The 2011 Community Schools National Awards for Excellence
# Table of Contents

About Community Schools and the National Awards for Excellence .........................  2

Congratulations from the Coalition for Community Schools .................................  3

2011 Award-Winning Schools ...................................................................................... 4

**Roy Clark Elementary School** ................................................................. 4
*Tulsa, Oklahoma*

**Ethel M. Taylor Academy** ................................................................................. 7
*Cincinnati, Ohio*

**Glencliff High School** .................................................................................... 10
*Nashville, Tennessee*

Affiliated Community School Initiatives .................................................................. 13

About the Coalition for Community Schools .......................................................... 14

Coalition for Community Schools Steering Committee Members ....................... 15

Coalition for Community Schools Partners ............................................................ 16

About the Institute for Educational Leadership ...................................................... Inside Back Cover
To highlight the impact of community schools on student success and their efficient and effective use of school and community resources, the Coalition for Community Schools established a national awards program. This year’s program sought individual community schools that have been operating for at least 3 years, are public schools, and have strong results along multiple measures.

The Coalition is proud to recognize three schools with a $1,000 prize. These schools are not exceptions; rather they are exemplars in their communities, where a broad school and community partnership is working to create effective community schools across the entire district.

This year’s winners show that schools that work together with their communities can create optimal conditions for students…conditions that will not only help them succeed academically but also enable them to become healthy and successful citizens and contributing family members. Community schools across the country create these conditions for learning and seek concrete results.

Conditions for Learning
• Early childhood development is fostered through high-quality, comprehensive programs that nurture learning and development.

• The school has a robust core instructional program with qualified teachers, a challenging curriculum, and high standards and expectations for students.

• Students are motivated and engaged in learning - both in school and in community settings, during and after school.

• The basic physical, mental and emotional health needs of young people and their families are recognized and addressed.

• There is mutual respect and effective collaboration among parents, families, and school staff.

• Community engagement, together with school efforts, promotes a school climate that is safe, supportive and respectful and that connects students to a broader learning community.

This year’s winners have also shown that schools with an intense focus, not only on academic curriculum, but also on creating these optimal conditions for students in their schools, will not only help students thrive in life, but also create the results we seek for ALL children to be healthy and successful citizens.

Community schools also focus on results, which typically include:
• Children are ready to enter school
• Students attend school consistently
• Students are actively involved in learning and in their community
• Families are actively involved in their children’s education
• Schools are engaged with families and communities
• Student succeed academically
• Students are healthy - physically, socially and emotionally
• Students live and learn in safe, supportive and stable environments
• Communities are desirable places to live
The Coalition for Community Schools has always understood that attaining better results for all children means finding a way for people to work more closely together. The three 2011 Community Schools for Excellence Award winners, Roy Clark Elementary, Ethel Taylor Academy, and Glencliff High School, are doing just that.

These community schools exemplify one of the Coalition’s core beliefs: Schools, communities, and families are inextricably connected and must work closely together for the benefit of every child.

Although each of these schools have different challenges and assets, they share a common vision for how deep and purposeful partnerships with other organizations can be well-integrated in the life of the school; they recognize the importance of building strong families and communities around the school. They have learned how to sustain their work by leveraging the resources of the entire community; grants may come and go, but partners stay committed and engaged. Most importantly, these community schools are getting results with high needs students.

**Roy Clark Elementary** is leveraging resources from 30 partners to support their students, reaching out purposefully to families through home visits, offering free medical services, and academic enrichment. From 2008-2011, Roy Clark students increased overall Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) scores from 799 to 1217 (max score=1500) encompassing all students in both reading and math. The school has 100% of their families participating in parent teachers conferences, which is up from 68%.

**Ethel Taylor Academy** has seen a 42.4% increase in the number of students scoring “Proficient” or higher on the Ohio Achievement Assessments. The school made it a priority to identify subject areas where there are deficiencies, and established partnerships and allocated resources to meet these needs. The school’s four focus areas: academics, parental involvement, community engagement, and health and wellness, have all shown great improvements since implementing their community schools strategy.

**Glencliff High School** provides supports and services before, during, and after the school day. The school has also implemented career academies in partnership with the business community and community partners, to meet many urgent student and family needs, including flooding or unexpected refugee resettlement in the community. Glencliff High School boasts students from 42 countries and a graduation rate that rose from 66.4% to 81.2%.

We congratulate these community schools, their school systems and their communities. They are beacons to everyone in our nation who cares about achieving better results for our vulnerable children and youth.

Sincerely,

![Signatures]

Martin J. Blank  
Director  

Ira Harkavy  
Chair  

Lisa Villarreal  
Vice-Chair
Roy Clark Elementary was the first school in the Union Public School District in Tulsa, Oklahoma to pilot the community school strategy. Principal Theresa Kiger, began the community school development process in 2005. Kiger was determined to do whatever was necessary to help her students succeed. Thanks to her efforts and those of the Tulsa Area Community Schools Initiative (TACSI), Roy Clark is now a thriving community school that is at the heart of its neighborhood. The school and its partners are helping to improve student success, grow healthy families, and create strong communities. The successes at Clark, have led to the expansion of community schools in seven of the thirteen elementary schools in Union Public Schools, Independence District #9 are now community schools. (There are 12 additional community schools in the Tulsa Public School District that are part of TACSI).

Clark’s Academic Success

Clark continues to grow and flourish in its community school initiative. Despite factors that typically indicate decline in achievement (high poverty, high health risks, low family educational levels, 63% single parent families, 49% ELL learners), the schools data indicate just the opposite! In 2008, Clark received an Academic Excellence award from the state as “most improved” in Annual Yearly Progress (AYP). Recent research by Dr. Curt Adams of OU-Tulsa indicates that Clark students achieve at levels far exceeding comparable students in non-community schools. Academic achievement according to the State Department of Education is more than 400 points above state averages for reading and math, and all sub-groups have increased over 500 points since the development of community school components.

“Roya Clark Elementary gives the students [of this community] equal opportunities with students in more affluent communities. No longer do our students come to school hungry, with clothes and shoes that don’t fit, with medical and emotional needs that aren’t being met, and without hope for the future. Our students are now physically and emotionally healthy, they know they are loved and that we believe in them, but most of all, they now believe in themselves. The fact that Roy Clark is a community school put the words, “I care” into action and made a difference in the lives of our students and their families.” - Bobbi Whitlock, Counselor, M.Ed., LPC

Roy Clark At-A-Glance

Grade Level: PreK-5  
Number of Students: 600  
Demographics: 47% Hispanic, 21% African-American, 20% White, 6% Native American, 3% Asian, 3% Other  
ELL Students: 46%  
Special Education Students: 14%  
Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch: 96%  
Student Mobility Rate: 35%  

Who’s Who at Roy Clark

Dr. Cathy Burden, Superintendent, Union Public Schools  
Dr. Kathy Dodd, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning Union Public Schools  
Theresa Kiger, Principal  
Harriet Patterson, Community School Coordinator  

Results (From 2004 to the present)

• Current immunization rate: 98%  
• Increase in attending Early Childhood Programs from 15% to 70%  
• Increased attendance rate 93% to 95%  
• Decrease in chronic absenteeism from 9% to 1%  
• Decreased mobility rate 45% to 35%  
• Increased overall Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) scores from 799 to 1217 (max score=1500) for subgroup encompassing all students in both reading and math  
• State AYP score is 400 points above state average  
• Increase in breakfast participation: 25% to 100%  
• Increase in fresh fruit/vegetable snacks: 100% in school; 70% after school  
• Increase in Parent-Teacher conference participation: 68% to 100%  
• Increase in annual community night attendance from 300 to 1,000  
• Food for Kids - weekend food assistance for 80 students  
• Families connected to support networks and services 10% to 100%  
• Increase in health clinic enrollment from 300 to over 8,000 patients
from Family and Children’s Services, a community partner, is available at any given time. Other services available to students include interventions provided by the school counselor, behavior coach, on-site therapist, and/or school psychologist.

“When it comes to people who care about a kid’s success and go the extra mile to build relationships with their students and their families, Roy Clark Elementary staff goes above and beyond the call of duty!” - Matt Hancock, Executive Director, Dickenson Family YMCA

These efforts led to an increase in clinic patients from 300 in January 2005, to over 8,000 patients currently! Good healthcare has contributed to a 2% increase in daily attendance and a decreased in mobility from 45% to 35%. Families do not want to leave a school where they receive this kind of support.

The social and emotional needs of students and their families represent another key component. The well-being of students is reviewed at monthly Student Assistance Team (SAT) meetings with community partners; wrap-around services are then provided to meet a variety of needs. Improvement is evaluated for each individual student through intervention plans that include progress monitoring of targeted behaviors. Approximately 65 students (>10%) receive site-based counseling services from our community partner, Family and Children’s Services, at any given time.

Integrating Community-Based Service Learning to Core Curriculum

Teachers use community-based learning in Clark’s classrooms. All classes participate in Junior Achievement (JA), learning from community leaders about business and enterprise. Fifth grade students attend JA BIZ TOWN to run a mock business community. Service learning is integrated into the school’s core curriculum. Students participated during and after school in a school-wide service learning project, “Where are the Bees?” The project asks students to find out why the bee population is declining in the community and what to do about it. Students researched and created posters, videos, art projects, and science activities, and grew a garden to attract bees and feed the resident bunnies. Area businesses made donations; seven community grants funded the effort. The project culminated with student portfolios showcasing all of the activities and curriculum correlations. Portfolios were then submitted to Disney Planet Challenge. Upon completion of this project students had worked in many curriculum areas: math, science, social studies, reading, writing, art, health, and safety.

Engaging Families and the Community

Clark involves families and community residents in a variety of different ways. Parents and community partners serve on the Site Community Team, with other school staff and partners and are involved in the decision making process for the school.

Prior to the first day of school, staff visits each student’s home to meet families and welcome the students back to school. The mother of Clark student, Luis Rodriguez, said “Community schools help children and their families succeed. Assisting mothers in getting jobs, to completing their GED, [the] school just isn’t for the child; it helps the entire family and community.” Going even a step further to reach families where they are, the school holds enrollment days at local apartment complexes before school begins each year.

Participation in parent-teacher conferences is now 100% (90% in person and 10% by phone conference or mail). This happens because school personnel make every attempt to accommodate parents’ busy schedules. Last year, 100% of parents of special needs students participated in their child’s Individualized Education Program meetings. Meetings were deliberately scheduled to accommodate parents’ schedules. In some cases, home visits were made to ensure their opportunity to participate. Parent participation in early childhood class learning events ranges from 80-100%. Approximately 75% of fifth grade parents attended a Moving Up transition meeting for students matriculating to the 6th Grade Center.

Seasonal community events bring together over 1,000 participants and more than 25 community resource providers. The school’s Community School Coordinator attends area apartment managers’ meetings. Southwood Baptist Church hosts family events for Clark families and helps to distribute food sacks to over 80 children every week.

“When my oldest daughter entered seventh grade, no after-school or extended daycare was offered. Principal Kiger overheard and offered that my daughter could ride a bus to Clark after school each day, where she could do her homework and wait until I arrived. As a single mother working 25+ miles from the school, I am extremely indebted and grateful for the assistance.” - Teresa Burgess, Parent

Executive Director, Dickenson Family YMCA
Site Community Team at Clark

The Site Community Team consisting of parents, the principal, other school staff and partners, meets three times a year using student data to analyze the effectiveness of core program components. The team’s goal is to engage the school and surrounding neighborhood in identifying their local needs and priorities and to support the programs, services, and opportunities provided in response. If a program is not working, the team reviews and works with the partner to revise or recreate.

Collective Governance

“One unique aspect of Roy Clark is the absence of a primary partner”, says Clark Principal, Theresa Kiger. Rather, community support comes from more than 30 partners working to optimize learning conditions. “Collectively, governance is a shared responsibility between the larger community under the TACSI umbrella, community partners, parents, and school administrative personnel which includes the site principal, assistant principal, and community school coordinator. Partners support core components and serve on the school’s Site Community Team. Kiger expresses that, “Serving the whole child defines the culture of Clark, and our staff exemplifies a learning community invested in success for all of our students.” In collaborating with people from so many different sectors, Clark ensures enduring relationships among educators, families, community volunteers, businesses, health and social service agencies, community faith-based and civic groups, youth development agencies, and others that are committed to children. Those relationships are changing the landscape, not only for Clark, but the community and the district as a whole.

“Before joining the Clark team, I had never seen such a school-wide, collaborative effort to literally know and address every single student’s academic and social needs. It is simply magical to see Clark staff and community partners provide personal, individualized, effective instruction and services to make certain each child succeeds.” - Wendy Johnson, Assistant Principal

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“We love being a community partner, serving hundreds of children and their families. Our joint efforts have resulted in better mental health and academics among Clark students.” Whitney Downie, Family and Children Services

Educating the Whole Child

“We are passionate that children can learn if given the opportunity. Clark is a hub for educating the whole child, so students and families are offered a variety of programs - health care, counseling, enrichment activities, adult education, early childhood programs and summer camps,” says Principal Kiger when asked about her school. “Looking at the accomplishments we have made since becoming a community school five years ago, we see the effective instruction, high expectations, and engaged learning that has led to incredible student success.”

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“The teachers at Clark will do whatever they can to help us succeed in life. When you have been here since Pre-K, the hard time is when you have to graduate to middle school.” - Chip Pratt, 5th grade student

Roy Clark’s School Partners

- Children’s Dental Health Center
- Clark Parent Teacher Association
- Community Action Project Early Learning Center
- Community Service Council
- CREOKS, Family & Children’s Services
- Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma
- Hicks Recreation Center, Jr. Achievement
- Northeastern State University
- University of Oklahoma (OU) College of Pharmacy
- OU Physicians Community Health Clinic
- OU Urban Design Studio
- Oxley Family Foundation
- Pa’Lante Dance
- Erwin Photography
- Sam’s Club
- Southeast Rotary Club
- Shadow Mountain Behavioral Health
- Southwood Baptist Church
- Tulsa Area Community Schools Initiative (TASCI)
- YMCA, Thomas Academy
- Tulsa Arts Council, Tulsa Children’s Museum
- Tulsa City-County Library
- Tulsa Health Department

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Dion’s success story is just one of many that Ethel M. Taylor Academy staff tells when asked about why the community school strategy is so important to their students and families. In a school where 100% of students qualify for free and reduced lunch, Taylor’s community learning center (CLC) is designed to act as a hub for community services — providing health, safety and social services for students and families, as well as recreational, educational and cultural opportunities.

The school was named after Ethel M. Taylor who understood the needs of the community and worked to improve its quality of life. In 1957, she led the crusade to keep a public school in the neighborhood, ensuring that there would always be a school for the community’s children. This pioneer’s strong influence is why Taylor Academy believes that communities and schools are strongly linked — one seldom succeeds if the other fails.

Ethel M. Taylor Academy organized through the Cincinnati Community Learning Center Initiative, emphasizes results and focuses on four areas vital to learning: academics, parental involvement, community engagement, and health and wellness.

Emphasis on Results

When Taylor staff looks at their academic goals each year, they start with state testing data from the previous year. They identify subject areas that need more attention, and come up with CLC academic goals for the year. The Resource Coordinator then meets with each partner to see how they are going to align their work with those goals. As the school year progresses, the principal and resource coordinator meet with teachers and allocate resources according to the data. The Resource Coordinator also meets monthly with community partners to share data and other school information. All year, data is analyzed to see what impact partnerships are having on individual students and how that affects the school goals.

At Taylor, increasing parent and community engagement is a primary goal. Staff and partners review programs and interventions from the previous year, look at what was successful, and build on it. Building and maintaining relationships is seen as the successful foundation for engagement.

Also a focus of Taylor’s planning is health and wellness. The goal is to improve student’s physical and mental well-being with an emphasis on student’s interactions with peers and adults. Staff
reviews the percentages of students fully immunized, medical referrals completed, and dental referrals completed; mental health and behavior data are also analyzed. Taylor correlates this data with academic achievement to see the impact in those categories. In the most recent CLC report card, all of the school health indices and mechanisms have improved.

Engaging Partners to Meet Students Needs
Taylor Academy engages many partners to provide programs and services to its students. Partners help Taylor staff to stay connected to community needs. They are not only involved in the school, they ARE the school. It is often said at Taylor Academy, that if a stranger would walk in the door, they would not know the difference between a partner and a school employee. This is because the school feels that everyone needs to be “rowing in the same direction” for them to be as successful as a Community Learning Center.

When the CLC was created, Taylor did an assessment to determine what partnerships were needed in the neighborhood to help students and families be successful, and to make the school the center of the community. At the outset, it was important that Taylor mobilize resources already available to the school that could be delivered through a different, more effective model. Therefore, each partner at the CLC needed to come fully sustainable to their site. Even the Resource Coordinator for the school is provided through a partnership with Central Clinic. The school partners with the Children’s Home of Cincinnati, the Childhood Food Solutions, Mental Health, as well as local faith-based institutions, Primary/Dental Health partners, After School, Tutoring, Mentoring, Parent Engagement, College Access, and other partnerships all bring their own resources to the CLC. The key to success is making sure that these partnerships are seamlessly integrated into the school.

Partnering to Keep Students Healthy
Taylor’s mental health partner, The Children’s home of Cincinnati, provides 2 full time therapists, one full time case manager and a part time psychiatrist. They work on behavior issues with students through prevention, intervention, and Medication Management (MEDSOM) visits at the school. The school partners with the City of Cincinnati to provide dental care for students. There is a full time nurse who coordinates all health partnerships including eye and dental screening, sick visits, and the wellness team. Childhood Food Solutions which has a Fresh Fruits and Vegetable Grant, provides nutritional snacks for students and food bags to go home with otherwise hungry children during long weekends and holiday breaks.

Creating More Enrichment Opportunities for Students
Taylor Academy offers enrichment programs outside of traditional school hours. An after-school program runs Monday through Thursday from 2:15-6:00pm, and includes a hot dinner, tutoring and mentoring, enrichment activities, community service, career and college exploration, health and wellness, leadership development and parent and family engagement. The tutoring partners are led by Project Grad Cincinnati, but also in-

A Coordinating Mechanism
Ethel Taylor has a Resource Coordinator employed through a partnership with Central Clinic. The Coordinator works closely with the principal to ensure the proper running of the school and has 3 main duties: 1) to maintain relationships with the community, including families and neighbors, to ensure that the needs of the students and the community are met; 2) to facilitate communication between partners and school staff to ensure alignment with the mission and goals of the school; the coordinator does this by attending all school meetings -- Instructional Lead Team, Data, and Local Decision Making Committee, and 3) to allocate partner resources properly so that students receive the opportunities and supports that they need.

At the district level, there is a Community Learning Centers Coordinator who brings together all of the Resource Coordinators, from their various agencies, for bi-weekly meetings. These meetings are information sharing and provide professional development opportunities.

School-Level Decision-Making
Taylor Academy has a Local Decision Making Committee (LSDMC). The LSDMC is the site level governing board for the school. This committee is made up of the principal, school staff, community members and parents. The Community Learning Center, represented by the Resource Coordinator, reports to the LSDMC. The Resource Coordinator makes a monthly report to the LSDMC and the committee has the final vote on bringing new partnerships into the building. The lead agency at Taylor Academy is Central Clinic, which is represented on the LSDMC.

Results
(From the 2008–2009 school year to the 2009–2010 school year)

- Met AYP: rose from the ranking “Academic Emergency” to “Continuous Improvement” on its Ohio Report Card in 2009-2010 school year
- State performance index rating increased from 61.2 to 69.7
- 42.4% increase in the numbers of students scoring “Proficient” or higher on the Ohio Achievement Assessment
- Attendance increased from 93.8% in 2008-2009 to 97.3% in 2009-2010. Behavioral incidents decreased from 309 in 2008-2009 to 94 in 2009-2010
- 85% of our students had a parent engaged in their education, up from 40%
- Parent volunteers increased over 100%; Parent attendance at parent teacher conferences increased from 40% in 2009 to 85% in 2010; and parent volunteers doubled.
- Community volunteers increased over 100% (from 36 to 788)

“The welcoming atmosphere of the Community Learning Center extends throughout the building and makes the time spent at school a worthwhile effort. Our company looks forward to the time spent at Taylor and to the positive impact we make on each other’s lives!” – Kevin Berlon, Community Member and Business Partner

Fruits and Vegetable Grant, provides nutritional snacks for students and food bags to go home with otherwise hungry children during long weekends and holiday breaks.
cllude SES, Gear UP, area colleges, local business volunteers and community members. Mentoring is a need at Taylor Academy, and the CLC’s has been able to garner partnerships for their students from the Cincinnati Youth Collaborative and Origins Community Church as well as Adopt-A-Class which mentors entire classrooms.

The school works with college access partners such as Project Grad Cincinnati and GEAR UP, and Origins Community Church who organizes the 7th/8th grade class trip to visit colleges.

Another unique partnership is the 5th Quarter, which is a summer program in June to address summer learning loss and the need for continuing support to students. The morning is focused on academics, the afternoon includes enrichment activities, and the program includes lunch and dinner! Taylor also has a Junior Community Action Committee led by Union Savings Bank, the group that plans and organizes volunteer activities in the school.

Ethel Taylor’s School Partners

Lead Agency: Central Clinic
Community Engagement Partners: United Way, Greater Cincinnati Foundation, Target, Playhouse in the Park, Community Councils, Fairmount Providers, Mallory Center, Union Savings Bank, Urban Ministry, St. James, St. Columban, St. Susanna, Assistance League, Riverfront Kiwanas, Fenwick High School
Mental Health Partners: Children’s Home of Cincinnati, Character Council
Primary/Dental Health Partners: Cincinnati Health Department, Wellness Team, Childhood Food Solutions
After-School Partners: Central Clinic, Boy Scouts, Girls Scouts, multiple partners in CincyAfterSchool Program
Tutoring and College Access Partners: Project Grad Cincinnati, Gear Up, University of Cincinnati, Xavier University, Miami University, Children’s Hospital
Mentoring Partners: Adopt-A-Class, Cincinnati Recreation Commission, Fifth Third Bank, Union Savings Bank, Origins Community Church, Neon Lites, Cincinnati City Council, Cincinnati Youth Collaborative
Parent Engagement Partners: Gear Up, Cincy After School, Ohio State Extention, Beech Acres

Family Involvement

When it comes to family involvement at Taylor, relationship building is primary. School staff and community partner’s know that if families and community members feel welcome, they are more willing to be involved. Teachers, school staff, and partners are also trained to engage families and make the school a more inviting place. These efforts have led to increased numbers of parents and community volunteers.

Events ranging from the typical open house or a back to school fair to National African American Parent Involvement Day bring families together in the school setting. The school also offers classes to parents and community members, on nutrition, parenting, and budgeting. Parents are welcome to volunteer in the school in many different roles and as volunteers, they are vital to the daily operations of the building.

Aligning Core Curriculum to Engaging Service Projects

Community-based learning approaches are used during the school day and after school are aligned with the school day curriculum. Specific examples of this type of alignment with the CLC partners are: 1) the after-school program aligned with math goals - If the 5th graders are working on perimeter and area, they measure the court and do math during their tennis lessons; 2) if there is an academic goal of making students proficient writers, the mental health partner works on journals with their students; 3) when the tutoring partners are trained, they receive folders for the students containing the exact needs of that student; and 4) professional development is aligned with the CLC - at the start of the school year, the Resource Coordinator reviews the CLC model with the teachers, then throughout the year, the resource coordinator works with the principal to identify needs and address them during professional development experiences.

One service learning project was “Pennies for People”. The students collected pennies for Heifer International, whose mission is help end world hunger and poverty through self-reliance and sustainability. After students raised $550, a CLC partner matched it. Heifer International visited the school and gave a presentation about how animals can help different communities, students then had the opportunity to buy different animals for communities in Africa. The project was aligned with curriculum: counting money, weighing objects, animals, and geography.

Another great project student were involved in was Project Linus where students learned about cancer patients and what it’s like for kids who must spend time in the hospital. Students measured and cut materials (learning about area and perimeter) to make blankets for children in Children’s Hospital; they presented the blankets to the organization. Students working on these kinds of projects, are also writing letters for donations, reading about the topic or issue and then writing thank you letters as well. There is always alignment with the curriculum, learning is more exciting.

A Place for Success

Taylor Academy has worked very hard to create an environment that is welcoming for all staff, students, families and community members. They have successfully been able to bring together the best partnerships to ensure that the needs of their students are being met at all times.

“We understand that the combination of quality teaching along with great partners that directly support our academics has created an environment for improved academic achievement. We still have room for improvement, but know we are headed in the right direction.” said Dr. Sean McCauley, principal at Ethel Taylor Academy.
Four years ago Glencliff High School in Nashville, TN rewrote their vision statement in order to create a profound change in the culture of the school. The first sentence reads, “Our vision is to make Glencliff High School a truly comprehensive place of learning and the central focus of the community.” Glencliff strives every day to bring that vision to reality, and has been successful in many ways. Since Glencliff has implemented the community schools strategy, they have leveraged the services and expertise of over 70 community partners and have seen significant increases in the graduation rates, student performance, and the engagement and support of families and community partners.

Coordinating Resources with a Focus on Results
Glencliff uses multiple measures to guide their planning. The School Improvement Plan, which is written by a large leadership team includes staff, administration, students, parents and community leaders. It is used as the school’s framework for action. Each year the school examines student academic performance data, which not only includes data, but also graduation rates, drop-out rates, attendance, truancy, discipline, and multiple survey results. This data, along with benchmarks set by NCLB, guide planning for the academic year; funding and staffing decisions are based on these results and goals are based on student performance and non-academic data from the previous year. Glencliff then leverages partnerships and resources to fill the gaps.

Aligning Curriculum and Instruction with the Supports Students Need
When Glencliff began implementing the community school strategy, the school was faced with multiple challenges; low 9th grade promotion rates, attendance, discipline, and school climate problems, inadequate academic performance and lack of relevance in the curriculum for students. To combat this, Glencliff created multiple arenas of community participation and programming that are available during the day, evening, and weekends. They formed partnerships with community-based organizations (CBO’s) that provide programs for students during the school day. Many of these opportunities are based in the classroom and have an intentional focus on instruction and curriculum.

The high school instructional reform initiative focuses on Career Academies, which are aligned with the philosophy of community schools. Each academy (Engineering, Health, Business, Hospitality and Marketing, and Freshman Academy) has partners that engage the students and teachers in meaningful ways. Business partners offer opportunities to experience the world of work. Youth development partners offer clubs and organizations that specialize in leadership, service, and arts programs. In the afternoon there is an alternative academic setting for students who do not at-
tend during the day, or who need remediation, enrichment, or ELL support. University partners arrive after the regular dismissal and work with these students, who are the most at-risk on their dual enrollment courses.

**Glencliff’s School Partners**
- Avenue Bank
- Conexión Américas
- Coleman Park Community Center
- Coordinated School Health
- DCI – Dialysis Clinic Incorporated
- Earl Swensson
- Ford Motor Company Fund
- Monroe Carell Jr. Children’s Hospital at Vanderbilt
- YMCA of Middle Tennessee
- United Neighborhood Health Services

“As the Glencliff administration has made it a priority to open their doors to the YMCA Latino Achievers program, they have opened amazing opportunities for their students to broaden their perspectives of the community they live in. YMCA Latino Achievers students from Glencliff have participated in college tours, career exploration, and an art project with the Frist Center during the 2010-2011 school year. The YMCA is grateful for this strong partnership with Glencliff, one that is a blessing to everyone involved, most importantly, the Glencliff students.”
- Kathleen Fuchs, YMCA Program Coordinator

Four years ago when the school was experiencing high levels of gang activity and high levels of discipline incidents, Glencliff implemented an advisory period, which is a 30 minute homeroom that meets at 7 am every day. Students stay with their advisor and advisees throughout their four years in high school, and advisory has become an important way for students to connect with an adult and for adults to become advocates for their advisees. The advisory curriculum provides whole child support and addresses issues of conflict resolution, communication skills, study skills, time management, career exploration, and more.

**Creatively Using Partnerships**
Glencliff has been creative in how they align community partners to support student learning and development. Partners, are recruited and supported by the Academy Coach, and provide programs and opportunities during the school day that have intentional focus on instruction and curriculum.

The Family and Community Engagement Specialist man-

**Teachers as Partners**
Career Academies help teachers understand the practical application of the skills they are teaching in the classrooms, as well as the most current practices in their fields. Glencliff teachers have come to see that community partners are integral to their success; they have created a culture of openness to new ideas and strategies for instruction and assessment by allowing partners to help guide instructional planning. Partners involved in the Career Academies invite teachers to “externships” at their sites, speak to classes, help develop curriculum and assessments, design job shadowing and internship opportunities for students and accompany staff to professional conferences.

**Focusing on Healthy Students**
In 2007, Glencliff was a school struggling with gang violence, high rates of absenteeism, and low student performance. The school had a large number of students who were absent due to illness, as well as students who were performing poorly on health indicators in wellness and PE classes. In response, the school organized the “Glencliff Community Coalition” and together reached out to the community for help. The coalition created a Community Health Framework to address the health needs of students. The school and its community partners created a comprehensive wellness program for the staff and students. They collaborated with the local YMCA to renovate their pool, which is open to the community, and with United Neighborhood Health Services to open an on-site community clinic, which serves 1000 patients each year. Glencliff also partners with Vanderbilt Children’s Hospital to run a school-based garden, now the largest in the city.

“Glencliff High School has changed in so many ways in the past three years. The teachers and Mr. Majors [Principal] have given the students something to look forward to after high school, and have shown us how to reach our goals. My life would be completely different without United Nations and the many opportunities that Glencliff has given me.”
- Decorye’ Bradford, Student, Class of 2012

**Educating and Engaging with Families**
In a recent survey conducted by the school, 95% of parents surveyed in the Parents as Partners program expressed an increase in knowledge about state academic standards, how the school’s system functions, and how to help their child with homework and have a productive parent-teacher conference. Families come to Glencliff with multiple needs. A school climate and needs assessment survey offered two years...
ago, helped define those needs and allowed the school to target partnerships and resources in response.

Glencliff parents serve on the school’s leadership team, represent the school on the district-wide Parent Advisory Council, and serve on a cluster (the elementary and middle schools that feed to Glencliff) team as well. Many Glencliff parents participate in a program called the Parent Support Group, which makes decisions on school issues, raises funds for the school, and recognizes faculty.

In a survey conducted by the Small Learning Communities program at Glencliff, 80% of parents surveyed expressed satisfaction with the communication about school and academics.

"As a community partner working with Glencliff High School, we have come to deeply appreciate the effort, heart, and deep desire to provide a warm welcome in the highly multicultural environment that we see every day at Glencliff. GHS is truly a center of the community and we find ourselves there on a regular basis to participate in community events outside of our own workshops. It is absolutely the leader of the pack when it comes to expertise in developing new and effective manners to work with our changing community. ” - Laura Delgado, Program Coordinator, Parents as Partners, Conexión Américas

Results

Over the course of the last three years 2007-08 to 2010-2011, Glencliff has had an:

- Increase in graduation rate - 66.4% to 81.2%
- Increase in student enrollment in Honors and/or AP courses - 20% to 33.3%
- Increase in student performance on writing assessment - 58% to 93% scored proficient or advanced
- Increase in students receiving Dual Enrollment credit with a community college +12%
- Decrease in student mobility rate - 48% to 42%
- Increase in partnerships
- Non-profits: Health (mental and physical) +21 partners, Family Outreach/Workshops +7 partners, student mentoring/tutoring +6 partners, Faith-based Institutions +4 partners
- For profits +24 partners working in classrooms with teachers and students on career exploration, 21st century skills and post-secondary preparation.
- 81% of students surveyed feel that community and business partnerships have improved school climate and 70% say these partnerships helped foster better adult-student relationships (Spring 2010).

"I learned so much from Parents as Partners and it only helped me realize how much more I have to learn. In particular, I really appreciated the workshop on what to do at a parent-teacher conference, because now I feel I know what to do and what questions to ask. My other favorite part of the program was learning about college applications and how the process works. ” - Ana Molina, Parent

Glencliff has been able to achieve this high standard from parents by hiring a full time Spanish interpreter (2007), a full-time Arabic interpreter (2010), a part time Somali interpreter (as of 2009), and a full-time Family Engagement Specialist (2008).

In spring 2011, the school established a full-time Family Resource Center with a devoted staff member in a dedicated space for classes and meetings. Parents use the resources in the center to apply for jobs, work on resumes, and read online newspapers from their country of origin. Glencliff parents and community members come in the evenings and on weekends to attend parenting classes, workshops, and leadership meetings. Partners provide expanded workshops for parents in order to help them navigate high school with their student and prepare them for careers and/or college.

Making Glencliff the “hub” of the Community

The use of the school building has increased substantially because there are many community events, such as health fairs, Parent University, Housing Informational Events, Night Out Against Crime, gang awareness events for parents, immigration information sessions, parenting classes, teacher preparation workshops, and other neighborhood/community events and celebrations. Glencliff has been able to create unique partnerships and supports that have created a school where students feel challenged, supported and prepared for life beyond high school and where the vision that they crafted four years ago has now become reality.
This year’s three honorees also are unique because they each are part of a larger initiative to make community schools the norm and not the exception in their communities. Only when we bring community schools to scale, will all of our nation’s children get the learning opportunities and supports they need.

Tulsa Area Community Schools Initiative

The Tulsa Area Community Schools Initiative (TACSI) was established through the Tulsa Metropolitan Human Services Commission (MHSC) in 2007 and is administered by the Community Service Council of Greater Tulsa (CSC). There are currently 18 community schools across Tulsa and Union Public School Districts, with plans to expand.

TACSI recognizes the need to engage the entire community in aligning and developing community resources to educate the whole child, by building relationships based on collective trust. It believes that community schools should serve as centers of community life, offering comprehensive and integrated programs, services, and opportunities to students, families, and neighbors in the community.

Cincinnati Community Learning Centers

Cincinnati’s Community Learning Centers Initiative started in 2001 when the Board of Education adopted a vision for a district-wide redevelopment of all schools as centers of their community. The goals of the CLC are to support student achievement, revitalize neighborhoods and maximize the community’s return on their financial investments. They act as hubs for community services, providing access for students, families and community to health, safety and social services, as well as recreational, educational and cultural opportunities.

CLCs provide programming during and beyond the school day and year round, including after school and summer enrichment, integrated and comprehensive health services, adult education, early childhood education, college access, parent/family engagement, mentoring and tutoring; although unique partnerships are customized to each site. Since implementing the community schools strategy, some results that the Cincinnati’s CLC’s have seen are: the city is first urban district in Ohio to receive an “effective” rating and is the highest performing urban district in Ohio; High school graduation rates have climbed from 51% in 2000 to 83% in 2009., and the achievement gap between African American students and white students narrowed from 14.5% in 2003 to 4.3% in 2009.

Alignment Nashville

Alignment Nashville (AN) is a unique and scalable framework for developing community schools. The mission of AN is to align community organizations and resources so that their coordinated support of Nashville’s youth has a positive impact on public school success, children’s health, and the success of our community as a whole. AN has developed processes and structures that enable collaboration, ensuring all children receive the services and supports they need in an effective and efficient way that complements their education, health and well-being, and the goals of the public schools.

Currently, AN supports 21 city-wide committees, composed of more than 350 representatives from community organizations, public schools, government agencies, faith communities, and other stakeholders. Highlights of collaborative successes include: The AN Middle School Committee’s “Creating a Culture of Kindness” initiative, which has resulted in large reductions in behavioral referrals (greater than 30%) and have, on average, doubled the number of support services provided in the school, Pre-K Committee’s “Essential Literature” initiative, which promotes the importance of reading and shared experiences, has resulted in a 65% increase in circulation of six Essential Literature titles in Nashvile Public Library branches since 2005. The AN High School Academies Committee’s efforts to engage the community in district-wide transformation of high schools into smaller learning communities has contributed to an increase in the high school graduation rate (from 68.8% in 2006 to 82.9% in 2010).

For more information about Alignment Nashville, go to www.alignmentnashville.org.
VISION
The Coalition for Community Schools believes that strong communities require strong schools and strong schools require strong communities. We envision a future in which schools are centers of thriving communities where everyone belongs, works together, and succeeds.

MISSION
The Coalition advances opportunities for the success of children, families, and communities by promoting the development of more, and more effective, community schools.

CORE VALUES
- **Foster Strong Partnerships**—Partners share their resources and expertise and work together to design community schools and make them work.
- **Share Accountability for Results**—Clear, mutually agreed-upon results drive the work of community schools. Data helps partners measure progress toward results. Agreements enable them to hold each other accountable and move beyond “turf battles.”
- **Set High Expectations for All**—Community schools are organized to support learning. Children, youth, and adults are expected to learn at high standards and be contributing members of their community.
- **Build on the Community’s Strengths**—Community schools marshal the assets of the entire community, including the people who live and work there, local organizations, and the school.
- **Embrace Diversity**—Community schools know their communities. They work to develop respect and a strong positive identity for people of diverse backgrounds; and they are committed to the welfare of the whole community.

GOALS
- To foster local action and build the capacity of school and community leaders to organize community schools.
- To create a supportive policy environment for community schools
- To demonstrate the effectiveness of community schools
- To communicate the importance and value of community schools to the public, policymakers, and opinion leaders.

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www.communityschools.org
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ABOUT THE INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

ABOUT IEL

Since 1964, the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) – a non-profit, nonpartisan organization – has been at the forefront of innovative efforts that bring together leaders across the various sectors of education (P-20), workforce development and child- and youth-serving systems. IEL builds partnerships across institutional boundaries, helping individuals and institutions tackle leadership challenges and leverage the resources of multiple partners to foster reform. For IEL, deep and purposeful collaboration is essential to getting results that will transform learning for the 21st Century.

IEL’s work focuses on multiple factors that influence child and youth outcomes. Institutional factors, such as effective organizational stewardship and strong professional development; in-school factors, such as principal leadership, teacher quality and rigorous, engaging curricula; and non-school factors, such as family circumstances and community context all require attention. We believe that our society and our leaders can and must address all dimensions of child and youth development.

Core principles guiding IEL’s work:

- Leadership development and professional development are necessary to prepare people with knowledge, skills and abilities to help children and youth succeed.
- Culturally competent leaders are vital to empowering organizations to address the needs of a diverse society
- Quality education is a responsibility shared by school systems, families, communities, businesses and governments.
- The results we seek for our children and youth must guide our work with them.
- Strategic alliances and partnerships are essential to achieving measurable and sustainable outcomes.

IEL’s results-driven focus is anchored in four strategies:

- Harvesting lessons from research and on-the-ground experts to formulate practical frameworks and clear standards of practice;
- Crafting and running leadership and professional development programs and provides technical assistance to help individuals, organizations, and systems build their capacity to work together;
- Informing policy makers and thought leaders about policies and practices that will drive innovation and systems change; and
- Building and supporting networks, coalitions and alliances that engage diverse groups in learning and collective action.

IEL’s work is conducted by its three centers: the Center for Workforce Development, the Center for Family, School and Community, and the Center for Leadership.
Coalition for Community Schools

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