The recent Race to the Top district competition gives us the opportunity to rethink schools as smart schools that build strong relationships with partners whose assets and expertise are aligned and integrated with school resources to address the needs of the whole child.

**What People Think of Schools Today**

- Serving a single purpose
- A binary, analog system of delivery: teachers teach & students learn

**Community Schools are Smart Schools**

Community schools are like smart phones, they serve as a vehicle enabling schools and communities to connect, collaborate, and create. Children gain access to an array of opportunities and supports that lay the foundation for more enriching and impactful learning. Communities and schools leverage their shared physical and human assets to help students succeed.

**Infrastructure**

Just like smart phones, community schools have an infrastructure or operating system that makes all the 'apps' work in a synchronized manner. A school-site leadership team, often comprised of educators, parents, community partners, and others, is responsible for creating a shared vision for the school, identifying desired results and helping align and integrate the work of partners with the school. A community school coordinator works hand-in-hand with the principal, and is a member of the school leadership team. The coordinator is responsible for building relationships with school staff and community partners, for engaging the families and community residents, and coordinator an efficient delivery of supports to students both inside and outside of the classroom, all day, every day. Data on academic AND non-academic factors drive the work for a community school.
The Coalition for Community Schools, housed at the Institute of Educational Leadership, is an alliance of national, state, and local organizations in education K-16, youth development, community planning and development, family support, health and human services, government and philanthropy as well as national, state and local networks. The Coalition represents nearly 50 system-wide community school initiatives across the nation.

Use a Smart Phone to make a Smart Choice

Call the Coalition for more information