



Uses of Title I Funds for Parent and Community Engagement and Community Schools

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The Coalition for Community Schools is made up of national, state, and local organizations whose mission is to advance opportunities for the success of children, families and communities by promoting the development of community schools. We have joined with our partner the United Way and presenters to bring this webinar to you. Our objective is to present best practices and examples of uses of Title I funds for parent, family and community engagement, and an overview of community schools.

Presentation

We believe student achievement is high in many households but at the same time gaps continue among the social, educational and economic needs of children & families coast-to-coast. Partners in the Coalition for Community Schools believe these gaps can be traced to factors that have little to do with academic-related services provided by schools *or* the high expectations among school officials, parents, and the community.

Recent research supports this notion. This year, Education Testing Service, released findings that relate to a home and school connection. In the report, *Parsing the Achievement Gap II*, parent participation is listed as a key correlate to academic achievement. Correlates related to teaching and learning *and* the learning environment include class size, rigor, teacher preparation, commitment of teachers & staff, safety at school, access to technology, and more. In the area of early development and the time before and after school, the report lists correlations as birth weight, hunger & nutrition, talking and reading to babies & young children, television, frequent changing of schools, the gap of time in summer, and more. This broad list suggests that if we want to be certain that all students have a fair chance to succeed academically, the school cannot be expected to act alone.

Community schools embrace the strengths of the community to assist the school in educating children and youth. We know times have changed and when schools are centers of community, open longer hours, on more days, and throughout the year, they serve children, youth, families, and the communities of today—not yesterday. A community school is not a program, it is place and set of partnerships between the school & community. It's also a strategy that integrates academics, health and social services, youth development, and more to improve student learning, and to develop stronger and healthier families and communities.

Another way to describe a community school is what some call a full-service school and full-service community school. Also, some community schools are known as community learning centers. These schools act as a hub or center of the community where public and private partner agencies come together with the school and its staff to provide integrated services to meet the range of learning and developmental needs of students.

Community schools focus on the following results: Children & youth are:

- Ready to learn
- Engaged in academic experiences and enriched opportunities that help them see a positive future
- Healthy—physically, socially, and emotionally
- Prepared for adult roles in the workplace, as responsible parents, and citizens
- Safe, supported, and engaged
- Engaged in real-world problem solving
- And parents and community members are involved

Many schools are doing pockets of this work, but we are seeing that intentional *community school* efforts are growing in Chicago, in Houston through our partner Communities in Schools, in the communities of Greater Lehigh Valley Pennsylvania working in partnership with the United Way, in New York through our partner the Children's Aid Society and the popular Harlem Children's Zone, in Tulsa, OK through the Tulsa Area Community Schools Initiative, SUN Schools in Portland, OR, Tukwila, WA, Grand Rapids, Cincinnati, OH, Redmond, CA; Beacons Schools across the county, in Philadelphia through the Netter Center for Community Partnerships at UPENN. And others.

There are many supporters for the community schools effort including organizations that lead teacher unions, principals, superintendents, community based organizations, YMCA, Big Brothers, Big Sisters, the after school networks, and more.

Why is Title I a good match with community schools?

It's all about alignment, coordination and leverage.

Title I serves as an important funding source and focus for community school initiatives. These schools operate on key principles consistent with the provisions of Title I. They *align* school, district, and community resources to increase the amount and quality of instructional time and attain specific results related to academic, social, health, and nutritional, emotional and civic development of children, youth and families. They create mechanisms to *coordinate* programs and services operated by school personnel and external partners, blending the resources of other services or programs that receive other Title funds and federal funds from other departments. And finally, community schools *leverage* public and private resources as well as the assets and expertise of volunteers from business, civic, higher ed, and faith-based institutions.

Allowable uses to Title I funds to support the community school strategy

- Title I funds can be used for **community planning** that involves conducting a **community-wide assessment** to identify major factors, both academic and nonacademic, in schools and the surrounding community that affect student academic achievement. Also, it allows for the **development of a plan to integrate school and community resources** and opportunities within a coordinated system to meet student and family needs.
- Title I funds can be used to **maximize resources** by coordinating and integrating Title I funded services with other programs funded under ESEA *and* coordinating them with services funded by public or private funding dollars.
- Funds can be used for **professional development for family and community engagement targeted toward building the capacity of**

- school personnel, volunteers, and other pupil support staff to work with families, the community, and service providers. For example, LEAs may use Title I funds to allow staff of community providers working in partnership with the schools to provide professional development.
- Funds can be used to support the [curriculum design, implementation, and professional development for curriculum](#) that connects students to real world issues and community problems, while addressing the challenge of student disengagement from learning. This would include service-learning, place-based education, work-based learning, environmental education, experiential learning and related strategies that are consistent with state standards.
 - Title I funds can be used to hire [community school coordinators](#), or site coordinators, whose job it is to integrate school and community resources.
 - Title I funds can be used for [out-of-school programs](#) providing additional instructional time or goals.
 - Title I funds can be used for [parental involvement, early childhood education](#) including support to facilitate transition to elementary schools, for family literacy, and other services that address barriers to learning.

Uses of Title I funds in some community schools

In Evansville, IN, Title I funds were used as the catalyst for the community schools effort. School and district leaders there believe that Title I is the perfect place to start in looking at a holistic educational experience. Title I funds were used as a means for change and school improvements to pay for portions of district and school staff salary, after-school and summer programs, social work services, parent coordinators, and more.

In Lincoln, NE, community school principals have designated Title I funds annually to support the site supervisor position and also for a Behavioral Health Therapist in partnership with Family Services. Some principals also designate these funds to support summer activities as well as staff development opportunities for site supervisors and after-school program staff. The school district uses Title I funds to support a portion of their Community Learning Center position.

In Indianapolis to increase the level of coordination, Indianapolis Public Schools and the United Way of Central Indiana have jointly funded parent liaison/community coordinator positions in four elementary schools in urban neighborhoods. The District provides 40% of the salary and benefits through Title I and the United Way covers the remaining 60% for each position. They plan to expand this arrangement to more schools across the district.

In the State of New Mexico Title I funding has been used to provide materials and training for school-to-parent partnerships in 27 of the State's 89 school districts. This includes a family/parent and community liaison to provide technical assistance, training, and outreach meetings for community input and data collection to guide decisions on parental involvement. Also included are a coordinating parent involvement team for project coordination and to assist with meeting NCLB parent engagement requirements, a family/parent involvement advisory council, a supportive web site, and more.

In the SUN Schools of Multnomah County, OR, Title I is used to support after school tutoring, after school academic programs, summer academically-focused programs, family engagement activities and family engagement coordinators, daytime title staff training and teaching in the extended day.

The following is a preview of a section of the Coalition's upcoming report (fall 2009 release) *Financing Community Schools: Blending Resources to Fuel a System*.

Appendix

Federal Funding Opportunities for Community Schools

Title I, U.S Department of Education

Community schools operate on principles that are consistent with the provisions of Title I legislation in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

- ❖ **Alignment:** Community schools align school and community resources to attain specific results related to the academic, social, emotional, and civic development of children and youth and the involvement of their families.
- ❖ **Coordination:** Community schools create mechanisms to coordinate programs and services operated by school personnel and external partners in order to use resources most efficiently and effectively.

- ❖ **Leverage:** Community schools leverage public and private resources as well as the assets and expertise of volunteers from business, civic groups, faith-based institutions and other organizations.

Catalyst for Change

Title I dollars and other funding streams work together in concert to help all children, including our most at risk, succeed. Title I funds used as a catalyst for change and school improvement pay for portions of district and school staff salary, after-school and summer programs, social work services, parent coordinators, and more. Using Title I funds to support the community school approach allows the school to coordinate efforts with community partners to address the social, emotional, and academic needs of the whole child.

Support for Community Planning

Title I may be used to conduct a community-wide assessment to identify the major factors (both academic and non-academic) in schools and in the community surrounding the school that significantly affect student achievement, including an inventory of the resources in the community and the schools that could be aligned and coordinated to address these challenges. These funds may also be used to develop a plan to integrate school and community resources, within a coordinated system, to meet student and family needs. The assessment process should inform a subsequent planning process to engage an array of stakeholders, including parents and caregivers, local government, community-based organizations, higher education institutions, faith-based institutions, businesses, students, and others.

LEAs are encouraged to deploy Title I funds through partnerships with other groups in the community that have planning, collaborative, and needs-assessment expertise to complement the schools, e.g., United Ways, local government, institutions of higher education, community foundations, and community-based organizations.

Support for School-level Planning

LEAs may use Title I funds to conduct similar planning efforts at the school site as those described above under community planning.

Integration of Funding Streams and Provision of Comprehensive Services

Title I funds may be used maximize resources by coordinating and integrating Title I services with other programs funded under ESEA and services funded by other public or private funding sources. Funds may be used to hire school-based coordinators, who may be employed by community providers under sub-grants from the LEA, to mobilize community assets *and* integrate school and community services that will meet students' comprehensive needs, improve school climate, and strengthen student achievement. School-based coordinators recruit, organize, and make available comprehensive services to students and their families, including extended learning opportunities, community-based learning opportunities, health, nutrition, and other social services, as well as provide opportunities for family engagement in leadership and volunteering. Community providers may include community-based organizations, local government, institutions of higher education and other public and private agencies.

Professional Development for Family and Community Engagement

Title I funds may be used for professional development targeted directly toward building the capacity of school personnel including principals, teachers, volunteers, and other pupil support staff to effectively work with families, the community, and service providers. LEAs may use Title I funds to allow staff of community providers working in partnership with the schools to provide professional development, or to engage an array of professional development providers including community-based organizations with a track record of effectively engaging young people in addressing community issues and parents in the education of their children and of building strong partnerships between schools and the community.

Student Engagement

Title I funds may be used to support the curriculum design and implementation as well as professional development related to curriculum that connects students to real world issues and community problems, while addressing the challenge of student disengagement from learning. Allowable uses include high quality and results-based service learning, place-based education, civic learning, work-based learning, environmental education, experiential learning, and related strategies that are consistent with state standards. These learning experiences may be provided to students through sub-grants to community-based organizations that work in partnership with LEAs.

Family Involvement

Title I funds may be used to involve families in their children's education. This includes activities and events such as home visiting, family nights, parent and family outreach and education, parent leadership development, coordinated parent-volunteer programs and other strategies that support and develop the capacity of parents to support their children's education. LEAs may use Title I funds to enter into sub-grants with community-based service providers who have demonstrated expertise to involve parents in their children's education.

Other Uses

Title I funds may be used for sub-grants to partner with organizations to provide other services that have demonstrable impact on student achievement including: extended learning opportunities (after school, weekend and summer); provision of health, mental health and social services; violence prevention; and others that have demonstrated the ability to create the conditions for learning and improve student achievement.

Other Federal Funds that Support Community Schools

Title VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act supports the coordination of the education of homeless children and youth in each state and the gathering of data and barriers they must overcome to attend school. This funding is meant to ensure that homeless children, including those preschool-aged, receive services. States are required to have a plan for addressing problems associated with the enrollment, attendance, and success of homeless children and youth. With their holistic approach to education, community schools better serve children because they seek to address and remedy the causes of chronic absenteeism by working with parents and children early,

linking them to social services before more serious problems, such as homelessness escalate.

Student Financial Assistance – Work-Study funding provides college students funds to work in schools. Some community schools have developed a partnership with local universities who use work-study funds as part of the partnership.

State Stabilization Funds are discretionary dollars for the State Incentive Grant program which awards bonus grants to states for meeting key education reform measures. The grants are awarded to states that have made significant progress in any of the following areas: achieving equity in distribution of highly-qualified teachers; establishing longitudinal data systems; enhancing assessments for children with disabilities or those who are English language learners; and/or supporting struggling schools ensuring low-performing schools in corrective-action stage are in compliance.

Innovation Funds provide funding for LEAs or a partnership between a nonprofit organization and one or more LEA, or a consortium of schools that have made significant progress in closing the achievement gap. This includes schools or programs with a record of accomplishment of boosting achievement. Community schools that have kept clear records of academic achievement gains, attendance, and other results are in a good position to reach for these funds. These funding awards allow eligible entities to expand their work and serve as models for best practices; to work in partnership with the private sector and the philanthropic community; and to identify and document best practices that can be shared and taken to scale based on demonstrated success. Community schools have shown that they significantly closing the achievement gaps between groups of students; make significant improvement in other areas such as graduation rates, and demonstrate an established partnership with the private sector.

School Improvement Funds will go to Governors for public safety or other government services to include education services and/or higher education modernization, renovation and repair. For community schools working with university-based partnerships, this may be a venue to explore. This is funding that will go towards construction of buildings that could be designed to serve as parent education centers or community school sites.

Department of Health and Human Services

Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) goes to states to be used to supplement state funding spent on child care assistance. Through the CCDBG, low-income parents receive vouchers or other reimbursement for childcare costs to enable them to work or participate in education or training activities. Funding is reserved for activities designed to provide comprehensive consumer education to parents and the public, increase parental choice, and improve quality and availability of child care such as resource and referral services. Grants can provide for after school and before school programs.

Health Resources and Services Administration Funds are provided for community health centers to be used to support new sites and service areas, to increase services at existing sites. Grants for new sites and service areas are to be two years in length as startup is phased in. About 30% of school-based health centers receive funding through

Community Health Centers so there is potential for expansion with these new funds would seem to be eligible and should seek funding.

School-based Healthcare Centers (SBHC) are defined in the SCHIP (State Children's Health Insurance Program) reauthorization. The language empowers SBHCs to seek provider status in their states' SCHIP programs and to argue for reimbursement by SCHIP managed care plans. In states where the SCHIP program is part of the Medicaid program, it should be helpful in getting Medicaid provider status. The language validates SBHCs as SCHIP providers and should ease the way for establishment of federal laws and regulations to ensure that SBHCs are reimbursed by government programs.

Head Start and Early Head Start. Congress allocated funding for Head Start (\$1B) and Early Head Start (\$1.1B) for competitive grants that provide comprehensive development services for low-income preschool children, infants and toddlers. This will expand early education opportunities for additional children and create early education jobs. Public-private partnerships have an advantage in serving families at a time when both innovation and speed are essential. Existing early childhood programs in states should link up with community schools to provide a seamless continuation of services and supports for healthy development and academic achievement in school.

Community Services Block Grant will flow from state to local or regional Community Action Agencies (CAA or CAP) serving low-income families. Partnerships with CAP agencies can help support community schools. CSBG funding for CAPs is flexible and subject to a public input. These funds may be used for reduction of poverty, revitalization of low-income communities, and empowerment of low-income families and individuals in rural and urban areas. CAPs are to focus assistance on activities geared towards "the preservation and creation of jobs to promote economic recovery and the provision of assistance to those most impacted by the recession."

Public Health Service Act to carry out evidence-based clinical and community-based prevention and wellness strategies authorized by the Public Health Services Act.

Corporation for National & Community Service

Some community schools have utilized college-age students as coordinators and coordinator assistants. VISTA and AmeriCorps volunteers can coordinate community school activities and partnerships with community agencies. Senior Corps and Experience Corps can also provide skilled volunteer assistance.

Department of Agriculture

Community schools thrive in rural areas too. Congress is allocating loans and grants for rural community facilities through the Rural Community Facilities Program Account including hospitals, health clinics, health and safety vehicles and equipment, public buildings, and child and elder care facilities. Child and elder care centers could be build next to schools or included in a community school partnership.

Department of Justice

Byrne Competitive Grants are competitive grants to state, local and tribal government, and to national, regional, and local non-profit organizations go to prevent crime, improve the administration of justice, provide services to victims of crime, support critical nurturing and mentoring of at-risk children and youth. These grants serve the same

students that may be attending community schools and would see greater leverage and efficiency if they were used in conjunction with other similar programs serving at-risk children and youth. Programs can stretch their dollars by using the same buildings or sharing transportation costs such as a van, bus, or staff.

Bureau of Indian Affairs

The tribal community is an often overlooked but natural environment for a community school. Funding for school improvement is available for BIA schools who might consider looking at the community school model as it suits tribal culture and the needs of tribal children, youth, and families. Funding from the stimulus plan provides facility improvement and repair, restoration of roads, school replacement, school improvement and repair, and detention center maintenance and repair.