



Coalition for Community Schools Recommendations for the Biden-Harris Transition Team

We are pleased to offer below our recommendations for the Biden-Harris Transition Team. Our recommendations are organized in two parts: those we recommend for the first 100 days, and those beyond the first 100 days. We are excited to work with the Biden-Harris Administration to enact, fund, and implement our common goals to ensure that all young people have the supports and opportunities to learn and thrive.

For more information/to connect further, please email Jose Munoz, Director, Coalition for Community Schools at munozj@iel.org and Mary Kingston Roche, IEL Director of Policy, at rochem@iel.org.

About the Coalition

The [Coalition for Community Schools](#), housed at the [Institute for 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 community school networks. The Coalition promotes community schools as an equity-driven, researched based strategy to ensure that all young people have the supports and opportunities to learn and thrive.

Coalition Recommendations

The First 100 Days

- **Prioritize community schools as an evidence-based strategy for recovery and improvement in the next COVID emergency relief bill.** Throughout the pandemic, individual community schools and systems of community schools were able to mobilize quickly and effectively to support the social, emotional, physical, and learning needs of students and their families.

Community schools are [demonstrating](#) how their strong relationships, relational trust, agility, and coordination are helping schools and their communities better respond to and recover from the pandemic. Further, the strategy is effective whether students are actually going to school in-person or are learning remotely (or in a hybrid approach), since the relationships, trust, and coordination enable community schools to operate effectively regardless of whether these activities are occurring on the school site or not.

- **Incorporate in the next COVID relief bill funding for community schools for high-poverty schools (e.g. schoolwide Title I/schools with concentrated poverty). Reserve 5% of this funding for technical assistance to be administered by organizations with expertise in community schools.**
- **Reference community schools as a recommended strategy/allowable use of funds for schools, including through state fiscal stabilization funds and Governors' discretionary funds.**
- **Appoint a Secretary of Education who commits to expanding community schools and who will elevate the roles and voices of family and community in education.**



- **Establish a White House Office of Children and Youth to elevate the needs of children, youth and their families.** The Coalition signed on in support of a forthcoming letter from hundreds of organizations echoing this request. As is stated in the letter, “The Office would liaise with the President, Vice President, Cabinet Secretaries and Congress to ensure that addressing the unique needs of children is a regular consideration in policy decisions. It would also develop and advance a National Children’s Strategy and all-of-government Children’s Budget that would set forth an aspirational yet achievable vision, including the related outcomes goals and metrics, to make measurable progress toward rebuilding systems for children.” This Office would also work to align and integrate relevant federal funding, programs, and strategies across agencies that impact children’s well-being.
- **Provide federal guidance on how to align and integrate federal funding to implement and expand community schools.** This guidance should prioritize funding at the school site for a full-time coordinator and for programming responsive to a needs assessment, as well as funding to develop the collaborative leadership structures at the school and district/system levels.
- **Create two positions within the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE) to advance community schools: a Deputy Assistant Secretary for Family and Community Partnership and an Advisor to the Deputy Assistant Secretary.** The Deputy Assistant secretary will ensure that the roles of family and community are included in policies and practices promoted and implemented by OESE; and the advisor will have expertise in community schools.

Beyond the First 100 Days

- **Push for the enactment of The Full-Service Community Schools Expansion Act of 2020 (S 4865).** The Coalition for Community Schools, including key partners, worked with the Senate sponsors (Brown, Van Hollen and Gillibrand) to draft this legislation, which was introduced in October 2020. The bill reflects the current research and best practices of community schools as informed by community school practitioners and sets the appropriation at \$500 million per year over 5 years.
- **Repurpose the OESE Office of Innovation to prioritize community-designed, whole-child initiatives including the Full-Service Community Schools program and the Promise Neighborhoods program.** This redesign of the Office will elevate programs and strategies-including community schools-that practice the cross-sector, collaborative leadership needed for 21st century schools.
- **Create flexibility in blending and braiding federal funding for children and youth across relevant federal agencies** through waivers and/or pilot programs, like the previous Performance Partnership Pilots initiative. This could be piloted and prioritized through current and future federal Full-Service Community School grantees.
- **Collect and share information on Community Schools** as part of federal fiscal transparency mandates and in NCES regular collections; and establish the coordinator position as an official position listed in the Bureau of Labor Statistics.
- **Increase funding for the Full-Service Community Schools program to ensure schools with the most under-resourced populations (i.e. schoolwide Title I schools, schools with concentrated poverty) can create the conditions for all students to learn and successfully pursue their postsecondary goals.**