) to support family engagement<br>• The school implements key facilitators for family engagement—for example, a parent-family coordinator, a parent-family resource center, a homework club, a child care center<br>• Parents are recruited and supported to help recruit, engage and support other families |
| Parents as leaders | • Parents and families guide and structure programs according to their wants and needs<br>• Parents lead or co-lead activities<br>• Classes are offered to develop parent leadership<br>• Family engagement activities double as opportunities for parents to learn and practice leadership skills that generalize to other settings |
| School expectation and support | • Schools assist families with monitoring their child's progress in school<br>• Homework is reasonable and includes opportunities for students to talk about what they are learning with an adult at home |
| Parent and home supports for learning | • Parents are viewed as their child's first and closest teachers<br>• Educators share specific strategies with families for how to help a student at home<br>• Educators assist families with monitoring their child's progress in school<br>• Parents and family members supervise and communicate high expectations for their children<br>• Parents and family members provide verbal support and encouragement<br>• Parents and family members communicate a high value for education and the importance for getting a degree<br>• Parents and family members talk with children about their school day<br>• Parents and family members praise children for good academic performance<br>• Parents and family members provide verbal support and encouragement to do homework<br>• Parents and family members establish time schedules for homework completion<br>• Parents and family members encourage children not to "give up"<br>• Parents and family members provide space for children to do homework<br>• Parents and family members model reading<br>• Parents and family members provide direct help with homework<br>• Parents and family members involve children in outside activities like clubs, sports and faith-based organizations |
| **Underlying values** | |
| Diversity | • There is the recognition of, appreciation of, and adaptability to, cultural values and beliefs, race and class<br>• Engagement initiatives recognize and adapt to racially and culturally diverse families<br>• Differences in view points and perspectives are seen as a |

| ***Table 7.3: Key design principles and/or strategies for family engagement and support*** | |
|---|---|
| **Principle and strategy** | **What this looks like** |
| Diversity Continued | strengths<br>• Diversity of families is incorporated into the design of programs and services<br>• Language translators are provided as needed |
| Shared ownership | • Both educators and families are viewed as essential<br>• Educators and families develop shared goals<br>• Parents are equal partners<br>• Parents are "experts" in their child's development and education<br>• Educators and families develop shared rules, norms and behavioral standards for students<br>• Parents are supported and rewarded for their recruitment, engagement and support of other parents and students |
| Value of family and culture | • Parents and families are viewed as the first and primary educators of their children<br>• Parents and families are valued as "experts"<br>• The cultural traditions and values of the family are appreciated |
| **Relationships and affect** | |
| Relationships | • Educators, service providers, youth development leaders and families trust and respect each other<br>• Educators, service providers, youth development leaders and families enjoy regular opportunities for meaningful dialogue<br>• Communication between educators and families is not just crisis- and problem-centered; progress and achievements also are communicated routinely<br>• Families and teachers develop shared understanding of their roles and constraints<br>• Families and educators see each other as partners and friends |
| Communication | • Regular opportunities are provided for meaningful dialogue between parents and educators, parents and service providers, and parents and youth development leaders<br>• There are frequent opportunities for communication between the home and school<br>• There is ongoing communication between parents and schools that uses multiple methods<br>• Communication occurs regularly and not just when crises arise |
| Meaningful and engaging | • Opportunities for family engagement are meaningful and purposeful—as parents and families perceive them<br>• Families are engaged and enjoy their experiences with the school |
| Climate | • Parents and families are welcomed at schools and organizations<br>• Schools are seen as "family-friendly" places |
| **Family support** | |
| Assess and respond to basic needs | • Parental and family needs and perspectives are routinely assessed<br>• Programs link families to needed resources and supports to address basic needs as these factors often limit parents ability to be involved in school in traditional ways<br>• Families are supported through linkages to emergency assistance and other needed resources |

| ***Table 7.3: Key design principles and/or strategies for family engagement and support*** | |
|---|---|
| **Principle and strategy** | **What this looks like** |
| Assess and respond to basic needs continued | • Places are provided (i.e., family resource centers) where families can go to receive services and information |
| Social support/mutual support | • Programs build informal mutual support networks where families give and receive support<br>• Social capital and sense of community are built by helping isolated parents become connected<br>• Programs seek out, understand, and respond to families' concerns, needs and priorities |
| Learning and skill development | • Family members and other adults are provided with additional learning opportunities<br>• Programs are designed to develop parenting skills and competencies, especially in young parents with no previous experience or training |
| Responsiveness | • Parent and family input and leadership guide services and programs<br>• Programs seek out a good fit between school, student and family needs and strengths<br>• Educators and others at the school actively seek out and respond to families' concerns, needs and priorities<br>• Educators take action when families express a need or a complaint<br>• Family input helps guide schools' services and programs<br>• Family engagement includes multiple strategies and methods, which are tailored to meet family needs and conditions<br>• Family engagement strategies are adapted to seek out a good fit between the school's needs and both student and family needs |

From: Anderson-Butcher, 2006; Boone, 2002; Briar-Lawson, 2000; Christenson, 2003, 2004; Christenson & Sheridan, 2001; Kumpfer & Alvarado, 2003; Lawson & Briar-Lawson, 1997; Mapp, 2003; Marzano, 2003; McWilliam, Tocci & Harbin, 1998; Rutherford, Anderson & Billig, 1995; Ward, Anderson-Butcher, & Kwiatkowski, 2006.

There is an important, exciting line of research on family-school relationships. Arguably, the four most important findings are:

- Parents and teachers usually want the same things and have the same goals for the children and youth under their care, but are often unaware of this important common ground;

- School-, family- and neighborhood-related barriers prevent them from developing shared awareness of this common ground;

- These barriers can be addressed effectively, enabling parents, families and teachers to work together effectively, benefiting students, each other, the school, and the surrounding neighborhood; and

- Intermediary people (e.g., parent-family coordinators; other parents) and organizations (e.g., the United Way, a local neighborhood organization) often play pivotal roles in removing these barriers, capitalizing on facilitators, and developing more common grounds between schools and families (e.g., Delgado-Gaitan, 2002; Lawson, 2003; Shirley, 1997).

When planning for these partnerships with families, it is important for your school improvement team of parents, community representatives and educators to have a comprehensive plan of practical yet innovative strategies. Educators, after-school staff or community partners should not attempt a "one-size-fits-all" approach, expecting all families to support learning in the same way. Rather, a match or "goodness of fit" of activities to the needs and assets of children and their families should be the priority (Christenson, 2004). In other words, there is no, single "best" strategy to use with every kind of family in every situation. Rather, it is most important to address the key design principles and strategies, while you choose strategies that fit the families in your school community.

Several frameworks also are available for guiding your planning and implementation of family engagement strategies. For instance, Ohio's School Climate Guidelines offer one framework that is aligned with the research-based theoretical framework of Joyce Epstein, the National PTA and Marzano's (2004) features of effective schools. You also might consider using the School, Family, Community Partnerships model developed by Epstein and colleagues (Epstein, Sanders, Simon, Salinas, Jansorn & Van Voorhis, 2002). Other models are designed specifically for high poverty school communities, especially those on the emergency list (e.g., Briar-Lawson, 2000; Lawson & Briar-Lawson, 1997) or for specific family populations such as Latino (e.g., Delgado-Gaitan, 2002).

## *Other considerations in family engagement*

The family engagement strategies provided in this chapter draw on this research and are designed to lead your school community in its implementation of quality, effective family engagement programs and practices. Here we also provide guidance related to school-based and community-based family engagement as well as present an overview of the role of the school in helping and supporting families.

### School-based and community-based family engagement

To reiterate, all family engagement strategies are aimed at increasing parent and family involvement in children's education. Your school community leaders must make important choices as you implement a two-part family engagement plan.

#### *School-Based Family Engagement*

Some models and strategies specifically aim to increase parent involvement and family engagement in and at schools. Most of these latter strategies are school-based because educators and others at the school (e.g., school social workers, psychologists and counselors) initiate and lead them.

Leaders of these school-based strategies typically focus on specific improvements needing to be made at the school in order to recruit, engage and retain a significant number of parents and families. For example, these leaders strive to develop a welcoming environment, help teachers communicate with parents in welcoming and inviting ways, and create parent- and adult-friendly facilities (a coffee lounge, a family resource center).

### *Community-Based Family Engagement*

Other family engagement strategies are initiated in the surrounding community, and they are led by parents and families as well as community leaders and organizers. These community-based family engagement strategies often emphasize home visits, family-to-family networking and support systems, and neighborhood meetings.

Like school-based family engagement strategies, community-based strategies also focus on facilitators and barriers. In contrast to school-based strategies, community-based family engagement strategies also aim to develop *collective family engagement*. In other words, they aim to recruit, organize and mobilize groups of parents and families, at the same time encouraging them to do more of the same with other parents and families. Community-based strategies thus have the potential to benefit families, schools and entire neighborhoods. For example, they can increase parent and family engagement; strengthen and stabilize families (reducing the school's transiency or mobility rate); develop community-based after school programs and homework clubs; improve children's safety as they travel to and from schools; and help rally support for school levies (e.g., Shirley, 1997; Gold & Simon, 2003).

### *Blending the Two Strategies*

Each school community is unique in some important ways. That said, each stands to benefit from an effective, appropriate mix of school-based and community-based family engagement strategies. Your challenge (and opportunity) lies in figuring out this local mix.

Just as educators and their partners must complete assessments to get the conditions right for student learning, so must parent and family leaders and educators complete parallel assessments to get the conditions right for family engagement. As the above discussion indicates, these assessments will start with school-based assessments with special attention to the existing and potential facilitators and the existing barriers. These assessments also must attend to family and neighborhood factors and conditions. Leaders in your school community can then use this information generated from their assessments to determine the ideal mix of school-based and community-based family engagement strategies. Often, two strategies emerge: (1) Creating important roles for families at school; and (2) Helping and supporting families in school communities.

## Important roles for families at school

One of the most important barriers to family engagement can be transformed into a powerful facilitator. Here is the barrier: many parents perceive that they do not have meaningful, important roles to play at school. The facilitator derives from this barrier: provide meaningful, important roles for families to play at school as volunteers and as paid employees.

Your school community can develop at least three meaningful, important roles for families. Parents can serve as *co-teachers, co-leaders and co-workers*. These three roles are not mutually exclusive. All entail creating better relationships with families, connecting with parents in a variety of ways, and working to understand the needs and assets of all families. You can and should plan for all of them, including how one can lead to the other(s). Details and examples follow.

### *Co-teachers*

Families, especially parents, are the first and most important educators of children. Many researchers of family engagement conclude that the support parents provide for their children's learning at home has a greater impact on overall achievement when compared to other forms of involvement and other school-related factors (Ho & Willms, 1996; Marzano, 2003). Parents essentially serve as *co-teachers*, communicating important messages to their children about the value of education. Table 7.4 presents examples of co-teaching roles for parents.

**Table 7.4: Examples of co-teaching roles for parents**

- Asking about their children's school day
- Encouraging learning and application at home
- Assisting children with homework
- Reading aloud to their children
- Providing educational experiences for their children at home
- Reinforcing the importance of school for success in life
- Valuing education
- Connecting the learning experiences at school with home life
- Monitoring school performance and behavior
- Communicating with teachers about school-related issues
- Modeling life-long learning behaviors
- Attending parent/teacher conferences
- Providing resources and supplies in support of school assignments

### *Co-leaders*

Families and parents are sources of energy, leadership and decision making for the school community (Comer, 1995; Epstein et al., 2002). While the initial response of your school may be to make decisions from within the school or partnering agencies, this practice limits your strength and effectiveness. To strengthen schools and programs for children and youth, family members can serves as *co-leaders* within your school community, providing guidance, direction and program planning.

Federal guidelines for implementation of NCLB, section 1118, actually requires districts to include parents in the development and adoption of various school policies. Specifically, these provisions [Title I, Part A of the ESEA] stress shared accountability between schools and parents for high student achievement, including …local development of parental involvement plans with sufficient flexibility to address local needs, and building parents' capacity for using effective practices to improve their own children's academic achievement (U.S. Department of Education, 2004).

In light of these definitions and requirements for school improvement, it only makes sense for schools to include families in the work of complying with federal guidelines and in meeting the school's continuous improvement goals. In addition, families offer school communities insight into best practices for their community and the needs and cultures of families being served. There is an added benefit for programs and families as parent leaders become ambassadors of the program, telling other families about the work of your school and partnering agencies. Parents in leadership roles become not only better advocates for their own children, but for all children (Henderson, Jacob, Kernan-Scholss & Raimondo, 2004).

In order to engage parents in leadership activities, you can take action by creating formal groups that include family representatives for guiding program planning and reaching out to other families. Large numbers of families also may provide guidance and feedback for programs by offering opinions in feedback groups, interviews and responding to surveys. Another viable and worthwhile means for parent leadership, often called "parent empowerment" involves informing parents about the local education system and the routes they may access for influencing their children's schools (Trumball, Rothstein-Fisch, Grenfield & Quiroz, 2001).

### *Parent Academies, Ohio Department of Education*

In 1999, the Ohio Department of Education began the Parent Academy project with the creation of the Parent Academy for Reading. A team of parents, literacy specialists, community representatives and teachers came together to develop this two-hour workshop. Training events were held around the state to train parent-teacher teams to lead the workshop in their own communities. Many schools and school districts provide parent and teacher presenters with stipends for each Parent Academy they present. The workshop empowers parents by providing them with information about Ohio law regarding the 3rd grade reading achievement test, about reading diagnostic and achievement assessments, and about how their school district is working to provide high quality reading instruction and intervention for their children. Parents are encouraged to develop questions for their schools with the new information they receive. In addition, the parents work together to list their own strategies for helping their child become a better reader, and they share their strategies with each other. Parents are treated as the experts, understanding how to help their children with reading and other literacy skills at home.

In 2002, ODE brought together a team of parents and education professionals to develop a second workshop, the Parent Academy on Academic Content Standards. Once again, parents and teachers have been trained to work as a team to lead the workshop with parents and teachers in their communities. This time the content of the presentation focuses on Ohio's academic content standards and state-wide assessments. Parents and teachers who attend the workshop discuss the assessments and standards, and they receive tools they can use to monitor each child's progress in school. In addition, parents and teachers work together to brainstorm ways they can work together to help all children succeed.

Schools, churches, YMCAs and libraries have all hosted Parent Academies. They work hard to eliminate any obstacles that might keep parents from being able to attend. Child care and a meal are often provided. The workshops are held in accessible locations, and/or transportation is provided. Parents are invited to Parent Academies by personal invitations from other parents (the most powerful invitation), personal invitations from teachers, phone calls, flyers, newspaper articles, and posters.

If you would like to know more about Parent Academies go to, www.ode.state.oh.us/families/.

### *Co-workers*

School communities also are presented with many opportunities to partner with parents as *co-workers*. Parents can serve in paid staff positions before, during and after-school. Table 7.5 presents examples of co-worker roles for parents.

**Table 7.5: Example co-worker roles for parents**

- Translators
- Teacher's aides
- Coaches
- Club leaders
- Home-visitors
- Greeters
- Home-work monitors
- Workshop leaders
- Parent mentors
- Family-school liaisons
- Tutors
- Office assistants
- PTA/PTO leaders
- Lectures/Teacher on special topics
- Library aides
- Child mentors
- Leadership and decision making
- Advisors
- School bond issue organizers
- Others…

In addition, parents can provide needed expertise to other parents through mentoring, leading parent support groups, teaching classes and sharing skills with other parents. Parents offer a link to the community and other families that outside professionals often do not have. Family Resource Centers in schools can be set up and staffed by parents. These same parents can conduct home-visits to other parents in the school.

Volunteering is a traditional school-based role for parents in schools, though this type of role is not feasible for many parents facing issues of poverty, difficult work schedules, lack of transportation, or family demands. Still, there are parents willing to take on volunteer positions in the school, in after-school programs or in community agencies. It is important for program leaders to provide training for volunteers in order to increase the volunteer's comfort and effectiveness with their job. Volunteers may do many of the jobs listed above, but are also possible advocates for children and education at school board and city council meetings. They also can be vocal constituents with legislators.

A family resource center in a Missouri middle school has a "chill out space" that contributes to the school's desire to be "a cool school." Teachers and parent classroom aides refer and bring kids who are having a bad time or bad day. Specially trained parents responsible for the chill out space calm and counsel the child. As needed, they contact the social worker and the children's parents and make home visits. This strategy unites social and health services with school improvement. It also prevents serious disruptions in classrooms and schools, while supporting the teacher and preventing the social workers' caseload from skyrocketing.

## *School communities helping and supporting families*

When families fail to respond to communications and invitations from school communities they are often considered "hard to reach". It is the experience of many educators that the families of their lowest achieving students are often the hardest to reach. Because family engagement is essential to student achievement, healthy development and overall school success, it is essential that we adopt different strategies for engaging these "hard to reach" families (i.e., those who

might benefit the most from our support and connections to services). Our "hard-to-reach" families must become our "high priority" families.

Our "high-priority" families often experience many challenges that prevent them from being involved in the school and in the lives of their children. These barriers limit traditional parent involvement, and include factors such as socio-economic status, social isolation, cultural differences between parents and teachers, parents' sense of efficacy within the school, parents' educational experiences in school, parents' time commitments and family responsibilities, and race and ethnicity if they are faced with racial discrimination (Alameda, 2003; Barton et. al., 2004; Briar-Lawson, 2000; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Gettinger & Guetschow, 1998; Lynn & McKay, 2001; McNeal, 1999). Figure 7.1 describes these relationships.

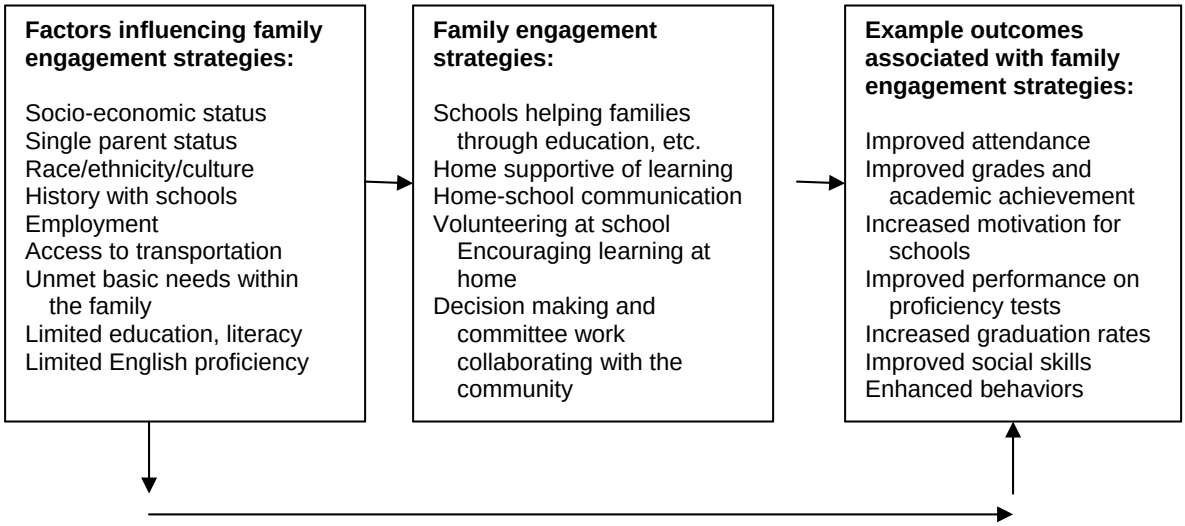



***Figure 7.1****: Adapted from: Ward, Kwiatkowski, and Anderson-Butcher (2006)*

Given these underlying factors that predict traditional involvement, one of the most effective ways to support family engagement is by helping parents and families meet their basic needs. By addressing these barriers, schools can help increase parents' time, flexibility, skills, motivation and energy to become involved in schools in traditional ways. Identifying ways for parents to be *co-learners* and *co-supporters* is an essential strategy when family engagement is examined from this perspective.

### *Co-learners*

Providing for the learning needs of families is an important support school communities can offer to families. School communities across the country have served this purpose by providing families of the children in their schools with GED classes, English as a Second Language classes, job skills training, parenting classes, family literacy programs, and more. Deciding on which programs to offer should be guided by input from families regarding their education needs and those of their children. Programs for family literacy to consider are available through ODE and include: Reading First–Ohio, Adult Basic Literacy Education (ABLE), Head Start, Even Start, and Title programs through NCLB.

Some school communities have used the welfare-to-work programs that are being tested in every state to become key occupational ladders for parents who have been long-term welfare recipients. Schools and/or community agencies can receive supports from TANF to hire parents to serve in paraprofessional roles (such as parents using the school as a work site). In many cases, there will be special aid to help parents. Other school communities have used modest parent stipends and honorariums to recruit diverse families into teaching, health and social service careers. Parents receive monthly support for their leadership and learning.
In addition, parents trained for these paraprofessional roles also bring a community perspective that helps to give more relevance to instructional, social and health strategies. For example, parents may be very effective in locating truant youth as they are often aware of hiding places. Parents and other youth often know about a youth who is homeless and who may be absent because of family stress. Much of this local, neighbor-to-neighbor information is often unavailable to professionals. Parents build bridges between other parents and children, but they also improve teachers' and health and social service providers' effectiveness. For instance, parents can do outreach to other parents to motivate them to come to the school for special meetings or conferences. They are able to approach families with whom professionals have enjoyed little success.

Furthermore, parents who have been trained can provide services to low risk and no-risk children. In this way, they respond to the needs of children and, at the same time, to the increasing caseloads of some social workers, psychologists and other student supportive service personnel.

### *Co-supporters*

Families provide support to children and youth, to schools and to communities. At the same time, families need support structures, especially when the resources of the family are stressed. These support structures include extended family, supportive friends, strong neighborhoods, faith communities, dependable employment and effective schools. With family support structures in place, children are more likely to have the assets they need for positive youth development and learning.

Here, it also is important to emphasize that when families are supported, stabilized and strong, children and youth have the best chances of enjoying healthy development, and they are ready and able to learn and achieve at school. Furthermore, when families are supported, stable and strong, and when schools help them become and remain this way, families are less likely to move. In turn, when families move less, student mobility, also called turnover or transience, is reduced, and this is an important contribution to school improvement.

> Clearly, most social interventions designed to strengthen families occur through programs or centers, involving staff, physical space and activities. At the same time, the best such programs and centers are more than a set of activities and curricula. They create opportunities for families to exercise leadership, and they serve as community-building anchors (Bruner, 2004).

School communities have the opportunity to help strengthen and support the families they serve, and by that same action strengthen the environments in which children are learning and growing. Family support offered by schools and their partnering community agencies may include cash assistance programs, parenting classes, divorce or grief support groups, immunization clinics, counseling and other mental health resources, child care co-ops, and others. Often, these services are streamlined and coordinated through parent -staffed and -led family resource centers.

Parent-Family Resource Centers facilitated by specially trained parent-family coordinators are two key facilitators for family engagement (e.g., Briar-Lawson, et al., 1998; Kalafat & Illback, 1998). Centers provide an adult-friendly place. Coordinators provide an adult-friendly atmosphere. Coordinators also serve as intermediaries and advocates for parents needing help with their efforts to communicate and work effectively with teachers, principals and service providers at the school.

As the parent-family center becomes more established, families take charge of it. Parents are trained and supported to serve as co-leaders, intermediaries, and recruiters and supporters of other parents. The center, its operations and the benefits provided to the school and to families are sustained in the process. Programs such as these strengthen and support families, who in turn provide more stable support for their children.

School communities also can plan for occasions for families to get to know each other, helping families to build more connections with the families in their community. Educators, parent leaders and community agency staff can talk with families about their level of connectedness to family and community, looking for ways to build on those connections. Developing opportunities for parent leadership in the school community, and partnering with parents as co-workers are additional ways that school communities can support parents as co-supporters of their family and community. Special attention should be given to isolated families (often considered “hard to reach”) for developing support structures with neighbors, other school families, school personnel and community agencies.

## *Addressing common barriers to family engagement*

Research documents the following barriers to family engagement (Caspe, Traub, & Little, 2002; Christenson, 2003; Epstein & Dauber, 1991; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997). Each is described briefly along with strategies for reducing the barrier.

### Barrier: School perceptions about parents and their roles

First, families experience organizational barriers within the school that often deter their involvement. For a number of reasons, school personnel oftentimes do not engage in meaningful ways with parents. There is limited communication between the home and the school; and many times schools are seen as unfriendly places for parents and families. Table 7.6 presents common school perceptions about parents and their roles barriers and makes suggestions about how to address them.

| *Table 7.6: School perceptions about parents and their roles - Specific barriers and minimizing strategies* | |
|---|---|
| **Barrier: School perceptions about parents and their roles**<br><br>• School personnel have limited knowledge about effective and meaningful practices for partnering with families<br>• School personnel have low sense of efficacy for their own ability to partner with families<br>• School personnel do not believe family engagement will make a difference in student outcomes, and blame families for low achievement<br>• School personnel believe they are the professionals, and minimize the roles of parents and families in learning<br>• School personnel discourage family involvement in the classroom and school<br>• Policies and practices exist that exclude parents or some groups of parents (i.e. fathers, working parents, grandparents, etc.)<br>• School climate is not family-friendly<br>• School personnel have negative past experience with families<br>• There is limited or unfriendly communication between school and home<br>• School personnel do not communicate with families about course or assignment expectations<br>• Communication between the school and the families is often driven by crises and problems<br>• Families lack of understanding of new standards, course content or class expectations<br>• Others… | **Minimizing strategies**<br><br>• Provide professional development for school personnel on effective strategies for engaging families<br>• Set aside work time for classroom teachers to spend contacting families<br>• Include expectations for working with families in the job description/duties of each school personnel<br>• Establish a family resource center<br>• Welcome families into the building and honor parent efforts to help their children at home<br>• Appoint a "coordinator" of family engagement – a point person for facilitating family engagement and support activities for the school community<br>• Create a team for planning and implementing family engagement in your school community (include teachers, parents, community representatives and your principal)<br>• Create and disseminate a family engagement policy with parent representatives<br>• Use friendly language in communication between school and home<br>• Communicate assignments and other course expectations to parents so they may monitor their children's progress<br>• Communicate with families early and frame contacts in positive language<br>• Clearly communicate course expectations and rubrics for assignments in student language<br>• Others… |

### Barrier: Limited views on family engagement

Most family engagement strategies developed by schools are only attractive to certain "types" of parents. Many parents do not have the skills, motivation and/or time to participate in their children's schools and lives (Alameda, 2003; Briar-Lawson, Lawson, Rooney, Hansen, White et al., 1997). Traditional family engagement strategies that assume families have their basic needs met do not necessarily work for all parents and families. Table 7.7 presents common limited views on family engagement barriers and makes suggestions about how to address them.

| *Table 7.7: Limited views on family engagement - Specific barriers and minimizing strategies* | |
|---|---|
| **Barrier: Limited views on family engagement**<br><br>• Family engagement strategies primarily involve activities where parents are asked to help the schools<br>• Expectations that all parents have the skills, time, energy and abilities to be involved in schools<br>• Many family engagement opportunities are not meaningful<br>• Strategies do not address various personal and family obstacles that limit family engagement (see below)<br>• Others… | **Minimizing strategies**<br><br>• Begin asking what the schools can do for parents; as opposed to only thinking about what parents can do for schools<br>• Keep track of the parents who you do, and do not reach – adapt strategies to engage "high priority families"<br>• Find ways for families to be engaged in meaningful activities in the school community<br>• Invite parents frequently to become involved in their child's education and healthy development – give them a wide variety of specific requests from educators for parents to help for child, other children or for the school<br>• Offer opportunities for families to serve as leaders within the school community<br>• Provide families with requisite training so they may be successful at their leadership roles<br>• Provide GED programs, adult literacy, technology classes, and other programs to support families' learning<br>• Develop parent support programs and neighbor-to-neighbor initiatives to build social capital<br>• Others… |

### Barrier: Personal and family obstacles

Families experience many personal and family obstacles that keep them from participating in the youth's learning. Specifically, some families may be struggling with not being able to meet their basic daily needs. When this occurs, families are unable to focus on other areas of their lives, including helping their children succeed in school. Table 7.8 presents common personal and family obstacles barriers and makes suggestions about how to address them.

| *Table 7.8: Personal and family obstacles - Specific barriers and minimizing strategies* | |
|---|---|
| **Barrier: Personal and family obstacles**<br><br>• Poverty<br>• Parents do not have the time, energy or skills to engage in ways desired by the school<br>• Families have many unmet needs that interfere with their ability to engage in the school<br>• Availability of resources of time and money, family stability, accessibility (school or community agency distance from home)<br>• Parents have limited educational levels and have limited knowledge and skills for helping child<br>• Work schedules ( #1 issue sited by fathers)<br>• Divorce (strongly impacts a father's access to children; lack of father's support effects academic development for children as well as | **Minimizing strategies**<br><br>• Assess parent and family needs and provide services and supports in response<br>• Assist families with accessing cash assistance, job training, employment and other vital services<br>• Provide child care, food and transportation for events<br>• Hold conferences, tutoring and other events at times and places that are easily accessible to families (consider family members who work long hours)<br>• Give parents specific ideas for how they can help their child with the skills and knowledge they are expected to gain each school year<br>• Demonstrate parenting skills or how to do |

| | |
|---|---|
| social and emotional development)<br>• Unsafe neighborhoods (restrict family travel, especially in the evening)<br>• Lack of transportation<br>• Others… | learning activities with a child<br>• Consider the unique needs of fathers, grandparents and others caring for children when planning and scheduling events<br>• Include both parents in all communications when children have non-custodial parents<br>• Others… |

### Barrier: Language, culture and past experiences

Language, culture and past experiences can sometimes hinder the way in which the school is able to communicate with the family and can pose additional risks for the student. Table 7.9 presents common language, culture, and past experience barriers and makes suggestions about how to address them.

***Table 7.9: Language, culture and past experiences - Specific barriers and minimizing strategies***

| **Barrier: Language, culture and past experiences** | **Minimizing strategies** |
|---|---|
| • Language used at home is different than language used at school<br>• Limited resources for translating communication to languages of families<br>• Families do not view the role of the parent as important in helping with education<br>• Families and parents do not view the teacher and school with respect<br>• Parents have negative feelings or distrust of educators because of past experiences<br>• There are cultural and intergenerational effects that impact the degree to which certain populations engage in schools (i.e., grandparents, Native American populations, etc.)<br>• Parents have limited educational levels<br>• Parents have feelings of inadequacy for helping child with school work (low sense of efficacy)<br>• Others… | • Offer ESL and adult literacy classes<br>• Meet with families to hear about their dreams and aspirations for their children – talk about how their goals and the school goals for children can be achieved through partnership<br>• Clearly communicate expectations to families and work together to come to agreement on a role for the parents that fits with their expectations, skills and resources<br>• Translate all communications for parents into the primary language of the family<br>• Have translators available for parent meetings, conferences and home-visits<br>• View parents' distinct engagement strategies as their cultural style rather than their level of investment in education<br>• Be sensitive to parent's prior negative experiences with school and community agencies<br>• Let parents know specifically how they can positively effect their child's learning and health development<br>• Treat the cultural capital of parents as valuable and try to build on it to create stronger connections between schools and communities<br>• Recognize school-based expectations of parents as one set of cultural beliefs (among several) about the appropriate role of parents in education<br>• Utilize the community-based forms of social capital in racial minority communities<br>• Others… |

## *Conclusion*

Family engagement that improves the healthy development and education of children requires three key components:

- First, it requires firm commitments by educators, service providers and youth development leaders, especially the commitment to view families as genuine partners with expertise about what they and their children want and need.

- Second, it requires a comprehensive plan that has a dual focus: it pinpoints the contributions of family engagement to school improvement and also prioritizes the ways in which school improvement benefits and supports families. Furthermore, this kind of family engagement plan is most powerful when it includes key programs, services and strategies aimed at the "high priority" parents – especially parents whose children predictably are experiencing difficulties at school.

- Third, this kind of powerful family engagement also requires infrastructure supports. These supports start with a parent-family coordinator who assembles a team of representative parents. These supports also include family friendly facilities at school.

Hopefully, this chapter has convinced you that the work of family engagement is not just worthwhile; it is absolutely essential to school improvement, youth development and closing the achievement gap. Recruiting and mobilizing others is critical to your success. No one person, program or service can achieve the enormous potential of family engagement. Like health and social services, family engagement is a shared responsibility. Schools, families and community agencies have key roles to play.

School communities are in a unique position to build relationships with families, to support parents in their critical role as parents, to support families by providing and linking them to needed services, to develop parent leaders, to help families support learning at home, to give parents opportunities to learn, and to work together with families to provide the best school communities and community services for the children in your community. These important activities and contributions are merely examples of what you and others can initiate. Your leadership in promoting and implementing powerful family engagement strategies will improve outcomes for youth, schools, families and communities.

## *References*

Adams, K.S., & Christenson, S.L. (2000). Trust and the family-school relationship: Examination of parent-teacher differences in elementary and secondary grades. *Journal of School Psychology, 38*(5), 477-497.

Alameda, T. (2003). *Empowerment, social support, and self-esteem of parents involved in an elementary school program.* Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Florida International University, Miami, FL.

Anderson-Butcher, D. (2006). Building effective family support programs and interventions. In C. Franklin, M. Harris, & P. Allen-Meares (Eds.). *School Social Work and Mental Health Worker's Training and Resource Manual.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Barton, A.C., Drake, C., Perez, J.G., St. Louis, K., & George, M. (2004). Ecologies of parental engagement in urban education. *Educational Researcher, 33*(4), 3-12.

Boone, B. J. W. (2002). Family-school connections: A study of parent involvement in Ohio's partnership schools. *Dissertations Abstracts International, 63*(4), 1195.

Briar-Lawson, K., Lawson, H.A., Rooney, B.J., Hansen, V., White, L.G., Radina, E., & Herzog, K.L. (1997). *From parent involvement to parent empowerment and family support: A resource guide for school community leaders.* Oxford, OH: Institute for Educational Renewal, Miami University.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The Ecology of Human Development*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Buckman, R. B. (1976). The impact of EBCE: An evaluator's view-point. *Illinois Career Education Journal, 33*(3), 32-36.

Caspe, M.S., Traub, F.E., and Little, P.M.D. (2002). Beyond the head count: Evaluating family involvement in out-of-school time. *Issues and Opportunities in Out-of-School Time Evaluation, 4.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard Family Research Project, Harvard Graduate School.

Christenson, S. (2003). The family-school partnership: An opportunity to promote the learning competence of all students. *School Psychology Quarterly, 18*(4), 454-482.

Christenson, S. (2004). *Parent-teacher partnerships: Creating essential connections for children's reading and learning.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard Family Research Project. Retrieved October 27, 2004, from http://www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/content/projects/fine/resources/materials/parent-teacher_module.pdf

Christenson, S., & Sheridan, S.M. (2001). *School and Families: Creating essential connections forlearning*. New York: Guilford Press.

Comer, J.P. (1995). *School power: Implications of an intervention project.* New York: Free Press.

Comer, E.W., & Fraser, M.W. (1998). Evaluation of six family support programs: Are they effective? *Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Human Services, 79*(2), 134-148.

Delgado-Gaitan, C. (1992). School matters in the Mexican-American home: Socializing children to education. *American Educational Research Journal, 29*(3), 495-513.

Eccles, J. S. & Harold, R. D. (1996). Family involvement in children's and adolescents' schooling. In A. Booth & J. F. Dunn (Eds.). *Family-school links: How do they affect educational outcomes?* (pp. 3-34). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Association.

Epstein, J.L. & Dauber, S.L. (1991). School programs and teacher practices of parent involvement in inner-city elementary and middle schools. *The Elementary School Journal, 91*, 289-305.

Epstein, J.L., Sanders, M.G., Simon, B.S., Salinas, K.C., Jansorn, N.R., & Van Voorhis, F.L. (2002). *School, family, and community partnerships: Your handbook for action.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Faires, J., Nichols, W.D., & Rickelman, R. (2000). Effects of parental involvement in developing competent readers in first grade. *Reading Psychology, 21*(3), 195-215.

Fischer, R.L. (2003). School-based family support: Evidence from an exploratory field study. *Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Human Services, 84*(3), 339-347.

Gettinger, M. & Guetschow, K. W. (1998). Parental involvement in schools: Parent and teacher perceptions of roles, efficacy, and opportunities. *Journal of Research and Development in Education, 32*(1), 38-52.

Goldenberg, C., & Gallimore, R. (1995). Immigrant Latino parent's values and beliefs about their children's education: Continuities and discontinuities across cultures and generations. In P. Pintrich & M. Maehr (Eds). *Advances in achievement motivation*. Vol. 9 (pp.183-228). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

Henderson, A. T. & Berla, N. (Eds.). (1994). *A new generation of evidence: The family is critical to student achievement.* Washington, DC: National Committee for Citizens in Education.

Henderson, A., Jacob, B., Kernan-Schloss, A. & Raimondo, B. (2004). *The Case for Parent Leadership.* Lexington, KY: Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence.

Henderson, A.T. & Mapp, K.L. (2002). *A new wave of evidence: The impact of school, family, and community connections of student achievement.* Austin, TX: National Center for Family & Community Connections with Schools.

Ho, Sui-Chu, E. (2004). *Family influence on 15 year-old students: A comparative study of the pacific rim in PISA 2000.* Paper presented at the 12th International Roundtable on School, Family and Community Partnerships, San Diego, CA.

Ho, Sui-Chu, E., & Willms, J.D. (1996). Effects of parental involvement on eighth-grade achievement. *Sociology of Education, 69*(2), 126-141.

Hoover-Dempsey, K. V. & Sandler, H.M. (1997). Why do parents become involved in their children's education? *Review of Educational Research, 67*, 3-42.

Keith, T.Z., & Keith, P.B. (1993). Does parental involvement affect eighth-grade student achievement? Structural analysis of national data. *School Psychology Review, 22*(3), 474-496.

Kumpfer, K.L., & Alvarado, R. (2003). Family-strengthening approaches for the prevention of youth problem behaviors. *American Psychologist, 58*(6/7), 457-465.

Lawson, H., & Briar-Lawson, K. (1997). *Connecting the dots: Progress toward the integration of school reform, school-linked services, parent involvement, and community schools.* Oxford, OH: Institute for Educational Renewal, Miami University.

Lynn, C.J., & McKay, M.M. (2001). Promoting parent-school involvement through collaborative practice models. *School Social Work Journal, 26*(1), 1-14.

Mapp, K. (2003). Having their say: Parents describe why and how they are engaged in their children's learning. *The School Community Journal, 13*(1), 35-64.

Marzano, R.J. (2003). *What Works In Schools: Translating research into action.* Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

McNeal, R.B. (1999). Parental involvement as social capital: Differential effectiveness on science achievement, truancy and dropping out. *Social Forces, 78*, 117-144.

McKay, M. M. & Stone, S. (2000). Influences on urban parent involvement: Evidence from the national education longitudinal study. *School Social Work Journal, 25*(1).

McWilliam, R. A., Tocci, L., & Harbin, G. L. (1998). Family-centered services: Service providers' discourse and behavior. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education, 18*(4), 206-221.

Palenchar, D.R., Vondra, J.I., & Wilson, J.A. (2001). *Parental involvement in the home and at school as predictors of early school functioning in an urban, low-income sample.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Seattle, WA.

Quigley, D. D. (2000). *Parents and teachers working together to support third grade achievement: Parents as Learning Partners findings: CSE Technical Report 530.* Los Angeles, CA: Los Angeles Compact on Evaluation/National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing.

Reynolds, A.J., Temple, J.A., Robertson, D.L., & Mann, E. (2001). Long-term effects of an early childhood intervention on educational achievement and juvenile arrest: A 15-year follow-up of low-income children in public schools. *Journal of the American Medical Association, 285*(18), 2339-2346.

Rutherford, B., Anderson, B., & Billig, S. (1995). *Studies of Education Reform: Parent and Community Involvement in Education*: *Final Technical Report, I.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved August 4, 2004, from http://www.ed.gov/PDFDocs/.

Sanders, M.G. (1998). The effects of school, family, and community support on the academic achievement of African American adolescents. *Urban Education, 33*(3), 385-409.

Shaver, A.V., & Walls, R.T. (1998). Effect of Title I parent involvement on student reading and mathematics achievement. *Journal of Research and Development in Education, 31*(2), 90-97.

Trumball, E., Rothstein-Fisch, C., Grenfield, P.M., Quiroz, B. (2001). *Bridging cultures between home and school: A guide for teachers.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

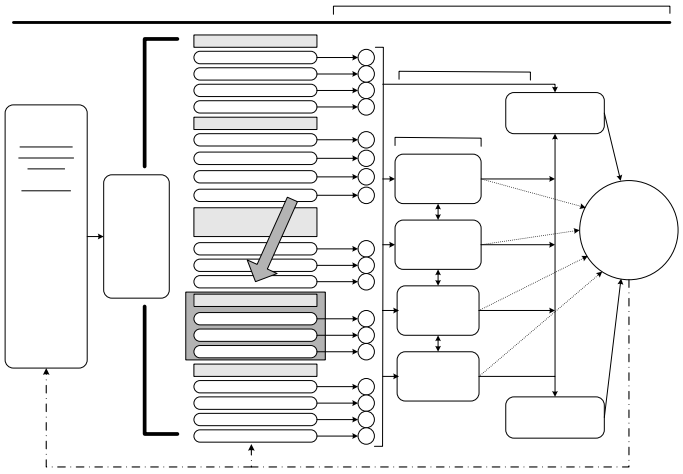
Trusty, J. (1999). Effects of eighth-grade parental involvement on late adolescents' educational experiences. *Journal of Research and Development in Education, 32*(4), 224-233.

U.S. Department of Education. (2004). *Parental involvement: Title I, part A, non-regulatory guidance.* Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education.

Ward, H., Anderson-Butcher, D., & Kwiatkowski, A. (1006). Effective strategies for involving parents in schools. In C. Franklin, M. Harris, & P. Allen-Meares (Eds.). *School Social Work and Mental Health Worker's Training and Resource Manual.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

# Health and Social Services

## Introduction



It is important that all students come to school ready and able to learn because learning readiness is a prerequisite to school success and improvement. Unfortunately, some youth come to school who are not ready and able to learn. As described in the needs and resources assessment chapter, "non-academic barriers" often get in the way of creating the right conditions for students and families. Table 8.1 presents examples of these non-academic barriers to learning that must be taken into consideration within designing program and service strategies related to health and social services within the Ohio Community Collaboration Model for School Improvement (OCCMSI).

**Table 8.1: Example non-academic barriers**

| Example child-related barriers | Example family-related barriers |
|---|---|
| • Schools are under-funded, in general<br>• Mental health and/or physical health needs<br>• Lack of coping and social skills<br>• Insufficient sleep and nutrition<br>• Learning challenges such as dyslexia<br>• Repeated aggressiveness and violent behavior<br>• Substance abuse problems<br>• Juvenile delinquency<br>• Others… | • Parent un- or under-employment challenges<br>• Housing stressors<br>• Family conflict<br>• High family mobility rates<br>• Parents' unmet mental health and/or physical health needs<br>• Lack of social supports and a sense of isolation<br>• Perceived racism and discrimination<br>• Others… |
| **Example peer-related barriers** | **Example community-related barriers** |
| • Associations with gang involved peers<br>• Associations with violent peers<br>• Associations with others involved in criminal activities, substance use, etc.<br>• Peer attitudes and beliefs related to antisocial behaviors<br>• Others… | • Lack of recreational and/or social opportunities<br>• Lack of community cohesiveness and collective efficacy<br>• Lack of affordable quality child care<br>• Air, water and environmental quality problems<br>• Community antisocial norms<br>• Availability of drugs and alcohol<br>• Others… |

Some of these barriers are health-related. Examples of health-related barriers include unmet dental and medical needs. Medical and dental services are two kinds of health services designed to meet these needs. Additionally, schools offer other health-related programs and services such as health education and promotion programs, including physical activity programs. They also offer nutrition programs because nutrition affects students' physical well-being, growth and development, readiness to learn and risk of disease (ODE School Climate Guidelines, 2004).

Other non-academic barriers to learning can be classified as social and developmental. These barriers include child abuse and neglect, domestic violence, substance abuse, mental health needs and family-related problems. Social services are designed to meet these needs.

Each school community confronts important issues regarding how to design, locate and operate its health and social services in order to address non-academic barriers to learning, academic achievement, healthy development and success in school. For example, important issues loom regarding the roles and functions social and health service providers can and should perform. For example, how much responsibility should schools assume for the provision of services? Which ones should be located at school? And, when social and health service providers are located at school, can they also assist with instructional planning for students under their care?

Important questions like these structure the discussion in this chapter. It is designed to help you and other school community leaders make good decisions about service design and delivery. It also is designed to ensure that social and health services become an integral component in school improvement. This starts with your understanding of the contributions these services can make to positive school climates, learning and academic achievement. It also requires that you and other school community leaders know why and how to connect service providers with classroom teachers.

## *What do we mean by health and social services?*

Every student should come to school free of various kinds of barriers to their learning, academic achievement and healthy development. Unfortunately, many students are not free of these barriers. Health, mental health, social, cultural, economic and family barriers, individually and in various combinations limit some students' learning, academic achievement and success in school Further, they complicate the work of teachers, principals and student support professionals.

Health and social services are designed to address and prevent these non-academic barriers. They are often defined by who owns and operates them (Adelman & Taylor, 1998). School-owned and -operated services include student support professionals such as school counselors, psychologists, social workers and behavioral specialists. Community-owned and -operated services involve the providers and services that are located in the community. There also are government-based services, which include services provided by the government to provide financial and medical assistance.

Whether services are school- or community-owned, services offered at the school are called *school-based services*. They are available because the school's student supportive service staff (i.e., school counselors, social workers, etc.) provide them or because service providers have re-located these services to the school. In other words, these services are co-located at the school. With this arrangement, both educators and service providers may claim they are developing "full-service schools" or "multi-service schools." Your job is not necessarily to develop one of these schools.

Rather, your job is to ensure students have access to services, especially the services essential to learning and academic achievement. This requires an inventory; you and other leaders must determine which services students (and their families) need, including where they should be offered. This inventory also must address newly-developing needs and conditions, the gaps in existing services, and the opportunities to link schools with community agencies.

Services offered in the community, and in partnership with the school, are called *school-linked services.* Community-based service providers include juvenile justice officers, social workers, psychologists, pediatricians, dentists, child welfare workers and family support workers. These community-based and school-linked services necessitate referral mechanisms, communication networks, transportation assistance, and integrated service design strategies. They ensure that the school benefits, and at the same time kids and families are served effectively.

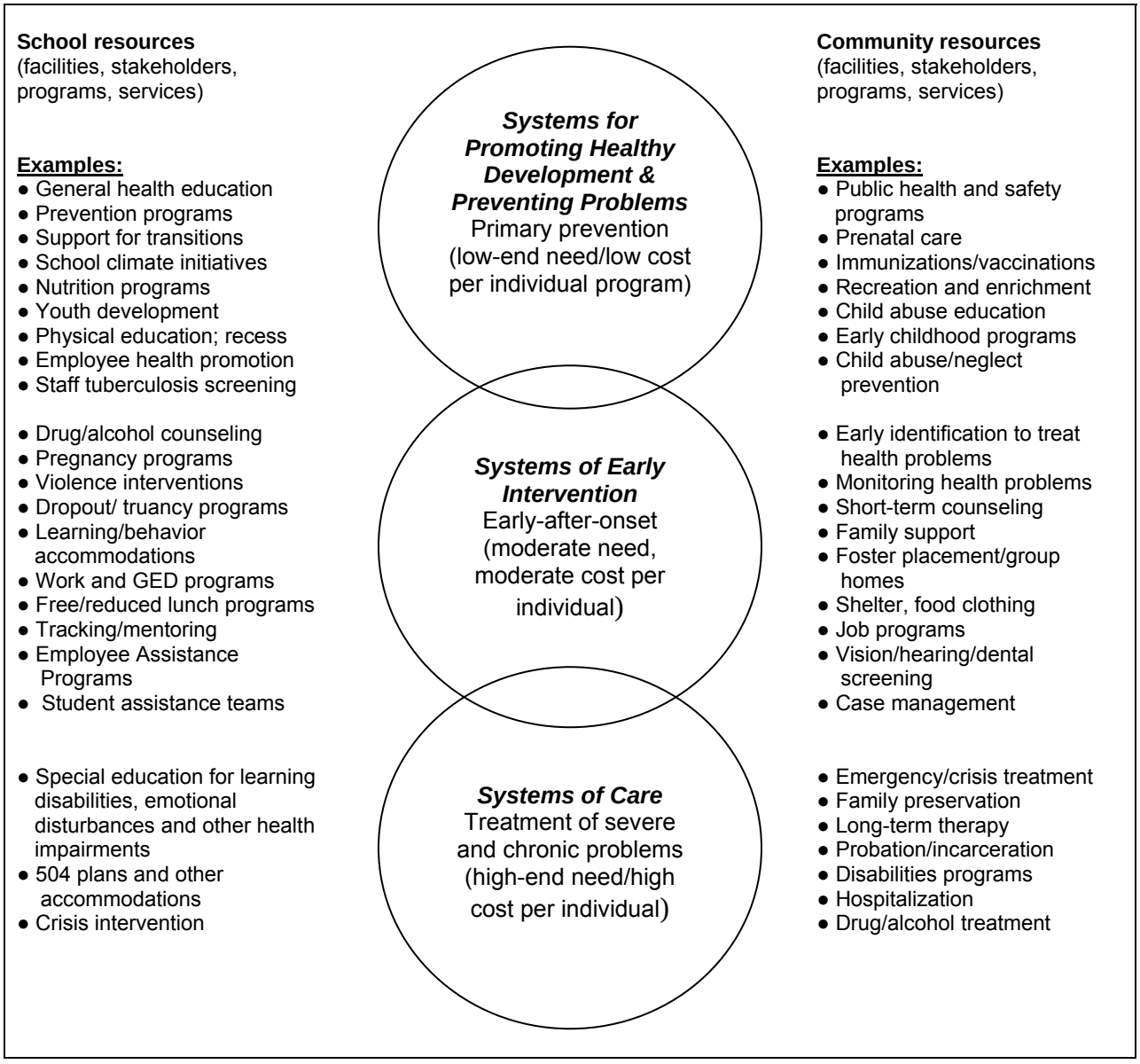
Figure 8.1 provides an overview of an expansive continuum of care related to the delivery of health and social services in schools (Adelman & Taylor, 1998; 2000a; 2000b; Browne, Gafni, Roberts, Byrne, & Majumdar, 2004). The continuum begins with primary prevention, health promotion, and youth development strategies targeted at the entire student population. It involves early intervention services directed toward targeted youth through the use of student assistance teams, school counselors, social workers, psychologists, and other support staff. It also includes more intensive interventions for youth with more critical problems and needs, and thus rely on important linkages to outside social and health service providers located in the community (particularly in relation to coordinated case management, accommodation plans, and individualized instruction).

Note that Figure 8.1 provides a dual inventory of school-owned and -operated and community-owned and -operated services; the aim is to maximize resources and avoid duplication. The key is to coordinate school-owned and -operated and community-owned and -operated services. It also is important to ensure the services offered at school are the ones students need in order to succeed in school. These services are the ones that target the various non-academic barriers to learning students bring with them to school.

Presently, too many teachers in too many of Ohio's schools confront daily students' non-academic learning barriers. Understandably, teachers are not prepared for the tasks at hand, and they do not want to be social workers, psychologists and nurses. However, they need help from these allied professionals and others. Teachers need this help to be "on call" – immediately available and responsive, much like the 911 system employed by police departments.

By necessity, educators and their community partners must develop a comprehensive, coherent, cohesive and feasible plan and system for getting services to teachers, students and families in need. Only then will they ensure that no child is left behind; and also that educators, especially classroom teachers, do not have to confront students' non-academic barriers alone – without sufficient services, supports, assistance and resources.

This continuum of services, while important, is simply an overview for your planning and development. The more important issue is whether services are effective, i.e., whether they improve outcomes by minimizing, removing and preventing non-academic barriers to learning, healthy development and academic achievement. The next section highlights the outcomes that are associated with school-based and/or -linked services health and social services.




Adapted from public domain documents written by H.S. Adelman & L. Taylor and circulated through the Center for Mental Health in Schools at the University of California at Los Angeles.

***Figure 8.1**: Comprehensive approach to addressing barriers to learning and promoting healthy development*

## *Outcomes associated with health and social services*

A great deal of research has pointed to the importance of health and social services. Research has documented significant improvements in important outcomes as well as reductions in problem behaviors. Table 8.2 provides important examples of both.

***Table 8.2: Key outcomes associated with health and social services***

| **Improvements in:** | **Reductions in:** |
|---|---|
| • Academic achievement<br>• Positive school climate<br>• Service accessibility<br>• Behavioral and emotional functioning<br>• Psychosocial functioning<br>• Social and life skills<br>• Self-control<br>• Self-efficacy and -concept<br>• Costs associated with mental health services<br>• Service utilization (i.e., access to care)<br>• Accuracy of diagnosis<br>• Service integration | • Drug and alcohol use<br>• Special education referrals<br>• Discipline problems<br>• Depression<br>• Disruptive, aggressive and violent behaviors<br>• Substance use<br>• Anxiety<br>• Withdrawn behaviors<br>• Duplication of services<br>• Worker isolation |

From: Armbuster & Lichtman, 1999; Catron, Harris, & Weiss, 1998; Chalfant & Pysh, 1989; Eggert, Thompson, Herting, Nicholas, & Dickers, 1994; Hawkins, Catalano, Kosterman, Abbot, & Hill, 1999; Hoagwood, & Erwin,1997; Hunter, 2004; Knoff & Batshe, 1995; Marx, 2003; Meyers, Sampson, Weizman, Rogers, & Kayne, 1989; Murphy, Pagano, Nachmani, Sperling, Kane, & Kleinman, 1998; Nabors & Reynolds, 2000; Rones & Hoagwood, 2000 ; Sindelar, Griffin, Smith, & Watanabe, 1992; Sallis et al., 1999; Schoener, Guerrero, & Whitney, 1988; Weist, Paskewitz, Warner, & Flaherty, 1996; Weist , Myers, Hastings, Ghuman, & Han, 1999.

In addition to these social and behavioral outcomes, research has emphasized important economic benefits. For example, for each dollar invested in comprehensive school health programs designed to prevent smoking, substance use, and other health behaviors will save upwards of 14 dollars in avoided health care costs for each dollar invested (Kolbe, Collins, & Cortese, 1997).

## *Key design principles and strategies in health and social services*

Service providers, in partnership with families and educators, make choices about the design and implementation of their services and service system. Services simply must be tailored to the local context, and specific services may vary based on the non-academic barriers presented by a child or a family. The most important alternatives include:

- *Student-centered services* involve service planning aimed at one child. Here, the child is viewed as an expert and a partner, and service providers collaborate with this "client" to develop and implement service plans and improve results.

- Within *family-centered services*, the unit for service planning, delivery and evaluation is the family system. As with student-centered services, parents, students and other family members are viewed as experts and partners, and professionals collaborate with them in order to do good work that improves results.

- *Integrated services (i.e., service integration)* involve service planning where service providers, both school- and community-based, work together when two or more of them serve the same child and family. Providers mesh their respective service interventions into a coherent, comprehensive plan, which requires them to "wrap around" the child, parent or family. Service integration, with its wrap-around service planning, responds to several service system problems such as duplication, competition and conflict, and lack of communication and coordination. These and other problems make children and families feel as if they are "caught in the middle," and results suffer.

- *Interprofessional collaboration* refers to new working arrangements among service providers, educators and other professionals working with the same schools, community agencies and families. Professionals collaborate because they learn they can not achieve the results for which they are accountable and reap other benefits if they continue to work alone. Oftentimes, these professionals' agencies (e.g., a school and a boys and girls club) develop formal partnership agreements and establish interagency collaborations.

These alternatives are not competing or mutually exclusive. To the contrary, service providers, educators and families may rely on all of them at some time, and all are supported by research.

Other research-supported design principles should guide the development of school-based and school-linked health and social services. Initially these programs should be grounded in the overarching design principles and strategies for successful programs. In addition, there are key principles and strategies that are critical to health and social service delivery. Table 8.3 and 8.4 present design principles for successful health and social service programs.

***Table 8.3: Check list of overarching design principles and/or strategies for successful programs***

| | |
|---|---|
| ☐ | Program is designed to create intended results |
| ☐ | The logic behind the program makes sense as the services link to outcomes |
| ☐ | Program uses multiple strategies to accomplish its goals (comprehensive) |
| ☐ | Program is evaluation-driven and continuously improved upon |
| ☐ | Program is research-supported and theoretically-sound |
| ☐ | A variety of teaching and learning strategies are used |
| ☐ | There is sufficient dosage |
| ☐ | The program is implemented the way it was originally designed |
| ☐ | Staff are well-trained in the program design |
| ☐ | Participants have a "say so" in how the program is structured and implemented |
| ☐ | Program is tailored to meet individual needs |
| ☐ | Program is appropriately timed and located |
| ☐ | Program is implemented in culturally competent ways |
| ☐ | Program is family-centered and -supportive |
| ☐ | Strategies foster self-determination and personal control |
| ☐ | Participants are empowered |
| ☐ | Participants' strengths are built upon in the program |
| ☐ | Positive relationships and bonding are created |
| ☐ | Program activities are enjoyable and meaningful to participants |
| ☐ | Staff are engaging |

| *Table 8.4: Key design principles and/or strategies for health and social services* | |
|---|---|
| **Principle and strategy** | **What this looks like** |
| **Critical structural components** | |
| Service coordinator | • A single person receives special preparation and support to oversee the operation of school-based and -linked services (i.e., typically a social worker, special educator, counselor or psychologist)<br>• This coordinator serves as the single point of contact for referrals and assistance<br>• The coordinator serves as the principal's designated representative on school-based and community-based service planning teams<br>• The coordinator develops effective working relationships with classroom teachers and has lead responsibility for developing the abilities to identify risks and problems, make referrals and work with other service providers<br>• The coordinator facilitates partnerships, collaboration and interprofessional service teams (service integration)<br>• The coordinator develops a service planning and delivery management team, which ensures that school and community resources are maximized and utilized |
| Comprehensive services | • Services are comprehensive enough to address the full range of student needs<br>• Services conform to best practice guidelines (e.g., family-centered, culturally-responsive, strengths-based, solution focused and results-oriented)<br>• Services address multiple domains and support systems (target families, communities, schools, peers, etc.)<br>• Services decrease risk factors and build protective factors simultaneously<br>• Services take into account the whole child and family system, including the impacts of economic and housing problems<br>• Schools offer planned k-12 health and physical education curricula addressing comprehensive healthy youth development<br>• Schools offer school health services to promote health for all students<br>• Schools offer a variety of nutritious and appealing meals for students<br>• Schools promote healthy school climates<br>• Schools offer health promotion for staff |
| Continuum of services | • A well planned continuum of services exists, encompassing prevention, early intervention and crisis-responsive services<br>• The continuum involves universal prevention/health promotion services to enhance protective factors<br>• School and community health education and promotion programs are included in this continuum<br>• There are key strategies in place to systematically identify and assess early problems and needs<br>• Referral processes are in place to link students and families to need resources and supports<br>• This continuum includes early detection-identification procedures and early intervention services<br>• The continuum is tailored to increase long-term interventions for high risk youth and families<br>• The continuum includes plans and protocols for classifying and reclassifying students and families as their conditions change |

| *Table 8.4: Key design principles and/or strategies for health and social services* | |
|---|---|
| **Principle and strategy** | **What this looks like** |
| | • Classroom experiences are included in when service planning occurs |
| Expands current school service continuum | • The continuum builds from the current school continuum involving student assistance teams, individualized education plan and 504 processes, grade level meetings, school supportive service staff, health and nutrition programs, and others<br>• The continuum also includes community resources and supports that further address unmet needs (school- and community-based mental health; interagency service delivery teams, school- and community-based youth development, etc.) |
| Interprofessional collaboration and service integration | • Assessments routinely seek to identify co-occurring needs in students and their families<br>• When a student and/or the family has two or more co-occurring and interlocking needs, two or more service providers and student support professionals work together to serve the same child and family<br>• Protocols are developed to facilitate information sharing and to protect the student's and the family's confidentiality<br>• Service providers mesh their respective services into one coherent and comprehensive plan<br>• Services are maximized and duplication is reduced<br>• Teachers and principals participate, as needed in service integration planning<br>• All professionals involved share responsibility for planning and accountability for results |
| School-agency partnerships | • Individuals and organizations plan and implement preventive and intervention strategies together in seamless, mutually beneficial ways<br>• Middle managers and supervisors in social and health service agencies strike agreements with their workers and with school leaders, ensuring that "everyone is on the same page"<br>• Policies, procedures and rules are changed, as needed, so organizations and people operate in harmony<br>• Partnerships are mutually beneficial and supportive |
| Case management | • Systems and interventions are monitored on an ongoing basis<br>• Follow up and accountability structures are in place<br>• Systems and interventions are improved upon as necessary |
| **Responsive to needs** | |
| Strategic | • Assessment data are examined to determine what types of needs and issues are evident in the school community<br>• Parents, families and youth are surveyed to determine where services should be located to facilitate use<br>• Parents, families and youth are surveyed to identify other key barriers and facilitators for service use<br>• Health and social services are provided that meet specific needs for youth and families in the school community<br>• Services are well thought out systems of care and are in place to maximize resource usefulness and reduce duplication |
| Availability | • Human resources exist in the community and school to support the delivery of health and social services |

| *Table 8.4: Key design principles and/or strategies for health and social services* | |
|---|---|
| **Principle and strategy** | **What this looks like** |
| Availability continued | • Fiscal resources exist in the community and school to support the delivery of health and social services<br>• Services are located where people in need will actually use them (i.e., availability and accessibility) |
| Flexibility | • Services are individualized and adapted as conditions and aspirations change<br>• Services are tailored to individual and family needs<br>• Services are adapted to fit the local context<br>• Services are modified and altered to meet ongoing progress needs |
| Least intrusive intervention | • Services are provided in the least intrusive manner as possible<br>• Youth or families who need more services will receive more services<br>• Youth or families who need fewer services will receive fewer services<br>• Services will be provided to those that need them without being more intrusive than required<br>• Service providers work closely with parents and families to ensure that their authority is preserved and strengthened |
| Access | • Service providers and educators routinely ask youth and families about the most convenient location(s) for service delivery<br>• Barriers to access are eliminated by strategic location of services, whether they be community- or school-based<br>• Assistance is provided to support access (i.e., child care, transportation, etc.)<br>• Services are provided at times that are convenient for those that need them<br>• Programs and services offered at the school are integrally linked with those offered in the community and vice versa (i.e., school-linked services)<br>• Students and families are linked with outside services in the community when health and social services are not available on the school site<br>• Programs and services are co-located to schools in order to enhance access to health and social services that are not usually accessible in particular areas (i.e., school-based services)<br>• Stigma associated with health and social service settings is reduced via school-based services |
| **Day-to-day operations** | |
| Confidentiality | • Confidentiality of health and social service information is maintained.<br>• Informed consent and assent, parent/guardian consent, and shared information agreements are used to protect individual's rights<br>• Teachers and other individuals working in and with schools understand and respect confidentiality<br>• Settings providing health and social services have private, confidential and comfortable physical space |
| Record keeping | • Records must be kept in locked cabinets where access is protected<br>• Shared information forms are used that provide written consent for communicating across systems |
| Language | • Specialized, discipline specific language is avoided<br>• Common languages that are understandable by various individuals, |

| *Table 8.4: Key design principles and/or strategies for health and social services* | |
|---|---|
| **Principle and strategy** | **What this looks like** |
| Language continued | especially youth and parents, are developed and used<br>• Translation services are provided for those who need them<br>• Materials about health and social services are publicized in appropriate languages for the target population |
| **Early identification, referral and coordination** | |
| Early identification | • Strategies are in place to screen and identify early signs and symptoms, ensuring interventions occur shortly after the onset of the problems<br>• Teachers and other essential individuals have the competencies to assess early signs and symptoms |
| Referral | • Referral networks linking youth and families to needed supports in schools and communities are in place<br>• Teachers and school staff understand the referral process (i.e., they know where to go for help) |
| Single point of contact | • A single point of contact exists, allowing individuals to know what to do when they see an initial need or problem<br>• A primary person is charged with coordinating and facilitating service delivery across the continuum |
| School-based coordinating teams | • Interagency representatives meet regularly to coordinate service delivery for students and families<br>• Services internal and external to the school are linked in order to provide more streamlined supports<br>• Representatives examine overall student, family and community data in order to assess needs for services<br>• Representatives examine overall resources and explore ways to bring additional supports to the table<br>• Representatives work on addressing gaps in services based on the needs and resource assessment |
| Assessment and triage | • Schools have a triage system that initially assesses needs and concerns, determining priorities for service delivery<br>• Students and families are appropriately linked with services and supports<br>• Channels exist so students and families are referred |
| Feeder systems and transitions | • Services are designed so they support elementary, middle and high school feeder systems to ensure youth and families are supported systemically across the service continuum<br>• Schools facilitate transitions for individuals and families across systems<br>• Efforts are in place to make transitions smooth for students and families (i.e., from elementary to middle school; fourth to fifth grade, school-to-work, school-to-college, etc.) |
| **Qualities of service providers** | |
| Understanding of schools | • Service providers in schools are trained in adolescent and child development and mental health<br>• Service providers in communities understand schools and their educational focus |

| *Table 8.4: Key design principles and/or strategies for health and social services* | |
|---|---|
| **Principle and strategy** | **What this looks like** |
| Staff competencies | • Workers have the appropriate knowledge and skills to do the work of which they are responsible<br>• School based service professionals have interdisciplinary training allowing them to better work across multiple service domains |
| Well-defined roles and responsibilities | • Health and social service workers both internal and external to the school have well-defined roles and responsibilities<br>• Roles and responsibilities are understood by those accessing services<br>• Roles and responsibilities are understood by those referring others for services |
| Clear expectations | • Organizations and individuals involved in providing health and social services have a clear understanding about their responsibilities<br>• Expectations are clear to others (i.e., individual roles and accountabilities)<br>• Memorandums of understanding among schools and community-based organizations exist to support this process |
| **Critical support** | |
| Public relations | • A marketing strategy is created to allow individuals to be aware of available services<br>• Proactive steps are taken in relation to public relations in order to inform stakeholders and alleviate potential opposition and controversy |
| Connections to classrooms | • General classroom curriculum for health education and promotion programs integrates program content, particularly that related to youth development and primary prevention<br>• Teachers that implement curriculum are appropriately trained and supported<br>• Teachers are informed about student and family progress<br>• Teachers provide ongoing assessments in relation to student progress and needs |
| Teacher support | • Strategies to support youth and families begin with classroom teachers<br>• Teachers receive support and training in how to identify, refer and address various needs and issues<br>• Time is allotted to consult regularly with teachers and other school staff |
| Value | • Schools understand the need to address non-academic barriers and see their role in the service continuum<br>• Health and social services providers value schools and understand their educational missions and mandates |
| Relationships | • Relationships and connections among youth and healthy adults, positive peers, practitioners, school, community, and/or culture are developed as services are delivered<br>• Relationships among teachers, school staff, supportive service staff and community-based service providers are built |
| Non-traditional helpers | • Parents/guardians, teachers, peers, custodians, secretaries and others are engaged and provide non-traditional support in relation to meeting youth and family needs<br>• Volunteers, aides, home visitors, peer mentors, etc. are recruited and |

| *Table 8.4: Key design principles and/or strategies for health and social services* | |
|---|---|
| **Principle and strategy** | **What this looks like** |
| Non-traditional helpers continued | utilized to meet youth and family needs |
| **Accountability** | |
| Outcomes focused | • Health and social services are delivered with the end goal of improving healthy youth development, enhancing learning and increasing academic achievement |
| Quality | • Health and social services providers use programs and strategies that are research-supported and evidence-based<br>• Health and social services providers implement programs and services with fidelity<br>• Programs and services are delivered with sufficient dosage to create outcomes |
| Shared accountability and ownership | • Partners involved in the continuum of services feel mutually responsible for students and family outcomes<br>• Students and families feel empowered and supported through the process |

From: Adelman & Taylor, 1998; 2000a; Anderson-Butcher, 2005; Briar-Lawson & Drews, 1998; Browne, Gafni, Roberts, Byrne, & Majumdar, 2004; Elias, 2002; Payton, Wardlaw, Graczyk, Bloodworth, Tompsett, & Weissberg, 2000; Weist, Sander, Walrath, Link, Nabors, Adelsheim, et al., 2005.

## *Other considerations in health and social services*

It is important to understand there are other considerations that influence the types of health and social services that are provided. Various phases related to the implementation of the health and social service continuum are explored. New roles and responsibilities are identified in relation to new priorities for schools; expectations and role clarity; single points of contact and streamlined referral processes; coordinating teams, case management, and lead responsibility; and overall legal considerations. Each one will be discussed as to their influence on the school community system.

### Phases of implementation

In the OCCMSI, the integration of health and social services with school improvement requires five key developmental and operational phases. These phases derive from the research and successful practice involving school-based and school-linked health and social service programs.

- First, a team of school and community service providers inventory school-owned and -operated and community-owned and -operated services and programs. In many of Ohio's counties, this inventory will reveal an undiscovered and untapped treasure – namely, service provider partnerships, which already are in place. Three notable examples are Partnerships for Success, Families and Children First Councils and Communities that Care, and there are others.

- Second, the health and social services team, in close consultation with students, families, classroom teachers and the principal, makes decisions about service location. They decide which services will be school-based – namely, those that teachers, students and student support professionals must have nearby for students' learning, academic achievement and sense of connection to school.

- Third, teachers and service providers develop the "on call", 911-like system that will operate at the school. Typically, teachers learn how to identify risk factors requiring services, and also how to refer students. Teachers also learn how to use service providers and students' service experiences as instructional resources. When it is feasible, service providers integrate instruction and services. This integrated approach is in stark contrast to the usual "fix, then teach" approach that divides service providers and teachers – and sometimes catches students and their families in the middle.

- Fourth, the team and the key persons they consult determine which services will be based and offered in the community, but with clear, effective linkages to school. They also determine how these school-linked services will stay connected to school, especially how they can support teachers and students in classrooms. Service planning also includes the school climate, aiming to establish, maintain and strengthen a dynamic, safe, health-enhancing and supportive learning environment.

- Fifth, the team and their key school and community consultants develop an integrated implementation-evaluation plan designed to ensure that services are effective and successful. This requires service designs that focus on improved access, more quality and higher accountability – as evidenced in an unrelenting focus on improved results. It also requires designs that recognize, eliminate and prevent fragmentation, duplication and undesirable competition.

## New roles and responsibilities

Given these five phases, the health and social services continuum requires new roles and responsibilities for those working in and with schools. New ways for connecting schools and health and social services systems are needed, and they require new ways of defining various roles and responsibilities. Schools and their community partners also must consider various legal issues evident when working across systems. Each of these areas is discussed in the following.

### *New priorities for schools*

With the advent of NCLB, schools have focused their reform efforts inwardly, concentrating on instructional strategies, curriculum alignment and standard-based accountabilities. Education indeed is the mission of schools; and many educators problem solve by teaching "harder" and "longer", as opposed to reaching outwardly and differently via expanded health and social service linkages.

The research identifies many conditions and needs that impact student success. The truth is schools cannot do their jobs of educating unless students come to school ready, able and motivated to learn. As such, perceptions about the school's role in addressing these non-academic barriers must change if the growing needs of youth today are met. Educators will have to expand their roles to work in partnership with others to address conditions, build strengths,

and support whole-child development; that is, if they truly want to get their arms around overall student achievement, in general.

### *Rethinking expectations and roles*

Many student supportive services staff (i.e., school social workers, counselors and psychologists) have been relegated to monitoring truancy and other behavioral issues, providing career and vocational training/advising, assessing for disabilities, and coordinating proficiency testing. In the model, these individuals' jobs are modified, allowing them to focus more of their time on providing direct services, collaborating with other service providers and working on service teams.

Similarly, health and social service providers in the community also must rethink their roles and responsibilities. They no longer provide services in isolation. They may deliver services at schools where youth and families are more likely to access them. They may sit on service teams, coordinating and linking both school and community supports for youth and families. They also may bring additional resources to the schools, providing case management and student advocacy in relation to unmet school needs.

Teachers also become active within the health and social service continuum. Traditionally, teachers and other school staff are often left out of service planning. Consistent with the traditional image of schooling, teachers teach and providers provide service. Specifically, teachers often want supportive service providers to "fix" students and return them when they are finished. In this model, teachers become agents of early identification, assessment and referral. These individuals see youth each day, have connections with parents/guardians, and are able to pick up on various needs and stressors. As such, early identification and referral often times begins in classrooms, and start with teachers. In response, teachers get the help they and the youth want and need.

In addition, new roles and responsibilities for "informal helpers" are created. For instance, parents/guardians have volunteered and/or been hired, trained and supported to provide classroom assistance, mentoring, hall monitoring, parent/guardian support and after-school programs (e.g., Briar-Lawson & Drews, 1999; Lawson & Briar-Lawson, 1997). Likewise, youth can take on new roles and responsibilities as they serve as peer leaders, bully-prevention specialists, playground monitors and mentors for younger children.

### *Single points of contact and streamlined referral processes*

Some needs and problems simply cannot be handled in the classroom. School communities who have successfully implemented comprehensive health and social service continuums often times designate single points of contacts, or one common referral place, that help streamline referral processes and service planning. This infrastructure typically starts with a point person in the school who is responsible for doing a preliminary assessment and triaging the referral to the appropriate channel in the school.

Where schools are concerned, and when more than one school is the planning unit, this point person often is someone from the district office. When it is just one school, it is often a school social worker. In other cases, schools can not do this work and an intermediary person from a local community-based organization does it.

Essentially, teachers identify needs and make strategic referrals. Strategic referral forms are helpful within this process. Specifically, teachers and other school staff may notice certain conditions that are impeding student success. In turn, they complete a referral form that describes the underlying issues, and directs youth and their family to the single point of contact who is then charged with triaging the supportive service response. Individuals and groups are then "on call" at the school and in the community in response to teachers' referrals.

### *Coordinating teams, case management and lead responsibility*

It also is helpful to have case-oriented teams such as triage, referral, case management, case progress review, teacher assistance or student support teams, and/or IEP teams. These specific teams focus on ensuring that everyone is working toward either the same or complementary goals for the youth and their families. These teams also may explore how people gain access to services, how resources are coordinated, determine what resources the school needs, and explore how to get the resources.

Ideally these teams are comprised of both school-based and community-based professionals. Using these teams, school supportive service staff (i.e., school social workers, counselors, nurses, etc) and local service providers (i.e., mental health providers, eligibility workers, advocates/mentors, child welfare workers, etc.) work together to streamline supports and services.

Someone involved in these case-oriented teams typically assumes lead responsibility; and is accountable for ensuring programs and services are offered in relation to identified youth and family needs. This lead person is charged with providing targeted interventions and supports, coordinating services and providing overall case management. Table 8.5 presents examples of case management roles.

**Table 8.5: Case management roles**

1. Link students and their families to needed health and social services that cannot be provided by case management team
2. Ensure through monitoring and evaluation that services are integrated and there is appropriate communication between providers, students and families
3. Advocate on behalf of the students to secure needed services and entitlements
4. Anticipate student crises
5. Assist in the facilitation of team meetings to plan, monitor and adjust coordinated services
6. Develop and maintain cooperative working relationships within the school among case management team members, teachers, counselors, administrators and outside the school with family members and health and social service providers
7. Assist professionals in determining the composition of each student needs
8. Provide the legwork needed to support true coordination and service integration
9. Foster collaboration among service providers and minimize turf and trust issues
10. Develop coordinated service plans
11. Linking multiple services provided for youth and families together in strategic ways
12. Evaluating and adjusting service plans based on changing needs and progress

From: Smith, et al., 1997; Rothman, 1992.

### *Legal considerations*

Individuals working within the health and social service continuum must be especially mindful of a multitude of legal considerations. These include:

- *Family Educational Rights And Privacy Act (FERPA)* protects the privacy of parents and students by requiring school districts to: (1) Provide a parent access to their child's educational records; (2) Provide a parent an opportunity to seek correction of records he/she believes to be inaccurate or misleading; (3) With some exceptions, obtain the written permission of a parent before disclosing information contained in the student's educational record; and (4) Annually inform parents of these rights under this act. (From: www.deltabravo.net/custody/ferpa.html)

- The *Protection of Pupil Rights section of the General Education Provisions Act* establishes standards related to the assessment or evaluation. Specifically, the act indicates that no student shall be required to submit to a survey, analysis or evaluation that reveals information about personal issues such as mental and psychological problems and/or anti-social or self-incriminating behaviors without the prior consent of the student (if the student is an adult or emancipated minor), or without the prior written consent of the parent. (From: www.ed.gov/legislation/GOALS2000/TheAct/sec1017.html)

- The *Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996* (HIPAA) regulates national standards and requirements that enable the electronic exchange of certain health information. Specifically, it realizes the trend toward the computerization of health information and how this trend may increase access to information, but also needs to protect the security and privacy of the information. Schools, organizations and others must be in compliance with several requirements related to this area.

- The *Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act and the related Ohio Statute* mandates known or suspected child abuse and neglect reporting by law by certain professionals, including individuals working in health care, mental health, social work, education, law, religion and child care fields. (From: http://nccanch.acf.hhs.gov/general/legal /statutes/manda.pdf)

In the end, these laws and others are designed to safeguard youth and family's rights and privacy, as well as ensure confidentiality. More specifically, they call for the use of parent and youth consent forms, shared information agreements, memorandums of understanding and creative insurance/liability policies. Stakeholders also must realize they are mandated reporters of suspected or known abuse and/or neglect. In the end, the ultimate goal of these policies is to protect youth and families. These regulations must be taken into account as schools and communities partner together to provide health and social services.

## *Common barriers in health and social services*

Several barriers exist when schools and communities strive to integrate and coordinate health and social services. The following section highlights specific barriers and provides strategies for minimizing the impact of each challenge.

Remember, the primary mission of schools is to develop and promote academic learning; health and social services are designed to achieve this mission. This relationship does not diminish the importance of these services. In fact, research and experience tell us that schools must gain control over non-academic barriers to learning if they are to be successful with their primary mission.

### Barrier: Perceptions of schools not as health and social service agencies

Nonetheless, public perceptions of school's roles and functions – and the family's primary roles and functions – often prove to be challenging. Simply stated, in this perception, the schools educate and the families are responsible for meeting students' needs. Social and health services, if they are needed at all, belong in the community, not in schools. These public perceptions comprise a major barrier to the development of a comprehensive, coherent and effective service system, one that is both school-based and school-linked; and one that focuses on the removal of non-academic barriers to improve learning and academic achievement. Table 8.6 presents common perceptions of schools not as health and social service agencies barriers and makes suggestions about how to address them.

***Table 8.6: Perceptions of schools not as health and social service agencies – Specific barriers and minimizing strategies***

| **Barrier: Perceptions of schools as not health and social service agencies** | **Minimizing strategies** |
|---|---|
| • There is a common belief that schools should only focus on students' learning and academic achievement<br>• Many have perceptions that academic achievement is enough, and non-academic barriers will go away simply as students get educated<br>• School staff feeling threatened by community service providers<br>• Teachers are already overburdened with classroom and teaching expectations; little time or energy to focus on the non-academic barriers to learning<br>• Teachers and other school staff are often resistant to addressing comprehensive youth development and family and/or community issues<br>• Teachers and other school staff do not value the role of supportive service staff<br>• There are challenges with pulling students out of regular class time for services<br>• There is an internal belief that community health and social service agencies duplicate and undermine the efforts of student support professionals at schools<br>• School-based services duplicate, and | • Emphasize that services at school are connected to learning and teaching support systems<br>• Increase public awareness, starting with the school board, of how many non-academic barriers students have that prevent learning and help to create an achievement gap<br>• Increase public awareness of how school staff effectively and efficiently remove and minimize barriers; and help teachers enable students' learning<br>• Educate community service providers about the role and missions of school; its policies and procedures, etc.<br>• Educate teachers and school staff on how to effectively and efficiently link students and families to programs and services and also to use service providers as instructional consultants<br>• Create streamlined referral systems and single points of contact that support teachers without overburdening them<br>• Blend and integrate community and school resources so they support and build from each other<br>• Develop a continuum of care that starts in the school and feeds to resources in the community<br>• Create effective communication channels between supportive service staff/community service providers and teachers and classrooms<br>• Supportive service staff and community service providers build relationships with teachers, showing them the value of what they are doing and how |

| *Table 8.6: Perceptions of schools not as health and social service agencies – Specific barriers and minimizing strategies* | |
|---|---|
| compete with, community-based services and vice versa<br>• Others… | community is there to help them<br>• Supportive service staff and community service providers should make every effort possible to avoid pulling student out of class time (use lunch, recess, before/after school, homeroom, planning periods for intervention); if it impossible to not use class time, rotate the time each week as to avoid students missing the same subject every week<br>• Others… |

### Barrier: Communication, referrals and integration

You may expect more challenges as educators, service providers and other key leaders such as parents initiate planning and begin developing partnerships. For example, oftentimes communication links between educators and service providers are missing, and strategic referrals to school-based and – linked services are non-existent or ineffective. Or, the concepts of interprofessional collaboration and service integration are new to both educators and service providers. One wonders how providers can work together if they are not even aware of the possibilities. Table 8.7 presents common communication, referral, and integration barriers and makes suggestions about how to address them.

| *Table 8.7: Communication, referrals and integration - Specific barriers and minimizing strategies* | |
|---|---|
| **Barrier: Communication, referrals and integration**<br>• Referral systems are not in place<br>• Teachers and service providers are unaware of what each needs and offers<br>• Service providers at the school aren't aware of each others' roles and functions<br>• School service providers and community-based service providers do not communicate; and therefore, services are fragmented, duplicative and competing<br>• There is a lack of time, supports and resources needed to enable good communication and relationships between school-based and community-based service providers<br>• Confusion exists about the roles of supportive service staff and community service providers<br>• There are delays in referrals for student and family issues because teachers and school staff do not know what to do<br>• Teachers and school staff wait until problems are really nested/deep end (do | **Minimizing strategies**<br>• Foster communication and collaboration through coordinating teams<br>• Increase awareness about the health and social services available in schools and communities<br>• Assign lead responsibility to one person/agency to serve as single point of contact for communication about non-academic barriers<br>• Make sure teachers and school staff know where to go for help and support in addressing non-academic barriers to learning<br>• Supportive service staff and community service providers give feedback and updates to teachers about student progress<br>• Build relationships between the school, the community and its stakeholders<br>• Establish early identification, assessment and referral strategies<br>• Provide youth development and health promotion services to prevent and deter onset of problem behaviors<br>• Build teams of teachers, supportive service staff, community service providers, and others to map school and community resources |

| | |
|---|---|
| not get students and families referred until it is way too late)<br>• Teachers are not included in decisions about service planning<br>• Teachers do not know how to reintegrate students in their classroom after they have received services<br>• Others… | • Plan collaboratively and strategically to meet gaps and reduce duplication<br>• Provide joint professional development programs for teachers, principals and service providers, enabling them to talk to each other and work together better<br>• Others… |

### Barrier: Funding for learning and support services

Funding is another major barrier related to the delivery of health and social services in connection with schools. Simply stated, schools and the services they provide – and community-based health and social service agencies and the services they provide – are both under-funded and strapped for resources. Maximizing resources, blending funding streams and reducing service duplication are essential if student and family needs are going to be systematically addressed. Table 8.8 presents funding for learning and support services barriers and makes suggestions about how to address them.

***Table 8.8: Funding for learning and support services - Specific barriers and minimizing strategies***

| **Barrier: Funding for learning and support services** | **Minimizing strategies** |
|---|---|
| • Schools are under-funded, in general<br>• There are not enough service providers to meet students' and teachers' needs.<br>• Funding to address non-academic barriers to learning is limited in schools<br>• Health and social services in communities are under-funded<br>• Health and social service agencies often compete for the same funding and resources<br>• Funding is tied to earmarked funds for special populations or subgroups (i.e., homeless, exceptional children, etc.)<br>• There are common beliefs that having service providers takes away from educational dollars<br>• School funding is often compartmentalized and rarely integrated (e.g., funding tied to family supports exist in Title 1, Title IV, etc., but rarely are these integrated)<br>• Others… | • Co-locate community service providers at schools to reduce personnel and facility costs, transportation costs and support access to services<br>• Train and deploy parents as paraprofessional service providers, assigning them low risk cases and having them assist service providers with follow-ups and paperwork<br>• Schools reduce outreach costs when community service providers are working in tandem<br>• Use Medicaid, TANF and other funding streams to support service provision<br>• Blend and braid funding streams (both school and community) to maximize resources<br>• Coordinate and integrate services to reduce duplication and maximize services<br>• Realize that schools can get certain types of money and communities get others; and explore how to maximize resources from different sources<br>• Collaborate on grants and special opportunities for funding<br>• Others… |

Remember to examine the sustainability chapter for more highlights related to funding.

## *Conclusion*

The strategic integration of health and social services with school improvement involves the entire school community. Although this innovation expands the boundaries of school improvement, it proceeds with a clear plan regarding the proper roles, functions and missions of Ohio's schools; and with due recognition that some health and social service programs are best provided in community settings in close consultation with parents and families.

The Carnegie Task Force on Education's recent policy statement sums up the situation regarding schools' responsibilities for non-academic barriers. *School systems are not responsible for meeting every need of their students. But when the need directly affects learning, the school must meet the challenge.*

In other words, schools, in order to achieve their primary missions, must develop a comprehensive, coherent and responsive learning support system. Starting with student support professionals already located at schools (e.g., counselors, school social workers, psychologists), this learning support system also requires the involvement of community-based service providers.

By necessity, educators and their community partners must develop a comprehensive, coherent, cohesive and feasible plan for getting services to teachers, students and families in need. Only then will they ensure that no child is left behind, and also that educators, especially classroom teachers, do not have to confront students' non-academic barriers alone – without sufficient services, supports, assistance and resources.

This chapter has been structured with these needs and priorities in mind. Far from the last word on the subjects at hand, you now should have a good idea about how to get started.

Remember, you do not have to do this work alone. No doubt you will find service provider collaboratives of some kind already operating in your local community. Start with your county department of child and family services, also called social services. In fact, you may find that your community is a Partnerships for Success site, an Ohio Family and Children's First site, or a Communities that Care site. Join these initiatives and gain access to the resources they provide.

The advantages of this approach to social and health services have been identified in this chapter. In brief, social and health services provide an effective way to expand the boundaries of school improvement without losing sight of, and distorting the school's primary missions and functions. As non-academic barriers are removed and prevented, students' learning, academic achievement and healthy development will improve. At the same time, both school-based and school-linked services fortify parents' authority and strengthen entire families. Major benefits like these justify investments in social and health services by educators, service providers, parents and other community partners.

## *References*

American Academy of Pediatrics. School-Based Interventions. Pediatrics. 2004; 113: 1839-1845.

Adelman, H.S., & Taylor, L. (1998). Reframing mental health in schools and expanding school reform. *Educational Psychologist, 33*(4), 135-152.

Adelman, H. S., & Taylor, L. (2000a). Promoting mental health in schools in the midst of school reform. *Journal of School Health, 70,* 171-178.

Adelman, H. S., & Taylor, L. (2000b). Shaping the future of mental health in schools. *Psychology in the Schools, 37,* 49-60.

Anderson-Butcher, D. (2006). The role of the educator in early identification, referral and linkage. In R. J. Waller (Ed.), *Child and Adolescent Mental Health Issues in the Classroom*. Sage Publications.

Armbuster, P., & Lichtman, J. (1999). Are school based mental health services effective? Evidence from 36 inner city schools. *Community Mental Health Journal, 35*(6), 493-504.

Brener, N.D., Martindale, J., & Weist, M.D. (2001). Mental health and social services: Results form the School Health Policies and Programs Study 2000. *Journal of School Health, 71*(7), 305-312.

Briar-Lawson, K., & Drews, J. (1998). School-based service integration: Lessons learned and future challenges. In D. van Veen, C. Day, & G. Walraven (Eds.). Multi-service schools: Integrated services for children and youth at risk (pp. 49-64). Leuven/Appeldorn, The Netherlands: Garant Publishers.

Browne, G., Gafni, A., Roberts, J., Byrne, C., Majumdar, B. (2004). Effective/efficient mental health programs for school-aged children: A synthesis of review. *Social Science & Medicine, 58,* 1367-1384.

Catron, T., Harris, V.S., & Weiss, B. (1998). Posttreatment results after 2 years of services in the Vanderbilt school-based counseling project. In M.H. Epstein, K. Kutash, & A. Duchnowski (Eds.). *Outcomes for children and youth with behavioral and emotional disorders and their families: Programs and evaluation best practices* (pp. 633-656). Austin, TX: Pro-Ed.

Chalfant, J. C., & Pysh, M. V. (1989). Teacher assistance teams: Five descriptive studies on 96 teams. *Remedial and Special Education, 10*(6), 49-58.

Elias, M.J. (2002). *Academic and social-emotional learning*. Educational Practice Series, 11. International academy of Education. Geneva, Switzerland. International Bureau of Education.

Guernsey, B.P., & Pastore, D.R. (1996). Comprehensive school-based health centers: Implementing the model. *Adolescent Medicine, 7*(2), 181-196.

Hoagwood, K., & Erwin, H. (1997). Effectiveness of school-based mental health services for children: A 10 year research review. *Journal of Child and Family Studies, 6*(4), 435-451.

Hunter, L. (2004). The value of school-based mental health services. In K.E. Robinson (Ed.). *Advances in school-based mental health interventions: Best practices and program models*. (pp. 1.1-1.10) Kingston, NJ: Civic Research Institute.

Kolbe, L.J., Collins, J., & Cortese, P. (1997). Building the capacity of schools to improve the health of the nation. *American Psychologist, 52*(3) 256-265.

Knoff, H.M., Batsche, G. M. (1995). Project ACHIEVE: Analyzing a school reform process for at-risk and underachieving students. *School Psychology Review, 24*(4), 579-603.

Larson, R. (2000). Toward a psychology of positive youth development. *American Psychologist, 55*(1) 170-183.

Lawson, H., & Briar-Lawson, K. (1997). *Connecting the dots: Progress toward the integration of school reform, school-linked services, parent involvement, and community schools*. Oxford, OH: Institute for Educational Renewal, Miami University.

Nabors, L.A., & Reynolds, M.W. (2000). Program evaluation activities: Outcomes related to treatment for adolescents receiving school-based mental health services. *Children's Services: Social Policy, Research, and Practices, 3*(3), 175-189.

Payton, J.W., Wardlaw, D.M., Graczyk, P.A., Bloodworth, M.R., Tompsett, C.J., & Weissberg, R.P. (2000). Social and emotional learning: A framework for promoting mental health and reducing risk behaviors in children and youth. *Journal of School Health, 70*(5), 179-185.

Rones, M., & Hoagwood, K. (2000). School-based mental health services: A research review. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review, 3*(4), 223-241.

Rothman, J. (1992). *Guidelines for case management: Putting research to professional use*. Itasca, IL: Peacock Publishers.

Sindelar, P. T., Griffin, C. C., Smith, S. W., & Watanabe, A. K. (1992). Prereferral intervention: Encouraging notes on preliminary findings. *The Elementary School Journal, 92*(3), 245-259.

Small, M.L., Jones, S.E., Barrios, L.C., Crosssett, L.S., Dahlberg, L.L., Albuquerque, M.S., Sleet, D.A., Greene, B.Z., & Schmidt, E.R. (2001). School policy and environment: Results from the school health policies and programs study 2000. *Journal of School Health, 7*(1), 325-333.

Smith, A.J., Armijo, E.J., & Stowitschek, J.J. (1997). Current applications of case management in schools to improve children's readiness to learn. *Journal of Case Management, 6*(3), 107-115.

Weist, M.D., Paskewitz, D.A., Warner, B.S., & Flaherty, L.T. (1996). Treatment outcomes of school-based mental health services for urban teenagers. *Community Mental Health Journal, 32*(2), 149-157.

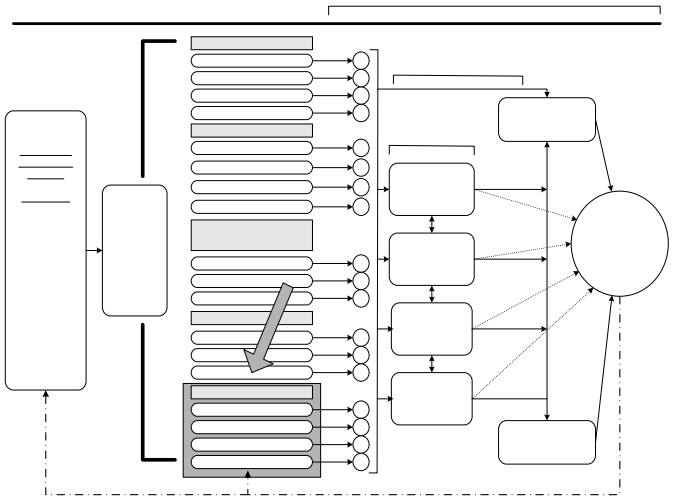
Weist, M.D., Myers, C.P., Hastings, E., Ghuman, H., & Han, Y.L. (1999). Psychosocial functioning of youth receiving mental health services in schools versus community mental health centers. *Community Mental Health Journal, 35*(10), 69-81.

Weist, M., Sander, M., Walrath, C., Link, B., Nabors, L., Adelsheim, S. *et al*. (2005). Developing principles for best practice in expanded school mental health. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 34*(1), 7–13.

# *Community Partnerships*

## *Introduction*

The Ohio Community Collaboration Model for School Improvement (OCCMSI) aims to help you maximize and leverage family and community resources for learning, healthy development and academic achievement. As you know by now, this model relies heavily on community partnerships.



The other core components in this new model – academic learning, youth development, family engagement and support, and health and social services – provide opportunities for partnerships. You also will see this chapter extends the discussions of the family engagement and health and social services chapters in important ways. For example, traditional approaches to school-community partnerships often focus on parents and public sector providers – mental health, health, counseling, child welfare, alcohol and substance abuse – as key strategies for reducing barriers to learning. "Traditional", as we use it, does not mean inferior or unnecessary; these partnerships are vital to student's learning and academic achievement and school success.

It also is important to emphasize community partnerships and collaborative leadership are interrelated. When we separate them in our model, we do so to make sure you understood each of them; and you know what to do in order to implement them successfully. In brief, partnership development is a common thread that weaves together these core components and other parts of the improvement model.

Given the importance of community partnerships across the board within the model, this chapter guides you to other under-developed and untapped partnerships, ones that can enhance and magnify many of the traditional ones. It also pays special attention to the development of a partnership system – a formal way to identify good partners and operate multiple partnerships that improve results.

As we noted in the getting started chapter, we advocate for the mobilization of a community's assets – individuals, local associations and organizations, and local institutions – in support of school improvement; that is why it is called a community collaboration model for school improvement. We encourage the identification and engagement of an entire community's "gifts" to get to better outcomes for schools, community organizations, families and children.

## *What do we mean by community partnerships?*

Our definition of a community partnership includes every formal arrangement a school can make with an individual, association, private sector organization or public institution to provide a program, service or resource that will help support student achievement. That said, you should not interpret this inclusive definition to mean that "anything goes" in the name of partnerships.

Potential community partnerships are bounded only by your imagination. If you consider all of your community's resources as potentially available for helping you and your school succeed and improve, your partnerships may range from relationships with individuals to relationships with corporations and businesses. Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) discuss a number of real-life school-community relationship examples:

- A school works with a local park to offer a summer family sports program, and the schools agrees to send flyers to other schools, churches and various organizations informing community residents of the types of sports activities available;

- The principal of a school works with a local library and other neighborhood organizations to create an anti-gang initiative in order to provide tighter security and special buses to ensure the safety of the students; after establishing this contact, the principal is invited to speak at the opening of the library's new computer facility;

- Local police officers offer to provide student and teacher training in conflict resolution to four schools in the community; now, when a conflict arises on the school playground, designated students work with both parties to discover amicable solutions to the problem;

- In cooperation with a local hospital, two high schools develop school-based health clinics; one of these now has an infant and child development center, while the other has a WIC and a counseling center;

- A large corporation decides to honor four local students with outstanding attendance records by awarding them $500 scholarships to be used for higher education, and next year the corporation plans to give a special award to the student with the most impressive community involvement record;

- Students at an elementary school are matched with local businesses for summer internships, which enable the businesses to tap into the skills of local youth and give the students a place to earn some money outside of school; and

- Neighbors and residents mobilize together with the school to address community safety issues; they provide cross-walk coverage in the area around the school both before and after school and mobilize neighborhood block watches to guard against crime and community disorganization.

## *Outcomes associated with community partnerships*

Outcomes associated with community partnerships potentially cut across all the areas noted in Table 2.2 (in the getting started chapter). Table 9.1 summarizes some of the evidence indicating that community partnerships lead to good outcomes.

***Table 9.1: Outcomes associated with community partnerships***

| **Improvements in:** | **Reductions in:** |
|---|---|
| • Academic achievement (e.g., in reading and math), opportunities for learning, and related indicators of educational success (attendance, student turnover)<br>• Low income students, many of color, gain more access to challenging academic programs and bilingual instruction<br>• Safer schools, including students' getting to and from school<br>• Graduation rates<br>• Social and emotional development of youth<br>• Positive school climate<br>• Resources<br>• Opportunities to participate (for staff, teachers and youth)<br>• Parent and family engagement<br>• Efficiency in running programs<br>• Service learning opportunities<br>• School levy passage<br>• Opportunities for youth involvement in pro-social activities<br>• Community reinforcement of youth involvement in pro-social activities<br>• Communities seeing youth as valuable assets<br>• Communities having higher expectations for youth<br>• Community trust in schools | • Isolation of individuals and organizations<br>• Apathy towards being involved<br>• In class size and school size<br>• Duplication of services<br>• Student transience |

From: Benson & Harkavy, 2002; Blank, Melaville, & Shah, 2003; Briar-Lawson, 2000; Gold, Simon, & Brown, 2002; Greenberg, Weissberg, O'Brien, Zins, Fredericks, Resnik, & Elias, 2003; Halpern, 2003; Hatch, 1998a, 1998b; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Keith, 1996; Lawson & Briar-Lawson, 1997; Lopez, 2003; Mediratta, Fruchter, & Lewis, 2002; Melaville, 1999; Quinn, 2003; Saks, 2000; Strand, Marullo, Cutforth, Stoecker, Donohue et al., 2003; Turning Points, 2004; Villarreal & Bookmyer, 2004.

This research clearly suggests that schools, families, community agencies and local higher education institutions gain from solid, community partnerships, especially ones that secure broad, yet focused community engagement. In summary, community partnerships:

- Raise the visibility of local issues and programs, while getting persons and organizations mutually committed;
- Help participants set priorities for the sharing of resources;
- Unleash new talents and resources to address old and new problems and opportunities;
- Gain new resources and make better use of existing resources; and
- Improve results, especially for schools.

## *Key design principles and strategies in community partnerships*

As we noted in the collaborative leadership chapter, partnership development must be done planfully and carefully. In this chapter, we use the research on partnership development, community development and community building to define key design principles and strategies for school leaders.

What follows is the checklist (Table 9.2) that highlights the overarching design principles and strategies for successful programs. This checklist is not as straight forward in this chapter as it was in other chapters. It has been slightly revised to reflect the fact that community partnerships are not necessarily programs, although they could be programs. It is modified to take into account this need. Following this checklist is a table (Table 9.3) that describes the key design principles and strategies within community partnerships.

***Table 9.2: Modified check list of overarching design principles and/or strategies for successful programs and partnerships***

| | |
|---|---|
| ☐ | Partnerships operate programs that are designed to create intended results |
| ☐ | The logic behind the partnership makes sense as the services link to outcomes |
| ☐ | The partnership uses multiple strategies to accomplish its goals (comprehensive) |
| ☐ | Partnerships are evaluation-driven and continuously improved upon |
| ☐ | Partnerships and the programs they operate are research-supported and theoretically-sound |
| ☐ | Programs operated by partner organizations use a variety of teaching and learning strategies |
| ☐ | Partnerships and their programs have sufficient dosage |
| ☐ | Partnerships and their programs are implemented the way it was originally designed |
| ☐ | Staff who operate programs as part of the partnership are well-trained in the program design |
| ☐ | Participants have a "say so" in how the program and partnership are structured and implemented |
| ☐ | The partnership and its programs are tailored to meet individual and community needs |
| ☐ | The partnership and its programs are appropriately timed and located |
| ☐ | The partnership and its programs are implemented in culturally competent ways |
| ☐ | The partnership and its programs are family-centered and -supportive |
| ☐ | Strategies foster self-determination and personal control |
| ☐ | Participants are empowered |
| ☐ | Participants' strengths are built upon in the partnership and its programs |
| ☐ | Positive relationships and bonding are created |
| ☐ | The partnership and its program activities are enjoyable and meaningful to participants |
| ☐ | Those facilitating the partnership and its programs are engaging |

***Table 9.3: Design principles and/or strategies for community partnerships***

| **Principle and strategy** | **What this looks like** |
|---|---|
| **Intentional and focused** | |
| Strategic | • Partnerships strategically recruit, engage and retain the "right" partners<br>• Partners are developed based on their clear link to one or more of the conditions (barriers to learning) you found in the conditions and resources assessment<br>• Partners are developed based on their ability to help with creating the outcomes you need to achieve and improve |

| *Table 9.3: Design principles and/or strategies for community partnerships* | |
|---|---|
| **Principle and strategy** | **What this looks like** |
| Strategic continued | • The partnership is not agenda driven and is instead driven by community aspirations and needs<br>• Partnerships allow for time in between meetings to make informed judgments (i.e., thoughtfulness)<br>• Partnerships use "targeting strategies" as they identify and prioritize special sub-populations, as opposed to trying to reach everyone |
| Logical | • Strategies for partnership development operate from a well-conceived and operationalized plan<br>• The plan for developing partnerships is supported by research<br>• Partnerships and the programs associated with them are intentional and focused on addressing unmet needs; there is a link between what is being done and what is needed |
| Unity in purpose and consensus | • All partners see the big picture<br>• All partners see how their work relies on the success of others<br>• All partners understand how their efforts fit together<br>• Partners endorse, reinforce and promote the school community's vision and mission |
| **Core responsibilities** | |
| Accountable | • The school community experiences greater benefits because of the partnerships (i.e., the conditions are better addressed in the end)<br>• Partners are accountable for their contributions<br>• Partners stay true to their agency missions<br>• Partners take into consideration the qualities and assets they bring to the partnership<br>• Partners are committed to the partnership<br>• Partners create formal contracts and Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) to improve efficiency, effectiveness and accountabilities |
| Results oriented | • Partnerships are developed and sustained with their eye on desired outcomes<br>• Partners feel accountable for results<br>• Strategies that emerge as a result of the partnership are research supported and documented<br>• Partners are willing to re-tweak or discard programs and services that do not work<br>• Partners measure progress and achievements<br>• Partners, individually and collectively, are focused on results, and they are committed to getting and using good information to get results, learn and improve |
| Sustainable | • Partnerships are developed based on their clear link to one or more of the barriers to learning you found in the conditions and resources assessment<br>• Partners are *solid,* have "sticking power" and "staying power"<br>• Partnerships must be long lasting and yielding benefits over the long haul after you have left<br>• The sum is better than its parts<br>• Partnerships are more than one meeting<br>• Partnerships avoid "quick fixes" |

| *Table 9.3: Design principles and/or strategies for community partnerships* | |
|---|---|
| **Principle and strategy** | **What this looks like** |
| **Win-win arrangements** | |
| Mutually beneficial | • Partners' needs and goals are met<br>• Every partner is able to see how the partnership enables them to achieve their missions and goals (i.e., how the partnership helps them)<br>• Every partner is able to see how the partnership helps them demonstrate their accountabilities<br>• The school community experiences greater benefits because of the partnership (i.e., the conditions are better addressed in the end) |
| Both independent and interdependent | • Partners are able to work together and also work independently<br>• Situations where partners are solely dependent upon each other are avoided (i.e., "don't put all their eggs in one basket")<br>• Partners have their own missions, programs and identities while simultaneously sharing ones within the partnership |
| Reciprocity | • Partners are able to share their resources<br>• There is a process in place by which partners both share and receive resources<br>• There is give and take within the partnership |
| Synergy | • Partners are energized as they interact<br>• Partners and partnerships use creativity, and develop innovative programs and services |
| **Structural considerations** | |
| Collaborative leadership | • Participants take charge of the project and have a say-so in what happens and develops<br>• The group takes charge of the partnership, rather than letting one individual or agency take ownership and responsibility<br>• Collaborative leadership teams are established that guide the vision and mission of the school community<br>• Leadership ensures the right things are done and things are done right |
| Intermediary people and/or organizations | • A single person or intermediary organization who is "neutral" serves as the facilitator of the partnership<br>• Local, indigenous "community guides" facilitate the entry of outsiders into tightly knit local communities; these individuals provide input into how to best mobilize the community and its resources |
| Policy/power connections | • Partnerships connect with and influence official decisions<br>• The community provides input to inform local decision making and partnership direction<br>• Partnerships serve as an influential group because of the power in numbers<br>• Partnerships have an influence on policy, rules, norms, etc., within the community<br>• Partnerships include people with informal and formal power and influence |
| **Grounded in the community** | |
| History and awareness | • Partnerships are grounded in community history, the history of previous partnerships, and past strengths, limitations and achievements |

| *Table 9.3: Design principles and/or strategies for community partnerships* | |
|---|---|
| **Principle and strategy** | **What this looks like** |
| History and awareness continued | • Partnerships are culturally responsive and grounded in local traditions<br>• Partnerships aim to know more about the community and its resources so they may better plan and develop strategic visions<br>• The community and its stakeholders are involved early in the process of partnership development<br>• The partnership identifies specific areas and neighborhood blocks, their social histories and local cultures, using this knowledge to recruit people and plan programs and services |
| Norms and values | • Partnerships establish firm norms, rules, principles and values that guide people's interactions<br>• Partners develop a "no finger-pointing and/or blaming" rule that operates when problems arise<br>• Partners know how to resolve disagreements and grievances<br>• Communities establish strong positive social norms for pro-social behavior, health and well-being<br>• Communities and partnerships reinforce and promote knowledge, attitudes and behaviors supportive of health and well-being<br>• Communities reinforce and promote the value of working together<br>• Culture, social networks, institutions and community values shape and channel the direction of the partnerships |
| Driven by community stakeholders | • The group takes charge of the partnership, rather than letting one individual or agency take ownership and responsibility<br>• Partnerships involve all sectors of the community<br>• Members are actively engaged in the partnership and planning<br>• Partners guide the partnership's direction and focus<br>• Community has a role to play in developing local school and community policy and direction<br>• Local residents have an influence over the partnership's direction and purpose<br>• Partnerships engage local residents, especially the most vulnerable ones, as co-teachers and co-leaders in your operations |
| **Focused on building connections** | |
| Engaging strategies | • Partnerships serve as the mechanism for sharing good news; make your partnership's and its members' good news contagious<br>• Partnerships use "seeking strategies" (actively finding and recruiting people instead of waiting for them to come to you); they do not expect people to come to them<br>• Partnerships go beyond the local neighborhoods and find, organize and mobilize dedicated people who reside elsewhere and draw on the resources, power, authority and social networks |
| Communication | • Partners receive, and have access to, accurate information<br>• Information is shared routinely and effectively<br>• There are effective referral and exchange mechanisms among partners<br>• Partners know "who to call" for certain needs and issues<br>• Partnerships build community awareness and knowledge through communication and learning networks |
| Relationships | • Partners trust each other |

| *Table 9.3: Design principles and/or strategies for community partnerships* | |
|---|---|
| **Principle and strategy** | **What this looks like** |
| Relationships continued | • Partners are credible, legitimate and dependable<br>• There are limited risks in working with partners<br>• Partnerships allow for processing time to build relationships (i.e., social gatherings, fun activities, celebrations, etc.) |
| Welcoming environment | • Partnerships offer opportunities for people to gather at convenient and comfortable locations and at a variety of convenient times<br>• All partners are encouraged to be actively involved in the partnership<br>• All partners have a voice<br>• Partnerships uses democratic leadership processes, as opposed to autocratic ones, within the partnership process<br>• All partners realize there will never be enough professionals, and welcome others and alternative designs and strategies when addressing community issues<br>• Partners avoid blaming and deficit-based language, and build from strengths and aspirations of all |

From: Anderson-Butcher & Ashton, 2002; Blank, et al., 2003; Briar-Lawson & Lawson, 1997; Cahn & Rowe, 1996; Chadwick, 2004; Ife, 1999; Knowledge Works, 2004; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993; Lawson, in press; Lawson, Anderson-Butcher, Peterson, & Barkdull, 2003; Larsen, Harlan, Bolin, Hackett, Hope, Kirby, Nelson, Rex, Wolf, 2004; Murray & Weissbroud, 2003; Shirley, 1997; Stone, Henig, Jones, & Pierannunzi, 2001.

## *Other considerations in community partnerships*

These design principles and strategies for community partnerships provide direction for schools and communities in relation to their partnership planning. Further detail is provided here in relation to designing strategic partnerships, operating from a well-conceived plan, recruiting partnership, and aiming for sustainability. At the end, a brief overview is provided in relation to community building, a common partnership strategy used in school communities across the nation.

### Partnerships are strategic

The above emphasis on "strategic" and "intentional" partnerships is important. Partnerships are strategic when you have recruited, engaged and retained the "right" partners. The underlying reasoning is as follows.

Partnerships are not automatically beneficial. Some yield more benefits than others. Unfortunately, some partnerships tap people's time, energy, commitments and resources, but they do not yield any tangible benefits. You need to ensure your partnership improves the core results for your school community, starting with academic achievement and healthy development (Murray & Weissbroud, 2003).

Furthermore, there are many candidates for partnerships, and they are not all alike. Some people and organizations will not be good partners. For example, some representatives will approach you because you have money and other resources they want and need, or because you have a grant. These undesirable "partners" will leave you when the money is gone, or when the grant ends. You, and others working closely with you, need to make important choices. You will need to be strategic in the selection of your partners.

It is important your partners share the vision and mission for your school, if not at the beginning, then later as you work with them. It also is important they demonstrate a commitment and a capacity to be a good partner. The point is, *choosing good partners is one of the most important parts of partnership development*.

We have provided two figures to jump start your thinking and planning. Table 9.4 provides questions you can and should ask about potential partners.

***Table 9.4: A partnership planning checklist***

| | |
|---|---|
| ☐ | Which condition(s) identified in your needs and resources assessment does this partner address? |
| ☐ | What population(s) does the organization (prospective partner) serve? |
| ☐ | Can it recruit, serve and retain other populations, especially ones you can not serve? |
| ☐ | Does this prospective partner offer unique and important benefits to kids and families? Does a partnership with it promise to improve learning, academic achievement and success in school? |
| ☐ | Does it have local competitors? If so, how will you choose among them? |
| ☐ | Does it have a good reputation? Is it credible? Are you willing to have its reputation affect your reputation? |
| ☐ | Are you willing to refer people to this organization? |
| ☐ | Will you lose other partners if you partner with this organization? If so, is it worth it? |
| ☐ | Is this prospective partner a results-oriented organization? If so, what results does it emphasize? If not, what does the organization pride itself in doing and accomplishing? |
| ☐ | Does the prospective partner have a clear, compelling mission and concrete, attainable goals? |
| ☐ | Does the prospective partner endorse your vision? If not, can the partner be convinced to "buy in" to this vision? |
| ☐ | Does it have a set of operating principles and values that guide its work? Are these principles, values and goals, and this mission consistent with yours? |
| ☐ | Does the prospective partner have enough resources to accomplish its mission? |
| ☐ | Is the prospective partner known for sharing resources and, all in all, cooperating and collaborating with others? Will you share resources with it? |
| ☐ | Is the prospective partner dependable and trustworthy? |
| ☐ | Are there risks associated with a partnership with this organization? Are these risks acceptable? Are they manageable? |
| ☐ | What do you stand to gain by partnering? To lose? Are the benefits worth it? |

## Choosing your partners

Table 9.5 presents examples of potential partners. These examples are just a few of those that may be available to you in your community.

This table also has two other features. It identifies potential school benefits, indicating that the partnership promises to be strategic. It also identifies what the partner organization gets in return. You can use these benefits when you recruit them. In short, many partnerships are cemented by enlightened self interest – the partnership meets needs and satisfies priorities – and reciprocity – the give and take of partnerships. Solid partnerships derive from these benefits.

| *Table 9.5: Examples of school–community partnerships* | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Community resource** | **Potential school benefits** | **Potential partner benefits** |
| Church or other religious institution | Space for a literacy program, after-school youth center | Materials for a youth center, clothes for a resale shop |
| College or university | Tutoring and mentoring summer program, future teachers, alternative high school | Space, employment for students |
| Local residents | Security guards, volunteers, donations, special skills | Employment opportunities, classes, newsletters, volunteer opportunities |
| Businesses | Donations, scholarships, mentoring, service learning opportunities | Future employees, interns and apprentices |
| Chamber of Commerce | Access to the business community, mentoring, training, volunteers | Well-trained workforce, publicity |
| Bakeries or restaurants | Food for events, help establishing catering enterprises | Catering opportunities, publicity |
| Media | Good publicity for events, assistance in mobilizing the community | Access to news events, public service opportunities |
| Artists and cultural institutions | Mentors, judges for contests, facilitators for projects | Display space, artist in residence opportunities, publicity |
| Library | Access to resources, space, specialized content skills | Support for library programs, access to kids and parents (patrons) |
| Senior citizen's groups | Tutoring, mentoring, transportation, event volunteers, child-care resources | Access to school space, educational programs, holiday meals |
| Banks | Money, connections to outside funders, grant-writing skills | Public service opportunities, publicity |
| Police | Assistance with crime prevention, mentoring | Development of relationships with youth |
| Various community events – festivals | Community exposure, support for school-community relationships | Volunteers, participants |
| Community education | Access to special training like sewing, model building, car maintenance, budgeting, public speaking | Access to participants |
| Daycare centers | Student exposure to young children, service-learning opportunities | Volunteer help from students, possible space |
| Policy makers | Influence over local decisions and policies, especially ones impacting schools (levies, etc.) | Exposure, platforms |
| Government | Influence over funding streams and priorities for delivery of services, etc. | More effective use of funding and resources because they are more responsive to local needs |
| Councils and boards (i.e., Family and Children First Councils, School Boards, etc.) | Influence over policies, funding streams, etc. | More effective use of funding and resources; better aligned policies |
| Citizen and community groups (i.e., neighborhood associations, racial and/or ethnic groups) | Mobilization of key constituents in support of school directions | Ability to better serve their community via the school |

From: Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993; Stone, Henig, Jones, & Pierrannuzi, 2001.

You can see from these examples that potential community partnerships are limited only by your imagination and, of course, by the resources available in your local community. Even small communities have, upon closer inspection, many untapped resources that a school could effectively engage to support students and families.

Your ability to build effective community partnerships hinges on how you approach the related tasks. All potential community partners and resources are busy with their own mandates and expectations. Letting these potential partners know you know they are busy and that you are asking for their assistance in partnering with your program only after careful thought will be important perspective.

As you approach potential community partners, use the idea that there are four, inter-related driving forces that make school community partnerships crucial:

- Student and family conditions, including assets, risks and needs;
- Good student and family outcomes, including the trouble everyone has in getting them when they operate alone;
- Resource shortfalls and stresses everyone faces AND the opportunity to pool and maximize them; and
- Duplication, fragmentation and needless competition that get in the way of everyday operations and do not serve children, families and communities.

Stress the idea that these driving forces are the foundation for effective partnerships. Argue that all school-community partnerships start with shared recognition of unmet needs, outcomes that are not achieved, gaps in programs and services, and untapped opportunities to do innovative, exciting work.

Table 9.6 provides further direction about the activities your school and your potential community partners can undertake to get started on the road to partnership building (Jehl, Blank, & McCloud, 2001).

### Expanded Thinking About Partnerships

In this guide, partnerships refer to *strategic, solid* working relationships with other providers of programs and services. Most of these other providers are organizations such as Boys and Girls Clubs and YMCAs. However, youth, parents and families also provide programs and services, and they are experts in determining their own needs, wants and aspirations. Therefore, partnerships with them are every bit as important as the ones with professional providers and organizations. (This point also is emphasized in the family engagement section of this guide.)

By expanding your thinking about partnerships you may be able to increase resources available to you in non-conventional, but strategically important ways. For example, businesses and corporations, colleges and universities, and faith-based organizations all have a vested interest in good academic outcomes and may be more than willing to engage in productive partnerships.

| *Table 9.6: Examples of activities for connecting schools and community partners* | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Key activities** | **For educators** | **For community leaders** |
| **FIND OUT** about each others' interests, needs, aspirations and resources. | **Find out** about the neighborhoods where your students live. What are the local issues? What assets are out there? What resources do they offer? How can you capitalize on them to help students and the school? What can you provide them? | **Find out** about your local schools, including their performance records, their needs and their recent innovations? What opportunities do they offer for engagement and partnership? What opportunities can you help the schools develop? |
| **REACH OUT** to potential partners on their own turf with specific offers of assistance and opportunities to work together. | **Reach out** to community agencies invested in children's learning, healthy development and success in school. Tell them what you offer them and what they can provide in return. Be specific about the value of partnerships and your plans for developing them. Offer the school's facilities for programs and services that help advance the school's mission. | **Reach out** to principals, teachers and other school staff by attending school functions and offering help in concrete ways. Make educators aware of all you do with kids and families, emphasizing how your work helps them and the students. Develop concrete strategies for communicating, connecting and collaborating. |
| **SPELL OUT** the purpose of the partnership and the terms and conditions of joint efforts, including who will do what, with whom, when, where and how. | **Spell out** the areas that are "off-limits" for partnerships, emphasizing the need for partnerships to be linked directly to school improvement. Draft MOUs and inter-agency agreements that specify outcomes, responsibilities and resources. | **Spell out** how complete success in your work depends on successful schools. Also spell out how your work can make schools successful. Be clear on what you want to do, through the partnership, and how the partnership will benefit the schools. |
| **WORK OUT** the kinks as they arise and change your approach as indicated by the feedback you receive. | **Work out** the issues, especially the conflicts because conflict is unavoidable and good things happen when it is resolved. Develop trouble shooting procedures to fix problems "on the fly." | **Work out** the problems that always occur when you establish partnerships with schools and need to abide by their rules, procedures and policies. Help educators think about alternatives and remain flexible as you align some of your operations with theirs. |
| **BUILD OUT** as you experience success by sharing positive results and promoting more innovative programs and services. | **Build out** by sharing positive results and success stories with staff, parents, district leaders and school board members. Use your successes to seek resources from governmental officials and funding agencies. | **Build out** by sharing success stories with other community organizations, local governments and the media. Proudly announce your achievements and use them to recruit other partners and supporters. |

You might also consider developing or enhancing partnerships with the following entities:

- ***Businesses and Corporations*.** Business and corporations, along with the local associations they develop such as the Rotary Club and the Chamber of Commerce, often have resources that you will want and need. Their money is important, of course, but so are the opportunities and people they provide. For example, employees from businesses and corporations often will volunteer to serve as mentors and tutors. Some businesses and corporations will sponsor career development initiatives, including school-and-work and school-to-work programs. These programs and initiatives are especially important for kids who wonder where school will take them; and why they should study, succeed and graduate. Thus, there is good reason to work with the business and corporate community.

- ***Colleges and Universities*.** Colleges and universities are especially important to your school. More of Ohio's students must complete higher education degrees to gain meaningful employment in the new economy. Toward this end, P-16 (preschool through the undergraduate degree) planning is underway across the state.

  Colleges and universities offer another resource to your partnerships. Most community colleges, four-year colleges, and universities offer special programs called "service learning." Students are able to receive credit for volunteer work in organizations like yours. You also might consider partnering with academic disciplines that have field placements and internships as parts of their requirements (i.e., education, social work, psychology, nursing and other "professional schools and colleges"). In a nutshell, you are able to get lots of help at no cost to you, and this help also benefits your students.

  Higher education faculty also may be helpful, and are expected to give work requirements for service, outreach and engagement within their academic roles. Faculty can be recruited to help with your evaluation and research needs. Even if faculty cannot do the work themselves, many can offer students to help you. And, when it comes time to check out a new program or service, especially to determine whether there is any evidence indicating that it works, faculty and their students often are just a phone call away from providing help. Faculty also know how to write grants, and you will need more grants. A strategic, solid partnership with one or more committed faculty will yield this fiscal benefit and others.

- ***Faith-based organizations*.** Churches, synagogues, mosques and other religious organizations also qualify as good, potential partners. For example, many provide after-school programs for youth and family support programs. Some provide special incentives and rewards for students who excel in school and in their communities. All have the capacity to help organize and mobilize parents, families and community leaders in the support of schools. These potential partners are, in short, powerful resources.

There are a few final points to be made in relation to getting started. Remember first and foremost, you do not have to do this work alone. Use your school and community contacts to locate two or three long-term providers of programs and services. Use these persons as community experts and guides. Find out who does what with whom. Find out who is at war with whom. Find out who successfully partners with whom. Find out who is dependable, credible and legitimate, and who has a shaky reputation.

Second, rely on the data you collected about the kids, parents and families you want to serve and the gaps you identified in relation to them. Take the data a step further, figure out what specialized sub-populations of kids, parents and families you have overall. Then figure out which ones you can serve directly, which ones already are being served by someone else, and which ones are not being served and why. As you figure out who will do what with whom, you will be well on your way to identifying your most important partners. Your partnership plan and direction will be influenced by these steps.

### Partnerships operate from well conceived plans

The main idea here cannot be over-emphasized. *Strategic, solid partnerships are developed in relation to a justifiable plan that focuses on improved results.*

Clearly, you will be able to co-facilitate the development of strategic, solid partnerships if you operate with a well-conceived plan. This plan is not something new for you to do. Basically, *your plan is a practical way for you and your partners to implement the OCCMSI.*

You will recall the logic model is complex and comprehensive. You probably wondered when you first reviewed it whether you could do it all. Good thinking! You can not! You fundamentally need others, your prospective partners; and they also need you. You depend on each other.

Put another way, you will need strategic, solid partnerships in order to accomplish everything that needs to be done. You will not achieve the results you want and need unless you prioritize partnership development. *It is a central part of your job.*

If you develop a well-conceived plan that is tailored to your situation, you will develop a single school-linked partnership system. Like a large umbrella, this overarching partnership will encompass all of the "right" partners – the ones you have recruited strategically. As indicated in another chapter, you will develop collaborative leadership teams and processes to help operate these partnerships. Further, as indicated in yet another chapter, you will use evaluations to help you and your partners improve while you make progress in achieving outcomes.

This means that you, and others you recruit to develop and lead your partnership, need to understand "the big picture" for your operations. (Again, this is what the logic model provides for you.) This work also requires that you have a good idea about how the partners fit together in this big picture. As the partnership evolves – and every partnership does – you will need to be prepared to work with them to adjust their respective roles and contributions, and perhaps, the big picture. This macro perspective also is essential when aiming for sustainability.

### Partnerships aim for sustainability

Thus, the best partnership arrangements are not informal, occasional and haphazard. They are built to last because they improve outcomes. And, that is why it is worthwhile to invest the time, energy and resources in them.

It is not enough to have strategic partnerships. These partnerships also must be *solid*. Only then will they have "sticking power" and "staying power", i.e., lasting and yielding benefits over the long haul even after you have left.

Two features of solid, sustainable partnerships deserve special emphasis here. They signal why partners are strategic and also what makes them solid.

- *Every partner is able to achieve its own missions, goals and accountabilities at the same time it contributes to the achievement of the school's vision, mission, goals and accountabilities*. In this fundamental sense, partnerships are strategic and solid because they are mutually beneficial. In fact, this is why partners join and stay.

- With time and especially with your facilitation, partners will learn they depend on each other. No partner, including you, can achieve what it wants and needs without the others. *Mutual awareness of interdependent relationships is the key to effective partnerships and the hard work they require. It enhances a partnership's sticking power and staying power*.

In this view, solid partnerships are purposeful, effective, efficient and lasting. Partners enjoy formal and regular working relationships; they meet regularly and communicate effectively. Some partners have histories of working together, and they draw on these histories as they plan their future working relationships. Others use the partnerships as a way of rewriting their own histories.

Several things happen when you are effectively translating and forging these school-community partnerships. They also serve as important indicators of future sustainability. As you work through partnership development and community building, several authors (Jenson, 1999; Lawson, 2004; Murray & Weissbroud, 2003) suggest you look for:

- More belonging than isolation;
- More inclusion than exclusion;
- More participation than non-involvement;
- More recognition than rejection;
- More consensus and less competition and conflict; and
- More sharing and less selfish hoarding of resources.

As the discussion indicates, when you develop partnerships, you also are doing community building work, which benefits schools, families and community agencies. People and organizations start doing their work collectively, and planning in relation to others and larger community priorities. Essentially, communities are strengthened as a result of the synergism.

### Partnership development as a bridge to community-building

Several key strategies are documented in the research as being important for building bridges and engaging communities. Builders of community partnerships need to listen, think strategically, sort out agendas, build confidence and encourage participation. Mostly, partnerships must be built upon trust. This is challenging work in an age of cynicism and mistrust. In this approach to partnership development, bonding relationships and bridging mechanisms among people and organizations need to be developed among partners (Cahn & Rowe, 1996; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993; Larsen, Harlan, Bolin, Hackett, Hope, Kirby, Nelson et al., 2004; Lawson, in press). Strategies, steps and actions in bonding and bridging with potential partners are identified in Table 9.7.

| *Table 9.7: Bonding and bridging mechanisms* | |
|---|---|
| **Step** | **Action** |
| Listen | Meet one-on-one with all participants and potential collaborators. As you are able to identify the self-interest, passion and motivation for participation, you are able to most effectively enlist the resources that individual or collaborating partner has to offer. |
| Think strategically | Promote policies that maximize potential of all participants. A comprehensive community approach aims to do more than place a band-aid. It encourages a change in priorities grounded in local life, while incorporating resources from the outside world. Through collaborations and partnership, key information will surface. |
| Sort and build agendas | Understand obstacles. When approaching your work as a strategic builder of community partnerships, you will want to not only understand the strengths and the capacities of those around you, but also will want to engage in an informal analysis of decision-making. Understanding the roles by intentionally inviting persons and agencies to share their motivation or self-interest, transparency is generated. |
| Build confidence | Identify challenges and needs. However, build on the assets. As you do, do not forget to tell the stories. Emphasize building of grassroots resources, including cultural, faith-based, civic and recreational.<br>• Develop core resources.<br>• Increase support for training and recruitment of staff (paid and volunteer).<br>• Expose key community partners, including executive directors and other leaders to concerted educational opportunities. Do not assume they understand.<br>• Eliminate the rift between "process" or relationship-driven participants and "product-driven" ones. Both are necessary. |
| Build bridges | Strengthen and connect existing social networks, through bonding and bridging activities; and also strive to create new ones. Do not assume that poor people can be serviced out of poverty; include economic and occupational development initiatives, including ones you develop and provide through the partnership system. Use faith-based institutions such as mosques, synagogues, temples and churches as hubs of family support and community development.<br>▪ Identify and rely on community guides – insiders who can help you understand and work with residents you have not met before. |
| Recognize challenges and build on strengths | Identify and promote community-wide positive norms and expectations for prosocial behavior, health and well being. Create strong normative settings and environments that reinforce and promote knowledge, attitudes and behaviors supportive of health and well being. |

We see school leaders as particularly well-suited to adopt community builder roles. Schools are often at the center of a community and garner great interest from the community. By moving into more broadly defined community partnerships, school leaders actually begin modifying their roles in the community. They find themselves moving from simply being school leaders to being community builders. Community builders are people who work actively to engage the concerted efforts of all members of a community to solve community problems and to promote the community good (Ife, 1999). School leaders as community builders find this expanded role brings benefits to their students, their families, teachers, the school and the larger community.

## *Common barriers in community partnerships*

Regardless of who serves as the community builder, mobilizer or instigator, community partnerships allow for the tapping of underutilized resources, the mobilization of resources in focused, intentional ways, as well as the maximization of resources in school communities. In reality, extending and expanding the idea that all of a community's "gifts" offer potential resources for reducing barriers to student learning and increasing both student and family potential should be exciting for school leaders.

This work is not easy. There are multiple barriers and obstacles that may present themselves as you work through the process of negotiating partnerships and developing resources. A few are highlighted here, along with minimizing strategies aimed to reduce the impact of the each barrier.

### Barrier: Recruiting and retaining partners

There are always challenges related to recruiting and retaining individual and organizational involvement within any community partnership. It is difficult to get these stakeholders to view the partnership as imperative to their success in their work. Table 9.8 presents common recruiting and retaining partners barriers and makes suggestions about how to address them.

***Table 9.8: Recruiting and retaining partners – Specific barriers and minimizing strategies***

| **Barriers: Recruiting and retaining partners** | **Minimizing strategies** |
|---|---|
| • Interdependent relationships and collaboration are not valued<br>• Norms for quality interaction have not been established<br>• Sharing is not a priority<br>• Perception it is easier to do work alone<br>• People and agencies are inadvertently left out<br>• "Gifts" are left untapped<br>• Informal opportunities to get to know one another and continuously bring in new resources are not often available<br>• There is limited time and resources to devote to building partnerships<br>• Individuals and agencies do not see partnerships as central to their work and success<br>• Others… | • Find common ground that allows each person and organization to participate, while recognizing each other's varied accountabilities<br>• Identify benefits of partnerships; and costs and losses of dropping out<br>• Find ways for each person and entity to get their goals met through the partnership<br>• Find ways for each person and entity to have a niche to excel and ways to share in the accountability<br>• Regularly develop and disseminate fact sheets that announce the partnership's aims and accomplishments<br>• Make participation a welcome part of the climate and culture; hospitality will be contagious; persons will want to help you<br>• Help partners convince their top level leaders that their partnership with you is worth the effort and part of the job<br>• Offer resources and support to others when times are rough<br>• Establish interdependent relationships; co-grant write<br>• Explore intentional ways to include untapped resources; try to be aware of persons and groups that are not at the table<br>• Understand and identify clichés; dismantling false boundaries and stigmatizing in the community can help youth and children do the same<br>• Host "open houses" and informal times of hospitality to build effective bridges; there needs to be time together, without heavy agenda or motive<br>• Sponsor informal events that build friendships |

| *Table 9.8: Recruiting and retaining partners – Specific barriers and minimizing strategies* | |
|---|---|
| | • Ensure the "right mix" is invited, drawing on histories of success and failure<br>• Employ "community guides" who can translate the mission, best practices and interests of the entire community<br>• Identify neutral people and organizations to convene potential partners<br>• Others… |

### Barrier: Turf and related conflicts

Recruiting and retaining partnerships is challenging because of another related barrier: turf. Essentially, individuals and agencies are protective of their own expertise, clientele, geographical service area, space, practice arena and more. These self-interests often times get in the way of successful community partnerships. Table 9.9 presents common turf and related conflict barriers and makes suggestions about how to address them.

| *Table 9.9: Turf and related conflicts – Specific barriers and minimizing strategies* | |
|---|---|
| **Barriers: Turf and related conflicts**<br><br>• Multiple obstacles can block the convening of potential partners<br>• People and agencies have different missions and perspectives<br>• Agencies compete for the same resources<br>• Perceptions that certain professions and agencies are more qualified, competent, etc.<br>• Language and "alphabet soup" of organizations can impede communication<br>• Historical "rifts" and turf can keep new partnerships from emerging<br>• Not all perspectives are valued equally<br>• Others… | **Minimizing strategies**<br><br>• Find common ground that allows each person and organization to participate, while recognizing each other's varied accountabilities<br>• Find ways for each person and entity to have a niche to excel and ways to share in the accountability<br>• Learn the mission, vision, goals of each community partner and how it contributes to the community and partnership at-large<br>• Understand and identify clichés; dismantling false boundaries and stigmatizing in the community can help youth and children do the same<br>• Value each person and organization for its own worth in the community<br>• Establish norms for high quality interactions<br>• Build trust and relationships among community partners<br>• Remember there will never be enough resources to fully meet the needs of the community<br>• Develop conflict resolution procedures<br>• Reach consensus on core norms, values and principles<br>• Continuously emphasize partners' interdependence<br>• Continuously emphasize the greater good of the community you serve<br>• Develop "win-win" planning frameworks in which duplication of programs and services is good and needed in some cases<br>• Create shared vocabulary and meanings that cross disciplines; provide translators/translation<br>• Use only strengths-based, solution-focused language and avoid blaming<br>• Develop cross-training programs<br>• Do not be afraid to talk about issues involving race, socio-economic status, gender, sexual orientation, and their |

| *Table 9.9: Turf and related conflicts – Specific barriers and minimizing strategies* | |
|---|---|
| | relationships; silence is more of a problem than direct, problem solving<br>• Others… |

## Barrier: Confusion and controversy

When you have multiple stakeholders involved, it also becomes confusing and controversial. People and organizations have different expectations, believes and opinions about what the partnership, and its members, should and could be doing. It also is difficult to inform partners of all that is happening because communication channels are often limited or ineffective. Table 9.10 presents common confusion and controversy barriers and makes suggestions about how to address them.

| *Table 9.10: Confusion and controversy – Specific barriers and minimizing strategies* | |
|---|---|
| **Barriers: Confusion and controversy** | **Minimizing strategies** |
| • There are differences in opinions related to who should do what, when and for whom<br>• People do not know what others do, and have perspectives on what others should be doing<br>• Persons are not given permission to disagree<br>• Roles and expectations may be interpreted differently<br>• Simply having multiple stakeholders allows for confusion<br>• Partners are not necessarily accountable to the group, but to their own individual organization/boss<br>• Communication channels are limited, promoting miscommunication or little communication<br>• Others… | • Minimize a crisis orientation by being in constant, honest communication<br>• Honor differences and disagreement in a healthy way by establishing a culture of shared trust and integrity<br>• Invite partners to share their perceived roles for clarification of expectations; memos of understanding or a written commitment to collaboration may be helpful<br>• Avoid blaming and deficit-centered attitudes by agreeing to use strengths-based, solution-focused language<br>• Use memorandums of understanding to provide clarity in roles and expectations<br>• Spend time and energy on consensus-building aimed at the shared vision and missions<br>• Ensure that each partner sees how they fit the big picture and how it helps them<br>• Develop a coherent model and strategies<br>• Convene the partnership regularly to facilitate communication, planning, and accountability<br>• Develop newsletters, listserves, etc., that foster communication and the sharing of information and successes<br>• Work strategically through local media<br>• Others… |

## *Some final thoughts*

The OCCMSI aims to provide educators and their schools as well as students and their families with much-needed resources, assistance and supports. With this model, no one needs to operate in isolation. No potential resource remains undiscovered and untapped. Mindful that everyone needs additional resources, supports and assistance, your job is to develop strategic, solid partnerships.

This model's emphasis on "strategic" and "solid" partnerships is important. The research on school-family-community partnerships, and the multiple benefits they provide, emphasizes that not all partnerships are alike; nor are they automatically beneficial. Unfortunately, some partnerships tap people's time, energy, commitments and resources, but they do not yield any tangible benefits.

You and other local school community leaders need to rely on experiences and first hand knowledge about prospective partners. You especially need to remain mindful about the central roles, functions and missions of Ohio's schools, ensuring that partnerships do not take them off course.

Partnerships are strategic when school community leaders have recruited, engaged and retained the "right" partners. Important local choices are involved, especially choices about how prospective partners will make genuine contributions to school improvement. Reciprocally, partners expect something in return; and, what educators and schools offer should reflect and strengthen the central roles, missions and functions of Ohio's schools.

In this new school improvement model, partnership arrangements must be designed to provide resources, supports and assistance that will enhance learning, academic achievement, healthy development and a sense of connection to school. The OCCMSI encourages your school community to formalize the effective ones, consider shedding the ineffective and inappropriate ones, and develop new ones to gain family and community resources and, in turn, to improve results.

Only then will they be integral components of school improvement.

Above all, this model prioritizes strategic, solid partnerships in the aforementioned core areas – academic learning and enrichment, youth development, family engagement and support, and health-social services. Indeed, many of the improvement targets identified in relation to these core components require and facilitate partnership development.

Finally, you should be reminded that, in some of Ohio's communities and counties, partnership systems already are in place. Like undiscovered and untapped treasures, partnerships are out there waiting for you to discover them. Three notable examples are Partnerships for Success, Families and Children First and Communities that Care. There are others. And, most, if not all, are led by persons who believe they will not be wholly successful until such time as they develop solid, strategic partnerships with schools. As the saying goes, "opportunity knocks" under conditions like these.

## *References*

Anderson-Butcher, D., & Ashton, D. (2004). Innovative models of collaboration to serve children, youth, families, and communities. *Children & Schools. 26*(1). 39-53.

Benson, L., & Harkavy, I. (2002). Universities and community schools. *Universities and Communtiy Schools, 7*(1-2), 1.

Blank, M., Melaville, A.,& Shah, B. (2003). *Making a difference: Research and practice in community schools.* Washington, DC: Coalition for Community Schools & The Institute for Educational Leadership.

Lawson, H., & Briar-Lawson, K. (1997). *Connecting the dots: Progress toward the integration of school reform, school-linked services, parent involvement, and community schools*. Oxford, OH: Institute for Educational Renewal, Miami University.

Cahn, E., & Rowe, J. (1996). *Time dollars.* Chicago: Family Resource Coalition of America.

Chadwick, K.G. (2004). *Improving schools through community engagement: A practical guide for education.* Thousands Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Gold, E., Simon, E., & Brown, C. (2002). *Strong neighborhoods, strong schools: The indicators project on education organizing.* Chicago: The Cross City Campaign for Urban School Reform.

Greenberg, M.T., Weissberg, R.P., O'Brien, M.U., Zins, J.E., Fredericks, L., Resnik, H., & Elias, M.J. (2003). Enhancing school-based prevention and youth development through coordinated social, emotional, and academic learning. *American Psychologist, 58*(6/7), 466-474.

Halpern, R. (2003). *Making play work: The promise of after-school programs for low-income children*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Hatch, T. (1998a). How community action contributes to achievement. *Educational Leadership, 55*(8), 16-19.

Hatch, T. (1998b). The differences in theory that matter in the practice of school improvement. *American Educational Research Journal, 35*(1), 3-31.

Henderson, A.T., & Mapp, K.L. (2002). *A new wave of evidence: The impact of school, family, and community connections on student achievement.* National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools: Southwest Education Developmental Laboratory.

Ife, J. (1999). *Community development: Creating community alternatives—vision, analysis and practice*. Melbourne, Australia: Addison-Wesley Longman Australia.

Jehl, J., Blank, M., & McCloud, B. (2001). *Education and community building: Connecting two worlds.* Washington, DC: Institute for Educational Leadership.

Keith, N. (1996). Can urban school reform and community development be joined? The potential of community schools. *Education and Urban Society, 28,* 237-268.

Knowledge Works. (2004). *10 principles of authentic community engagement*. Cincinnati, OH: Author.

Kretzmann, J. & Mcknight, J. (1993). *Building communities from the inside out: A path toward finding and mobilizing a community's assets.* Evanston, Illinois: Center for Urban Affairs and Policy Research, Northwestern University.

Lawson, H. (in press). Empowering people, facilitating community development, and contributing to sustainable development: The social work of sport, exercise, and physical education programs. *Sport, Education, and Society.*

Lawson, H. (1999). Two new mental models for schools and their implications for principals' roles, responsibilities, and preparation. *National Association of Secondary School Principals' Bulletin, 83*(611), 8-27.

Lawson, H. (2003). Pursuing and securing collaboration to improve results. In M. Brabeck and M. Walsh (Eds.). *Meeting at the hyphen: Schools-universities-communities-professions in collaboration for student achievement and well being* (pp. 45-73). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lawson, H. (2004). The logic of collaboration in education and the human services. *The Journal of Interprofessional Care, 18,* 225-237.

Lawson, H.A., Anderson-Butcher, D., Peterson, N., & Barkdull, C. (2003). Design Teams as learning systems for complex systems change: Evaluation data and implications for higher education. *Journal of Human Behavior and the Social Environment*. 7(1/2), 159-180.

Lawson, H., & Briar-Lawson, K. (1997). *Connecting the dots: Progress toward the integration of school reform, school-linked services, parent involvement, and community schools*. Oxford, OH: Institute for Educational Renewal, Miami University.

Larsen, Harlan, Bolin, Hackett; Hope, Kirby, Nelson, Rex, Wolf. (2004). Bonding and bridging: Understanding the relationship between social capital and civic action. *Journal of Planning Education and Research,* 24(1), 64-77.

Lopez, M. (2003). *Transforming schools through community organizing: A research review.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard Family Research Project, Graduate School of Education, Harvard University.

Mediratta, K., Fruchter, N., & Lewis, A. (2002). *Organizing for school reform: How communities are finding their voices and reclaiming their public schools*. New York: Institute for Education and Social Policy, Steinhardt School of Education, New York University.

Melaville, T. (1999). Making a difference for children and families: The comm**unity** approach. *What Works Policy Brief*. Sacramento, CA: The Foundation Consortium for California's Children and Youth.

Murray, J., & Weissbourd, R. (2003). Focusing on core academic outcomes: A key to successful school-community partnerships. In M. Brabeck, M. Walsh, & R. Latta (Eds.). *Meeting at the hyphen: Schools-universities-communities-professions in collaboration for student achievement and well being* (pp. 179-197). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Saks, J.B. (2000). The community connection: Case studies in public engagement. Alexandria: VA: National School Boards Association.

Shirley, D. (1997). *Community organizing for urban school reform*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.

Stone, C., Henig, J., Jones, B., & Pierannunzi, C. (2001). *Building civic capacity: The politics of reforming urban schools.* Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press.

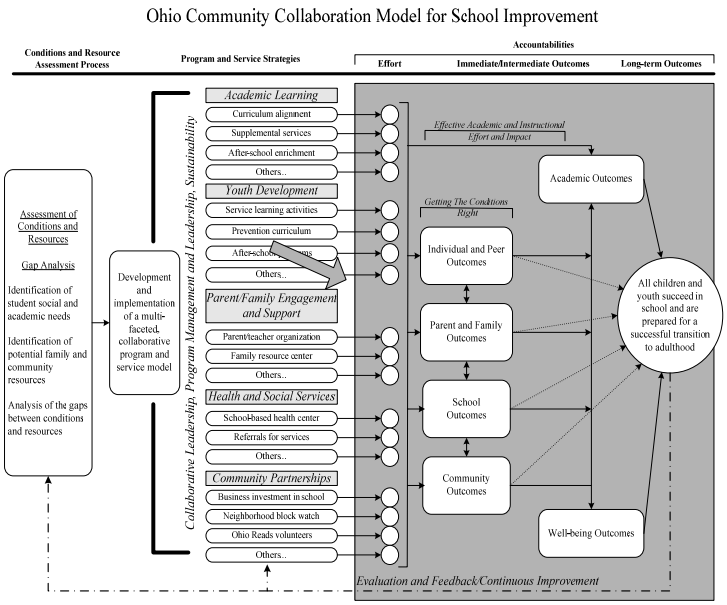
Strand, K., Marullo, S., Cutforth, N., Stoecker, R., Donohue, P. (2003). Principles of best practice for community-based research. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning, 9*(3), 5-15.

Turning Points: Transforming Middle Schools Project. (2004). *Creating partnerships, bridging worlds: Family andcommunity engagement.* Boston, MD: Author.

Villarreal, L., & Bookmyer, J. (2004). Community-school partnerships: The legacy of healthy start. *What Works Policy Brief*. Sacramento, CA: The Foundation Consortium for California's Children and Youth.

# Evaluation

## Introduction




This chapter presents conceptual and technical information about the final component of the Ohio Community Collaboration Model for School Improvement (OCCMSI) – evaluation. We emphasize a comprehensive approach to evaluation because comprehensive school improvement requires comprehensive evaluation. In what follows, we offer our best advice about how a district or school can approach evaluation planning and implementation in a way that will increase the chances it will produce meaningful information ("data") for continuous improvement.

In this chapter, we focus on processes and technologies that address the two major goals of any evaluation:

- The efficient collection and analysis of data about the delivery of programs and services to intended target groups and the *impact of* these programs and services on those targets; and

- The use of evaluation data to guide decision-making about the *improvement of* these programs and services.

The material in this chapter is anchored in two key concepts: data-based decision-making and continuous improvement. These two concepts and their relationship – data-based decision-making in service of continuous improvement – have influenced a great deal of thought, writing and policy-making in education (Bernhart, 1999; Johnson, 2002; Holcomb, 1999; Ohio Department of Education, 2000). These two concepts also are tied to another vital one: accountability for results (e.g., Doran, 2003).

Further, our approach has been influenced by action science (Argyris, 1985), the development of learning organizations (Argyris, 1999; Senge, 1990; Senge, et al., 2000), and empowerment evaluation (Fetterman, 2001). These concepts and perspectives all converge on the notion that accountability systems and evaluation strategies are intended to guide decisions and action.

Our approach to data-based decision-making started in the conditions, needs and resources assessment section of this guide. In that section, we described methods you can use to develop a list of conditions facing youth and families in your school community that are important to address in order to increase student achievement. We also described ways you can identify school and community resources available to help you address those key conditions. These data generated through your conditions and resources assessment are the foundation upon which you build your programs and partnerships.

This chapter links to and extends the conditions, needs and resources discussion. Your evaluation strategy will be aimed at assessing the extent to which you were successful in meaningfully addressing youth, family, school and community conditions.

In essence, the conditions you found in the conditions and resources assessment stage become desired outcomes you assess in the evaluation stage. The data you generate now through the evaluation of desired outcomes will in turn guide your future assessments of conditions and resources through an ever-evolving continuous improvement process.

As we have emphasized throughout this document, for the model to work, each component in the process must be planned and implemented with careful forethought. Evaluation is no different. In the next few sections, we identify tasks and activities necessary for you to undertake sound evaluations. Note that plural "evaluations" – it is a continuous process, not a once and then completed task.

The suggested tasks and activities are grounded in recommended evaluation practices (Worthen, et. al., 1997). Before that discussion, however, the following are pieces of general advice:

- Do not view evaluation as something tacked on at the back end; it starts when you start;
- Do not wait until the last minute to plan for evaluation - this is a classic mistake that usually results in questionable products; start early in evaluation planning;
- Do evaluation for the right reasons - it is the main way you will find out what you need to do to improve, it helps you learn as you improve and it is an essential management tool;
- Like all of continuous improvement, evaluation should be a team effort; collaborative leadership (discussed in a special chapter) also is needed with evaluation;
- Emphasize the fact that evaluation "closes the loop" in continuous improvement - it is where you get answers to key questions that will inform important decision processes; and
- Emphasize that evaluation paves the way for learning - the data it provides and the directions it signals enable individuals, groups and entire organizations to learn

Finally, we really do urge you to think comprehensively about evaluating school improvement. The current emphasis placed on state-mandated accountabilities – high-stakes tests, performance index scores and adequate yearly progress – actually serve to narrow the perception of what districts and schools do with and for students and families. In our approach to school improvement, we think that, in addition to academic progress, districts, schools and communities will be interested in evaluating efforts to impact youth development, to engage parents and families, to link and engage health and social services and to effectively engage community partnerships.

## *The empowerment perspective*

There have been some recent advances in conceptualizing evaluation that are critically important to the evaluation of the comprehensive school improvement model presented in this document. Empowerment evaluation has emerged – both philosophically and practically – as a marriage between the idea that information is more valuable to people the more involved they are in its creation and the traditional tools and technologies of doing evaluations. Fetterman (2001) notes that empowerment evaluation uses evaluation concepts, techniques and findings for fostering improvement and self-determination. It has an unambiguous value orientation; it is designed to help people help themselves and improve their programs.

The importance of this perspective is shown in Table 10.1. These are "Principles of Empowerment Evaluation." Please note how closely these principles fit with the overall school improvement philosophy and framework.

***Table 10.1: Principles of empowerment evaluation****

| Principle and strategy | What this looks like |
|---|---|
| Improvement | • Programs help develop relationships and connections among youth and healthy adults<br>• Evaluation focuses on making things better<br>• Improvement is incremental or can include radical transformative change |
| Group ownership | • A group is in charge of the conceptual orientation and execution of the evaluation<br>• In the context of school improvement, the group refers to the school and its community being in charge of the evaluation |
| Inclusion | • Critical stakeholders are invited to the evaluation table, particularly those that have been excluded<br>• Key partnerships are developed through evaluation, much in line with the spirit of the school improvement model |
| Research supported practices | • Programs and services that have been found to be effective in other settings are used, thus enhancing the likelihood of change and effectiveness<br>• Evidence-based practices, model programs and research supported principles are used, and their evaluation strategies are implemented |
| Capacity-building | • People learn how to conduct evaluations by actually conducting evaluations in practice<br>• They learn the logic of evaluation, specific techniques and procedures and how to use evaluation to improve program performance |

| *Table 10.1: Principles of empowerment evaluation** | |
|---|---|
| **Principle and strategy** | **What this looks like** |
| Organizational learning | • Data is used for decision-making; it encourages inquiry and critical thinking and, optimally, leads to organizational learning and growth |
| Accountability | • Evaluation supports both internal and external accountability requirements |

Empowerment evaluation has significant positive implications for schools working with the Ohio Community Collaboration Model for School Improvement. It represents an approach that helps develop ownership for the accountabilities implied by the model. It also helps build evaluation capacity in the school community by teaching various conceptual and technical skills. With an empowerment commitment, evaluation becomes an integrated component of the school improvement process and the school-community improvement process.

## *Developing a comprehensive evaluation strategy*

In this section, we describe a process for evaluation planning that fits nicely within the model as shown in Figure 1.2. In the model, the entire right side deals with various types of accountabilities that are the focus of your evaluation efforts. Because the model you develop may be complicated, we urge you to work through the recommended steps carefully to make sure you collect the right data you need to inform decision-making.

Hopefully, one of things you will discover as you plan for evaluation is that much of the material we present throughout this implementation guide is designed to link to evaluation. As you work through each step you should be able to recognize where the prior planning and implementation work on your part will be helpful in the evaluation process.

A comprehensive evaluation strategy requires attention to five basic areas or steps:

- Construct good program models;
- Identify key accountabilities (develop evaluation questions);
- Identify data sources;
- Establish a data collection strategy; and
- Develop data management, analysis and reporting procedures.

These components actually build on each other in a logical flow. Good program models and key accountabilities will lead you to the data you need to collect and analyze. Once you have identified data needs, you can consider how often you need to do data collection and how you need to organize and store it. Finally, various key accountabilities will help you structure your analysis and reporting plan. Each of these areas is developed more fully below.

## Step 1: Construct good program models

We have already discussed the fact that logic models are critical to the development of your programs and services. Carefully done, a logic model describes a pathway between an important condition faced by students (and/or their families) and the outcomes you hope to achieve by your program or service efforts. In addition, logic models are indispensable to evaluation because they identify what data needs to be collected, analyzed and linked to the continuous improvement process.

> Examine the program/services overview chapter for more information on logic models.

## Step 2: Identify key accountabilities

Simply defined, accountabilities are the things for which you are willing to be responsible. If you refer to our school improvement framework (Figure 10.1), you will note that we differentiate between two types of accountabilities: effort and outcome. *Effort accountabilities* refer to information that generally describes how programs and services have been implemented. These measures are sometimes referred to as output or process measures (Rossi & Freeman, 1993).

*Outcome accountabilities*, on the other hand, refer to how the people you serve have benefited from your programs and services. These accountabilities address potential positive changes or gains in knowledge, attitudes, intentions and behavior that students and families experience as a result of your effort.

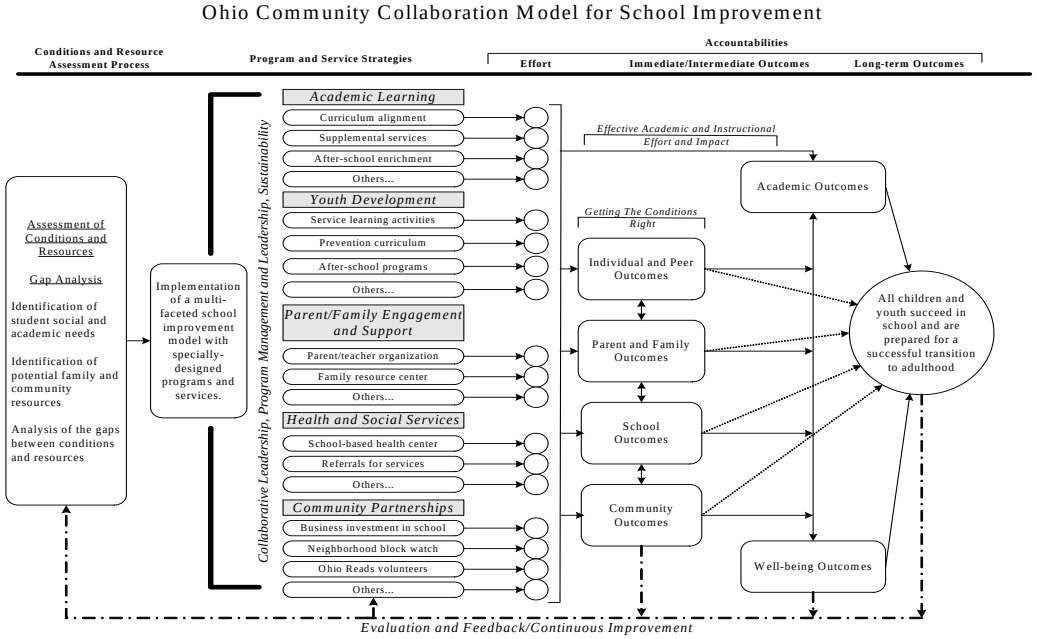



***Figure 10.1**: Ohio Community Collaboration Model for School Improvement*

A balanced evaluation strategy needs to address both effort and outcomes. An analysis of effort provides a rich description of how a program or service actually was delivered to youth and and/or families. It provides details about how much service was provided, where it was provided, and, in some cases, how well it was received by people served. Effort, then, sets the context for understanding outcomes. By understanding context, you can tie outcomes to critical program or service ingredients that help you talk meaningfully about change mechanisms. Furthermore, you can determine the extent to which you can make sound conclusions and applications based on limited data (generalizability) and also judge whether the data justify replicating your work elsewhere.

### *Measuring effort*

As noted above, measures of effort help you track and assess program or service implementation and operation. There are two dimensions of effort important to address: coverage and process. Program or service coverage describes the population served and the types and range of services provided. Process describes how students and families move through the system and experience the services provided.

One convenient way to think about effort measures is that they help you answer the following question(s):

- For coverage
    - Are we providing the right types and amounts of programs and services?
    - Are we providing the appropriate range of programs and services based on identified student and family needs?
    - What are the demographic characteristics of students and families served?
    - What proportion of student and families served complete their program and service experience and what are key characteristics of those who drop out?
    - Have we engaged necessary community partners based on identified student and family needs?

- For process
    - How do students and families enter our programs and services?
    - What actually happens to students and families in programs and services? Is what happens the intended experience?
    - Were multiple program and service experiences for students and families well coordinated?
    - Are program and service tasks being carried out on time and within budget?
    - Are there barriers to optimal performance by program and service staff that affects program operation and delivery?
    - How do students and families feel about the program or service? Do they feel their experience was positive? Was the location, time and setting for the program acceptable?

Answers to these questions – and others you may identify based on your own unique program models – help you understand the critical match between your program and service intention and your actual program action. In other words, they address the extent to which you have been faithful to what you have promised to do. The term used to characterize this match between intention and action is called program implementation fidelity. If you do not pay attention to implementation fidelity, you run the risk of letting your program efforts drift.

Effort measures are generally descriptive and may be expressed as volumes or amounts such as who was served (characteristics of students and families), how much (how much service did you provide to students and families), how many (how many students or families were provided services) and how often (how regularly were students and families provided services). See Table 10.2 for a sample of the types of data useful for assessing program and service effort.

***Table 10.2: A sample of types of data useful for assessing effort***

- Student and family demographic characteristics
  - Location
  - Race
  - Socio-economic status
- Student and family service use
  - Attendance
  - Types of services used
  - Amount of services used
- Referral sources
- Student and family satisfaction with services
  - Access
  - Availability
  - Professionalism
  - Appropriateness
  - Safety
- Staff characteristics
  - Credentials
  - Demographics
  - Experience
- Service activity
  - Type
  - Amount
  - Setting
- Service financial data (for cost/benefit analysis)

From: Royce & Thyer, 1999

Finally, we would like to underscore the importance of understanding your program and service effort. Scheirer (1994) identifies four major roles for process and effort evaluation:

- Effort measures provide feedback on the quality of ongoing service delivery - information that can stimulate greater effort to make the program consistent with what was intended in the planning process (implementation fidelity);

- Effort data can provide feedback about who is receiving program services and to what extent, allowing program managers to assess whether the program is reaching its intended target (the right people are getting services);

- Effort evaluation increases knowledge of what program components contribute to outcomes, enabling program managers to design more effective future programs (true test of the intended program); and

- Effort evaluation aids in understanding how programs can be successfully implemented in other settings (generalizability).

### *Measuring outcomes*

Once you adopt the OCCMSI, you have invested heavily in the evaluation of outcomes. As you know by now, this model emphasizes both intermediate and long-term outcomes as well as research-supported policies and practices for achieving them. Here, you are learning about your responsibilities and opportunities to evaluate in relation to these outcomes, enabling continuous learning and improvement.

You will see in the model (Figure 10.1) there are various boxes devoted to student and family outcomes, and there are arrows connecting these outcomes in important ways. These arrows are important because they imply a set of key connections between the various outcome types. In this section, we will discuss various types of outcomes and the important links between them.

It is important to start this discussion by focusing on the far right on the model. In the circle under long-term outcomes we define the over-arching outcomes to which all other outcomes point. These outcomes – that all children and youth succeed in school and are prepared for a successful transition to adulthood – are two of a set of outcomes established by the Ohio Family and Children First Initiative and are targeted as final goals for schools in Ohio. These outcomes are referred to as Ohio's Commitments to Child Well-Being and have been at the core of child policy direction in various state agencies for a number of years.

Further, this set of outcomes form crucial long-term accountabilities for Ohio's educational system. Many of the state-mandated education measures attach to these broad child well-being goals. The fact they are driving other state and local policy and program direction is welcome to our model. It means we are beginning to harness the attention and energy of other key partners and stakeholders who have a vested interest in our success in these areas.

| ***Table 10.3: Ohio Commitments to Child Well-Being (with selected school indicators)*** |
|---|
| Children and youth succeed in school<br>• Annual % of students passing the fourth grade reading proficiency test<br>• Annual % of students who have a 95 percent attendance rate or better<br>• Annual % of students who graduate from high school<br>• Annual % of students who report parental involvement with their education<br><br>Youth successfully transition into adulthood<br>• Annual % of high school graduates who continue their education<br>• Annual % of employed young adults<br>• Annual % of youth who did not graduate from high school earning the GED through age 20 |

The importance of these long-term outcomes in the model is clear. They are the outcomes to which all others point, including parents, school board members and both state and governmental officials.

Please notice the different kinds of arrows; each kind has a special purpose. The solid arrows indicate a direct contribution to long-term outcomes by other outcome types. For example, in this model two areas make that direct contribution – academic outcomes and well-being outcomes. The dotted lines indicate an important but indirect contribution to long-term outcomes. In the model, you can see that individual and peer outcomes, parent and family outcomes, school outcomes and community outcomes make direct contributions to academic outcomes and well-being outcomes and, also, make indirect contributions to the long-term outcomes.

The boxes that correspond to the various program strategies represent the immediate and intermediate outcomes associated with the services you develop in those areas. Outcome measures are sometimes differentiated by level; for example, your program efforts may be designed to have initial or immediate effects and intermediate effects. The difference between these levels is:

- Initial impacts or outcomes are the first benefits or changes experienced by program participants and are the ones most closely related to and influenced by the program's outputs (often, initial outcomes are changes in participant's knowledge, attitudes or skills); and

- Intermediate impacts or outcomes link a program's initial outcomes to the longer-term outcomes it desires for participants and are often sustained changes in behavior that result from participant's new knowledge, attitudes or skills (United Way of America, 1996).

As we discussed above, long-term impacts or outcomes are the ultimate outcomes a program desires to achieve for its participants. They are generally measured at the school, district or the community level where they are tracked over time to assess trends.

It is important to understand not all outcomes are intrinsically immediate, intermediate or long-term. An intermediate outcome for one program may be long-term for another. In fact, you may design programs that do not have all three levels of outcomes.

If you have developed logic models for the services you intend to provide, the immediate and intermediate boxes for each should be filled out. These accountabilities are program specific and will flow logically from conditions addressed and program intent. The link between conditions addressed by your program and outcomes is important to stress once again. In Table 10.4, we present a sample of potential program outcomes that come directly from the list conditions presented in Table 2.1 of the 'Getting Started' chapter.

| ***Table 10.4: A sample of potential program outcomes (i.e., conditions you desire)*** |
|---|
| **Academic outcomes** |
| Students perform at grade level<br>Students attend school regularly and on time<br>Students have a 93 percent attendance rate or better<br>Students entering ninth grade graduate from high school<br>Students with disabilities spend more time in general classes<br>High school graduates continue their education<br>Young adults are employed<br>Students are prepared to enter a career<br>Students are not expelled or involuntarily removed from school due to disciplinary reasons<br>Students are not suspended from normal instructional school activities due to discipline reasons<br>Students do not have in-school suspensions, Saturday school assignments, and other disciplinary actions |
| **Individual and peer behaviors and attitudes** |
| Youth experience a sense of belonging to pro-social institutions or groups (i.e., faith-based organizations, youth organizations, etc.)<br>Youth have social competence, self-esteem and self-confidence<br>Youth have effective social and life skills<br>Youth associate with pro-social peer groups<br>Youth have strong relationships with caring adult role models<br>Youth have values for honesty, integrity, caring and responsibility<br>Youth have a sense of purpose; feel personal control and are empowered<br>Youth are easy going, flexible and have a sense of humor<br>Youth feel safe and secure<br>Youth have positive mental and physical health<br>Youth do not have potential or identified learning disabilities<br>Youth have their basic needs met (i.e., food, shelter, etc.)<br>Youth have opportunities for skill-building and learning via participation in pro-social activities (i.e., vocational experiences, extracurricular activities, hobbies, etc.)<br>Youth display pro-social behaviors (i.e., are substance free, abstain from gang involvement and sexual activity, etc.) |
| **School conditions** |
| Schools offer opportunities for students to be involved in pro-social activities<br>Schools and their staff reinforce student involvement in pro-social activities<br>Schools have positive climates<br>Schools have high expectations for students<br>Teachers and school staff are well trained and supported<br>Facilities are safe and conducive to learning<br>Teachers, students and school staff are committed to the school<br>Relationships are strong among teachers and students<br>Schools are bully-free |

| ***Table 10.4: A sample of potential program outcomes (i.e., conditions you desire)*** |
|---|
| **Family** |
| Families have their basic needs met (i.e., food, shelter, clothing)<br>Parents and/or caregivers are well educated and have English proficiency<br>Parents and/or caregivers have stable employment<br>Family child care needs are met<br>Families and parents and/or caregivers have functional management styles and communication patterns<br>Parents and/or caregivers are engaged in their children's schooling<br>Families are not experiencing grief and/or loss<br>Family members engage in pro-social behaviors presently and in the past<br>Parents and other family members have positive mental health histories<br>Families offer opportunities for children to be involved in pro-social activities<br>Families reinforce children's involvement in pro-social activities |
| **Community conditions** |
| Residency and housing in the community is relatively stable (low mobility rates)<br>Communities have laws and norms that reinforce pro-social behaviors<br>Communities are substance- and gang-free<br>Communities have accessible, quality services and supports available for families<br>Residents and other stakeholders feel a sense of attachment to the community<br>Communities are stable and supportive of families<br>Communities have informal social support networks embedded within their infrastructures<br>Communities provide opportunities for youth involvement in pro-social activities<br>Communities reinforce youth involvement in pro-social activities<br>Communities see youth as valuable assets<br>Communities have high expectations for youth |

One way to organize your evaluation of these outcomes is to develop the set of questions you seek to answer through your evaluation strategy. These questions could include, for example:

For students:

- Are we positively impacting academic skills and learning?
- Are we positively impacting academic achievement?
- Are we positively impacting student's sense of connection to school?
- Are we positively impacting social development?
- Are we positively impacting healthy development?

For parents and families:

- Are we increasing parental interest and participation in the academic lives of students?
- Are we supporting good education, health and social outcomes for entire families?

For community partners:

- Are community partners emphasizing academic achievement outcomes?
- Are we positively impacting community partner attitudes towards and commitments to schools?

Finally, we would like to underscore the importance of understanding the outcomes of your program and service effort:

- Outcomes are at the heart of your program's effort and intention;
- Outcome data can be used in programs to inform students and families about their progress (clinical use);
- Outcome feedback will inform the process of program direction and improvement; and
- Tying outcomes to program financial data will lead to important cost-benefit assessments.

### Step 3: Developing data sources

The data you need to gather to address your various key effort and outcome questions will come from a variety of sources. It is helpful to identify those sources early in the data strategy design process and to establish procedures and protocols that will provide data to you in a format you can use. It is especially important that you map key questions and data sources to ensure you do not have gaps. Table 10.5 presents such a map.

***Table 10.5: Example key questions and potential data sources***

| Question | Data source |
|---|---|
| Are we serving the right students? | Program records, student demographics |
| Are we providing the right types and amounts of programs and services? | Program records |
| Are we involving parents and families? | Program records, parent survey and/or focus group |
| Are we supported by important community partners? | Program records, community survey and/or focus group |
| Do students think we are doing services in a quality way? | Student survey and/or focus group |
| Do classroom teachers and school staff think we are doing services in a quality way? | Teacher and school staff survey and/or focus group |
| Do parents and family members think we are doing services in a quality way? | Parent survey and/or focus group |
| Do community partners think we are doing services in a quality way? | Community partner survey and/or focus group |
| Are we positively impacting academic skills and proficiency? | Program records, school records, EMIS, observation |
| Are we positively impacting social development? | Program records, classroom teacher survey, EMIS, parent survey, observation |
| Are we increasing parental interest and participation in the academic lives of students? | Parent survey, student survey, home visits, observation |
| Are we positively impacting community partner attitudes towards and commitments to schools? | Community survey, community visits, observation |

Examine the conditions and resources assessment chapter for more on potential data sources.

In many instances, one data collection effort can answer a series of key questions. For example, a well-designed parent survey could realistically include questions about their engagement in the program, perceived program quality and the academic and social progress of their child as a result of the program.

Not all data sources are created equal, however. There are trade-offs you need to consider as you structure your strategy. To highlight, Table 10.6 presents some strengths and issues/weaknesses of various data sources.

***Table 10.6. Things to consider about data sources***

| Data source | Strengths | Issues/Weaknesses |
|---|---|---|
| School records | Gets you critical information about student performance and behavior during the school day | Can be difficult to get; may be inconsistent by teacher or school |
| Education Management Information System (EMIS) | Gets you critical information about student performance and behavior on a standardized format | May be difficult to access; may not be timely or at least may not fit your time frames; data may not be in a usable format |
| Surveys (student, parent, teacher, school staff, community partner) | Provide broad coverage about topics of interest; can usually be done economically | Require attention to distribution and follow-up for non-respondents; require data management and analysis skills |
| Focus groups (student, parent, teacher, school staff, community partner) | Gives you more personalized information about program | Coverage is not as broad as survey; require qualitative data analysis skills |
| Visits and observation (home, school, community partner) | Information is collected and processed in a natural context; collects information and encourages communication and dialogue | Narrow coverage that may be biased; requires qualitative data analysis skills |

### Step 4: Deciding when to collect evaluation data

Once you have established what data you intend to collect and how you are going to collect it, you then need to decide when or how often you will collect evaluation data. There are two basic ways to think about this "when" question:

- *One-time only data collection* – some data, like student or family demographics, need to be collected only once since it is not data that typically changes over time (referred to as cross-sectional data); and

- *Multiple time data collection* – some data like student academic and social progress should be collected at various time points through the course of the program since it is data you expect to change as a result of your efforts (referred to as longitudinal or time-series data).

The importance of thinking about regular, multiple data collection through the program time frame should not be under-estimated. These longitudinal looks at critical effort and outcome measures form the basis of data-based decision-making (these data also are called formative data because they help to guide program content and direction over time). Further, in the areas of social and academic progress, longitudinal data help you follow student development and learning trajectories that provide key information to program staff as they construct individualized plans for each student.

This time-ordered, multiple-measure data strategy for individual students has been popularized in education under the name of value-added education (Doran, 2003). Value-added education has a simple premise. You assess where a student – or a family, for that matter – is starting and you design programs and services intended to make sure that student makes progress from that starting point.

Figure 10.2 shows how a value-added trajectory looks. The y-axis represents scores on a measure of the area addressed in the value-added effort. It can be an educational area such as reading or mathematics, or it could be an area of youth development like developing social skills. The x-axis is a measure of the interval of time measures will be taken. It can be at any interval depending on the objective of the value-added effort. For an intensive effort, it may be daily or for a less intensive effort it may based on a grading period or quarterly.

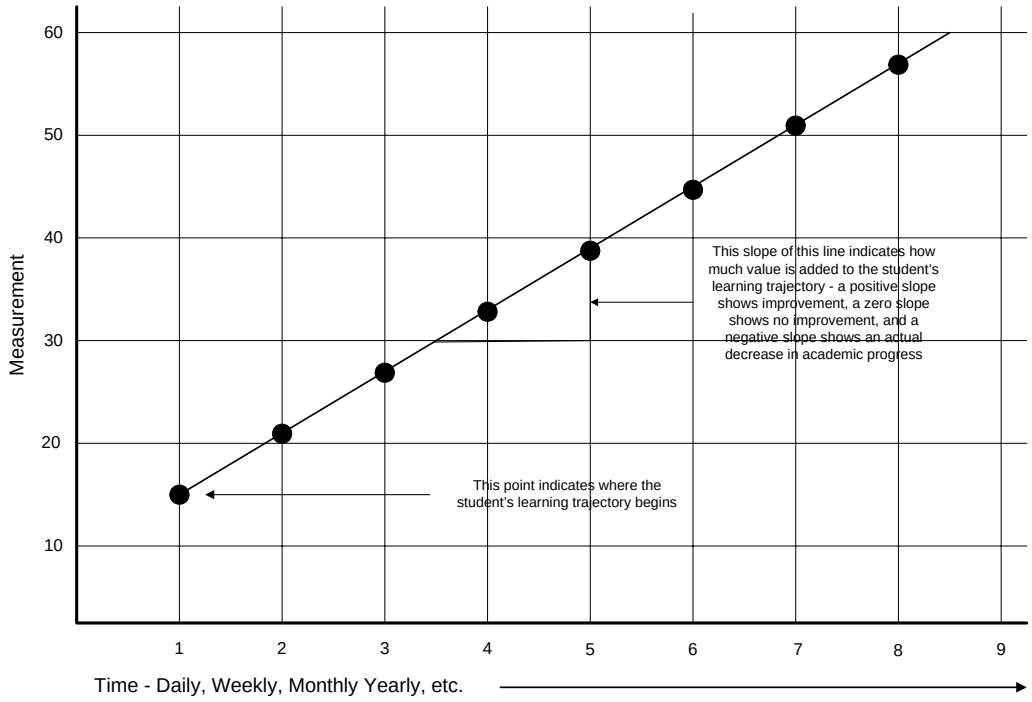



***Figure 10.2:*** *Value-added trajectories*

The initial data point represents the starting point on the measure of interest. It is a comparison point for the trajectory. In value-added education, we expect the line to increase. The slope of the line indicates how much value we are adding for the student. An up-sloping steep line shows considerable value added. A horizontal line would indicate we are not adding any value for the student. Finally, a downward sloping line suggests the student is actually declining in the measure of interest.

Figure 10.3 shows a set of trajectories for a class of students. The measure in this example is oral reading fluency and it expressed as the correct number of words read in one minute from a grade-appropriate reading passage. The trajectories are based on three measures taken in the fall, winter and spring.

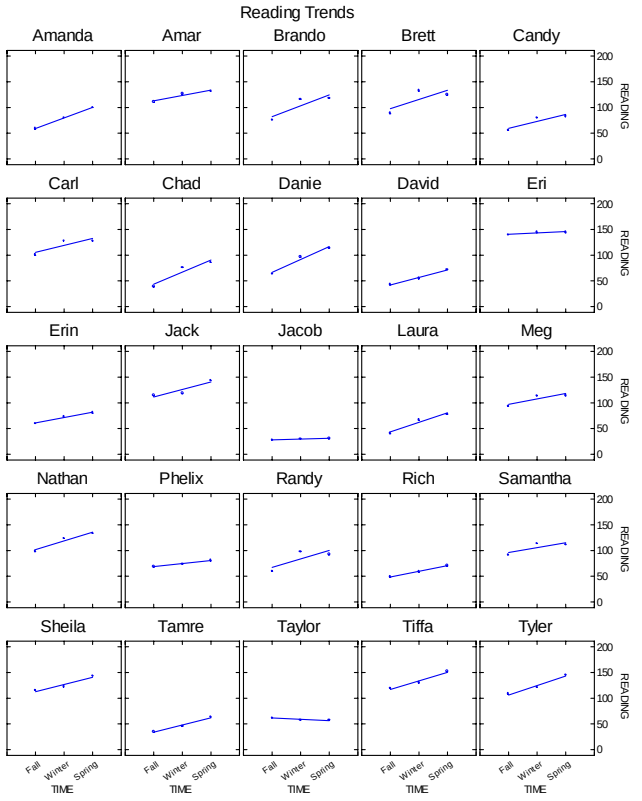



***Figure 10.3**: Value-added reading trajectories for a classroom*

These trajectories present helpful information. First, it looks like many of the students in the class have upward sloping lines indicating they are making gains in oral reading fluency. A few students have relatively flat lines indicating they are improving slowly or are not improving at all. One student has a downward sloping line indicating he is losing ground in reading fluency.

Second, each of these 25 students is starting in a different place in reading fluency. In fact, there is substantial variability around the first data point. This variability presents challenges to the classroom teacher who will need to tailor instruction for each student to ensure that she adds value to each student's reading fluency skill.

Individual growth trajectories also can be meaningfully aggregated. For example, Table 10.7 shows summary baseline and value-added coefficients for classrooms of students in a school (these happen to be all fourth-grade classes making them comparable; the measure is oral reading fluency measured as correct words per minute; the teachers' names are fictitious).

These data are very helpful in looking at classroom effects. First, you can see there is some variability in where each class, on the average, starts in oral reading fluency. The values range from a low of 64.3 correct words per minute for Ms. Ross to 86.9 correct words per minute for Mr. Adams. This is actually quite a substantial difference and certainly possesses challenges for Ms. Ross. Further, the value-added coefficients are similarly variable. Remember, these values show, on the average, how steep the growth trajectory is for each class. Ms. Ross not only starts low, but also has a modest value-added trajectory. Mr. Adams enjoys not only a high starting value but a high value-added coefficient, as well.

***Table 10.7: Baseline and value-added coefficients for fourth grade classrooms***

| Classroom | Starting point (Intercept) | Value-added (Slope) |
|---|---|---|
| Adams | 86.9 | 17.8 |
| Jones | 67.8 | 13.4 |
| Mann | 76.3 | 12.4 |
| McGovern | 82.7 | 14.0 |
| Ross | 64.3 | 4.9 |
| Smith | 70.1 | 12.8 |
| All 4th Grade | 75.1 | 13.7 |

This idea of aggregating value-added information has important implications for understanding the differential effects of instruction and social intervention. These data can be disaggregated in a variety of ways: by gender, by race, by classroom, by free and reduced lunch status, etc. These data help us seriously and substantively understand "achievement gaps" (Johnson, 2002) that can inform decision-making in many helpful ways.

In summary, time-ordered data holds real promise for an evaluation strategy. It enables you to track changes and gains over time and to make changes in your effort if value-added trajectories are not headed in the right direction. Further, it can be used to track all kinds of outcomes for students and families, not just academic outcomes. The notion of tracking changes over time applies as well to families, schools and communities (Bernhart, 1998; Poister, 2003).

### Step 5: Managing and analyzing your evaluation data and reporting results

This is the key component of your comprehensive data strategy that may present the most frustration. Most people feel overwhelmed by the technical challenges of data management, analysis and reporting. The task may be made less daunting, however, by following some simple steps (some of these steps may require the short-term use of outside help, especially if you lack confidence in computer skills):

- *Commit to electronic support for your data strategy* – If at all possible, you should avoid manual processing of data. It is time consuming and inflexible. Computer resources are generally available at low cost. You can use a spreadsheet program such as Excel to manage and analyze your data, or you might consider a more specialized package such as SPSS for your management and analysis needs. Do not be put off by the term statistical package; modern programs like SPSS are user-friendly and may be even easier to use than a spreadsheet for some tasks. Also, training for each package is readily available;

- *Be deliberate and structured in your data management approach* – You will likely have multiple data files you will need to manage and analyze. Be sure to avoid confustion by developing good naming conventions for files and by developing a system for file version control. It might be helpful to also identify a person who will serve in the lead responsibility role for evaluation.

- *Develop a sound analysis plan* – There are well-developed steps in the analysis of data that you can use to guide your efforts. Data analysis should be guided by your key questions - that is, your analysis should lead to answers to those questions.

- *Develop a user-based reporting strategy* – Getting the right information to the right people at the right time is usually done through a set of reports that summarize and present data. Be sure to talk to people who will be interested in your data to get their opinion about effective presentation. Creating effective reports requires a blend of technical skills (statistical or qualitative analytic) and artistic design and presentation.

## *Using data to guide decisions and action: Closing the loop in the continuous improvement process*

We want to be sure to emphasize the important link between evaluation and continuous improvement. We basically see them as inseparable. Continuous improvement requires that you actually use evaluation data to revise or restructure your program efforts if you determine things are not going as planned or if you are not getting the positive student and family outcomes you thought you would.

We show that feedback loop in Figure 10.1. The heavy dotted lines indicate a flow from outcomes back to both programs and the conditions and resources assessment process. The entire process of using data in decision-making is one of adjustment and re-adjustment. You may find yourself re-thinking the priority of the conditions presented by students and families and develop new programs to address those conditions, or you may find you are not getting to some of the outcomes you think are important. In that case, you may suggest changes or modifications to currently operating programs that increase the chance you will improve outcomes. In any case, you are always willing to make changes implied by the feedback you get through the evaluation system and process.

Finally, your goal in this process is to create a school that is, itself, committed to learning. The following are some important characteristics of learning organizations. Use these to assess where you are in the learning organization development process. Learning organizations:

- Have leaders and staff who are committed to learning and improvement;
- Are inquisitive - they want to know about the performance and impacts of their efforts;
- Respond to data and information; they value feedback and commit resources to the development of responsive information 'guidance' systems;
- Actively seek to identify sources of error – mismatches between intention and results – and they have in place mechanisms to correct and prevent errors;
- Have the capacity to change, revise and refocus (in fact, change is expected and greeted enthusiastically); and
- Think strategically; look for opportunities and build capacity to be strategic.

## *Final thoughts*

Remember, you need to think about evaluation as a strategic management skill and not as an externally mandated requirement.

If you follow our recommendations by constructing sound program logic models, developing key questions, carefully identifying data sources, establishing a data collection strategy and developing data management, analysis and reporting procedures, you will find that collecting evaluation data and using it to support decision-making can be exciting.

## *References*

Argyris, C. (1985). *Action science*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Argyris, C. (1999). *On learning organizations.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Bernhart, V. L. (1998). *Data analysis for comprehensive school improvement.* Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.

Bernhart, V. L. (1999). *The school portfolio: A comprehensive framework for school improvement (2nd Ed).* Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education, Inc.

Doran, H. C. (2003). Adding value to accountability. *Educational Leadership,* 55-59.

Fetterman, D. (2001). *Foundations of empowerment evaluation.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishers.

Holcomb, E. (1999). *Getting excited about data: How to combine people, passion, and proof.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.

Johnson, R. S. (2002). *Using data to close the achievement gap: How to measure equity in our schools.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.

Ohio Department of Education. (2000). *Reference guide to continuous improvement planning (2nd Ed.).* Columbus, OH.

Poister, T. H. (2003). *Measuring performance in public and nonprofit organizations.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, Inc.

Rossi, P. H., & Freeman, H. E. (1993). *Evaluation: A systematic approach.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Royce, D., & Thyer, B. A. (1996). *Program evaluation (2nd Edition).* Chicago: Nelson-Hall Publishers.

Scheier, M. A. (1994). Designing and using process evaluation. In J.S. Wholey, H. P. Hatry, & K. E. Newcomer (Eds.). *Handbook of practical program evaluation.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, Inc.

Senge, P. M. (1990). *The fifth discipline: The art and practice of the learning organization.* New York: Currency-Doubleday.

Senge, P. Cambron-McCabe, N., Lucas, T., Smith, B., Dutton, J., & Kleiner, A. (2000) *Schools that learn: A fifth discipline fieldbook for educators, parents, and everyone who cares about education* (pp. 529-536). New York: Doubleday.

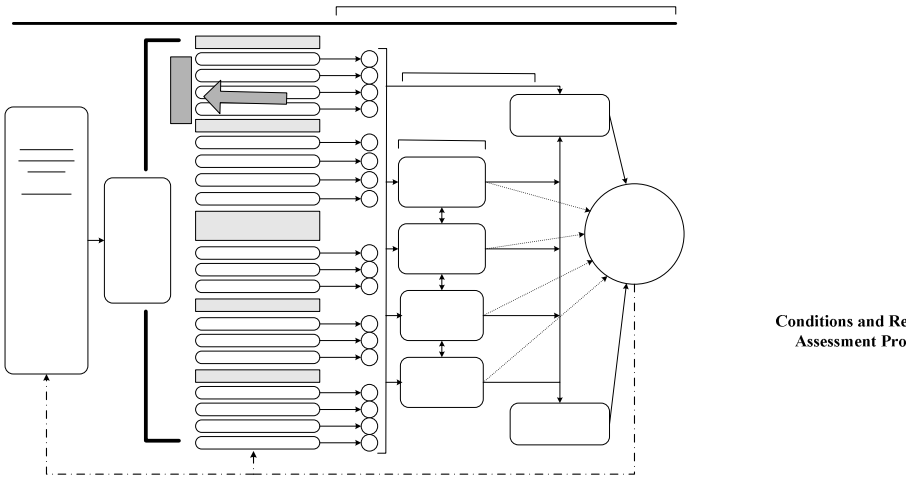
United Way of America. (1996). *Measuring program outcomes: A practical approach.* Alexandria, VA: Author.

Worthen, B. R., Sanders, J. R., Fitzpatrick, J. L. (1997). *Program evaluation: Alternative approaches and practice guidelines* (2nd Ed.). New York: Longman.

# *Planning for Sustainability*

## *Taking aim at sustainability*

Your expanded school improvement effort will benefit greatly from thinking through strategically the limitations within traditional school reform initiatives, particularly in relationship to sustainability, long-term commitments and overall vision. Essentially, countless studies of school reform have yielded five major findings:




1. Schools change constantly, especially as they implement reform plans and add new programs and services;

2. Many times changes occurring in response to school improvement efforts do not necessarily improve results;

3. Reform initiatives often are incoherent, fragmented and even competing, sometimes causing as many problems as they may solve;

4. School reform initiatives often fail to penetrate the center of the school – namely, life in classrooms for teachers and students and, by extension, the school's climate for learning and healthy development; and

5. Teachers and other school staff become cynical about future changes. For example, teachers' cynicism is evident when they refer to proposed changes as "this year's new thing."

Such is the context for the topic at hand – the sustainability of the OCCMSI. Like the foundation for a building, sustainability-related processes and mechanisms will influence and determine the future viability and success of this new school improvement model.

Essentially, comprehensive school improvement systems cannot be maintained without attention to management, stewardship, ongoing funding support and focused agendas. In this chapter we discuss the important topic of planning for the sustainability of your efforts. We discuss the importance of sustainability plans with strategic visions. Key design principles and strategies for sustainability are provided. We overview the various types of funding that support school and community efforts, as well as discuss creative financing strategies designed to maximize resources and overall results. Finally, we will re-emphasize the importance of collaboration and collaborative leadership, particularly in relation to sustainability and creating long-term investments.

## *What do we mean by sustainability?*

Sustainable initiatives are built to last. In other words, they have "staying power" because they are strategic – aimed at the right priorities – and solid – built on a strong foundation. They also have "sticking power." They are connected to other school improvement processes and structures because they are integral components of school improvement. They are not "tacked on" temporarily causing incoherence, competition, duplication and fragmentation.

While some initiatives may begin as special projects, including those that are created with the support of short-term grants, leaders aiming for sustainability recognize from the beginning that they must complete six crucial tasks. We have had all six in mind as we developed this implementation guide and prepared this chapter.

- Leaders must convince everyone that the new initiative (e.g., a parent/family engagement and support program, an after school program) is a missing piece in the school improvement puzzle; and furthermore, that this new piece is one of the only sure ways to improve results and realize other related benefits. We have had this need in mind as we developed this implementation guide for you. We emphasized how each component in the model contributes to a coherent, comprehensive and more effective school improvement approach, one that helps eliminate and prevent fragmentation, duplication and unhealthy competition among people, programs and organizations. We emphasized these key points with sustainability in mind, and we have been especially mindful of the history of failed and flawed school improvement efforts.

- Leaders must develop "a critical mass" of other leaders, especially leaders representing key organizational partners. This critical mass guards against one of the most important threats to sustainability – key people leave or retire, and no one is able to pick up the slack and maintain the direction and momentum.

- Leaders must develop an infrastructure for school improvement. This infrastructure is vital to sustainability. For example, we emphasized the necessity for collaborative leadership, and we indicated how important this team approach is for key priorities involving leadership (making sure the right things are done), management (making sure things are done right) and governance (oversight and steering toward the future).

- Leaders must figure out how to develop, implement and evaluate training, technical assistance and capacity-building programs. This work is vital because the Community Collaboration Model asks people to learn and do new things. More specifically, it changes job descriptions and responsibilities, making them different AND better. For example, it requires teachers to work in new, better ways with families, youth development leaders, after school program coordinators and social-health service providers. Teachers benefit because they gain much-needed resources, supports and assistance; they no longer have to work alone. It also recasts the roles of principals, benefiting them to be sure, but also requiring new orientations and behaviors. Once again, we wrote this guide with these needs in mind. It is a resource for training, technical assistance and capacity building – and when it is used, sustainability is enhanced.

- Leaders must figure out how to work with school district leaders, state governmental leaders, and in turn, federal governmental leaders to get the policies right. Existing policies may need to be amended and new ones developed. While we have not addressed this aspect of sustainability in this guide, it is on the drawing board for future work.

- Leaders of new programs must figure out how to finance and run the new initiative over the long haul, especially when special, short-term funding from a grant or another special source ends.

You will find that the following pages are designed with this final point in mind. We provide you with special language, design principles and strategies, and examples of how you can plan for sustainability.

## *Design principles and strategies for sustainability*

We provide you an overview here of several design principles and strategies aimed to support the overall financing and sustainability of your school improvement efforts. These concepts will be helpful as you plan over the long-haul, engaging partners and resources in relation to your school improvement vision. Table 11.1 presents these important design principles.

***Table 11.1: Design principles and/or strategies for sustainability***

| Principle and strategy | What this looks like |
|---|---|
| **Planning** | |
| Focus and direction | • Financing strategies are driven by well-conceived and focused policies and agendas focused on school improvement priorities<br>• Resources are tied to outcomes and, in turn, the programs and services for achieving them<br>• Leaders ensure that work aimed at implementing the new school improvement model is not presented as a "special project" or a "trial pilot"<br>• A sustainability plan is created and acted upon at early stages of program design and implementation |
| Priority | • Funding sources and financing strategies are designed to address needs and conditions (i.e., data-informed financing strategies)<br>• Leaders emphasize going to scale and replication from the outset<br>• Funding sources and financing strategies are designed to leverage untapped opportunities and resources<br>• A working group is created that specifically addresses funding and financing strategies |
| **Efficiency and effectiveness** | |
| Cost-effective | • Resources contribute to a positive return in relation to investment<br>• Financing strategies support the prevention and promotion of positive behaviors<br>• Financing strategies take into account "the costs of failure" – i.e., the costs associated with expensive, specialized interventions and treatments (school drop outs, etc.)<br>• Resources are redeployed by shifting costs from higher cost effective programs to lower cost effective programs<br>• Costs are cut by doing the work more efficiently<br>• Leaders ensure they are offering the right programs and services; |

| *Table 11.1: Design principles and/or strategies for sustainability* | |
|---|---|
| **Principle and strategy** | **What this looks like** |
| Cost-effective continued | and they cease offering programs that do not work and reallocate their resources<br>• Leaders ensure they have eliminated unnecessary duplication |
| Results-oriented | • Financing strategies are prioritized in support of key targeted outcomes<br>• Funding sources and financing strategies support research-supported practices, programs and services, thus ensuring the most "bang for the buck" |
| Minimal overhead | • Administrative costs are minimized<br>• De-centralize decision making so control is in the hands of those most likely to produce positive results (and then hold them accountable for them) |
| **Diversified** | |
| Multiple sources to maximize resources | • Funding sources and financing strategies are tapped from all different levels, such as local, federal, state, public, private, etc.<br>• Multiple sources of human and fiscal resources support implementation<br>• Financing strategies cut across services and programs, as opposed to being compartmentalized in separate areas<br>• Funding and financing strategies include supports for volunteers' and parents' part-time jobs<br>• In-kind resources are integrated (i.e., contributed space, donated equipment, technical assistance)<br>• Resources are maximized through efficient strategic planning and implementation |
| Efficiency | • Funding sources are redirected or reallocated from less to more effective programs<br>• Partners make better use of existing resources by reallocating funds in support of identified plans and priorities<br>• Revenues are maximized through federal, state and local avenues<br>• Reinvestments are made as funds are "saved" through redeployment or reductions in spending to new or alternative supports and services |
| Flexibility and adaptability | • More flexibility is created in funding categories<br>• Categorical funding streams are coordinated and aligned across agencies<br>• Resources are pooled from multiple sources to support the program or service strategy<br>• Financing strategies take into account changing programmatic and fiscal needs (i.e., short- and long-term funding needs)<br>• Refinancing strategies are used where other sources of money pay for activities already provided, thereby freeing up money for a new programs and services |
| **Collaboration and partnership** | |
| Shared ownership | • Multiple people and organizational partners contribute resources<br>• Resource sharing is the norm<br>• Partners have a mutual commitment to help ensure the success and sustainability of the program or collaboration<br>• Non-traditional private partners contribute resources to the |

| *Table 11.1: Design principles and/or strategies for sustainability* | |
|---|---|
| **Principle and strategy** | **What this looks like** |
| Shared ownership continued | collaboration and/or program and services<br>• Funding sources and financing strategies include in-kind donations from a variety of sources |
| Interdependence | • Individuals and organizations realize their successes are mutually dependent upon those of others, thus creating buy-in and the willingness to share resources, etc.<br>• Create ways to share knowledge and technical assistance across the partnership (shared training and professional development, etc.) |
| Enlightened self-interest | • Multiple funders, partners and stakeholders feed their own or their organization's self-interests and missions as they provide funding, align financing strategies and access new funding streams |
| Coordinated services | • Organizations, programs and services are coordinated and integrated to maximize resources, accessibility, etc. |
| **Generating additional resources** | |
| Leveraging new resources | • Funding sources and financing strategies are used to leverage, or attract, other public and private sector resources<br>• Revenue is maximized as local, state and private funding is leveraged to bring down additional federal revenues<br>• New partnerships are created that bring additional resources to the collaboration or program and expand the fiscal base<br>• Past successes and achievements attract additional resources to your collaboration or program<br>• Partners incorporate the school improvement vision into their own programs or services as part of their overall mission and accountabilities |
| Generating income | • Charge fees for services or sliding scale fees to cover some or all or program and service costs<br>• Medicaid, TANF and other dollars are used to support programs and services<br>• Unrelated business income is generated by creating revenue streams (i.e., lease space, parking, etc.)<br>• Fundraising events bring in additional resources<br>• Grant writing teams share opportunities to gain new and expanded resources |
| **Social marketing** | |
| Communication | • Strategies are in place to effectively communicate achievements and successes (i.e., "to tell your story")<br>• Individuals in leadership positions help guide the process and dynamics of working with the media<br>• The public opinion endorses and supports the collaboration and its programs and services<br>• Marketing and public relations activities positively communicate messages about the school improvement efforts |
| Power and influence | • Relationships are built with key stakeholders in order to support ongoing efforts<br>• Individuals with power and influence are committed to the collaboration and its programs and services |

| *Table 11.1: Design principles and/or strategies for sustainability* | |
|---|---|
| **Principle and strategy** | **What this looks like** |
| Power and influence continued | • Individuals with power and influence are educated about what the priorities are and how they relate to their interests, needs and priorities<br>• Individuals in leadership positions help work the right political channels and networks |

From: Afterschool Alliance, 2003; Carmela, Cloud, Byrne, & Wheeler, 2003; Hayes, 2002; Walter, 2001; Wright, 2003.

## *Other considerations in sustainability*

We created these multiple design principles and strategies to assist you in your sustainability efforts. In this section, we provide you with an overview of the various types of funding available to support your school improvement efforts. Please note, it is not an exhaustive list. However, it does identify the key funding streams that might serve as a starting place when planning for sustainability. We also provide you with strategies related to creating sustainable partnerships, particularly in relationship to the creation of a resource and financing team that focuses on maximizing resources and generating new funding streams in support of your school improvement efforts.

### Sources of funding

Multiple types of funding are available to support the implementation of the Ohio Community Collaboration Model for School Improvement. Finance experts call these types of funding "funding streams." They use this language because they analyze how money will flow from its sources to the programs, services and activities it supports.

There are multiple funding streams that may be used to support schools, community organizations, and their programs and services (Afterschool Alliance, 2004; Hayes, 2002; Halpern, Deich, & Cohen, 2000). Public funds may be found at the federal, state and local levels. Private funds exist from independent foundations, faith-based organizations, businesses and their sponsored foundations, and hospitals.

The priorities related to each type of funding opportunity, as well as the processes for tapping into each type of each resource, often are quite different. For example, many sources of funds are based upon eligibility requirements, only targeting certain families and children who match certain requirements (i.e., age of children, family income, employment status, etc.). Some funds flow directly from federal agencies to local grantees (i.e., Head Start), while others are administered by state agencies (i.e., TANF). To complicate things further, certain funds mandate how and when services may be offered. For instance, licensing standards regulate various program qualities such as staff/child ratios and staff qualifications. Some funds are disbursed as subsidies and involve reimbursement after the delivery of services.

Here we will provide a brief description of each type of funding stream, providing you with some initial guidance in relation to the multiple sources of funding that are available to your school community.

### *Public and private funds*

*Entitlement programs* are public sector programs – meaning they are available to everyone who meets their eligibility criteria. Federal dollars (and policies) support these special programs and their state counterparts. These federal dollars are uncapped appropriations, are open-ended, and no competition exists for these funds. Example entitlement programs include Medicaid, Medicare, and Title IV-E of the Social Security Act (child welfare).

*Block or formula programs* provide a fixed amount of federal funds to states based on formulas that are established on population characteristics such as income status, geographic residence or disabilities. They involve capped appropriations that provide a fixed amount of funding to states or localities based on pre-established formulas. Example block or formula programs include Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and the Child Care Development Block Grant. Similarly, Title I is distributed based on the number of low income families served within a school.

*Discretionary programs* offer federal funds for certain types of programs and services based upon a competitive process. These programs involve capped appropriations for specific project grants which are awarded based on competitive applications (i.e., AmeriCorps, Safe Schools/Healthy Students, Youthbuild; Head Start; 21st Century Community Learning Centers, GEAR UP). These dollars can be accessed by applying directly to the federal government; but many times the federal government passes these dollars to state agencies who then allocate these discretionary funds. Table 11.2 presents various federal and state funding sources.

**Table 11.2: Select federal entitlement and state block grant programs**

Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF). This program promotes job preparation and work through education, training, professional development and work-related career planning. States have the option of spending TANF funds directly on various forms of assistance, including after-school programs or social services

Medicaid. Medicaid provides financial assistance to states for medical assistance payments and administrative expenses made on behalf of low-income children and adults who meet income, resource and categorical eligibility requirements. States have flexibility in designing and operating their programs within federal guidelines

Social Services Block Grants. This block grant is to be used on a range of social services such as child care, substance abuse prevention, information and referral services, counseling, and other related services

The Child and Adult Care Food Program. This federal program provides funding for meals, snacks and nutrition education within childcare programs and after-school programs operating in low-income neighborhoods

The Child Care and Development Fund (also known as the Child Care and Development Block Grant). Most of this money provides subsidies to help low-income working families access childcare. Subsidies are distributed through vouchers to families or slots funded by contract with licensed providers

Title I Grants to Local Education Agencies. This program helps local education agencies and schools meet state academic standards by providing funds to address various needs evident among children who are disadvantaged and at risk of failing

Safe and Drug Free Schools. This program provides funding for drug and violence prevention activities

| *Table 11.2: Select federal entitlement and state block grant programs* |
|---|
| and other offerings that promote the health and well being of students<br><br>Community Development Block Grants. This program provides states and localities funding for a wide variety of activities such as neighborhood revitalization, economic development or provision of improved community facilities and services (i.e., child care)<br><br>Community Services Block Grants. This program helps states provide services and activities that alleviate poverty, assist with self-sufficiency, address needs of low-income youth and improve social service systems<br><br>Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention – (Title V) Block Grants. This program provides grants to states to improve their juvenile delinquency prevention, treatment and rehabilitation programs and justice systems<br><br>Child Welfare Services, Title IV-B. This program provides states with a range of child welfare activities that enable children to remain in their own homes or provide alternative placement for them (i.e., family preservation, kinship care, etc)<br><br>Title IV-E Foster Care. This program provides funds to states to assist with the costs of foster care, which may include child care and other goods and services for eligible children. It also pays for program administrative and training costs<br><br>Title IV-E Independent Living. Grants under this program helps states assist youth in foster care to successfully transition to independent living |

Adapted From: Halpern et al., 2000.

*Direct payments* also provide direct financial assistance to individuals who satisfy certain federal eligibility requirements. These involve capped appropriations such as Supplemental Security Income, Section 8 Housing Assistance, and Refugee and Entrant Assistance.

Furthermore, *state and local governments* often disburse funds through human service departments that are passed down from the federal government or generated from local taxes. For instance, state departments in Ohio often provide grants related to specific targeted program areas (i.e., alternative education, prevention and community youth development, truancy interventions). Table 13 overviews competitive funding opportunities offered through the Ohio Department of Education.

| *Table 11.3: Ohio Department of Education competitive funding opportunities* | |
|---|---|
| **Program** | **Purpose** |
| 21st Century Community Learning Centers | • Provides opportunities for academic enrichment, particularly those who attend low-performing schools, to meet state and local student performance standards in the core academic areas of reading and mathematics<br>• Offers students a broad array of additional services, programs and activities, such as youth development activities, that are designed to reinforce and complement the regular academic program of participating students<br>• Offers families of students who are served by community learning centers the opportunities for literacy and related educational |

| *Table 11.3: Ohio Department of Education competitive funding opportunities* | |
|---|---|
| **Program** | **Purpose** |
| | development |
| Alternative Education Challenge | • Allows local school districts to work with community partners to develop alternative education strategies for at-risk children and youth<br>• Serves children and youth who: have been suspended or expelled; have dropped out of school or are at risk of dropping out; are habitually or chronically truant; are disruptive in class; are on probation from the juvenile court; and/or are on parole after having spent time in an Ohio Department of Youth Services facility |
| Homeless Education Program—McKinney-Vento Act | • Assures that each homeless child, and homeless youth of a homeless individual, shall have access to a free, appropriate public education<br>• Provides educational activities and services to homeless children and youth that enable them to enroll in, attend and achieve in school<br>• Develops and implement programs for school personnel and the general public to heighten awareness of specific problems related to the education of homeless children and youth |
| Even Start Family Literacy | • Helps break the cycle of poverty and low literacy by improving the educational opportunities of low-income families through a cooperative learning effort<br>• Creates interactive literacy activities between parents and their children (PACT)<br>• Trains parents regarding how to be the primary teacher for their children and full partners in the education of their children (Parenting Education)<br>• Teaches parent literacy preparation that leads to economic self-sufficiency (Adult Education)<br>• Creates an age-appropriate education to prepare children for success in school and life experiences (Early Childhood Education) |
| Learn and Serve America | • Creates high-quality service-learning programs that provide youth with opportunities to learn and develop by bringing together classroom instruction and community service<br>• Expands the awareness of the value of engaging young people in service to their community<br>• Transitions service-learning programs and activities from being primarily supported by the Ohio Department of Education to local support |
| Public Preschool | • Serves children between the ages of three and five that are not age eligible for kindergarten whose families earn no more than 185 percent of the federal poverty level<br>• Provides an age appropriate education to all children enrolled in the public preschool program |
| Reading First | • Supports teachers and students in low-performing, high-poverty schools and targets children in kindergarten through grade three<br>• Helps states, school districts and schools use scientifically based reading research and proven instructional strategies and tests to ensure that all children can read at or above grade level by third grade<br>• Helps teachers learn to identify and monitor the progress of students' reading abilities<br>• Helps schools align reading instruction with Ohio's academic content |

| *Table 11.3: Ohio Department of Education competitive funding opportunities* | |
|---|---|
| **Program** | **Purpose** |
| | standards in reading<br>• Allows schools and districts to develop teacher expertise to make sound decisions about materials, programs and interventions |
| Title II-D Special Education—ACCESS | • Ensures students with disabilities have access to the general curriculum aligned with Ohio's academic content standards, regardless of the educational setting(s) in which they receive special education services<br>• Identifies and supports evidence-based strategies for increased student achievement<br>• Assists schools in building the capacity to include children with disabilities in standards-based reform efforts designed to improve the academic performance of all children |
| Title II-D Special Education—ASD | • Identifies and supports current resources and programs that show evidence of increased student achievement for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)<br>• Builds the capacity of principal-led building-level teams to provide services and supports to students with ASD<br>• Grants under this program priority must be used to improve results for students with ASD by increasing knowledge in educational assessment and instructional strategies of building-level teams providing services and supports<br>• Project activities may include strategies that increase students' time in the general education environment and focus on increased academic performance and effective data management |
| Title II-D Special Education—Positive Behavior Support | • Implements school-wide positive behavior support for students based on the model provided in the Ohio Department of Education's "*Positive Behavior Support Toolkit*"<br>• Will improve results for students by aligning instructional goals with Ohio's academic content standards |
| OhioReads | • Help schools purchase books and other materials<br>• Funds schools reading programs<br>• Provides teachers with professional development opportunities in the area of reading |

From: NCLB, 2001.

In addition, children's trust funds have a designated account in the public treasury (i.e., certain taxes flow directly to these trusts). City and county municipalities provide local funding through park districts, city school districts, youth service bureaus, or the police department. Special taxing districts create independent units of government with taxing authority; and special tax levies are passed through local ballots and add to existing taxes with earmarked revenues for certain types of programs and services. Finally, taxes also may be applied to specific economic activities such as the purchase of cigarettes, marriage licenses, and licenses to practice in certain professional occupations. These funds are often directed toward certain program and service priorities established at the local level.

There also are multiple sources of *private funds* that exist within communities. To name a few, businesses and company-sponsored foundations often provide funding to address certain program areas and geographical locations. Independent and community foundations (i.e., United Ways) establish priority areas that target certain population groups and service delivery arenas. Resources from faith-based organizations, civic organizations, police athletic leagues, chambers of commerce, hospitals and universities also might be tapped.

Many times these entities offer *in-kind resources*. For instance, programs may be able to use space for free, or rent space at below-market rates. Services for low income children and families are sometimes subsidized by other paying participants. Also, many organizations or businesses provide reduced cost or free activities for certain special populations (i.e., free or reduced cost tickets, etc). In addition, never underestimate the value of human in-kind resources through volunteerism, service learning and community service opportunities.

Finally, schools and organizations also *generate revenue* through varying strategies. Some charge fees for services and generate resources through unrelated business income (i.e., leasing fees, etc.). Lottery and gaming systems generate funding for certain services. And organizations often create their own fundraising campaigns that solicit donations and support from various community entities and individuals.

## *Financing strategies*

To build upon these design principles and strategies, here we overview five primary financing strategies that aim to support your school improvement efforts (Flynn & Hayes, 2003; Hayes, 2002; Walter, 2003).

### Making better use of existing resources

One way to maximize funding involves making better use of existing resources allocated towards your efforts. The most basic example of this strategy is presented in the academic learning chapter, as strategies are provided that focus on maximizing academic learning time in schools, homes and in the community. *Efficiency* is central to this idea and involves activities such as streamlining management, sharing professional development and training opportunities, joining together on benefit plans, co-locating programs and services, and providing effective linkages between schools and community organizations.

*Effectiveness* also is important, as few results are found when resources are allocated to poorly implemented programs and services. As such, professional development efforts must be created that support quality teaching and instruction strategies, as well as the implementation of efficient, effective and research-supported programs and services. We also need strong evaluation processes that provide continuous feedback to school leaders and others, allowing for the critical examination of key data that informs planning and program implementation.

Two additional strategies aimed at making better use of existing resources are helpful. First, *redeployment strategies* shift funding from higher to lower cost programs and services. Second, entities may use *reinvestment strategies* involving the transfer of "saved" funds into new or alternative programs and services. In either case, intervention-related dollars are reallocated or invested to support prevention and related health promotion activities.

### Creating new revenue streams

Funds also are generated by the *creation of new revenue streams*. One way in which local entities can maximize revenues is by applying for and receiving discretionary and other types of grants. In addition, organizations may create financing plans that charge fees for services. Others may generate resources through unrelated business income (i.e., charging parking fees, leasing fees, or generate income through the sale of various goods and services). Fundraising campaigns also are extremely successful in some school communities, generating flexible funding streams that may be used for a multitude of purposes.

### Maximizing federal and state revenues

In addition, oftentimes federal revenues are allocated contingent upon state, local and private funding levels (i.e., TANF). In other words, the better able a local entity can demonstrate investments and expenditures (i.e., state or local, public or private), the more federal funding is able to be drawn down to match these local efforts. This financing strategy, called *leveraging*, allows for the maximization of federal revenue allocated to the local level.

You also might consider using *refinancing strategies* that use certain sources of funding to pay for activities already provided within your programs and services. For instance, schools might substitute federal and state entitlement funding (i.e., Federal Child and Adult Food Care Program) for discretionary funding, thus freeing up additional resources for new program and service areas. This is particularly helpful as entities claim for the *coverage of administrative costs* through federal approved programs such as Medicaid and Title IV-E (i.e., child welfare).

### Creating more flexibility

A primary way to create more flexibility within funding streams is through the pooling of resources. *Pooling* involves combining funds from several agencies and programs into one funding stream. It is most often used by state agencies, where a portion of state program funding across systems can be "pooled" to support comprehensive programming.

*Coordinating*, or "*braiding*" separate categorical streams together to support the seamless delivery of services is another effective funding strategy. There is often reduced duplication as services are integrated to support comprehensive programs and services. On a more macro level, *decategorizing* involves the removal of narrow eligibility requirements from existing funding streams. This strategy involves state-level policy changes that promote more flexibility in relation to the delivery of programs and services.

For instance, ODE utilizes a tool known as the Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan (CCIP) to categorize and create ease of use in their funding. In Table 11.4, you will see all of the funding streams in the consolidated application on the CCIP. These are funds allocated to districts based on a number of formularies, but due to their similar nature they share one common application at ODE.

| *Table 11.4: Funding streams within ODE's CCIP* |
|---|
| Title I-Part A: Professional development |
| Title I-C: Education of migratory children |
| Title I N & D: Neglected and delinquent children |
| Title I: Comprehensive school reform and school improvement grants |
| Title II-A: Improving teacher quality |
| Title II-D: Enhancing education through technology |
| Title III: Language instruction for limited English proficient and immigrant students |
| Title IV-A: Safe and drug-free schools and communities |
| Title V: Innovative education |
| Title VI-B: Rural education achievement program (REAP) |
| Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA)-Part B: Exceptional children |
| Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE): Pre-K |

Many of these funding streams can be blended or braided to create large amounts of money for a particular purpose. For example, Title I, Title III, Title IV-A, Title V and ECSE all require programs and services focused on family engagement and support. If the dollars across these various funding streams were blended, school districts would have a large pool of money for parent engagement and support activities. Likewise, these dollars can and should be complemented by community-based funding streams that also support family and parent involvement strategies (i.e., local settlement house programs, victims advocate funding through police departments, etc.).

Finally, *devolution* involves the delegation of authority for the allocation of funds from higher to lower levels of authority (i.e., federal to state, state to local county, etc.). The assumption here is the decentralized decision-making will more likely produce outcomes, as those that are directly responsible for creating outcomes are influencing decisions about programs and services.

## Building public-private partnerships

Partnerships are at the core of our school improvement model. Essentially, new funding streams and resources are created and leveraged as new and expanded partnerships are developed and nurtured. These partnerships are strengthened as leaders develop strategic infrastructures centered on school improvement efforts.

This infrastructure is vital to sustainability. For example, we emphasized the necessity for collaborative leadership in our toolkit, and we indicated how important this team approach is for key priorities involving leadership (making sure the right things are done), management (making sure things are done right), and governance (oversight and steering toward the future). In the end, these collaborative leadership structures ultimately influence resource generation and utilization.

We propose here that you work with your core school improvement team members and primary community partners to determine the types of partnerships you want and need. Candidates for your collaborative leadership team might include individuals such as the Title 1 coordinator, a special education coordinator, a representative from Ohio's Children and Family First Council, and a local school board member. Each of these persons has access to resources. Each, therefore, is a key to sustainability. The linkage between collaborative leadership and sustainability is further described in the following.

## *Collaborative leadership and sustainability*

In several of the preceding chapters, we emphasized the need to complete these four related tasks:

- Identifying and capitalizing on school-owned and operated and community-owned and operated resources;

- Identifying needs and gaps in school and community offerings, and then planning programs, services, strategies and activities that you will initiate at your school or that will be linked to it;

- Developing the connective mechanisms and people for your partnership, including people and mechanisms for communications, referral and boundary crossing; and

- Ensuring that all of it fits together, i.e., that what results is a comprehensive, coherent and integrated system that yields the maximum number of benefits to the greatest number of people, including the achievement of your school's mission.

But there's more. While educators will come to appreciate the need and importance of reaching out – expanding walled-in school improvement models – most of the school staff will expect someone else must handle everything external to "the regular school." For example, if you are an after-school program director, they will expect you to run the after school program, make connections to community social and health service providers, develop solid working relationships with youth development organizations, engage local community residents, and recruit, organize and mobilize parents and entire families, getting them more involved in the school and their children's education.

They are right; all are essential functions, and all require someone to look after them. But you can not do them all. You and they need to develop an infrastructure around these essential functions.

For example, and as indicated in the collaboration and collaborative leadership chapter, principals delegate responsibilities to key persons. To reiterate, they appoint a part-time or full-time parent and family coordinator. They appoint a part-time or full-time social and health services coordinator. They appoint a part-time, or full-time, after-school coordinator.

Some of these special positions usually are funded jointly by schools and their community partners. For example, schools contribute Title 1 dollars (federal funds earmarked for schools serving lots of kids eligible for free and reduced lunch programs) and special education dollars (called Title XI dollars because of the federal funding stream for this money). Child welfare agencies contribute child welfare dollars (called Title IV-E funds). Youth development agencies contribute some money. In short, they braid existing funds to create the full- and part-time positions they need.

As you know by now, these special people who fill them also perform the roles of boundary crosser, intermediary and linkage agent. They give life to partnerships.

The point is you do not have to perform all of these functions. You need to know they are vital; and that someone needs to do them. This means that you will need to find out what is already in place; what is missing and needed; and work with your partners to bridge the gaps you identify.

### Recruiting key people to support sustainability and financing plans

Work with your core partners to determine key leaders who can support your sustainability and financing efforts. Where other organizations are concerned, you will want to tap their managers and top level leaders. For example, invite your local superintendent to serve. Invite a member of the school board to serve. Invite a local city or town council member. Invite two or more key parents. Invite someone who understands state government. Invite two or more persons from the business community. Invite at least one higher education faculty member.

Here are other potential candidates for service on your collaborative leadership team:

- The school district's Title 1 coordinator
- The school district's special education coordinator
- The school district's student support (social-health services) coordinator
- The school's athletic director
- A representative from the juvenile justice system
- Student services personnel (i.e., school social workers, counselors, etc)
- Top level officials from the County Department of Job and Family Services
- Representatives from Partnerships for Success and Ohio's Children and Family First Councils
- Representatives from Communities that Care and other collaboratives designed to foster positive youth development
- Others…

Each of these persons has access to resources. Each, therefore, is a key to sustainability.

When you convene these important officials, make sure you educate them about what you are going to accomplish and how it relates to their interests, needs, and priorities. Above all, make sure you tap and use their expertise. More specifically:

- Do not give them the impression you are going through the motions, asking for them to "rubber stamp" what you have done and plan to do, and, all in all, wasting their time;

- Seek their help in planning and getting resources, supports and assistance that will make your partnerships, programs and services sustainable;

- Get their help in working the right political channels and networks; and

- Have them guide you and your leadership team through the process and dynamics of working with the media. The media may prove to be the most important resource-generating and sustainability mechanism of all.

You also will want to think through strategically the creation of your financing and sustainability plans. The following checklist shown in Table 11.5 will help guide your efforts.

| *Table 11.5: Steps in creating strategic sustainability plans* |
|---|
| ☐ Clarify what it is you need financing for (i.e., clear vision) |
| ☐ Articulate a common vision that drives the types of funding sources you solicit |
| ☐ Create a working group to focus on financing and funding |
| ☐ Create a funding and sustainability plan that focuses your financing priorities |
| ☐ Decide what types of programs you want to implement or sustain (i.e., a certain program administration, collaboration efforts, etc.)<br>o Number of clients<br>o Number of sites<br>o Target population<br>o Range of programs and services<br>o Level of quality of the programs and services<br>o Number of years funding is needed |
| ☐ Align your financing strategies with the needs, programs and services they are intended to support |
| ☐ Estimate your fiscal needs (how much money do you need and for what) |
| ☐ Conduct a needs and resources assessment |
| ☐ Identify present and potential partners who might help you achieve your vision |
| ☐ Build upon past history and achievements related to partnership and collaboration |
| ☐ Examine your gap analysis and identify current resources needs |
| ☐ Identify potential funding sources and financing strategies |
| ☐ Determine what you need to sustain the work over time |
| ☐ Explore ways to maximize existing resources in support of the vision |
| ☐ Maximize the use of resources already in the system (non-monetary, in-kind, volunteer, contributed space, donated equipment, technical support, etc.) |
| ☐ Assign responsibility to someone to identify and pursue other potential funding streams |
| ☐ Engage partners in pursuing additional funding opportunities |
| ☐ Create communication and outreach efforts to publicize your successes and achievements |
| ☐ Identify important stakeholders with power and influence who can advocate for your programs and services |
| ☐ Create new funding sources with your community partners |

From: The Finance Project, 2003; Flynn & Hayes, 2003; Hayes, 2002.

## *Final thoughts*

As you can see here, local, state and federal governments, as well as private funding sources, have long histories of funding special, often single-issue programs and services. For example, separate funding streams exist for school reform, after-school programs, youth development programs, teen pregnancy programs and juvenile delinquency prevention programs. These special programs and the special funding streams that support them are called "categorical programs and funding streams." They are sector-, need-, and problem-specific.

You and other school leaders implementing this new school improvement model have the opportunity to work together, indeed genuinely collaborate, as you figure out which categorical funding streams are available to you. In some cases, you will stop competing for the same funds. In other cases, you will develop new strategies for working together to get new funds from untapped categorical funding streams.

As you gain skill in working together, and as you develop more trust with each other, you will be able to move to a higher level of funding-related work. For example, you will share existing resources. You will gain net new resources as you eliminate duplication and unnecessary competition.

Above all, you will have the opportunity to pool and braid existing resources. You and other school leaders will be able to extract dollars from existing funding sources and streams and use the newly-created "pool" of funds to support new programs and services. Ideally, you will braid these funds to the point where they are interwoven and integrated.

## *References*

Carmela M. F., Cloud, J.P., Byrne, J., & Wheeler, K. (2003). *Kindergarten through twelfth-grade education for sustainability.* Washington, DC: Environmental Law Institute.

Cloud, J.P. (1997). *A survey of leadership qualities distilled from sustainable community initiatives*. New York: American Forum for Global Education.

Flynn, M., & Hayes, C.D. (2003). *Blending and braiding funds to support early care and childhood initiatives*. Washington, DC: The Finance Project.

Halpern, R.,. Deich, S., & Cohen, C. (2000). *Financing after-school programs*. Washington, DC: The Finance Project.

Hayes, C.D., (2002). *Thinking broadly: Finance strategies for comprehensive child and family initiatives*. Washington, D.C.: Finance Project

The Afterschool Alliance. (2003). *The road to sustainability*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved on November 11, 2004 from http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/ sustain.pdf

The Finance Project. (2003). *Creating a strategic financing plan: Module III of the sustainability planning workbook.* Washington, DC: Author.

Walter, F. (2001) *District leaders guide to reallocating resource*s. Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

Wright, E. (February, 2003). *Finding resources to support rural out-of-school time initiatives: Strategy brief.* Washington, D.C.: The Finance Project.

# Conclusion

We developed this implementation guide with your needs in mind. In the preceding chapters, we described and explained the Ohio Community Collaboration Model for School Improvement (OCCMSI).

Now that you have surveyed its components, it is time to return to the big picture. Figure 12.1 presents this model once again. You may wish to give it a second look, looking anew for how the parts fit together and appreciating how the whole model is greater than the sum of its parts.

The approach we described for school improvement in the preceding chapters is clearly anchored in this model. Each of the various components of the model reflects a best-practice philosophy. The relationships among the components – including how they fit and flow together and how assessment and evaluation are used – indicate a firm commitment to continuous improvement.

## Important reminders

As you reflect on this model and its components, you may wish to keep in mind the following recommendations:

- You need to be sure all of the components of the model are addressed. Mindful that developing all of them and the relationship needed among them takes time, the sooner you get them all in place, the better. These components build on each other and connect in important ways. If you neglect or ignore one or more of the components and the relationships among them, you will lose some of the benefits this new model offers.

- Once you have tailored the model in response to local conditions, needs and opportunities, review it to make sure the pieces fit. It is especially important to work backwards from long-term outcomes to ensure that program pathways logically make a contribution to those outcomes.

- Do not lose sight of this model's main focus – school improvement. While it is true this model enables you and other partners to achieve multiple benefits for students and families, it also is true that, as indicated in chapter one, its main contribution to schools lies in its ability to get the conditions right for academic learning, instruction and achievement.

## Back to basics: Relationships with existing school improvement initiatives

We have stated repeatedly this new model does not mean "out with the old, in with the new." To the contrary, this new model will not succeed unless the typical priorities for school improvement planning are strengthened. These priorities include standards-based, curriculum alignment; evidence-based teaching and learning strategies; positive school climates; effective school management; and evaluation-driven, continuous improvement efforts. Simply stated, school communities can not and should not lose sight of these priorities and the accountabilities established by the No Child Left Behind Act.

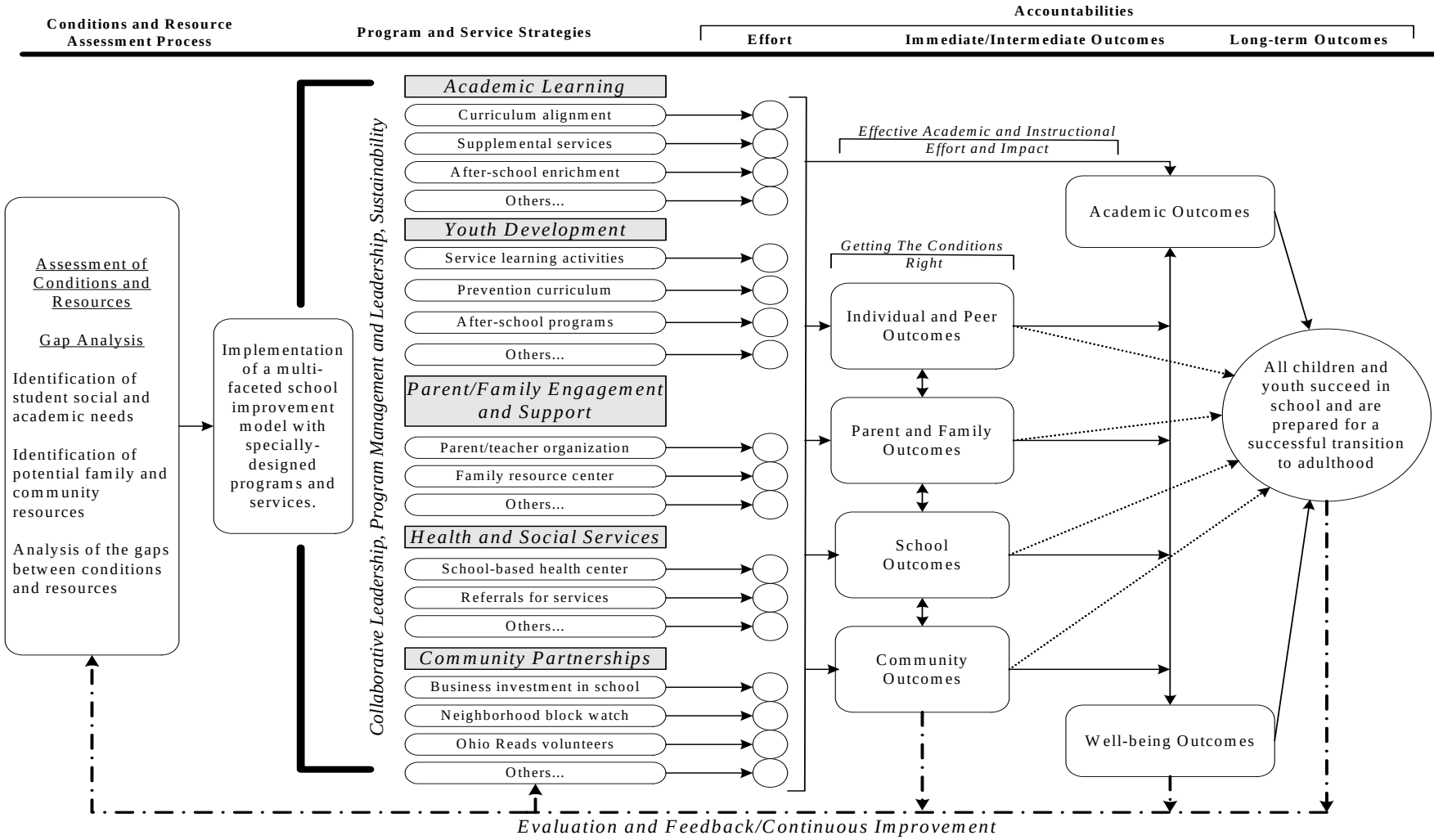



***Figure 12.1**: The Ohio Community Collaboration Model for School Improvement and Example Programs/Services*

In this light, we have emphasized that this multi-faceted model is designed to enhance existing school improvement models. To reiterate, this new model is not a competitor. It enhances every model because it expands the boundaries of school improvement

In support of this claim, we have identified and described this model's five core components: youth development, family engagement and support, health and social services, community partnerships, and a comprehensive, unified approach to academic learning. While each is important, we also have emphasized the relations among them.

Moreover, we have identified and described this model's "drivers," i.e., the processes and mechanisms that make this model both dynamic and innovative. These drivers are collaborative leadership, program management and leadership, assessment, evaluation and sustainability.

Aiming to help you implement this model, we have provided research-supported design principles and strategies as well as improvement targets. We also have identified likely implementation barriers, along with some strategies you may use to address these barriers.

### It is your model: Tailoring it for local conditions

In all such cases, we tried to strike a reasonable, effective balance. We tried to provide enough practical, research-supported information to guide you and enable you to get started; and, at the same time, we encouraged you to build on the strengths of existing local initiatives and develop new ones as needed.

In brief, we prioritized the choices you and other school community leaders must make. We also emphasized that you will adapt and tailor this model to fit your local school community's conditions, needs and opportunities. Aiming to help you make good choices and decisions, we have emphasized assessment, evaluation and their relationship.

Your local assessments, we have suggested, enable you to identify and describe local conditions, needs, untapped opportunities and gaps. You will use these assessment data when you implement and adapt the model. More specifically, you will adapt this multi-faceted improvement model, with its tailored programs and services, so it responds to your assessment data and fits your local school community context.

In this fundamental sense, it is your model because you will make the most important choices. As we have said throughout this guide, this is not a "one-size-fits all approach," which others are forcing you to adopt, a model that ignores your school community's uniqueness.

Furthermore, we emphasized evaluation because it is a practical necessity in today's accountability-rich environment. As important, when you embed evaluation in all of your design and implementation activities, you will get good information that enables you to make "in flight adjustments", learn and improve. In this way and in others, we linked evaluation to your needs and priorities for continuous improvement planning at both the school level and the district level.

## Getting started: Recruiting others

In every chapter, we tried to hit hard five other important points. All are aimed at helping you get started, including your ability to recruit others as you help them understand what this model entails and offers.

The first point, you do not have to "start from scratch." Many of the programs, services, partnerships and activities we emphasized already exist in some form in your local school community. We tried to help you recognize that you have the opportunity to take advantage of work already underway.

Second, as you take advantage of untapped family and community resources for learning, academic achievement, and success in school, you also will gain new capacities to address non-academic barriers to learning. Many of these barriers are rooted in families, neighborhoods and community agencies. As you remove and prevent them, you will be ensuring that students come to school ready and able to learn.

Third, we encouraged you to take two additional steps. We tried to help you "connect the dots" – gain understanding of how these several initiatives fit together in a comprehensive, coherent model of school improvement (Lawson & Briar-Lawson, 1997). We also indicated how you might unify, integrate and sustain now-separate, even competing, programs, services and initiatives.

Fourth, this model takes into account school-related barriers to learning, healthy development and academic achievement, most of which stem from walled-in, or building-centered improvement models. As school-related barriers are removed and prevented, your school community will be able to achieve twin goals. In addition to ensuring that all children and youth come to school ready and able to learn, this model enables Ohio's schools to be ready for the learning, healthy development and academic achievement of all children and youth.

Fifth, the "whole" of this new school improvement model is greater than the sum of the parts. In fact, you will derive the most important, lasting benefits when the five core components (e.g., academic learning, youth development) and the other key drivers (e.g., collaborative leadership, evaluation) fit together so well that they generate a powerful synergy. To achieve this coherence and synergy, you will need to strike an effective balance between an often narrow focus on one or two key components and a broader focus on how all the parts fit together.

## Collaboration leadership, partnerships and collaboration

Clearly, this is complex work. It is difficult, if not impossible, for one person to "do it all, alone." This is why collaborative leadership and strategic, solid community partnerships are mainstays in this new model. They are the mechanisms that enable people to assess, plan, implement, evaluate, learn and improve together.

These collaborative and partnership arrangements comprise a new way of doing the business of school improvement. For example, they make school improvement a family and community affair. More specifically, in this new model, families and community members from all walks of life assume joint responsibility and accountability for academic learning and achievement, success in school and a successful transition into productive adulthood. This distinctive advantage is inseparable from another.

Educators no longer must operate in stand-alone schools, work exclusively with walled-in improvement models, and labor without enough supports, assistance and resources. The work of educating, of working in Ohio's schools will become more rewarding, especially as more of Ohio's children succeed in school. The benefits to Ohio's school workforce, especially its teachers and principals, will spill over to Ohio's children.

This is what it will take to close the achievement gap, ensuring that all of Ohio's children succeed in school and are prepared for a successful transition to productive adulthood. Together we can make a difference. Now is the time to "get it together" – and to get started – together.

# Resources

## Collaborative partners

Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives
www.governor.ohio.gov/fbci
77 South High Street
Phone: 614-466-3398 or 614-644-5320

Office of the Governor
www.governor.ohio.gov
77 South High Street, 30th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215-6117
Phone: 614-466-3555 or 614-644-HELP

Ohio Department of Aging
www.goldenbukeye.com
50 W. Broad Street, 8th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215-5928
Phone: 614-466-0623

Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services
www.odadas.state.oh.us
280 North High Street, 12th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215-2550
Phone: 614-466-3445

Ohio Department of Education
www.ode.state.oh.us
25 South Front Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215-6338
Phone: 1-877-644-6338

Ohio Department of Health
www.jfs.ohio.gov
30 E. Broad Street, 32nd Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215-3414
Phone: 614-466-6282

Ohio Department of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities
www.odmrdd.state.oh.us
1810 Sullivant Avenue
Columbus, Ohio 43223
Phone: 614-466-0129

Ohio Department of Youth Services
www.dys.ohio.gov
51 North High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215
Phone: 614-466-8783

Ohio Family and Children First Council, State and County
www.ohiofcf.org
30 E. Broad Street, 34th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215
Phone: 614-752-4044

Ohio Office of Budget Management
www.obm.ohio.gov
30 East Broad Street, 34th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215-6117
Phone: 614-466-3398 or 614-644-5320

## *State of Ohio initiatives*

Access to Better Care
www.pcsao.org/abc.htm

Center for Learning Excellence
Partnership for Success Academy
www.pfsacademy.org

Center for School-Based Mental Health Programs
www.units.muohio.edu/csbmhp

Ohio Access Report 2004
www.ohioaccess.ohio.gov

Ohio After School Alliance
www.afterschoolalliance.org

Ohio Association for the Education of Young Children
www.oaeyc.org

Ohio Child Care Resource and Referral Association
www.occrra.org

Ohio Community Service Council
*Ohio law gives OCSC responsibility to develop best practices for screening of volunteers
www.serve.ohio.gov/background_checks.htm

Ohio Learning First Alliance
www.learningfirst.org/alliances/ohio

Ohio Mental Health Network for School Success
www.units.muohio.edu/csbmhp/network.html

Ohio Parent for Drug-Free Youth
www.ohioparents.org

Ohio Parent Information and Resource Center (PIRC)
www.ohiopirc.org

Ohio Parent Teacher Association (Ohio PTA)
www.ohiopta.org

Ohio Resource Network (ORN)
www.ebasedprevention.org/

OSU Extension
www.extension.osu.edu/community
www.ohioline.osu.edu

Public Children Services Association of Ohio
www.pcsao.org

Shared Agenda
www.units.muohio.edu/csbmhp/sharedagenda/html

Urban League
www.cul.org

## *Collaborative leadership*

Center for Collaborative Leadership
www.ccl.umb.edu

Collaborative Leadership Field book
www.josseybass.com

Institute for Educational Leadership
www.iel.org

Pew Partnership
www.pew-partnership.org/
collableadership/collableadership.html

## *Academic learning*

An Educators' Guide to School wide Reform
www.aasa.org/issues_and_insight/district_organization/Reform/index/htm

Comprehensive School Reform
www.ncrel.org.csri

Comprehensive School Reform: Research-Based Strategies to Achieve High Standards
www.wested.org/csrd/guidebook.toc.htm

K-12 Education Compendium of Standards
www.mcrel.org/standards-benchmarks/

Learning First Alliance
www.learningfirst.org

National Center for Education Statistics
www.nces.ed.gov

National Clearinghouse for Comprehensive School Reform
www.goodschools.gwu.edu/

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
Catalog of School Reform Models
www.nwrel.org/scpd/catalog/index.html

Ohio Academic Content Standards
www.ode.state.oh.us/academic_content_standards/

Office of Reform Assistance and Dissemination
www.ed.gov/offices/OERI/ORAD

Ohio School Climate Guidelines
www.ode.state.oh.us/students-families-communites/PDF/Ohio%20School_Climate_Guidelines_9-27-04.pdf

Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
Annotated Bibliography of Resources
www.sedl.org/pubs/catalog/items/pic02.html

U.S. Department of Education
www.ode.oh.us

U.S. Department of Education Institute of Education Sciences National Center for Education Evaluation
www.excelgov.org/evidence

## *Youth development*

Academy for Educational Development, Inc.
Center for Youth Development and Policy Research
www.aed.org

Academy for Education Development's Center for Youth Development and Policy Research
www.afterschool.org

After School Alliance
www.afterschoolalliance.org

American Youth Policy Forum
www.aypf.org

Children's Aid Society Community School Technical Assistance Center
www.childresaidsociety.org

Children's Defense Fund
www.childrensdefense.org

Forum on Youth Investment
www.forumforyouthinvestment.org/

Institute for Youth Development
www.youthdevelopment.org

National Association of State Boards of Education
www.nasbe.org/HealthySchools/index.html

National Clearinghouse on Families & Youth
www.ncfy.com

National Collaboration for Youth
www.nassembly.org

National Coordinator Training and Technical Assistance Center
www.ncrel.org
www.k12coordinator.org/Links.cfm

National 4-H Council
www.fourhcouncil.edu

National Institute on Out-of-School Time
www.niost.org

National Network for Youth
www.nn4youth.org

National School Boards Association
www.nsba.org

National Youth Development Information Center
www.nydic.org/nydic/devdef.html

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
www.nwrel.org/ecc/youthdev/training.html

Society of State Directors of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation
www.thesociety.org

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families
www.afterschool.gov

### *Family engagement and support*

Adult Basic and Literacy Education
www.ode.state.oh.us/ctae/adult/ABLE

Center for Parent Leadership
www.centerforparentleadership.org

Family Information Services – Families and Crisis
www.familyinfoserv.com/crisist.html

Family Involvement Network of Educators
www.gseweb.harvard.edu/~hfrp/projects/fine.html

Family Support America
www.familysupportamerica.org/content/home.htm

First Day Foundation
www.firstday.org

Institute on Family and Neighborhood Life
www.virtual.clemson.edu/groups/ifnl

National Center for Family Literacy
www.famlit.org

National Coalition for Parent Involvement In Education
www.ncpie.org

No Child Let Behind Resources
www.responsiveeducation.org/NCLB.html

Ohio Department of Education, Family site
www.ode.state.oh.us/families/

Ohio Parent Information Resource Center
www.ohiopirc.org

PTA
www.pta.org

Urban Parent Involvement: Internet Resources
www.ncrel.org/sdrs/timely/upires.htm

U.S. Department of Education
www.ed.gov/hdb/landing.jhtml

## *Health and social services*

Action for Healthy Kids
www.actionforhealthykids.org

American Psychological Association
www.helping.apa.org

CDC School Health Guidelines
www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash/publications/Schoolguidelines.htm

Center for Mental Health Services
www.mentalhealth.org/cmhs/

Center for Prevention of School Violence
www.ncsu.edu/cpsv/

Collaborative to Advance Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL)
www.casel.org

Connect for Kids
www.connectforkids.org

Health in Education Web
www.ascd.org/health_in_education

Indiana University Center for Adolescent Studies
www.education.indiana.edu/cas/

Internet Mental Health
www.mentalhealth.com/

National Institute of Mental Health:
www.nimh.nih.gov/home.cfm

National Assembly on School-Based Health Care

www.nasbhc.org

National Association of School Psychologists
www.naspweb.org/

National Dropout Prevention Center/Network
www.dropoutprevention.org

Nutrition and Youth Health: Dietary Guidelines for Americans
www.usda.gov/cnpp/DietGd.pdf

Ohio Commission on Dispute Resolution & Conflict Management
www.state.oh.us/cdr/index.htm

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays
www.pflag.org

President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health
www.mentalhealthcommission.gov

Research & Training Center on Family Support & Children's Mental Health
www.rtc.pdx.edu

Safe and Responsive Schools Project
www.indiana.edu/~safeschl

SAMHSA's National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information:
www.health.org

School Psychologists' Home Page
www.bartow.k12.ga.us/psych/psych.html

School Psychology Resources Online
www.schoolpsychology.net

Strengthening the Safety Net
www.air.org/cecp/safetynet

UCLA Center for Mental Health in Schools
smhp.psych.ucla.edu/

University of Maryland at Baltimore Center for School Mental Health Assistance
csmha.umaryland.edu/

## *Community partnership*

American Planning Association
www.planning.org

Anne E. Casey Foundation
www.aecf.org

Asset-Based Community Development Institute
www.northwestern.edu/ipr/abcd.html

Beacons Technical Assistance Center
www.fcny.org

Civic Practices Network
www.cpn.org/topics/community/index.html

Consensus Organizing Council
www.agree.org

Community Building Resource Exchange
www.commbuild.org

Community Builders Toolbox
www.ctb.ku.org

Communities in Schools
www.cisnet.org

Corporation for National Service
www.learnandserve.org

James Irvine Foundation
www.irvine.org

National Center for Community Education
www.nccenet.org

National Center for Cultural Competence
www.georgetown.edu/research/gucdc/nccc/

National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools
www.sedl.org/connections

National Community Building Network
www.ncbn.org

National League of Cities
www.nlc.org

National Urban League, INC.
www.nul.org

New Schools Better Neighborhoods
www.nsbn.org

Online Conference on Community Organizing and Development
www.comm-org.utoledo.edu

Search for Common Ground
www.sfcg.org

Search Institute
www.search-institute.org

Smart Growth Online
www.smartgrowth.org

The Ohio Sate University Service Learning Initiative
www.service-learning.ohio-state.edu
www.communityconnection.osu.edu

University of San Diego: Community Service Learning
www.sandiego.edu/csl

Working Group on Human Needs and Faith-Based and Community Initiatives
www.workinggroup.org

## *Evaluation*

American Evaluation Association
www.eval.org

Federal Department of Education Planning and Evaluation Website
www.ed.gov/offices/OUS/PES/index.html

General Evaluation Suggestions – Carter McNamara, Ph.D
www.mapnp.org/library/evaluatn/fnl_eval.htm

Harvard Family Research Center Site
www.gse.harvard.edu/~hfrp

Penn State University Evaluation Site
www.extension.psu.edu/evaluation

Western Michigan University Evaluation Center Site
www.wmich.edu/evalctr

University of Kentucky Evaluation Site
www.ca.uky.edu/aspsd/soregion.htm

## *Sustainability*

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance
www.cfda.gov/

The Center for Health and Health Care in Schools
http://www.healthinschools.org/sbhcs/financing.asp

Education for Sustainability
www.sustainabilityed.org

The Federal Register
http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/tools.html

The Finance Project
www.financeproject.org

The Foundation Center
http://fdncenter.org/

The Future of Children
http://www.futureofchildren.org/pubs-info2825/pubs-info.htm?doc_id=73347

GrantsWeb
http://www.research.sunysb.edu/research/kirby.html#index

Indicators of Sustainability
www.sustainablemeasures.com

National Governor's Association Center for Best Practices\
http://www.nga.org/center

NEA Foundation for the Improvement of Education
http://.nfie.org/grants.htm

Notices of Funding Availability
http://www.grants.gov

School Health Finance Project of the National Conference of State Legislatures
(funded by DASH, CDC)
http://ncsl.org/programs/health/pp/schlfund.htm

School Health Program Finance Project Database
http://www2.cdc.gov/nccdphp/shpfp/index.asp

SustainAbility

http://www.sustainabilityonline.com

School-Grants
http://www.schoolgrants.org

# Resources

## Collaborative partners

Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives
www.governor.ohio.gov/fbci
77 South High Street
Phone: 614-466-3398 or 614-644-5320

Office of the Governor
www.governor.ohio.gov
77 South High Street, 30th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215-6117
Phone: 614-466-3555 or 614-644-HELP

Ohio Department of Aging
www.goldenbukeye.com
50 W. Broad Street, 8th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215-5928
Phone: 614-466-0623

Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services
www.odadas.state.oh.us
280 North High Street, 12th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215-2550
Phone: 614-466-3445

Ohio Department of Education
www.ode.state.oh.us
25 South Front Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215-6338
Phone: 1-877-644-6338

Ohio Department of Health
www.jfs.ohio.gov
30 E. Broad Street, 32nd Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215-3414
Phone: 614-466-6282

Ohio Department of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities
www.odmrdd.state.oh.us
1810 Sullivant Avenue
Columbus, Ohio 43223
Phone: 614-466-0129

Ohio Department of Youth Services
www.dys.ohio.gov
51 North High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215
Phone: 614-466-8783

Ohio Family and Children First Council, State and County
www.ohiofcf.org
30 E. Broad Street, 34th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215
Phone: 614-752-4044

Ohio Office of Budget Management
www.obm.ohio.gov
30 East Broad Street, 34th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215-6117
Phone: 614-466-3398 or 614-644-5320

## *State of Ohio initiatives*

Access to Better Care
www.pcsao.org/abc.htm

Center for Learning Excellence
Partnership for Success Academy
www.pfsacademy.org

Center for School-Based Mental Health Programs
www.units.muohio.edu/csbmhp

Ohio Access Report 2004
www.ohioaccess.ohio.gov

Ohio After School Alliance
www.afterschoolalliance.org

Ohio Association for the Education of Young Children
www.oaeyc.org

Ohio Child Care Resource and Referral Association
www.occrra.org

Ohio Community Service Council
*Ohio law gives OCSC responsibility to develop best practices for screening of volunteers
www.serve.ohio.gov/background_checks.htm

Ohio Learning First Alliance
www.learningfirst.org/alliances/ohio

Ohio Mental Health Network for School Success
www.units.muohio.edu/csbmhp/network.html

Ohio Parent for Drug-Free Youth
www.ohioparents.org

Ohio Parent Information and Resource Center (PIRC)
www.ohiopirc.org

Ohio Parent Teacher Association (Ohio PTA)
www.ohiopta.org

Ohio Resource Network (ORN)
www.ebasedprevention.org/

OSU Extension
www.extension.osu.edu/community
www.ohioline.osu.edu

Public Children Services Association of Ohio
www.pcsao.org

Shared Agenda
www.units.muohio.edu/csbmhp/sharedagenda/html

Urban League
www.cul.org

## *Collaborative leadership*

Center for Collaborative Leadership
www.ccl.umb.edu

Collaborative Leadership Field book
www.josseybass.com

Institute for Educational Leadership
www.iel.org

Pew Partnership
www.pew-partnership.org/
collableadership/collableadership.html

## *Academic learning*

An Educators' Guide to School wide Reform
www.aasa.org/issues_and_insight/district_organization/Reform/index/htm

Comprehensive School Reform
www.ncrel.org.csri

Comprehensive School Reform: Research-Based Strategies to Achieve High Standards
www.wested.org/csrd/guidebook.toc.htm

K-12 Education Compendium of Standards
www.mcrel.org/standards-benchmarks/

Learning First Alliance
www.learningfirst.org

National Center for Education Statistics
www.nces.ed.gov

National Clearinghouse for Comprehensive School Reform
www.goodschools.gwu.edu/

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
Catalog of School Reform Models
www.nwrel.org/scpd/catalog/index.html

Ohio Academic Content Standards
www.ode.state.oh.us/academic_content_standards/

Office of Reform Assistance and Dissemination
www.ed.gov/offices/OERI/ORAD

Ohio School Climate Guidelines
www.ode.state.oh.us/students-families-communites/PDF/Ohio%20School_Climate_Guidelines_9-27-04.pdf

Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
Annotated Bibliography of Resources
www.sedl.org/pubs/catalog/items/pic02.html

U.S. Department of Education
www.ode.oh.us

U.S. Department of Education Institute of Education Sciences National Center for Education Evaluation
www.excelgov.org/evidence

## *Youth development*

Academy for Educational Development, Inc.
Center for Youth Development and Policy Research
www.aed.org

Academy for Education Development's Center for Youth Development and Policy Research
www.afterschool.org

After School Alliance
www.afterschoolalliance.org

American Youth Policy Forum
www.aypf.org

Children's Aid Society Community School Technical Assistance Center
www.childresaidsociety.org

Children's Defense Fund
www.childrensdefense.org

Forum on Youth Investment
www.forumforyouthinvestment.org/

Institute for Youth Development
www.youthdevelopment.org

National Association of State Boards of Education
www.nasbe.org/HealthySchools/index.html

National Clearinghouse on Families & Youth
www.ncfy.com

National Collaboration for Youth
www.nassembly.org

National Coordinator Training and Technical Assistance Center
www.ncrel.org
www.k12coordinator.org/Links.cfm

National 4-H Council
www.fourhcouncil.edu

National Institute on Out-of-School Time
www.niost.org

National Network for Youth
www.nn4youth.org

National School Boards Association
www.nsba.org

National Youth Development Information Center
www.nydic.org/nydic/devdef.html

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
www.nwrel.org/ecc/youthdev/training.html

Society of State Directors of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation
www.thesociety.org

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families
www.afterschool.gov

### *Family engagement and support*

Adult Basic and Literacy Education
www.ode.state.oh.us/ctae/adult/ABLE

Center for Parent Leadership
www.centerforparentleadership.org

Family Information Services – Families and Crisis
www.familyinfoserv.com/crisist.html

Family Involvement Network of Educators
www.gseweb.harvard.edu/~hfrp/projects/fine.html

Family Support America
www.familysupportamerica.org/content/home.htm

First Day Foundation
www.firstday.org

Institute on Family and Neighborhood Life
www.virtual.clemson.edu/groups/ifnl

National Center for Family Literacy
www.famlit.org

National Coalition for Parent Involvement In Education
www.ncpie.org

No Child Let Behind Resources
www.responsiveeducation.org/NCLB.html

Ohio Department of Education, Family site
www.ode.state.oh.us/families/

Ohio Parent Information Resource Center
www.ohiopirc.org

PTA
www.pta.org

Urban Parent Involvement: Internet Resources
www.ncrel.org/sdrs/timely/upires.htm

U.S. Department of Education
www.ed.gov/hdb/landing.jhtml

## *Health and social services*

Action for Healthy Kids
www.actionforhealthykids.org

American Psychological Association
www.helping.apa.org

CDC School Health Guidelines
www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash/publications/Schoolguidelines.htm

Center for Mental Health Services
www.mentalhealth.org/cmhs/

Center for Prevention of School Violence
www.ncsu.edu/cpsv/

Collaborative to Advance Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL)
www.casel.org

Connect for Kids
www.connectforkids.org

Health in Education Web
www.ascd.org/health_in_education

Indiana University Center for Adolescent Studies
www.education.indiana.edu/cas/

Internet Mental Health
www.mentalhealth.com/

National Institute of Mental Health:
www.nimh.nih.gov/home.cfm

National Assembly on School-Based Health Care

www.nasbhc.org

National Association of School Psychologists
www.naspweb.org/

National Dropout Prevention Center/Network
www.dropoutprevention.org

Nutrition and Youth Health: Dietary Guidelines for Americans
www.usda.gov/cnpp/DietGd.pdf

Ohio Commission on Dispute Resolution & Conflict Management
www.state.oh.us/cdr/index.htm

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays
www.pflag.org

President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health
www.mentalhealthcommission.gov

Research & Training Center on Family Support & Children's Mental Health
www.rtc.pdx.edu

Safe and Responsive Schools Project
www.indiana.edu/~safeschl

SAMHSA's National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information:
www.health.org

School Psychologists' Home Page
www.bartow.k12.ga.us/psych/psych.html

School Psychology Resources Online
www.schoolpsychology.net

Strengthening the Safety Net
www.air.org/cecp/safetynet

UCLA Center for Mental Health in Schools
smhp.psych.ucla.edu/

University of Maryland at Baltimore Center for School Mental Health Assistance
csmha.umaryland.edu/

## *Community partnership*

American Planning Association
www.planning.org

Anne E. Casey Foundation
www.aecf.org

Asset-Based Community Development Institute
www.northwestern.edu/ipr/abcd.html

Beacons Technical Assistance Center
www.fcny.org

Civic Practices Network
www.cpn.org/topics/community/index.html

Consensus Organizing Council
www.agree.org

Community Building Resource Exchange
www.commbuild.org

Community Builders Toolbox
www.ctb.ku.org

Communities in Schools
www.cisnet.org

Corporation for National Service
www.learnandserve.org

James Irvine Foundation
www.irvine.org

National Center for Community Education
www.nccenet.org

National Center for Cultural Competence
www.georgetown.edu/research/gucdc/nccc/

National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools
www.sedl.org/connections

National Community Building Network
www.ncbn.org

National League of Cities
www.nlc.org

National Urban League, INC.
www.nul.org

New Schools Better Neighborhoods
www.nsbn.org

Online Conference on Community Organizing and Development
www.comm-org.utoledo.edu

Search for Common Ground
www.sfcg.org

Search Institute
www.search-institute.org

Smart Growth Online
www.smartgrowth.org

The Ohio Sate University Service Learning Initiative
www.service-learning.ohio-state.edu
www.communityconnection.osu.edu

University of San Diego: Community Service Learning
www.sandiego.edu/csl

Working Group on Human Needs and Faith-Based and Community Initiatives
www.workinggroup.org

## *Evaluation*

American Evaluation Association
www.eval.org

Federal Department of Education Planning and Evaluation Website
www.ed.gov/offices/OUS/PES/index.html

General Evaluation Suggestions – Carter McNamara, Ph.D
www.mapnp.org/library/evaluatn/fnl_eval.htm

Harvard Family Research Center Site
www.gse.harvard.edu/~hfrp

Penn State University Evaluation Site
www.extension.psu.edu/evaluation

Western Michigan University Evaluation Center Site
www.wmich.edu/evalctr

University of Kentucky Evaluation Site
www.ca.uky.edu/aspsd/soregion.htm

## *Sustainability*

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance
www.cfda.gov/

The Center for Health and Health Care in Schools
http://www.healthinschools.org/sbhcs/financing.asp

Education for Sustainability
www.sustainabilityed.org

The Federal Register
http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/tools.html

The Finance Project
www.financeproject.org

The Foundation Center
http://fdncenter.org/

The Future of Children
http://www.futureofchildren.org/pubs-info2825/pubs-info.htm?doc_id=73347

GrantsWeb
http://www.research.sunysb.edu/research/kirby.html#index

Indicators of Sustainability
www.sustainablemeasures.com

National Governor's Association Center for Best Practices\
http://www.nga.org/center

NEA Foundation for the Improvement of Education
http://.nfie.org/grants.htm

Notices of Funding Availability
http://www.grants.gov

School Health Finance Project of the National Conference of State Legislatures
(funded by DASH, CDC)
http://ncsl.org/programs/health/pp/schlfund.htm

School Health Program Finance Project Database
http://www2.cdc.gov/nccdphp/shpfp/index.asp

SustainAbility

http://www.sustainabilityonline.com

School-Grants
http://www.schoolgrants.org