BIPARTISAN BILL INTRODUCED TO EXPAND COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

WASHINGTON, D.C.-The Coalition for Community Schools and its nearly 200 partners applaud the leadership of House Minority Whip Steny Hoyer (D-MD) and Rep. Aaron Schock (R-IL) for their bipartisan introduction of the Full Service Community Schools Act in the House this week.

Mr. Hoyer has been a longstanding champion for community schools, having introduced this bill in every Congressional session since 2005. Mr. Schock has seen first-hand the positive impact of the three full-service community schools in his district in Peoria, IL. We are grateful for the leadership of Mr. Hoyer and Mr. Schock for a bill that would replicate the success of community schools nationwide.

"We are thrilled at the leadership of Mr. Hoyer and Mr. Schock to introduce this bill together, as they recognize the success of community schools in their districts," said Martin Blank, President of the Institute for Educational Leadership and Director of the Coalition for Community Schools. "This bipartisan effort reflects the collaborative nature of community schools to bring all kinds of community stakeholders together to make the school the hub of the community and help young people succeed. This bill also adds to a national momentum toward community schools that brought over 1,500 people to our 2014 forum in Cincinnati, saw the number of places operating community schools triple in the past seven years, and saw states like New Mexico, Connecticut, Tennessee and New York passing legislation or approving funding to explicitly support community schools. We are thankful for the federal support and leadership to elevate and accelerate this work."

The bill authorizes funding for full-service community schools, which are public elementary or secondary schools that coordinate multiple federal, state and/or local educational and social service programs and opportunities with community-based organizations and public/private partnerships. Community schools can be found in nearly 100 places across the country, from Oakland, CA and Cincinnati, OH to Lincoln, NE and Albuquerque, NM. If authorized, this bill would increase the number of places implementing community schools across the country, and enlist communities as key partners for student success.

###

About the Coalition for Community Schools
The Coalition for Community Schools, housed at the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL), is an alliance of national, state and local organizations in education K−16, youth development, community planning and development, higher education, family support, health and human services, government, and philanthropy as well as national, state, and local community school networks. The Coalition advocates for community schools as a strategy to leverage local resources and programs, changing the look and feel of the traditional school structure to best meet the needs of children and families in the 21st century.

About the Institute for Educational Leadership
For a half-century, the Institute for Educational Leadership has championed the need for leaders at all levels to shake off their institutional constraints and work across boundaries to address the needs of young people and their families. Bound by no constituency, IEL serves as a catalyst that helps policymakers, administrators, and practitioners at all levels to bridge bureaucratic silos and undo gridlock to improve outcomes for all young people and their families. The work of IEL focuses on three pillars required for young people and their communities to succeed: Involving the broader community with public education to support the learning and development of young people; building more effective pathways into the workforce for all young people and supporting the transition to adulthood; and preparing generations of leaders with the know-how to drive collaborative efforts at all levels.