

BLACK HISTORY MONTH



Challenges and Opportunities

ALTHOUGH THE PUBLIC engagement efforts studied in this inquiry vary widely in their implementation and scope, they face a number of common challenges and opportunities. This research suggests a number of lessons that can influence the effectiveness and potential of public engagement and that will require a concerted response if the work of schools and communities is to mature into a long-term strategy for school improvement.

1. Most engagement efforts work in isolation.

While a handful of regional and national networks of engagement efforts exist, most people working in engagement know little about their counterparts, whether across the country or across town. Some national networks, such as the Public Education Network, do serve to connect individual local efforts, and some individual statewide efforts are connected and support one another through organizations such as the National Business Roundtable or the Columbia Group.

Yet, the majority of engagement efforts involve people who are working locally to build connections between their individual schools and communities. They do not think of themselves as part of any national effort, and very often do not know of similar efforts

in their own communities. In addition, they are blazing their own trails and creating their own knowledge. Very few materials, resources, successful strategies, or listing of models are available to support them; and what is available is often not known to them.

2. Few engagement efforts have gone to “scale,” as traditionally defined.

Many wonder how public engagement can expand or “go to scale.” Taking initiatives to scale usually requires one of two approaches – the replication of a particular model in a variety of places, or the vast expansion of efforts within one jurisdiction. Because the nature of engagement is uniquely local, it does not fit neatly into these traditional definitions of scale. Engagement efforts are difficult to expand to ever-larger geographic regions, just as they are difficult to disseminate from the top down or to replicate by fiat.

Given the great diversity in people and circumstances, leadership, school quality, and issues within a community or district, it is unlikely that all schools, parents, and the public would be engaged at the same time at the same levels. “Going to scale” in public engagement might, instead, be viewed as the increasing prevalence of locally grounded support for schools and school change, each

effort acting in its own way. Support for scale may not be locally available but rather come from national or regional networks or information resources accessed by local initiatives, which use information and models to strengthen their own work.

3. "Process" outcomes are powerful but hard to measure.

Public engagement may seek very specific ends such as the adoption of a set of standards or the passage of a bond issue – but much of the benefit of engagement lies in how those ends are achieved. The process of bringing people together, talking, listening, developing a shared vision, and creating a plan of action has value in and of itself. It brings new people into conversation and decision making around schools. It builds trust and goodwill. It expands the capacity of the community to undertake effective problem solving and to bring additional resources to bear.

The increased social capital or civic capacity that results is often difficult to measure – which can lead at times to difficulties in

attracting either media coverage or sustained funding to engagement initiatives – but is surely one of engagement's most important outcomes.

4. Community-driven efforts are more readily apparent, but education leaders are driving some significant efforts.

More than two-thirds of the projects identified in this project were started either by parents or community members who felt impelled to "do something" to help their schools. The other one-third of the initiatives had their impetus inside the schools. At this early stage in mapping public engagement, it is difficult to determine the specific percentage of efforts nationwide that actually derive their energy from "outside" or "inside."

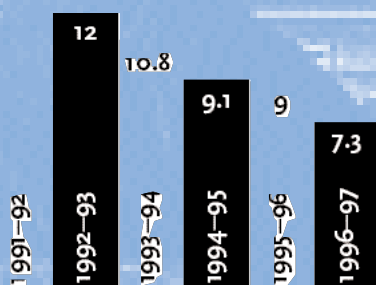
School-driven efforts are often motivated and enlightened by a visionary leader who sees the broader engagement of parents and the community as a means to sustain reform efforts that have impacted school personnel. Efforts driven by educational leaders have brought about substantial achievements –

technology

The ratio of students per computer has improved

19.2

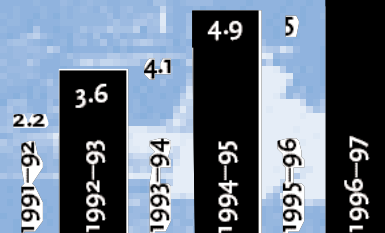
Students per computer



Source: USA Today, December 17, 1997

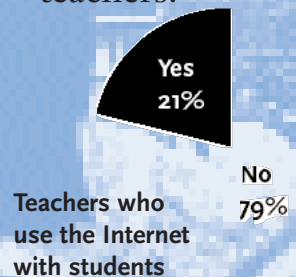
The number of computers in school has grown

Number of computers in millions



Source: USA Today, December 17, 1997

More Internet access and connections would make it a better teaching and learning tool, according to over 40% of K-6 teachers.



Teachers who use the Internet with students

Source: USA Today, January 20, 1998

from building community trust and involvement to increasing the ability to implement new standards or other practices. These achievements provide reason to believe that increasing the *desire* and *capacity* of schools to engage communities may be one of the most promising strategies for long-lasting reform.

5. Teachers are not yet a significant force in public engagement.

While school and district administrators are initiating and supporting engagement initiatives, few efforts are driven by or involve teachers or their local unions – and for legitimate reasons. Public or community relations has often been seen as the purview of administration. Direct teacher contact with parents and/or the community has largely been confined to parent-teacher conferences or major public events. Involving, engaging, and listening reflectively to parents and community members is rarely part of the job description for teachers, who are often consumed with the day-to-day challenges of teaching. It is a

rare principal or superintendent who knows how to encourage or model these behaviors or how to find the time in the school day for teachers to participate in the community. New mandates, methodologies, strategies, and tests require even greater teacher attention toward classroom performance and student achievement.

Yet the lack of teacher involvement in the majority of efforts studied is cause for concern. Educators must play as vital a role as parents in bringing school and community together to improve student achievement and must be an integral part of any engagement effort. Teachers are also a critical conduit of information about schools to parents and the broader community. Polls indicate that parents and the public believe teachers have a central role to play in both school reform and community revitalization.

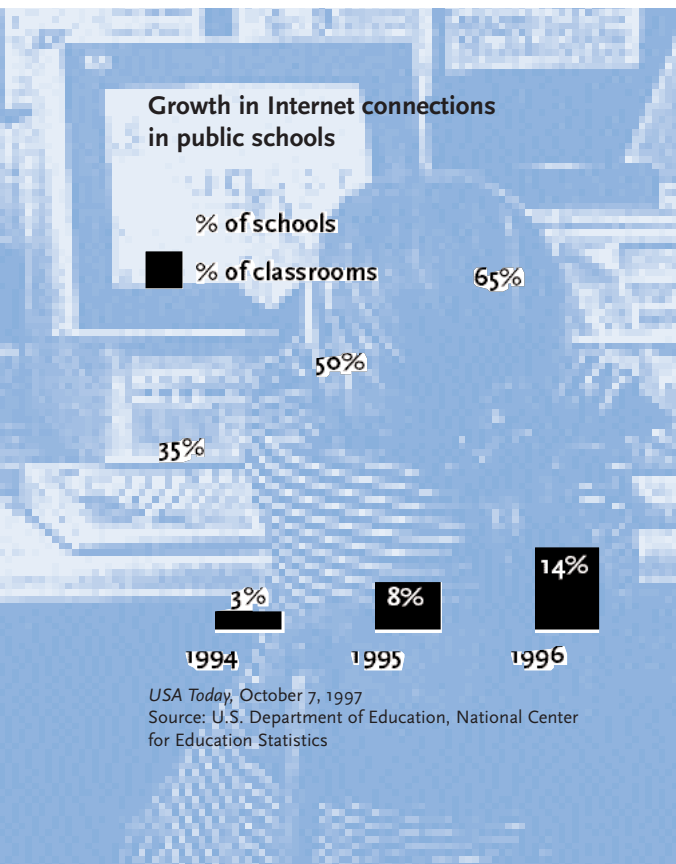
6. The potential of students is largely untapped.

This research uncovered few efforts that involve or create leadership roles for students in public engagement. Those few that do – including a statewide program in Maine; Plainfield and Paterson, New Jersey; Howard and Pollock, South Dakota; and Pattonville, Missouri – have unleashed significant energy for change, encouraged young people to remain citizens of their home communities and states, and increased young people’s interest and understanding of the connection between school and community.

In addition, service and service-learning projects have demonstrated that linking students to work in the community can both address local needs and bolster students’ learning. Finding mechanisms through which students can focus this kind of service on improving their own schools will certainly deepen public engagement efforts in the future.

7. The use of technology to support engagement is growing but is not yet widespread.

While the use of Internet and other communications technologies to build action networks and support community problem solving is more and more common, relatively little emphasis on technology was found in



the education projects reviewed for this study. Since a growing number of schools and school systems are now connected to the Internet, and more and more communities have local-access networks (many with public-access features), there is considerable room

Public engagement is ... the recognition that education is a communitywide effort. You just can't turn to the schools and say, "You take care of it."

DON VANMETER
Ohio's BEST

in the future to use the World Wide Web and other new media to support school-community connections. Some national actors with interests in both education and technology – such as the George Lucas Educational Foundation, the Benton Foundation, the Annenberg/CPB project, and the IBM Foundation through its “Wired for Learning” initiative – are playing a strong role in advancing knowledge and interest here.

8. The work of engagement is difficult to do and to sustain.

Reaching, involving, and continually responding to diverse constituencies is hard work. Establishing those connections will take time and commitment, difficult commodities in a society where the pace of change has increased the expectation that complex problems can be solved quickly. This work can also be intimidating, especially for those who have not felt welcome in schools or do not have a background of action in citizen causes. There is no roadmap of clear and predictable tasks. And for many people, it is either “volunteer” work or a responsibility that comes on top of the heavy burdens of full-time jobs and family commitments.

9. Engagement challenges the traditional notion of power.

A deeply challenging issue for those seeking to support engagement strategies centers on power. Engagement, at its core, is a radical concept, involving a profound shift in the locus of responsibility for schools and

schooling. The public, which had largely delegated control of education to school professionals, is now seeking to share some of that responsibility and power. Since the issues of responsibility, power, and control in public education move rapidly into issues of race, class, culture, identity, and the welfare of our children, the challenge to engagement becomes even bigger and more complex.

Sharing control over schools involves not just listening to diverse needs but demonstrating that they were heard. To involve parents and citizens in the work of schools is to make them partners in decision making. To truly listen to students is to be influenced by what they say and take steps to ensure that they see the relevance of reform efforts. To make diverse constituencies partners in school improvement is to say that the outcome of that process will be something that the partners can support and agree on. This may be a very different outcome from “what the professional educators want.”

10. Engagement is often born from crisis.

Engagement has often been seen as a strategy of last resort, a response to a crisis situation. Usually it is the kind of crisis – the failure of a bond issue, a contentious school board election, low achievement scores published in the newspaper, a sudden exodus to private schools, the rejection of a reform initiative – in which the alternative to engagement is even more threatening than the engagement itself. Occasionally, the vision of a single leader in a position of authority – a superintendent, a community leader, a respected parent – who sees both the problems of the schools and the possibilities of inclusion and shared responsibility rescues a school or district from crisis.

But, where schools and communities *fail* to confront such crises together, there is the danger that public education can be seriously undermined. Where that is the case, more of the following can be expected:

- lack of public support for bond issues and school budget increases;

- increasing controversy over school board elections, superintendent searches, and reform efforts;
- increasing flight from traditional public schools, or increasing government mandates to restructure them;
- more divisiveness and confrontation around issues of race, class, culture and equity.

The findings from this inquiry indicate that it is possible to build a constituency for collaborative change and improvement in schools, both inside schools and in the outside community, that can tackle the process of change together. It is not easy work, by any means; but the study suggests that educators and community leaders alike could use engagement as an effective front-end strategy, employed from a position of strength, not from weakness or crisis. If, indeed, engagement is to be treated as a serious strategy to push school reform, there are some support needs and opportunities for leadership that will be essential for success. These are explored in the next chapter.



Leveraging the Power of Engagement

OVER THE EIGHTEEN MONTHS of this study, the research team identified four “beacons” that signal the existence of a fully engaged community.

- The expectation between school and community of mutual accountability for school performance and for the education of all children.
- The readily perceived existence of a culture of trust, inclusiveness, and collaborative problem solving in education and schooling.
- A continuously expanding capacity for improvement of teaching and learning.
- The perception of public schools as “democracy at work.”

Taken together, these constitute a very tall order for most schools and communities. Few initiatives or communities in the nation have succeeded in fully engaging one another. But those practicing engagement speak with passion about reaching that point where, in fact, a culture of engagement has been created that is sustainable over time.

For many of these initiatives, time is what it will take for the processes of engagement to create the culture they seek. This is not work that can happen overnight. The majority of the public engagement initiatives

identified in this report are no more than two years old. Several are between two and five years old, and only a few are mature efforts with more than five years of experience at their work. An analysis of these many efforts would indicate that there is, in fact, a discernible, three-stage developmental process for public engagement initiatives, through which most engagement efforts pass (see “The Cycle of Public Engagement,” pages 54–55).

Whatever stage these particular initiatives are in, what would have to happen if the country were, indeed, to treat engagement as a serious strategy for school reform? Based on the findings from chapter 3, there are five common support needs and resources to be developed for the future of this work.

1. Breaking New Ground in Leadership and Leadership Development

Those doing the work of engagement are virtually unanimous in this conclusion: Engagement initiatives, whether they are initiated in the school or the community, require a new breed of leader and a new kind of leadership. Many leaders spoke of their work in public engagement as demanding new levels of skill in listening, coaching, mentoring, encouraging, and supporting inclusion; forging con-

The Cycle of Engagement

There are three recognizable phases in the “life cycle” of engagement activities. Each cycle presents specific challenges – in leadership, inclusion, infrastructure, resources and evaluation. A continuing “circle of renewal” leads from conversation to action and evaluation. Many of the efforts studied went through these phases repeatedly, but rarely in a predictable or linear model. A deliberate “coming together” around issues critical to public education is the only way in which schools and communities can plan and act for positive education change.

Coming Together

Informal, often like-minded groups establish the need for some kind of change around children and schools, as well as a commitment to work with others to effect that change. Conversation and dialogue are critical to build trust and develop a “common ground” where people can meet, talk, listen, discuss, and develop a common understanding of key issues. If trust doesn't exist in this phase, it may be difficult – if not impossible – to build later on.

Challenges

Leadership: Often diffuse and highly participatory; important in order to build the trust necessary for action. Group support important for those “leaders” willing to step forward as spokespersons.

Information: Initial enthusiasm for change often hampered by access to accurate information. Good information is key to assessing the reality of the problem, and the potential for action.

Media: Coverage requires careful management. “Coming together” may be controversial, and the media may miss the reasons for concern. Coverage could widen the circle of participation and awareness.

Rush to action: Moving too quickly to action before common ground has been built can derail efforts. Commitment and information are essential for action.

Sustaining the Momentum

To ensure that engagement initiatives can be sustained over time, groups tend to institutionalize or formalize their work. They move from informal, “under-the-radar” networks to “on the screen” community/education change efforts. Initiatives that are outside-in (from parents and community to schools) are often brought inside schools; those that have started inside schools may now move out into the community. Many become 501c3 or 4 organizations. There is a significant increase in complexity and in multi-group collaboration and partnerships.

Challenges

Culture of engagement: Capacity developed over time used to address range of issues and problems on a regular basis. In addressing new challenges, mature groups demonstrate a predictable, renewable pattern of talk, plan, act that becomes a culture. Achievement *and* failure strengthen that culture.

Media: Collaboration with media and strong communication patterns advance positions, increase community awareness. Media may seek out organization for news or to verify accuracy of information, which confirms ongoing work.

Mature leadership:

Leaders become mentors, administrators, implementers, strategic planners, developers; experience builds keen political senses. Frequent interactions with school, civic, elected officials; visible presence in the media. Confident leadership nurtures new volunteers.

Stability: Growing too big too soon may “dull” the focus of work, stretch the resources of the organization. Planning/selecting targets provides maximum impact and sustainability. If the work of the group becomes part of the status quo, then it is questionable how long it can survive.

Moving Forward

Engagement efforts move into action as consensus-driven strategic plans are developed, and new relationships are built with other groups and people. This phase requires more resources – human and financial – and new skills, knowledge and capacity on the part of leaders and participants (i.e. public speaking skills, school or governmental policies, data analysis). The ability to act is strengthened by continuing conversations that are complemented and validated by initial actions. As efforts become more intentional, some groups grapple with formalizing organizational structure.

Challenges

Media: Increasing media attention requires a focused plan of action. Communicating effectively with the media will build long term relationships.

Information: Increasing flow of information between schools and stakeholders. Value of informed public recognized by schools and citizens.

Unpredictability: Changing conditions and issues can impact the base of support; good balance between deliberation and action needed. Managing ambiguity requires patience, resourcefulness, greater levels of understanding.

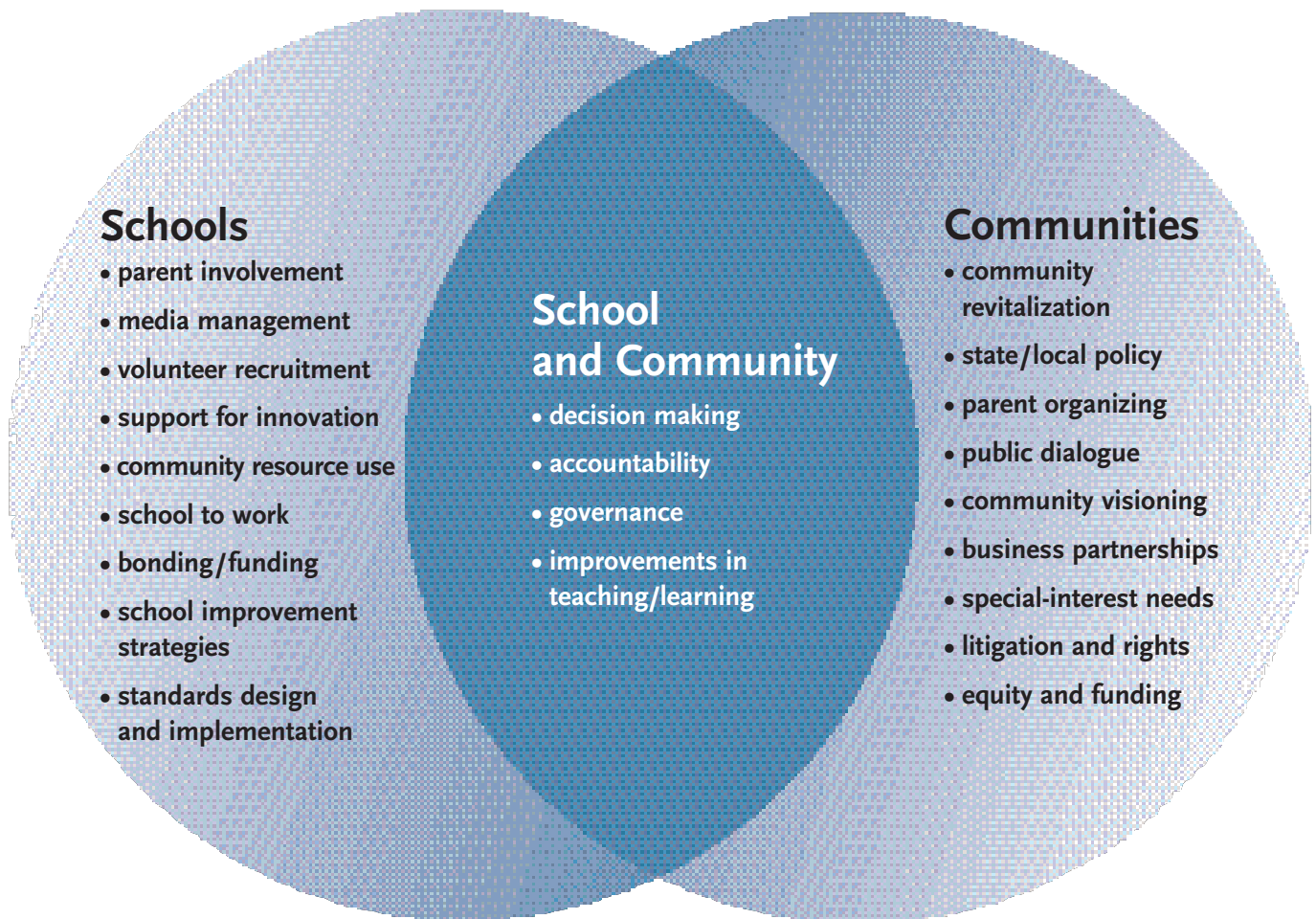
Identifying new leaders:

“Leadership” can often shift among several people; strong need for integrators, facilitators, active listeners, articulate spokespeople who can communicate the organization's message.

Building greater inclusiveness:

Moving forward means recognizing/including new stakeholders, bridging complex ideological, group, class, race, and ethnic lines, diffusing proprietary attitudes among “original” members. Greater inclusiveness ultimately leads to greater long-term strength.

The Intersections for Engagement



sensus; and surfacing possibilities for action. Most suggested that while these new “civic leadership” skills were needed across the board, the needs were particularly acute on the school side, where there is little practical or effective training or preparation for principals, teachers, or superintendents that prepares them to do this work.

2. Providing Support for Resource Development

Financial resources, while important, may not represent the most critical resource need. Those doing the work of engagement – passionate, committed, and driven toward a vision of expanded participation and change – are by and large creating their own knowledge.

They are eager to share and learn from colleagues but often do not know where to find those colleagues. While there are exceptions among the very well known (most typically statewide) engagement initiatives, from one community to another – and sometimes within a single community – people who are doing similar work are not aware of each other. Within the context of education change, there is no book or curriculum on engagement. There are few conferences; there is no web site for on-line resources. Materials do exist more broadly for community revitalization and civic engagement, but many of them are not considered applicable to those working in education.

3. Supporting Infrastructure Development

Engagement's practitioners face real challenges of institutionalizing their efforts. Some of these initiatives are self-standing organizations or projects. More often they represent the mindset of someone who has another job – a principal trying to change the conversation about school in the neighborhood, a parent-organization leader who wants to make a difference for children, a civic leader asked to chair or convene a conversation about schools and schooling, a superintendent looking for support for a bond referendum or a standards initiative, a director of policy or legislation who can't see how to build needed support without a different approach to constituency. There are few directors of engagement on organization charts, few strategic plans to achieve engagement objectives, few multiyear budgets for engagement initiatives. Thus, engagement efforts can be transitory, organizationally transparent, vulnerable to insufficient funding, or funded by informal reallocations of dollars. Many practitioners would say that lack of formality is what gives initiatives their energy, flexibility, and impact – but at the same time concede the need to provide for long-term sustainability.

4. Increasing Visibility and Credibility

Engagement to support school change has captured the attention of a large number of people and projects across the country in the past few years. But it remains an approach that means many things to many people. And most of its initiatives are too new to have achieved long-term results – including rising test scores. Initiated by parents, community groups, collaborative superintendents, or visionary school boards, engagement has come upon the country from outside the mainstream of foundation- and tax-supported school change initiatives, and from outside the purview of most of the professional experts who have both guided and focused attention on school reform. Like some of the other process-oriented strategies for change to which it is related – community visioning, collaborative problem solving, network

building, community mediation – its early outcomes are “soft” (like “trust”) and thus easier to feel as a participant than to describe and document to outsiders.

5. Developing Measures and Documenting Demonstrable Outcomes

Ultimately, the work of engagement is aimed at improving teaching and learning. But those outcomes are not often achieved quickly, and certainly they are not the first indicators of success in engagement work. Conversations with those most involved in engagement work at the community level suggest that the more likely measures of early success are things like increased attendance at parent meetings, greater parent volunteerism in schools, stronger parent support for teacher in-service days, higher levels of energy among a school district's administrative team, and more positive conversation about education at Rotary Club meetings. More generally, these higher perceived levels of trust, hope, and interest may lead to greater success in developing and sustaining plans for reform or passing a bond issue.

To date, very little work has been done to validate such measures or link them to subsequent outcomes in student achievement. Measures of the outcomes of engagement are needed. Such measures will help individual initiatives evaluate and credential themselves so that they can more effectively build a record of success and accomplishment.

It is essential to meet these common resource and support needs if, in fact, the beacons that signal the existence of a fully engaged community are to be seen with greater frequency. For this to happen, many more Americans will have to step forward and answer the call to action.



A Role for Every American

TEN YEARS AGO, the notion of public engagement as a response to the problems of public schools was not on the map. But as this report shows, in a growing number of communities, parents and the public have moved into partnerships with educators where all are serious players in the improvement of schools. For them, public engagement has already become an important new approach to school reform. For others, this approach offers new hope for making a difference in school performance and student achievement.

Clearly, there is new and compelling work for everyone – individuals and organizations, local and national. There is a greater need for more educators, parents, and citizens to get involved, more opportunities and initiatives where schools and communities can work together. If the isolated work in local communities that exists today is going to accelerate into a nationwide movement, thousands of organizations and millions of individuals will have to act, in many, many different *local* efforts to forge strong bonds between schools and communities.

Individuals – teachers, parents, grandparents, neighbors, small business owners, and many, many others – will have to assume

a responsibility for what is happening in their schools and for what is happening with children in their communities. Institutions too – local government, small businesses, and civic organizations – have a responsibility to participate in building the strong schools that are the foundation of a healthy community. There’s a role to play for everyone.

Public engagement *must* grow; the future viability of public schools in many communities hangs in the balance. No one should assume that this process is the silver bullet that will automatically make better schools; but it is doubtful that a strong public education system can be maintained without it.

Increasing the incidence of public engagement efforts will require bold new leadership and action by everyone. Even though this work at its roots is very much about local connections, national organizations must also play a leadership role. They must understand what the process brings to public education and make this movement of paramount importance to their constituents.

Leaders at all levels will need to step forward to support public engagement.

Parents have a critical and central role to play in the future of public engagement. They are the members of the broader public with the

most immediate stake in public schools. In addition to paying closer attention to their own child's experience in school, parents can think and act in ways that benefit all children. Importantly, they should be willing to step up and speak out when invited by school officials to participate in planning or decision

Public engagement is ... broad-based, inclusive, informed, parental involvement in the central decision-making life of the school at the school level, where the parents are organized to create an environment of accountability in shaping the vision and mission of the school.

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making. In places where they are not invited, parents can summon the courage to advocate for what they believe to be right, stay with their concerns until they are acted on, and participate, where possible, in implementing solutions.

National foundations can play a key role in using their resources to help build partnerships between schools and community that lead to both school improvement and stronger communities. Foundations can also find ways to support

leadership-development training or programs, print and electronic resources that might guide new and experienced practitioners, and conferences and other meetings that allow the people involved with this work to learn from one another. They might also provide funds to evaluate the work of engagement more closely and enable the field to develop indicators that all initiatives might use to gauge their success.

The media can be conscientious about its role in facilitating a broad public conversation about education and education change. It can play a pivotal role. In places where “public journalism” has taken hold, the media is already using its power and reach to renew the conversation about education change. The media should continue to report the

challenges facing schools but might also find ways in which its coverage can be a catalyst in building the school and community partnerships necessary to meet those challenges.

For example, the media can cover the meetings and conversations that are central to any public engagement effort not simply as a clash of competing ideas, but as a part of an ongoing public discussion. For many in the media, heated conflict is the crux of a compelling story. As any public engagement practitioner knows, some level of conflict is endemic to this work, but the real story of public engagement – and the story the media must strive to cover – is how conflict is resolved in a civil and productive way.

Schools of education can help both future and career teachers and administrators understand the vital role of parents and the public in their schools. These schools can be instrumental in developing courses for educators that build their leadership skills and help them work more comfortably with parents and the broader public. By studying the process of engagement, a new generation of education professionals may tap a reservoir of rich human resources overlooked by their colleagues in the past. Researchers in these schools can also play critical roles in evaluating the impact of public engagement and developing methodologies to describe individual initiatives' successes.

The *national education establishment* – organizations that serve those who work in and around schools – can galvanize their constituents to engage each other while reaching outward to parents and the public. Some important first steps have been taken with the creation of the Learning First Alliance, thirteen national education associations who have formed a partnership to advance the cause of public education.

It will be essential for educators to be fully engaged, with each other and with parents and the community, in working for improved teaching and learning. To reach that goal, teachers and the unions that represent them must make the communication

between teachers, parents, and the public a priority on their agenda for the future. It will be difficult to bring improvements to bear on teaching and learning if those who work with students are not part of the engagement process.

Business and civic organizations are dependent on citizens and consumers – both present and future. These entities can encourage their members and employees to become actively involved with their local schools. This means taking an interest in the academic achievement of all children and of their employees' children. It means being willing to serve on committees, helping implement new programs, and, perhaps even more, allowing employees time off to work on behalf of their schools and their own children.

Local school districts and schools have a tremendous opportunity to provide institutional support for public engagement. They can create staff positions and budget line items that ensure that engagement activities are both coordinated and sustained from year to year. Just as importantly, they can involve parents and community members on decision-making, advisory, and strategic planning bodies. They can honestly examine how parent- or community-friendly their school buildings are. They can provide accurate and timely information – both good news and bad – about student and staff achievement. They can encourage and reward teachers for building better communication with parents. All of these activities – as well as many others described in this report – can enable districts and schools to enter into real partnerships with parents and community members. All of this work can reinforce a crucial message: that public schools, indeed, belong to the public.

Toward a culture for public engagement and public education

Through this study, as both advocate and critical friend, the Annenberg Institute has begun to accumulate information that will help others develop local expertise and, at the same time, is seeking to shape a national

understanding of engagement. There is more to learn about this strategy for advancing school reform, to be sure – more research and case studies; a larger national conversation about the roles of parents, educators, and the public; networks of sites that can teach others about leadership, sustainability, and evaluation; and opportunities for everyone to develop the capacity for engagement.

Those who shared their stories with the Institute expressed a keen interest in learning further about engagement. Their needs – even more, their desires – are very much about a reinvestment in our public schools. This movement called public engagement represents a crucial turning point for public education. The many isolated ventures found across the landscape of America are important mile markers that indicate a mobilization of civic action for public education.

The work for the past eighteen months has led to the conclusion that there is a defining moment at hand, a rising opportunity to rebuild the partnership between schools, parents, and citizens that can renew a civic *responsibility* for public education, which is the cornerstone of a vital and sustained American democracy.

Acknowledgments

WE ARE DEEPLY GRATEFUL TO the hundreds of people – parents, teachers, principals, community and civic leaders, business executives and small business owners, and concerned citizens – who gave us their time, their stories, and their experiences over the past year. The vision they hold for their communities and their schools was shared with a passion that was energizing. Without them, this report would not be possible.

The insight and analysis of our research colleagues – David A. Smith, Ansley T. Erickson, Daniel Seltz, and Jonathan W. Considine at the Annenberg Institute; and Kristin Kurtenbach, John Beilenson, and Johann Neem at Millennium Communications Group – provided the unique perspectives of this report. The work was challenging, exciting, tiring, and rewarding – we laughed and learned with equal zeal. Special thanks to Susan Fisher, publications manager at the Institute and our editor, for providing clarity and keen understanding to a complex collaborative work.

Vartan Gregorian, former president of Brown University and acting director of the Institute, and John Bryan Starr, its managing director, have been unfailing in their commitment to this project. New to the University and the Institute, but adding their interest, advice, and support when it was needed, have been E. Gordon Gee, president of Brown University, and Ramón Cortines, interim director of the Institute.

An advisory panel and steering committee provided direction and insights about our work along the way. We thank Robert Blum

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This report represents a sacrifice for family, friends, and colleagues. To Julie, Meghan, Adam, Larry, David, Andrew, Anne, Ramona, Noelle, Caroline, Charlie, Wanda, Carlie, and Jacob, we are thankful for your understanding of the passion we have brought to this work.

Finally, we are grateful for the vision and generosity of Ambassador Walter Annenberg. His enduring faith in public education in America is the foundation on which the Institute rests and has provided strong spiritual support for our work.

APPENDIX A

HOW THIS INQUIRY WAS CONDUCTED

Throughout this work, the Institute has attempted to employ an engagement process in its own efforts to learn from the people and programs that were studied. Researchers met with and listened to many individuals in order to gain new perspectives and to learn from them as they talked among each other. Information, preliminary findings, and conclusions were deliberately shared with others, from whom researchers encouraged an honest evaluation. Finally, we were very eager that those studied from across the country have a chance to engage each other in a way that allowed them to define the summative judgments that have led to the conclusions of this report.

The Institute’s work in public engagement began with a series of conversations throughout the spring of 1996 to help shape an understanding of what public engagement meant across the country. These initial meetings culminated in a meeting in Washington, DC in June 1996, at which fifty leaders representing education, business, foundations, communications, the media, and parents met to discuss public engagement, and review potential directions for the Institute.

Beginning in the fall of 1996, Institute staff began traveling across the country, meeting with administrators, teachers, parents, citizens, researchers, reformers and reform organizations, state legislators, departments of education, foundation officers, and local citizens. The agenda of questions provided an early glimpse into the issues that form the heart of this report. A concept paper prepared from these sessions formed the basis of discussions at the Institute for the direction of this work.

The Institute then compiled a listing of public engagement sites from readings, travels, and recommendations from many people and advisors, including a list developed by Norman Fruchter of New York University for the Prichard Committee for Excellence in Education in Kentucky. Nearly 400 site recommendations were eventually gathered; each was sent a letter describing our efforts and requesting additional information. Using a protocol to screen the information submitted, Institute staff conducted interview surveys by phone with program directors or stakeholders in each site. Ultimately, 174 different school and community efforts were studied.

The interview reports were shared with all project staff, who exchanged reactions weekly about each site and the accumulating

knowledge. After two months of interviews, researchers began meeting monthly to review a developing list of critical questions and findings that became the basis for much of the analysis. The research team’s work was strengthened by both the steering committee and an advisory panel of practitioners.

Because the work we studied was local and came from rich, local contexts, researchers decided to visit sites that represented best experiences. Site visits began in May 1997 and consisted of one-to-three-day meetings with a variety of community stakeholders and groups. Researchers attended town meetings, public conversation events, board meetings, house meetings of parent groups and citizens, which were held in schools, homes, local businesses, corporate boardrooms, restaurants, corner diners, and libraries.

Site reports became an important part of the monthly cumulative review process. As themes and hypotheses were shaped and argued, the Institute tested these assumptions with various groups, including Institute colleagues, foundation officers, technical assistance providers, and consultants. Most importantly, we shared our findings with those who provided them. In November 1997 in Providence, Rhode Island, teams of stakeholders from twenty-six initiatives gathered to discuss their work with each other. Questions and themes shaped over the past year framed the discussion in sessions with various groupings of initiatives and stakeholders. As organizations learned from and challenged each other, the Institute was able to validate much of its cumulative research through very revealing lenses.

The following appendices list those individuals, schools, and organizations that have contributed to our understanding of engagement, to whom we are deeply indebted.

The Inquiry Sites		Breakdown of Sites Studied		
Identified	400	School-driven	34.5%	32 initiatives do local work nationwide
Studied	174	Community-driven	65.5%	
Visited	50	Urban	60.3%	
		Suburban or small/medium town	21.3%	2 initiatives work regionally supporting local work in multiple states
		Rural	14.4%	34 initiatives work statewide or do local work on a statewide basis

For descriptions of the sites studied, see Appendix B, pages 64–83.

APPENDIX B

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT INQUIRY SITES

The 174 schools, districts, and organizations listed below are representative of the initiatives that were identified as part of the Institute's inquiry into the practice of public engagement in America. This is not a comprehensive or exhaustive listing of schools or communities doing this work; such a listing would be impossible to compile. However, it represents a valuable cross-section of the kinds of initiatives that educators, parents, and citizens are using on behalf of public education.

The sites listed here form the beginning of a clearinghouse of public engagement sites. As additional sites are studied as part of its ongoing research in public engagement, the Institute will add to this listing. The clearinghouse will be available in print upon request or it may be accessed on the Institute's web site (www.aisr.brown.edu).

Alabama

A+ Research Foundation

William E. Smith, Jr., Chairman
Cathy Gassenheimer, Managing Director
P.O. Box 4433
Montgomery, AL 36103
334 279-1886
bill@aplusala.org
<http://www.aplusala.org>

A+ organized town meetings that enabled over 23,000 people to have a voice in school improvement and developed a blueprint for school reform, which eventually was drafted into a legislative plan, the Alabama First Plan. A+ also provides support to state policymakers and leadership training for school principals and superintendents.

Butler County School Board

Judy Manning
215 Simpson Street
Greenville, AL 36037
334 382-2665

A major districtwide goal is to increase parental involvement through a variety of activities and services. Spend a Day with Your Child invites parents to meet with teachers and administrators and then to shadow their child during classes. The Parent University allows parents to meet with teachers and hear about goals and priorities over the upcoming weeks. The district also offers parent education classes that help parents to be better parents.

Program for Academic and Cultural Enhancement of Rural Schools (PACERS)

Dr. Jack Shelton
University of Alabama
Box 870372
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487
205 348-6432
<http://www.pacers.org/pacerspg.htm>

PACERS is an association of twenty-nine small public schools in rural communities throughout Alabama. PACERS schools seek to improve and change the nature of learning through the active participation of the community. Projects include hands-on, interdisciplinary exercises that build on indigenous skills and resources. Each PACERS school has a newsletter that demonstrates student work and publicizes and reports on community activities. Twenty of these papers now have a readership of over 125,000 people.

Alaska

Chugach School District

Roger Sampson, Superintendent
165 East 56th Avenue, Suite D
Anchorage, AK 99518
907 522-7400

The Chugach School District, which is 50 percent Caucasian and 50 percent Alaskan native, comprises five communities covering 22,000 square miles on Prince William Sound. Frustrated by student performance, the district turned to the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory for assistance in determining what the values and beliefs of the community were as part of a planning process. By gathering parents and community members together, consensus was achieved around the common top priority of providing children with the academic and social skills to succeed in rural Alaska and beyond.

Arizona

Educational and Community Change Project

Paul Heckman, Associate Professor and
Principal Investigator
University of Arizona
College of Education Annex
1415 North Fremont
Tucson, AZ 85721
520 622-5719

The Educational and Community Change Project works inside low-income schools in South Tucson and Tucson to help teachers take advantage of what parents know and can contribute to the classroom. The Project also works in communities to organize parents and community members to become involved in their schools.

Arkansas

Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families

Amy Rossi
931 Donaghey Building
Little Rock, AR 72201
501 371-9678

Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families is a policy-oriented think tank that aims to get more parents involved in schools. They hired a coordinator and use ideas and materials from the National Coalition of Advocates for Students to engage parents. "Super Saturday" meetings have been developed to convene parents and administrators to talk about issues facing the schools for Title I parents.

Arkansas Friends for Better Schools

Judy Wilmouth White, Coordinator
1111 West Capitol, Suite 1096
Little Rock, AR 72201
501 373-5882
rayw@arkansas.net

Arkansas Friends for Better Schools is an alliance of fourteen statewide organizations that support public schools. Three years ago, Arkansas Friends helped to develop "Arkansas Public Schools Week" to encourage schools to welcome members of the community to visit schools and to take part in school activities. Arkansas Friends also collaborated with the *Arkansas Times* to initiate "Arkansas Public School Heroes," an annual cover feature that profiles administrators, principals, teachers, parents, community members, and volunteers who are making a difference in the lives of school children.

California

Accelerated Schools Project

Hank Levin, Director
National Center for the Accelerated
Schools Project
Stanford University
CERAS 109
Stanford, CA 94305-3084
415 723-0840
ka.hml@forsythe.stanford.edu
<http://www-leland.stanford.edu/group/ASP>

Formed in 1986, the Accelerated Schools Project is a school reform network that includes nearly 1,000 elementary and middle schools in 40 states. The goal of the project is to help at-risk students to reach their optimal performance. After members of the community devise a “living vision” of what they would see as their perfect school, school officials identify key areas to work in as part of a comprehensive school-change process. The three core principles of an Accelerated School are a unity of purpose, empowerment coupled with responsibility as part of a shared decision-making process, and building on the strengths of the entire community. Accelerated Schools treat all children as gifted and build on their strengths through enrichment strategies, independent research, problem solving, science, writing, music, and art.

The Achievement Council

Joyce Germaine Watts, Associate Director
3460 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 420
Los Angeles, CA 90010
213 487-3194

The Achievement Council is a nonprofit, public-interest organization whose mission is to examine and address the systemic challenges that have led to low academic outcomes for urban and low-income students. It also helps build capacity of districts and schools to ensure that all students are academically prepared to succeed at the highest levels, including graduation from a four-year college or university.

Bay Area School Reform Collaborative

Merrill Vargo
c/o WestEd
730 Harrison Street
San Francisco, CA 94107-1242
415 241-2740
<http://www.wested.org/basrc>

In 1995, the Bay Area School Reform Collaborative (BASRC), formed the previous year by a group of foundation, education, business, and community leaders, received grants of \$25 million each from the Annenberg Foundation and William R. Hewlett. BASRC's mission is to firmly establish the Bay Area as a vital, innovative, and effective place to learn and to teach. For its seventy-two Leadership Schools (members of the Collaborative that received funding in the fall of 1997), BASRC developed Accountability Frameworks to enable parents, teachers, the schools themselves, and their districts to measure their own progress toward reform. An integral part of this plan is an annual Accountability Event that each school holds to engage parents in a discussion on the school's progress, student achievement, and the role of the community in reform.

California Child Care Resource and Referral Network

Patty Siegel
111 New Montgomery Street, 7th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94105
415 882-0234

The California Child Care Resource and Referral Network works with sixty agencies across the state to help all families in California have access to safe, affordable, quality child care. The Network creates user-friendly and attractive materials and guides to enable their member agencies to engage parents in their search for quality child care. An initiative called Parent Voices seeks to organize and train parents to speak out on their own about child-care issues.

Conejo Valley Unified School District

Science and Technology Achievement
for Students (STARS)
Dr. Sheila R. Carlson
916 Chalet Circle
Thousand Oaks, CA 91362-2408
805 498-3608
<http://www.vcss.k12.ca.us/conejo/mainpage.htm>

STARS Teacher Enhancement Program expands the reform of science-education delivery throughout all K-6 classrooms in the school district through the diffusion of an exemplary, inquiry-oriented, process-approach science program. STARS enhances students' scientific knowledge, thinking, and problem-solving skills and encourages students to pursue careers in science and technology. Among the supporters and contributors to STARS is Amgen, a leading biotechnology company.

Consensus Organizing Institute

David Hoffman, Program Manager
1732 Grenada Avenue
San Diego, CA 92102
619 234-1268

Formed in 1994, the Consensus Organizing Institute (COI) is a national nonprofit organization that draws upon people's creativity and initiative to fashion innovative solutions to community problems. COI develops and implements comprehensive strategies for bringing people together and provides them with the tools necessary to achieve tangible reforms.

Crystal Stairs

Alice Walker Duff
5105 West Goldleaf Circle
Los Angeles, CA 90056-1272
213 299-8998

Crystal Stairs, whose name comes from Langston Hughes's poem “Mother to Son,” is a seventeen-year-old organization that does research, service, and advocacy around child care and development. Parent Voices is a community organizing project that organizes parents and community members around issues of child care and education.

Education Summit

Phyllis Harris
Pasadena Unified School District
351 South Hudson Avenue
Pasadena, CA 91109
818 791-4573
phylliswb@earthlink.net
<http://www.pasadena.k12.ca.us>

The Education Summit was a multiyear public engagement process driven by community and business leaders. More than 2,000 people at eleven sites watched an interview with the head of the Chamber of Commerce, the superintendent of schools, and several other educators about the state of the Pasadena schools. Participants at the sites then were divided into groups of eight to ten people to discuss and devise seven areas of concern. Safety and communications were the top two concerns. Year-long citizen groups were organized around each of the Summit's seven areas, which have been an important basis for the district's strategic plans.

James A. Foshay Learning Center

Howard Lappin, Principal
3751 South Harvard Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 90018
213 735-0241

The Foshay Learning Center, located in South Central Los Angeles, was at risk of state take-over of its Title I funds in 1989 when Howard Lappin became principal. Lappin reached out to parents, community members, and businesses to marshal as many resources as possible for the school. Foshay joined the Los Angeles Educational Alliance for Restructuring Now, academic standards were developed in line with district standards, and students were held accountable for their learning. Average daily attendance has risen, and recently, sixty-six of Foshay's sixty-seven seniors applied to colleges, and thirty out of thirty-one passed the first Advanced Placement Tests. Foshay is also a member of the Los Angeles Annenberg Metropolitan Project. Lappin was honored as a 1997 MetLife/National Association of Secondary School Principals "Principal of the Year."

The George Lucas Educational Foundation

Mark Sargent, Communications Director
P.O. Box 3494
San Rafael, CA 94912
415 662-1641
msargent@glef.org
<http://glef.org/welcome.html>

The George Lucas Educational Foundation, located in Nicasio, California, was established as a tax-exempt charitable organization in 1991 based on the filmmaker's belief that education is the most important investment we can make to secure the future of our democracy. To help the public revitalize the nation's schools, the Foundation gathers, synthesizes, and disseminates information and other resources through various media to promote and share the latest strategies to change the K-12 educational system, especially those that integrate technology with teaching and learning. In 1997, the Foundation completed *Learn & Live*, a documentary film (hosted by Robin Williams) with a companion resource book, to illustrate ways that innovative schools and communities are using technology to enhance teaching and learning.

Hawthorne Year-Round School

Becki Cohn-Vargas, Principal
Jen Corn, Reform Coordinator
1700 28th Avenue
Oakland, CA 94601
510 879-1240
beckicv@aol.com
jcorn72@aol.com

The Hawthorne School, one of the Bay Area School Reform Collaborative's Learning Schools, held an Accountability Event in November 1997 that attracted nearly 250 parents to discuss student achievement data around literacy. Teachers facilitated discussions on the data in parents' native languages of Spanish, Cambodian, Vietnamese, Cantonese, Serbo-Croatian, and English. The school also produced a video, in English and in Spanish, showing children reading at grade level to help parents understand what that looks like.

Joint Venture: Silicon Valley Network's 21st-Century Education Initiative

Tim Cuneo
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San Jose, CA 95113
408 938-1510
jvsoffice@aol.com
<http://www.jointventure.org>

The Joint Venture: Silicon Valley Network includes people in business, government, education, and the community who have joined together to act on regional issues affecting economic vitality and quality of life. In 1995, the Network agreed to raise more than \$20 million and launch the 21st-Century Education Initiative to spark a renaissance in public education in Silicon Valley. The Initiative's Challenge 2000 program, using a venture-capital model, works with "Renaissance teams" of educators, business people, and community members to implement systemic improvement programs focused on student performance and involving continuous evaluation. The Initiative made commitments of over \$1 million over three years to Renaissance teams in the form of financial, human, and technological resources. Continued support is dependent upon the achievement of measurable results toward world-class standards.

Los Angeles Educational Alliance for Restructuring Now (LEARN)

Michael Roos, President and CEO
300 South Grand Avenue, Suite 1160
Los Angeles, CA 90071
213 255-3276
learnla@aol.com
<http://www.lausd.k12.ca.us/lausd/offices/learn/learn.html>

A working group of thirteen community leaders formed LEARN in 1991. More than 600 civic, education, and business leaders help LEARN to build supportive, student-focused learning communities with the autonomy to define and realize their student achievement outcomes in new and imaginative ways best suited to their unique needs. The principal and one teacher from each LEARN school take part in an eighteen-month applied management training course with UCLA's Graduate Schools of Management and Education. Additionally, partnerships are formed with school communities and educational organizations. To date, 297 schools, or 45 percent, in the Los Angeles Unified School District are participating in LEARN.

Long Beach Unified School District

Carl Cohen, Superintendent
Kristi Kahl
1515 Hughes Way
Long Beach, CA 90810
310 997-8000
<http://www.lbusd.k12.ca.us>

The Long Beach Unified School District engaged over 300 people from the community in a series of education roundtables on standards-based reform in middle schools. These discussions were followed by leadership development training with twenty-two middle school principals to help them better communicate with and involve parents and community members around standards-based reform. The district has recently developed an all-day Saturday Parent Conference, with the support of the local union, to engage parents and teachers.

Mar Vista Family Center

Lucia Diaz, Executive Director
5070 South Slauson Avenue
Culver City, CA 90230
310 390-9607
marvistafc@aol.com

Founded in 1977, the Mar Vista Family Center is a parent-participation preschool adjacent to the Mar Vista Gardens Federal Housing Project in West Los Angeles, serving an at-risk community of primarily low-income Latino and African American families. Parents learn the importance of their role in their children's educational success through mandatory participation in the preschool program. Over 2,000 families have taken part in the Center's programs based on the Mar Vista Model of Shared Responsibility.

Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF)

Antonia Hernandez
634 Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90014
213 629-2512
maldefone@aol.com

Founded in 1968, the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund is a public-interest law firm that seeks to improve the status of Mexican Americans through litigation and advocacy, community education, and leadership development.

Parent Alliance for School Standards (San Diego)

Ellen Jaffa
Social Advocates for Youth
3615 Kearny Villa Road, Suite 101
San Diego, CA 92123
619 565-4148

The Alliance works with parents to educate them about student standards. During 1998, the Alliance intends to train 250 parents, including 15 site leaders. A parental network will be established to train parents and to help them access the schools and obtain information on what the standards are and how they work.

Parent Community Services, Los Angeles Unified School District

Shawna Tallant
534 Cesar E. Chavez Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90012
213 625-6010
pcs@lausd.k12.ca.us
<http://lausd.k12.ca.us/~pcs>

A telephone hotline was created and is staffed by parents in the Los Angeles Unified School District. The goal of the hotline is parent empowerment and increased collaboration between parents and district personnel. Parents who call the hotline can express their concerns, receive assistance with school- and district-related information, and obtain referrals to a wide variety of services. There are currently three full-time operators who can take calls in four languages (English, Spanish, Armenian, and Korean).

San Francisco School Volunteers

Sandra Treacy, Executive Director
65 Battery Street, 3rd Floor
San Francisco, CA 94111
415 274-0250
svolunte@sfusd.k12.ca.us
<http://www.maximov.com/sfsv>

Founded in 1963, San Francisco School Volunteers (SFSV) is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to improve the quality of education through informed community involvement in their public schools. In the city's middle schools, SFSV has helped to organize breakfast exchanges that bring together teachers and parents. During the 1997-98 school year, SFSV has enlisted the support of more than 2,500 volunteers who typically spend two to three hours per week in a school.

San Mateo-Foster City School District

Audrey Poppers, Assistant Superintendent
for Educational Services
51 West 41st Avenue
San Mateo, CA 94403
650 312-7777, ext. 7720
apoppers@smfc.k12.ca.us
<http://www.smfc.k12.ca.us>

In June 1997, the San Mateo-Foster City School District, a member of the Bay Area School Reform Collaborative, convened parents, teachers, and the principal from Parkside Elementary School for seven hours in the first in a series of four dialogues on accountability. This working group, along with central office staff and a few principals from other schools, has discussed the various types of assessment data, how to read and understand the data, and what acceptable student progress looks like. This process at Parkside will lead to dialogues at other schools in the district, and work has already begun on thinking about and planning for a districtwide accountability event.

Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District

Peggy Harris
1651 16th Street
Santa Monica, CA 90405
310 450-8338
<http://www.smmusd.org>

The Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District has a new teacher-training program in partnership with UCLA. Text-based seminars are used to engage the community and to allow student teachers to hear voices from the community. The district has created parent advisory groups that help the schools connect to various ethnic and minority constituencies. The district has a strong relationship with city government, which provides \$2 million a year in direct support to community outreach programs.

Urban Strategies Council

Martine Makower, Associate
672 13th Street, Suite 200
Thornton House
Oakland, CA 94612
510 893-2404
council@urbanstrat.com

The Urban Strategies Council seeks to inform and inspire change focused on reducing the risk of persistent poverty in Oakland. In 1989, the Council helped to launch the Commission for Positive Change in Public Schools, which lasted for six years, to engage the public to restore its confidence in the public schools. Public meetings were held to gauge the community's concerns and to determine what they expected of the schools. The Commission also looked for the conditions, instruction, and structure of the schools. Once the Commission released its report, it then re-engaged the community to examine those findings.

Colorado

Aurora Public Schools

Joan Ott, Director of Instructional Services
15751 East First Avenue
Aurora, CO 80011
303 340-0861
<http://www.aps.k12.co.us>

In 1988, the Aurora Public Schools first used an engagement process to initiate a communitywide strategic planning process. During the past decade, this process has led to several policy changes that involve key stakeholders in a more meaningful way. A Leadership Council of community representatives provides support and direction for the Board of Education, and each school building now has a shared-decision-making team. Additionally, a fifty-person school and community task force contributed to the district's process of rewriting graduation standards by studying the issue, holding communitywide meetings, and presenting recommendations to the board.

Colorado Children's Campaign

Barbara O'Brien
225 East 16th Avenue
Suite B-300
Denver, CO 80203-1607
303 839-1580
HN3157@handsnet.org
<http://www.kidscampaigns.org/cac/sites/cc.html>

Founded in 1985, the Colorado Children's Campaign mobilizes individuals and organizations to think and act on behalf of children with particular attention to the health, education, and safety of children most at risk. The Children's Campaign publishes annually *Kids Count in Colorado!* which looks at health, education, and safety issues confronting children and their families. In recent years, volunteers have made more than 20,000 dolls and placed them around the state as part of an annual Children's Summit and Doll Project, a public awareness campaign where volunteers make cardboard dolls that depict the life of a child in Colorado.

Community/Adult Education, Volunteer Services

Barbara Hook, Director
West Center for Intergenerational Learning
Colorado Springs School District #11
1115 N. El Paso Street
Colorado Springs, CO 80903
719 520-2162

The community education program, nearly twenty-five years old, provides support from the community to students and, in turn, offers services to the community. In 1996, more than 6,000 community volunteers participated in the program and helped teachers in the classroom. This new relationship with the community also led to the passage of the first bond measure in more than twenty-four years.

Connecticut

Study Circles Resource Center

Martha McCoy, Executive Director
Sally Campbell, Deputy Director
Matt Leighninger, Program Director
P.O. Box 203
Pomfret, CT 06258
860 928-2616
scrc@neca.com

The Study Circles Resource Center (SCRC) is a project of the Topsfield Foundation, Inc., a nonprofit, nonpartisan foundation dedicated to advancing deliberative democracy and improving the quality of public life in the United States. SCRC carries out this mission by helping communities to organize study circles – small-group, democratic, highly participatory discussions. SCRC has been a pioneer in facilitating communitywide conversations around the issues of race, diversity, education, and criminal justice.

Windham Public Schools

Pat Procter, Superintendent
322 Prospect Street
Willimantic, CT 06226
860 465-2310

After a team of administrators attended the Harvard Institute for School Improvement in 1996, the district determined that it was time to engage the community. The first year of the process is to set goals and expectations for students; year two undertakes an assessment; and year three entails putting together a plan to close the gaps. During 1996 and 1997, through focus groups with children, senior citizens, business leaders, and parents, the district collected data on the community's expectations and satisfaction with the schools and has moved on to a process of setting goals.

District of Columbia

The Benton Foundation

Larry Kirkman
1634 "Eye" Street, NW
12th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20006
202 638-5770
larryk@benton.org
<http://www.benton.org>

The Benton Foundation works to realize the social benefits made possible by the public-interest use of communications. Bridging the worlds of philanthropy, public policy, and community action, Benton seeks to shape the emerging communications environment and to demonstrate the value of communications for solving social problems. Through demonstration projects, media production and publishing, research, conferences, and grant making, Benton probes the relationships between the public, corporate, and nonprofit sectors to address the critical questions for democracy in the information age.

Center for Law and Education

Paul Weckstein, Co-Director
Kathleen Boundy, Co-Director
Anne T. Henderson, Consultant
1875 Connecticut Ave., N.W.
Suite 510
Washington, D.C. 20009
202 986-3000
clcdc@erols.com

The Center for Law and Education (CLE) is a national, nonprofit organization that seeks to advance the rights of all students, especially low-income students and their families. CLE helps community and school-based initiatives to increase parent and student involvement in education. CLE also conducts and publishes research on parent involvement, including its 1997 report, *Urgent Message: Families Crucial to School Reform*.

Institute for Educational Leadership, Inc.

Mike Usdan, President
Jacqueline Danberger, Director,
Governance Programs
1001 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Suite 310
Washington, D.C. 20036
202 822-8405
iel@iel.org
<http://www.iel.org>

The Institute for Educational Leadership's (IEL) mission is to improve individual lives and society by strengthening educational opportunities for children and youth. IEL accomplishes its mission by connecting leaders from every sector of our increasingly multiethnic and multiracial society and by reconnecting the public with our educational institutions. IEL collaborates with Public Agenda on "Engaging Americans in Education Reform," to involve Americans at the grassroots level in civic dialogue among themselves and with educators.

National Council of La Raza

Maria Fisher, Education Policy Analyst
Arianna Quiñones, Education Specialist
11 19th Street, NW
Suite 1000
Washington, D.C. 20036
202 785-1670
mfisher@nclr.org, aquinones@nclr.org

The National Council of La Raza (NCLR) is a private, nonpartisan, tax-exempt organization established in 1968 to reduce poverty and discrimination and improve life opportunities for Hispanic Americans. Nationally, NCLR lobbies federal lawmakers, while locally building grassroots community involvement for education reform.

Public Education Network

Wendy Puriefoy, President
601 Thirteenth Street, NW
Suite 900 North
Washington, D.C. 20001
202 628-7460
<http://www.publiceducation.org>

The Public Education Network is a national association of local education funds committed to achieving high-quality public education for all American children, especially the disadvantaged. Its mission is to link and unite these funds and mobilize the energy and resources of their communities to build effective and successful public schools. The Network is currently working in twenty-eight states and the District of Columbia.

Florida

Adult Education Center, Flagler County Schools

Stephen Edwards
Flagler County Schools
200 Lehigh Road
Flagler Beach, FL 32136
904 517-2040

The Adult Education Center offers 500 classes per semester for six semesters a year. The Center runs a fully operational childcare center and an adult activity center for persons with dementia or Alzheimer's. A full range of community education classes is offered, along with drop-out retrieval and vocational education programs.

Communities in Schools of Jacksonville

Stephen Zaricki, Executive Director
301 West Bay Street, Suite 2360
Box 23, Southern Bell Tower
Jacksonville, FL 32202
904 354-5918

Communities in Schools (CIS), part of a national program, is an in-school model that works with at-risk students in Jacksonville to keep them in school, raise their level of achievement, and prepare them for their future. CIS mobilizes community resources, including funding, mentoring, and social services from businesses, agencies, and nonprofit organizations, around these students. Case managers help to identify the problems that a family might have and connect them to the appropriate services.

Georgia

Chatham-Savannah Youth Futures Authority

Dr. Otis S. Johnson, Executive Director
316 East Bay Street
Savannah, GA 31401
912 651-6810

The Chatham-Savannah Youth Futures Authority was created by state legislation in 1988. Comprising representatives from schools, city and county government, the community, and business, the Authority's mission is to create a community collaborative to affect the change needed to enable the youth of the community to become productive, economically self-sustaining adults. The Authority provides after-school programs, drug-use prevention efforts, health and social services, and job training for young adults.

The Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education

Tom Upchurch, President
233 Peachtree Street, Suite 200
Atlanta, GA 30303
404 223-2280
<http://www.gpee.org>

The Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education was founded in 1990 with the mission to be Georgia's foremost change agent and a significant leader in the journey to higher standards and increasing academic achievement for all students. Since 1993, Georgia's education, business, and government leaders have traveled by bus to various communities throughout the state on five-day tours of schools to highlight innovative education approaches. The Georgia Partnership also works with communities across the state, through the Ambassadors for Education program, to build awareness about education issues.

Southern Regional Council

Marcia Klenbort, Director of
Education Programs
133 Carnegie Way, NW
Suite 900
Atlanta, GA 30303-1024
404 522-8764
73251.2024@compuserve.com
<http://www.src.wi.com>

Founded in 1919, the Southern Regional Council (SRC) is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that works to achieve racial equality and economic and social justice in the Southern United States through research and action that engages and transforms individuals, communities, and institutions. In 1994, SRC developed "Building a Culture for Middle School Achievement," a program to increase student achievement in middle schools in Atlanta. Parents, teachers, administrators, and community members came together as part of an advisory committee to serve as a locus for discussion on issues such as systemwide objectives.

Illinois

Cross City Campaign for Urban School Reform

Anne Hallett
407 South Dearborn Street, Suite 1725
Chicago, IL 60605
312 322-4880
ahallett@compuserve.com

The Cross City Campaign is an active strategic, national network supporting urban school reform leaders, both inside and outside of school districts, through information, shared strategies, joint work, and support of local reform agendas.

Designs for Change

Donald Moore
6 North Michigan Avenue, Suite 1600
Chicago, IL 60602
312 857-9292

Designs for Change, part of the Annenberg Chicago Challenge, was instrumental in the passage of the city's school reform law in 1988. Designs for Change subsequently worked with the Cross City Campaign for Urban School Reform from November 1994 through July 1995 on the Public Information Project. The Project led or supported fifteen significant initiatives to disseminate good, accurate information on Chicago school reform to the media and to key opinion leaders and decision makers.

Partners for Success Program

Carole Parkins
Regional Office of Education
DuPage County
421 N. County Farm Road
Wheaton, IL 60187
630 682-6955
cparkins@dupage.k12.il.us
<http://www.dupage.k12.il.us>

Partners for Success provides multiple learning environments that utilize a variety of strategies. Their curriculum includes partnerships with families, home schools, social service agencies, educational communities, businesses, and mentors.

Indiana

Buddy System Project

Alan T. Hill, President
17 West Market Street, Suite 960
Indianapolis, IN 46204
317 464-2074
ahill@indyvax.iupui.edu
<http://www.vonnegut.buddy.k12.in.us>

Launched in 1988, the Buddy System Project uses technology to extend learning beyond the classroom walls and into homes throughout Indiana. Fourth-, fifth-, and sixth-graders and their families from more than sixty school districts take part in the program. Families receive computers at home to encourage students to spend more time learning at home and to help parents interact with teachers and the school district.

Phi Delta Kappa International

Dr. Ron Joekel, Executive Director
P.O. Box 789
Bloomington, IN 47402
812 339-1156
<http://www.pdkintl.org>

Phi Delta Kappa (PDK), in collaboration with the National Parent Teacher Association, has sponsored discussions across the country as part of the Civic Forum on the Future of Public Schools. These forums focus on three questions: What is the purpose of public schools? How effective are our public schools? and What changes must be made to attain these purposes? PDK has announced plans to conduct fifty forums in 1998.

Kansas

Salina Public Schools

Gary Norris, Superintendent
P.O. Box 797
Salina, KS 67402
913 826-4727

Following the defeat of two local tax initiatives three years ago, the Chamber of Commerce directed the board of education to embark upon a strategic-planning process. Roughly fifty school officials and community members served on leadership and research teams. After conducting polls and focus groups, the teams came up with specific recommendations for the community centered around their top three issues of family, communications, and resources for student achievement.

Kentucky

Citizens' Advisory Committee, Scott County Public Schools

Dr. Dallas Blankenship, Superintendent
Scott County Public Schools
2618 Frankfort Pike
P.O. Box 561
Georgetown, KY 40324
502 863-3663
dblank@scott.k12.ky.us
<http://www.scott.k12.ky.us>

In 1993, the superintendent created a Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC) to create community awareness and to generate grass-roots support for a pending bond issue to build a new high school. While that bond issue failed, CAC was successful in gathering public input and sustaining an awareness for the need to build a new facility. Through state legislation, regular growth and levies, and the support of a local Toyota plant, the district was able to construct a \$24-million, state-of-the-art high school that opened in the fall of 1996. CAC has continued to share information with and gather input from the public, and over 80 percent of its recommendations have been acted on by the district.

Hopkinsville-Christian County

Tom Bell
P.O. Box 23
Hopkinsville, KY
502 886-2984, ext. 9117

The town was selected as a site for an Institute for Educational Leadership/Public Agenda-sponsored town meeting. The information that was compiled from the town meeting was subsequently used in the district's improvement plan. Since this initial conversation, the Board of Education has funded two more town meetings. The town has also tried to develop a mechanism to use this framework to address other issues.

The Middle School Coalition, Jefferson County Public Schools

Susan Shortt, Middle School Coalition
Coordinator
P.O. Box 34020
Louisville, KY 40232-4020
502 485-3011

The Middle School Coalition is a group of civic, business, health, and social service organizations, educators, and parents/caregivers that works to remove barriers and to create opportunities to support the academic achievement of middle school students.

Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence

Robert F. Sexton, Executive Director
Bev Raimondo, Director of
Community Support
P.O. Box 1658
Lexington, KY 40592
603 233-9849

The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence provides a public voice advocating for improved education for all Kentuckians. Through town forums, Prichard brought 20,000 people together in 1984 to talk about public schools and their problems. Prichard was instrumental in the passage of the 1990 Kentucky Education Reform Act. It continues to support the implementation of the reform act in individual communities through parent and community education and awareness programs like Community Committees for Education and Parents and Teachers Talking Together. Prichard recently launched the Commonwealth Institute for Parent Leadership to help engage more parents in schools and school reform.

Louisiana

Agenda for Children

Jenny Evans
P.O. Box 51837
New Orleans, LA 70151
504 586-8509

Agenda for Children is an advocacy organization that focuses on child-abuse prevention and child health and resources for young children up to eight years old. They work with local schools to increase awareness about quality child care, coordinate workshops on how children learn, and hold seminars on parent care.

Center for Development and Learning

Alice Thomas, Founder and
Executive Director
208 South Tyler Street, Suite A
Covington, LA 70433
504 893-7777
learn@cdl.org

Founded in 1992, the Center for Development and Learning (CDL) is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to help children break the cycle of failure to facilitate school and lifetime success. CDL trains teachers, parents, and students in techniques that can be used to address students' variations in learning. CDL helps individual students to identify their unique learning profile and provides families with training, consulting, and referral services that enable parents to understand their children's specific educational needs.

Council for A Better Louisiana

Harold Suire, Chairman and CEO
P.O. Box 4308
Baton Rouge, LA 70821
504 344-2250

Founded in 1962, the Council for A Better Louisiana (CABL) is a statewide citizens-advocacy organization. CABL engages voters to help them become informed and make better decisions. Its People's Agenda project utilizes scientific research, surveys, and focus groups to better understand the concerns of voters. CABL's work in education has centered on the development, since 1990, of nine permanently endowed local education funds across the state. CABL has received a grant from the BellSouth Foundation to initiate school-board leadership training programs across the state. CABL also serves as a resource to the state department of education in helping them communicate with citizens.

Louisiana Alliance for Education Reform

Ruth G. Hinson, Director
Tulane University
6901 Willow Street
New Orleans, LA 70118
504 865-5584
800 945-2198
laer@mailhost.tcs.tulane.edu
<http://www.tulane.edu/~laer/index>

Formed in 1992 with the collaborative efforts of the Shell Oil Company Foundation and Tulane University, the Louisiana Alliance for Education Reform is a nonprofit corporation whose purpose is to develop the ability of local citizens (educators and noneducators together) to lead the complex process of education reform in their own communities. The Alliance provides leadership training, resources, and coaching in schools and in the community. Teachers, a central part of the school leadership team, are trained to facilitate workshops with parents and community members around their collective vision for their school.

Maine

Maine Center for Educational Services

Jenifer VanDeusen
P.O. Box 620
Auburn, ME 04212
207 783-0833
Jenifer_VanDeusen@melink.avcnet.org

The Center's focus is on bringing together schools, families, community members, and students themselves to collaborate on helping children to develop intellectually, physically, and emotionally. Three years ago, with the assistance of the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the Center chose four sites to address the issue of how to increase parental involvement. Currently, all site teams are focusing their work on the development of children's life skills.

Maine Coalition for Excellence in Education

Denison Gallaudet, Chairman
45 Memorial Circle
Augusta, ME 04330
207 375-4334
102136.3124@compuserve.com

Founded in 1990, the Maine Coalition for Excellence in Education gathered together educators, community members, and business people to develop a statewide plan for broad education standards for students. The Coalition held hearings, conducted surveys, and developed a collaborative to create a standards plan called Learning Results. All told, the Coalition's engagement process involved almost 10,000 people and led to the passage of the plan's content standards during the 1997 Maine legislative session.

Pathway Partners

Gary Perlson, Career Coordinator
Mt. Abram High School
R.R. 1 Box 760
Salem, ME 04983
207 678-2455
gperlson@somtel.com

The mission of Pathway Partners is to focus the resources of their partners in education, government, business, and the community to provide a seamless transition from school to a successful Career/Life Pathway for every student in the district.

Maryland

Baltimoreans United in Leadership Development (BUILD)

Leslie McMillan
2521 North Charles Street
Baltimore, MD 21218
410 467-9770

BUILD, twenty years old and the largest mainly African American community organization in the country, mobilizes community members to ensure a quality education for all children. BUILD helped found the Child First Authority, a public authority with the ability to issue bonds and raise capital. With support from the mayor, ten after-school programs were created in Baltimore schools on a pilot basis. The after-school programs are partnerships between schools and BUILD. Parents serve as volunteer staff at these programs.

Citizens Planning and Housing Association

Laura Weeldreyer
218 West Saratoga Street
Baltimore, MD 21201
410 539-1369

The Citizens Planning and Housing Association (CPHA), founded in 1941, is a community-based organization that uses citizen action to achieve the best possible quality of life for all residents of Baltimore. CPHA has partnered with parent/community groups and the public school system to enable the formation of city-based charter schools. CPHA is also working with three schools in Southeast Baltimore to increase parental involvement in school life and governance. CPHA's third area of engagement is its role as convener of the Baltimore Education Policy Network, a group of education leaders inside and outside of the schools that has worked to settle three pending lawsuits and ensure public input in the reform process.

Maryland Business Roundtable for Education

June Streckfus, Executive Director
111 South Calvert Street, Suite 2250
Baltimore, MD 21202
410 727-0448

The Maryland Business Roundtable for Education (MBRT) is a coalition of eighty companies that have made a ten-year commitment to support education reform and improve student achievement in Maryland. MBRT used a 1993 gap analysis that identified nine components missing in Maryland's school reform effort as the framework for an Education Summit in January 1996 with 250 of the state's key education stakeholders. That conversation sparked local conversations in communities across the state. In addition, MBRT's Speaker's Bureau identifies and trains well-known people, chiefly business leaders, to make presentations on education reform throughout the state.

National Network of Partnership-2000 Schools

Center on School, Family, and
Community Partnerships
Dr. Joyce L. Epstein, Director
Johns Hopkins University
3003 North Charles Street, Suite 200
Baltimore, MD 21218
410 516-8818
p2000@csos.jhu.edu
<http://www.csos.jhu.edu/p2000>

The network guides school, district, and state leaders and teams of educators, parents, and others to improve school, family, and community partnerships.

Massachusetts

The Algebra Project, Inc.

Robert Moses, Founder and President
Bethany Allen
99 Bishop Allen Drive
Cambridge, MA 02139
617 491-0200

The Algebra Project is a nationwide network of projects designed to equip students with a new mathematics literacy required for full participation in a changing technological society. There are currently eighteen projects in twelve states.

Artists for Humanity

Susan Rodgers, Founder
288-300 A Street
South Boston, MA 02210
617 737-2455

Artists for Humanity was founded eight years ago as an after-school program in Boston. Students participate in an apprenticeship program where they are paid to create artwork that is then marketed to the business community. There are forty students on the staff, and the sale of the students' art generates \$100,000 in revenue each year. Students must maintain a 2.5 grade-point average to stay in the program. Ninety-eight percent of the students in the program go on to college.

Cape Cod Education Center, Inc.

Sally Grimes
64 Olde Homestead Drive
Marstons Mills, MA 02648
508 420-6219
grimes@capecod.net

The Center works with school districts to help teachers address reading and social problems, such as dyslexia and attention deficit disorder, problems that are not addressed in many teacher preparation programs. The goal of the Center is to develop a major resource center where parents and administrators can access information and research and where parents and teachers can receive training.

Community Training and Assistance Center

Bill Slotnick, President
30 Winter Street
Boston, MA 02138
617 423-1444

The Community Training and Assistance Center (CTAC) is a seventeen-year-old non-profit organization that provides technical assistance to more than ninety community-based organizations and public institutions that work in education, health, housing, neighborhood revitalization, and other issues. CTAC helps schools complete a site assessment, gather a diverse group of stakeholders to envision what an ideal school would look like, and ultimately put an actual reform plan together.

Institute for Responsive Education

Tony Wagner, President
 Northeastern University
 50 Nightingale Hall
 Boston, MA 02115
 617 373-4479
 twagner@nnet.neu.edu
 http://www.dac.neu.edu/ire

Founded in 1973, the Institute for Responsive Education (IRE) promotes family and community involvement in schools and new approaches to elementary and secondary education that are responsive to the changing needs of students, families, communities, and the larger society. IRE's Responsive Schools Project was launched in 1994 and now involves clusters of K-12 schools in eight school districts across the country. Responsive Schools seek to develop and demonstrate new strategies for creating locally based, "bottom up" systemic changes in schools serving economically disadvantaged families. IRE provides site grants, part-time facilitators, and training and resources on gathering data on the community's needs and concerns.

Samuel W. Mason Elementary School

Mary L. Russo, Principal
 150 Norfolk Avenue
 Roxbury, MA 02119
 617 635-8405
 russo@infl.com

The Mason School serves 273 students from pre-school through grade 5. In 1991, Mason was the least-chosen elementary school in Boston and destined to close. Under a new principal, teachers and the community rallied to save the school, initially by focusing on filling the school, then on rebuilding discipline and starting an after-school program. The school has since actively involved parents and key business partners, including John Hancock Financial Services, in the classroom and on management teams.

Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education

S. Paul Reville, Executive Director
 Harvard Graduate School of Education
 451 Gutman Library
 Appian Way
 Cambridge, MA 02138
 617 496-4823

Formed in 1988, the Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education (MBAE) did extensive outreach to many groups – including business organizations, community groups, unions, superintendents, and school committees – to develop an education reform proposal entitled "Every Child a Winner." By continuing this commitment to engagement once reform legislation was drafted, MBAE not only ensured the passage of the Education Reform Act of 1993 but has subsequently promoted dialogue around the implementation of the law and its progress.

Massachusetts Department of Education

Alan Safran
 350 Main Street
 Malden, MA 02148-5023
 781 388-3300
 asafran@doe.mass.edu
 http://www.doe.mass.edu

The Massachusetts Department of Education was mandated to develop statewide standards through a widely representative commission. The commission traveled the state to gather feedback about what parents, community members, educators, and others thought children ought to learn. In all, 50,000 people were involved through open houses and forums held by local school councils. Since the publication of those standards, the "Common Core of Learning," the department has worked to explain them to the public.

Mobilization for Equity

Fran Smith, Coordinator
 Massachusetts Advocacy Center
 100 Boylston Street, Room 200
 Boston, MA 02116
 617 357-8431

Mobilization for Equity is a national project with the mission of promoting equal access to high-quality education for all children who live in the United States. The Boston project provides parents with information on the new student standards, trains parents to become better advocates for their children's achievement, and works with the entire community to build an equity agenda.

Multi-cultural Education, Training and Advocacy (META)

Roger Rice
 204A Elm Street, Suite 22
 Somerville, MA 02144
 617 628-2226

META is a public-interest law firm that specializes in litigation addressing equity issues for immigrant and minority children. META's parents' training focuses on how schools work, what the power structures in schools are, and how parents can become involved.

Newburyport Education Business Coalition

Dr. Paul Dulac, Superintendent
 Newburyport High School
 P.O. Box 853
 Newburyport, MA 01950
 978 465-4440

Founded in 1990, the Newburyport Education Business Coalition began as a joint venture between the local Industry Group and the Newburyport Public Schools to strengthen the community's total educational process. The Coalition supports innovative projects that demonstrate collaboration between classrooms and business partners through annual Partnership Grants. Another growing program, called Port Day, introduces elementary school students to different occupations in local businesses.

Patrick O'Hearn Elementary School

William Henderson, Principal
 1669 Dorchester Avenue
 Boston, Massachusetts
 617 635-8725

The O'Hearn School, part of the Institute for Responsive Education's Responsive Schools Project, is a K-5 full inclusion-school. Seven years ago, O'Hearn determined that family involvement was its top priority and identified potential parent leaders. To ensure a more family-friendly school, a number of projects were implemented: a family center during the school day, parent participation on school-based management teams, workshops for family members during and after school, a family newsletter, and a home reading program. Today, 98 percent of parents meet with teachers to examine students' progress on portfolios, and the same percentage of families takes part in the home reading program.

The Right Question Project, Inc.

Dan Rothstein, Director
 Luz Santana
 218 Holland Street
 Somerville, MA 02144
 617 628-4070

The Right Question Project (RQP) works nationally to promote the belief that all parents are capable of thinking and acting on their own behalf. RQP assists parents in developing the skills to interact with their children's teachers. Parents who have completed the RQP training interact more regularly with their children and with teachers and principals and develop an understanding of the importance of asking questions and the power of working together. Many sites across the country are using the RQP model.

Springfield Learning Community Collaborative

Jo-Anne Wilson Keenan, Director
 Frank H. Freedman School
 90 Cherokee Drive
 Springfield, MA 01109
 413 787-7443
 wilsonke@acad.umass.edu

In 1994, the Springfield Learning Community Collaborative (SLCC) was developed to include students' families in the classroom environment, to strengthen children's academic learning and to foster school/home collaboration. Twenty Springfield elementary school teachers participated in an off-campus degree program focused on fostering family participation and learning new approaches to teaching language arts. SLCC has enhanced the school/home collaboration through family visits to the classroom, family field trips, and summer workshops for teachers, parents, and children.

Michigan

The Center for Civil Leadership at the Institute for Education Reform

Mike Kiefer, Director
2000 Huron River Drive, Suite 102
Ypsilanti, MI 48197
313 484-3232

The Center for Civil Leadership, created in 1997, uses community dialogue as a lever for effective change within schools. The Center has developed a diagnostic tool to benchmark the behavior of school governance teams and to identify training needs. This tool will be used on an on-going basis to monitor the change in behavior of governance teams and the degree to which collaboration between school and community has increased.

Grand Rapids Public Education Fund

Elizabeth Dilley, President
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Grand Rapids, MI 49503
bethd@grpef.org
<http://www.grpef.org>

The Grand Rapids Public Education Fund (PEF) is an independent, nonprofit organization that promotes high achievement for all students through community partnerships with public schools. PEF works to ensure that, through its partnership programs, community members participate in strategic planning, policy discussions, and legislative issues, thereby providing strong leadership for systemic school reform. PEF's community-asset mapping initiative engages community members to help identify strengths and weaknesses in their neighborhoods and collaborate on community improvement.

Middle Start Initiative

Leah Meyer Austin, Program Director
W. K. Kellogg Foundation
One Michigan Avenue East
Battle Creek, MI 49017-4058
616 969-2265
lma@wkkf.org

Begun in 1994 as a project of the Kellogg Foundation, the Middle Start Initiative began with a confidential self-study by 224 schools, the data from which provided the basis for a public engagement strategy. Grants are made to individual schools throughout Michigan to support planning, comprehensive school improvement in curriculum instruction, rural school improvement, networking, professional development, technical assistance, communications, and policy support for the initiative. In collaboration with the Michigan League of Human Services, a booklet and companion video, "Starting in the Middle," was produced as a guide for teacher professional development and community discussions.

Minnesota

Child Care Aware

Denise Fogerty, Program Director
2116 Campus Drive, SE
Rochester, MN 55904
507 287-2220
HN6125@handsnet.org

Child Care Aware was founded in 1988 to improve child care in America. They provide consumer education on how to choose good care and have established a national 800 number for parents to find out about local resources. For family child-care providers they provide training and networking opportunities.

Independent School District 197, West St. Paul

Robert Monson, Superintendent
1897 Delaware Avenue
Mendota Heights, MN 55118
612 681-2313
0197@informns.k12.mn.us

The school district initiated a strategic planning process by creating a thirty-two-member board and convening two town hall meetings with help from Public Agenda and the Institute for Educational Leadership. These conversations helped to renew community interest in the public schools. Task forces developed after these conversations are building partnerships with local churches, community organizations, and elected officials.

League of Women Voters of Minneapolis

Rosemarie Kelly, Executive Director
Young Quindland Building
81 South 9th Street, Suite 335
Minneapolis, MN 55402
612 333-6319
lwvmppls@mtn.org

Founded in 1920, the League of Women Voters of Minneapolis is a civic education organization that encourages citizens to play an informed and active role in government. During the 1997-98 school year, the League designed a "shadow" study, funded through a grant from the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, for all twenty-two middle-level schools in Minneapolis: community volunteers will shadow a student, a teacher, and a principal in each school; the League will then convene stakeholders in the community to disseminate the results of the study.

Middle School Connection

Bev Prawalsky
Linda Jury
1922 Garfield Street, NE
Minneapolis, MN 55418
612 789-3819
612 824-6052
Beverly.A.Prawalsky@HealthPartners.com

The Middle School Connection is a two-year-old, middle-school newsletter created by two mothers to inform and empower parents. Funded this year with a grant from the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, the newsletter is mailed to each of the roughly 12,000 families in Minneapolis with children in grades 5 through 8. A hotline for parents to call and comment on the newsletter has been established. During the 1997-98 school year, the two founders are collaborating with the League of Women Voters of Minneapolis to try to get a parent liaison in every middle school.

Mississippi

Parents for Public Schools

Kelly Butler, Executive Director
Ann Duffy, Parent Connections
Project Director
P.O. Box 12807
Jackson, MS 39236-2807
800 880-1222
601 982-1222
ppsduffy@aol.com
<http://www.pps.net>

Parents for Public Schools (PPS) is a national organization of grassroots chapters dedicated to recruiting students, involving parents, and improving public schools. PPS chapters are community-based, not school-based, and they work with superintendents, school boards, and civic leaders to "build excellent public schools and better communities." There are presently fifty-six chapters in twenty-five states.

Public Education Forum of Mississippi

Dr. Donald Cotten, Executive Director
120 North Congress Street, Suite 800
Jackson, MS 39201
601 353-5488

The Public Education Forum of Mississippi was begun in 1989 by a group of business leaders to enhance the quality of life in the state through the improvement of public education. The Forum's work focuses on issues of infrastructure, including the educator pipeline, human resources, attracting the best and brightest into the profession, technology, professional development, and work-force preparation.

Missouri

Pattonville Community Schools

Mickey Schoonover
Pattonville Learning Center
11097 St. Charles Rock Road
St. Ann, MO 63074
314 213-8025

During the mid 1980s, the community's ability to support the school district was threatened by the growing number of residents without school-age children, including a large number of senior citizens. School administrators worked diligently to include all community members, particularly senior citizens, in the planning and operation of the public schools. Today the district enjoys broad community support, intergenerational service work, and active participation by the community in school issues.

Nebraska

Florence Elementary School

Janet Pinaire, Principal
7902 N 36 Street
Omaha, NE 68112
402 457-5818
jpinaire@ops.org
<http://www.FlorenceSchool.ops.org>

Florence Elementary School, located in the northeast section of Omaha, strives to enhance the learning of children by tapping into a wide variety of business and community resources. Florence believes that when students and members of the community set goals, work on projects, and celebrate their accomplishments together, students achieve at higher levels and a stronger sense of community is evident. Students also helped to design a mural that was painted on the side of a local building representing Florence's history. The school has recently initiated a local dialogue on civility between school, religious, and community leaders.

The School at the Center Project

Jerry Hoffman, Coordinator
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Lincoln, NE 68588
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jerry_lee_hoffma@msn.com

The School at the Center Project developed in response to the farm crisis in Nebraska in the 1980s, seeking to renew the connection between schools and the community. Communities are seen as learning laboratories. Many schools have focused on technology, heritage, and community development. The program believes that students need responsibility, an identity, and purpose. Community and students work together to decide what they want to promote about the community.

Wakefield Community School

Jeanne Surface, 7-12 Principal
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Wakefield, NE 68784
402 287-2012
jsurface@priam.wake.esu1.k12.ne.us

Wakefield Community School, a rural school district of 460 students, is part of the Nebraska School at the Center Project and the Annenberg Rural Challenge. Wakefield has implemented community-based education focused on science, entrepreneurship, housing, technology, humanities, and journalism. The community-based education, with the full and active participation of teachers, aims to help students understand their place in the community and their role in its revitalization.

New Hampshire

Mount Washington Valley Education Roundtables

Gail Marrone
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Tamworth, NH 03886
603 323-8841

During the fall of 1997, ninety-six people from Mount Washington Valley participated in seven education roundtables sponsored by the Public Conversations Project, to address the question, "Is our current educational system working or not working for all members of the Mt. Washington Valley community?" Low morale and the concern of members of the nine towns that send students to Kennett High School in Conway about their voice in their children's education provided the impetus for these roundtables. After the seven roundtables had met four times each, the participants assembled together at a community forum to summarize their discussions and to offer recommendations.

Orford Education Roundtables

Douglas Tift
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Orford, NH 03777
603 643-7100, ext. 245
douglas.c.tift@dartmouth.edu

Civic leaders in Orford initiated education roundtables, with the assistance of the Public Conversations Project, to discuss how to improve the fiscal viability of the town's high school, which could no longer be supported by the town's tax base. From these discussions emerged a commitment on the part of the community to enter into a partnership with nearby Fairlee, Vermont, to share resources and offer both communities' students better educational opportunities.

Public Conversations Project

Bruce Mallory, Dean of the Graduate School
University of New Hampshire
Thompson Hall
Durham, NH 03824
603 862-3007
bmallory@christa.unh.edu

The Public Conversations Project coordinates local study circles or education roundtables on educational issues throughout New Hampshire. Groups of people from throughout the community typically meet for two hours once a week for four successive weeks.

New Jersey

Education Law Center

Steve Block
155 Washington Street, Room 209
Newark, NJ 07102-3106
201 624-1815, ext. 18

Formed twenty-three years ago, the Education Law Center is a school-finance reform group that focuses on litigation. The Center's Parent Representation Project takes calls from parents, identifies their problems in schools, and works to improve those areas of concern.

Hackensack Cares

Rachele Ackerman
Hackensack Public Schools
355 State Street
Hackensack, NJ 07601
201 648-7821

Hackensack Cares works to meet the needs of the mostly Latino population that it serves. Staff and volunteers work with families during home visits to help build relationships. Their work centers on bilingual education and helping parents to become more involved in their children's education.

Paterson Education Fund

Irene Sterling
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Paterson, NJ 07501
973 881-8914
isterling@delphi.com

Paterson was the site of the second state takeover of a school district in the country. This takeover served as the impetus for much of the Paterson Education Fund's (PEF) and the district's engagement work, as the community came to be seen as a vital contributor to school improvement. One of the most visible parent and community involvement projects is a collaboration with the Right Question Project in which parents learn how to monitor, support, and advocate for better schools. The PEF's Family Friendly Computer Program last year loaned 900 computers to public school families. The Kids Voting – New Jersey project enabled 23,000 Paterson students last year to cast their votes on the same issues that adults did.

Plainfield Public Schools

Larry Leverett, Superintendent
504 Madison Avenue
Plainfield, NJ 07060
908 753-3155
larleveret@aol.com

As part of a strategic planning process, more than 200 people participated in the production of the “Community Planning Task Force Report” in 1996. The school district subsequently incorporated many of the community’s suggestions into its plan. Leadership, Innovation, and Change Councils were created at each school as a site-based management team that includes parents and community members.

**Randall Carter Elementary School
(Wayne Township Public Schools)**

Linda Dubsy, Former Principal
15 South Baynard Lane
Mahwah, NJ 07430
201 934-1896
zlato@prodigy.net

When a new principal arrived at Randall Carter Elementary School in 1991, she immediately began work to develop school/business partnerships under a directive from the district. Working with students, teachers, parents, and community members, the school initiated a school-beautification project that planted trees and shrubbery, developed a mile and a half nature trail, and constructed a nature study center. While located at Randall Carter, the nature trail and center are used not only by each of the district’s schools but also by the community. Parents, educators, and community members, including one of the school’s business partners, have also been actively involved on site-based planning committees.

Woodstown-Pilesgrove Regional School District

Dr. Claude W. McAllister, Superintendent
135 East Avenue
Woodstown, NJ 08908
609 769-1664
wpschool@willie.salem.cc.nj.us

In March 1997, a group of ten school board members, parents, and administrators attended a Parents as Partners workshop sponsored by the New Jersey School Boards Association. Soon after, an engagement process was launched with educators, parents, and community members with the intent of increasing student achievement. More than one hundred community members began work on five committees to address issues such as parent resources, communications, and school climate. Two policies – on parent participation and volunteers – that emerged from these committees were subsequently approved by the school board and will be implemented beginning in January 1998.

The Writers’ Room (Montclair)

Sheila Crowell, Founder and Director
Ellen Kolba, Founder and Director
The Writing Centers of Montclair
Public Schools
346 Park Street
Montclair, NJ 07043-2234
973 746-7328

The Writers’ Room program has trained nearly a hundred volunteers from the community and from Montclair State University to work with students in the classroom to help them improve their writing skills.

New York**Campaign for Fiscal Equity, Inc.**

Michael Rebell, Executive Director
and Counsel
6 East 43rd Street
New York, NY 10017
212 867-8455

Founded in 1993 as a coalition of major educational and parent advocate groups, community school boards, and citizens, the Campaign for Fiscal Equity filed a lawsuit on school funding that was brought before the state. That lawsuit seeks to ensure that all students in New York have access to a “sound, basic education.” CFE has committed itself to building broad public support – through a multiyear series of statewide regional forums and events in New York City – for a remedy that can be presented to the legislature if the state Court of Appeals rules in favor of the lawsuit.

Highbridge Community Life Center

Brother Edward Phelan, Executive Director
979 Ogden Avenue
Bronx, NY 10452
718 681-2222

The Highbridge Community Life Center opened in 1979 in response to the mass exodus of families from the community. A handful of women began to canvas the neighborhood, asking residents how they could help, which led to a small referral service. Since then, the Center has offered adult education classes and after-school programs for children, including mentoring. After a strategic planning process in 1990, the Center decided to sponsor a VISTA program, and currently there are twenty-four VISTA and Americorp volunteers on the staff. The Center’s Futures Workshops bring families on a day-long retreat to talk about their vision of the Highbridge community.

**Industrial Areas Foundation/
Metro New York City**

Jim Drake
Westiders Together
165 West 65th Street
New York, NY 10024
212 875-9345

The Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) has been deeply involved in the development of the South Bronx over the past twelve years. Parents and community members helped to design and create a new school called the Bronx Leadership Academy. IAF helped to organize several thousand people to confront the school board to ensure the approval of this new school. The Academy, thanks to its small size and acceptance of shared governance with parents, has seen graduation rates rise and more and more graduates going on to college.

Mothers On the Move (MOM)

Lucretia Jones, Chairperson,
Board of Directors
928 Intervale Avenue
Bronx, NY 10459
718 842-2224
chairmom@aol.com

MOM began in 1992 as the Parent Organizing and Education Project of the Bronx Education Services (BES). A group of mothers looked up the reading scores at their children’s schools and were shocked at the low achievement levels. They started to organize, meet, and talk with other parents. Incorporated in 1994, MOM organizes parents to fight for their children, for greater funding and resource equity, and for improved student achievement. Membership now includes over 700 moms (and some dads).

Multicultural Music Group, Inc.

Luis Mojica, Executive Director
114 Briggs Avenue
Yonkers, NY 10701
914 375-4096

The Multicultural Music Group, Inc. (MMG), is a nonprofit organization created to promote multicultural music instruction as a tool to achieve global understanding, cultural awareness, and academic improvement. Parents and community members share experiences related to their cultural heritage to enhance lessons. MMG’s teacher-training program provides professional development in multicultural music education. Artists of different cultures in residence work with educators in school districts to enhance their music programs.

Public Agenda

Deborah Wadsworth, Executive Director
Will Friedman, Director of Public
Engagement
6 East 39th Street
New York, NY 10016
212 686-6610
paresearch@aol.com
<http://www.publicagenda.org/index.html>

Founded in 1975 by social scientist and author Daniel Yankelovich and former Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, Public Agenda works to help average citizens better understand critical policy issues and to help the nation's leaders better understand the public's point of view. Public Agenda's in-depth research on how citizens think about policy forms the basis for extensive citizen education work.

The Selborne Project

Mark Baldwin, Project Coordinator
Roger Tory Peterson Institute
311 Curtis Street
Jamestown, NY 14701
716 665-2473
mark@rtpi.org
<http://www.rtpi.org/selborne.html>

The Selborne Project is a curricular project of the Roger Tory Peterson Institute, a national, nonprofit organization. The Selborne Project's goal is to instill the love of nature and the revitalization of communities through a curriculum that allows children to learn about the natural and human ecology of the area around the school. Teachers receive in-service preparation, and parents and community members welcome students to their workplaces and in turn accompany them to classes during their learning.

North Carolina

Center for Creative Leadership

Kathleen M. Holmes-Ponder, Director,
Learning Systems Applications
One Leadership Place
Post Office Box 26300
Greensboro, NC 27436-6300
910 288-7210
holmesk@leaders.ccl.org
<http://www.ccl.org>

The Center for Creative Leadership (CCL) is an international, nonprofit educational institution founded in 1970. CCL focuses on expanding the interpersonal skill sets of educational leaders through a process of personal assessment, feedback, and coaching.

Latin American Resource Center (LARC)

Aura Camacho Maas, Founder and
Executive Director
P.O. Box 31871
Raleigh, NC 27622-1871
919 870-5272
larc@worldnet.att.net

The Latin American Resource Center (LARC) works with local schools, their students, and community members to impact history and other curricula and increase students' understanding of Latin American cultures. LARC's Dialogo program provides teacher training, piloted workshops, lesson plans and materials, and a traveling art exhibit to help educators infuse their classrooms with new knowledge about Latin American countries and people.

North Carolina Center for Creative Retirement

Carolyn Williams, School Volunteer
Program Director
University of North Carolina at Asheville
One University Heights
Asheville, NC 28804
704 251-6140

The North Carolina Center for Creative Retirement, an institute of the University of North Carolina at Asheville, provides programs in community leadership, volunteerism, peer learning and teaching, health promotion, intergenerational education, and retirement planning. In November 1996, the Center facilitated a pilot study-circles program at Asheville Middle School. Those study circles, which included thirty-one community members, aimed to improve communication in the schools and to clarify the points where people wanted to take action.

North Carolina Education and Law Project

Greg Malhoit
P.O. Box 27343
Raleigh, NC 27610
919 856-2150

The North Carolina Education and Law Project emerged from meetings in 1991 between a group of forty leaders who came together to examine the need for a legal advocacy project. The Project provides parents with forty hours of instruction as part of a parent-empowerment training program that focuses on educational policy and leadership development. The Project also does research and publishes reports and studies.

Public School Forum of North Carolina

John Dornan, President, Executive Director
3739 National Drive, Suite 210
Raleigh, NC 27612
919 781-6833
<http://www.ncforum.org>

The Public School Forum was founded in 1985 in direct response to *A Nation at Risk*. The Forum's sixty-person board is evenly divided among business leaders, elected officials, and educators. Its mission is to contribute to creating a school system in North Carolina that is second to none. The Forum seeks to build consensus around the goals of school improvement and an accompanying common vision that extends from the community level to the public policy arena of the state. The Forum is also launching the Institute for Educational Policymakers to build the capacity and vision of educational policymakers and the reporters and writers who cover them.

Transylvania Dispute Settlement Center

John A. Fenner
P.O. Box 1205
500 North Broad Street
Brevard, NC 28712
704 877-3815

During the fall of 1996, the Transylvania Dispute Settlement Center initiated a communitywide discussion, using the study-circles model, on a variety of educational issues. The goal was to provide a vision of excellence in public education. The Center trained facilitation and discussion leaders. Discussions began on a pilot basis with three groups of fifteen people and then expanded to communitywide groups with nearly one hundred people in eight groups.

Ohio

Cincinnati Public Schools

Monica Solomon, Communications Director
P.O. Box 5381
Cincinnati, OH 45201-5381
513 475-7023

Following a series of failed levies in 1990, the Cincinnati Public Schools adopted a communications strategy to build support for the schools among key community stakeholders. The district worked with Public Agenda and at the same time began a partnership with the New American Schools and the Education Commission of the States to build a strategic communications plan. A key component was building capacity at the local school level. The district has also worked to provide clearer, more easily understood information on standards and assessments to the community.

Citizen's League of Lorain County

Lisa Stofan, Executive Director
 P.O. Box 243
 1875 North Ridge Road East, Suite B
 Lorain, OH 44055
 216 240-1980

The Citizen's League publishes voter guides and hosts forums to help citizens better understand local candidates. The work of the Citizen's League in education this year has focused on leading a series of study circles around a range of educational issues, following a successful study-circles program on race.

Defiance City Schools/Defiance 2000

Ian MacGregor, Assistant Superintendent
 629 Arabella Street
 Defiance, OH 43512
 419 782-0070

Defiance 2000 was a collaboration between the Defiance and Ayersville schools to establish and work toward a set of goals based on the national Goals 2000 plan. The Defiance 2000 Committee comprised local education, civic, and business leaders. Six goals were originally chosen; a seventh – to increase parent involvement in schools – was added later. Programs that have grown out of this work include three neighborhood learning centers, a social group that organizes family activities at the middle school level, and a growing mentoring program.

Harmony Empowerment Center

David Nordyke
 1730 Section Road
 P.O. Box 37763
 Cincinnati, OH 45222
 513 761-9700

The Harmony Empowerment Center is a consumer-oriented education group that provides information and helps parents to get what is best for their children. The Center helps parents and citizens access information, formulate questions, and take action for their children.

The Kettering Foundation

David Mathews, President
 200 Commons Road
 Dayton, OH 45459-2799
 513 434-7300
 800 221-3657
<http://www.kettering.org>

The Kettering Foundation is a nonprofit research institution, dedicated to improving the practice of democratic politics. It works in the U.S. and in emerging democracies throughout the world for the development of healthy civil societies, communities able to manage their own public business effectively, and a public voice that clearly expresses the political will of the people. It also conducts research, which is used to craft "tools," study guides, community workbooks, and other exercises that help a public act effectively and responsively on its problems.

Medina Public Schools

Charles Irish, Superintendent
 120 West Washington
 Medina, OH 44256
 330 725-9201

When a conflict arose in Medina over a picture of Jesus displayed in an elementary school, school district officials used the opportunity to engage a broad range of school and community participants in a series of community forums. The school district has continued to use engagement strategies to develop a strategic plan and to decide whether to build a new high school.

The Mohican Institute

William G. O'Callaghan, Jr.
 William G. O'Callaghan Associates
 1201 Virginia Avenue
 Lakewood, OH 444107
 216 227-0236
cork@stratos.net

The Mohican Institute began as a group of thirty Ohio superintendents who met to discuss ways in which schools and communities could work differently in the future. The Institute was eventually incorporated in order to help other school districts in Ohio work with their publics.

Ohio's BEST – Building Excellent Schools for Today and the 21st Century

Donald S. Van Meter
 Jack Johnson
 68 North High Street, 4th Floor
 Columbus, OH 43215
 614 469-1200

Ohio's BEST is a public education and awareness campaign of the Ohio Education Improvement Consortium, Inc., a statewide alliance committed to improving educational opportunities and results for all Ohio school children. One program, Ohio's BEST Practices, identifies and showcases exemplary practices across the state.

Olivehill Accelerated School

Roger Evans, Principal
 1250 Olive Road
 Dayton, OH 45426
 513 854-0761

During meetings in church basements three years ago, the Olivehill Accelerated School launched its school reform efforts by developing a vision for its dream school. Now in the third year of the process, a team of teachers, the principal, two parents, and two students meet every other week. That team reviews reports from four operational-change groups, made up of people from within the school, that look at curriculum and instruction, parent and community involvement, physical plan and school safety, and school discipline and climate.

Olmstead Falls School District

Robert Kreiner, Superintendent
 P.O. Box 38010
 Olmstead Falls, OH 44138
 216 235-7979

School districts in Ohio are continually required to go back to their constituents to ask for levy approval to finance school improvement projects. Olmstead Falls engaged citizens as part of a process to garner support for a levy to build classrooms and increase the operating budget. The district has continued to work with a core group of thirty-to-forty community members.

Reaching Heights

Susie Kaeser
 3130 Mayfield Road, Suite E-239
 Cleveland Heights, OH 44118
 216 932-5110

Reaching Heights is a small, community-based organization founded in 1989. A dialogue, "Public Schools for the 21st Century," based on the study-circles model, convened community members around increasing community involvement and collaboration with educators and redesigning schools.

SchoolMatch

Jeffrey Glaze, Manager for
 Consulting Services
 Blendonview Office Park
 5027 Pine Creek Drive
 Westerville, OH 43081-4849
 614 890-1573
glaze@schoolmatch.com
<http://schoolmatch.com>

SchoolMatch started in 1986 to help provide relocating families with information on schools. They maintain a national database of information on every public school and each accredited private school in the country. SchoolMatch has also completed over 650 audits of school systems to date.

Wauseon Exempted Village Schools

Neil Weber, Superintendent
 120 East Chestnut Street
 Wauseon, OH 43567
 419 335-6616

A boom in the projected growth of the student population prompted district officials to convene an engagement process to build support for a \$7.2-million bond issue to construct a new school. Administrators began meeting in 1995 to discuss their options to accommodate the growth. Meetings with parents were scheduled, and a committee perused voting lists to find potential supporters. A communitywide "state of the schools" meeting drew more than 550 people. The bond issue was subsequently passed with 63 percent of the vote.

West Holmes Consolidated Schools

Dean Wurtzler, Former Superintendent
P.O. Box 897
Kilbuck, OH 44637
330 722-4513

Faced with serious overcrowding in their schools, administrators and principals went to teachers and parents to discuss the problem and to begin to build support for a major bond issue. A committee of school and community members formed to devise alternate plans to build a new high school and eleven new classrooms at the elementary level or to commit to a year-round scheduling plan with split-sessions. These plans were presented to 300 community members at a “state of the schools” meeting, and the Board decided to place a \$16.8-million bond issue on the ballot. That bond issue eventually passed with 58 percent of the vote.

Oregon

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

Robert E. Blum
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Portland, OR 97204-3297
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<http://www.nwrel.org>

The mission of the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL) is to improve educational results for children, youth, and adults by providing research and development assistance in delivering equitable, high-quality educational programs. NWREL provides research and development assistance to education, government, community agencies, business, and labor. NWREL’s primary service area is the Northwest states of Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington.

Pennsylvania

Alliance Organizing Project

Gary Rodwell
152 West Lehigh Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19133
215 739-5702

Founded in 1995, the Alliance Organizing Project (AOP) educates and funds professional community organizers to train parents to be able to hold all parts of the community accountable for maintaining and improving a quality public education system. AOP believes that parent and community organizing is the key component to creating and sustaining deep parental involvement in schools.

Asian Americans United

Ellen Somekawa, Executive Director
801 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19107
215 925-1538

Asian Americans United (AAU) formed in 1985 when small groups of like-minded individuals came together to build a broad base to support Asian American communities in Philadelphia. In 1986, AAU began a pilot summer program to provide an alternate education to Southeast Asian children in West Philadelphia and to train youth and organize parents. AAU’s goal is to get more parents involved in the education of their children by providing them with information and organizing them around issues such as the creation of English as a Second Language programs and ensuring bilingual staff in schools.

Central Elementary School

Christopher Yeager, Principal
829 Turner Street
Allentown, PA 18102
610 820-2123

To solve an overcrowding problem, the district in March 1996 selected Central Elementary School to pilot year-round schooling. As part of a three-year study and planning process, the district reached out to community members, businesses, and day-care providers. The school also contacted parents through invitations, phone calls, and surveys to inform them about the new program. Early indicators of success are a higher daily attendance level, a focus on positive discipline, and a stronger relationship with the community.

Children Achieving Challenge

Vicki Phillips, Executive Director
1818 Market Street, Suite 3510
Philadelphia, PA 19103
215 575-2200
<http://www.philsch.k12.pa.us>

The Children Achieving Challenge is a public-private partnership, created with a \$50-million grant from the Annenberg Foundation, to support Philadelphia’s school improvement plan. Public engagement is one component of the Philadelphia Public Schools’ ten-part Children Achieving plan. The Challenge has promoted the development of school councils to enable parents to take part in site-based management. Recently, parents, teachers, and community members participated in a process to craft districtwide content standards.

Communities in Schools

Martin Nock, Executive Director
JFK Center, Room 450
734 Schuylkill Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19146
215 875-3171

Ten years old and chartered by the Philadelphia school district, Communities in Schools (CIS) is a stay-in-school, drop-out prevention program aimed at at-risk youth. CIS, which is housed in seventeen high schools, including nine Small Learning Communities, works to help at-risk youth graduate and find employment. CIS develops curricula, such as health management, that are career-skills oriented.

Eastside Alliance

Jennifer O’Donnell, Project Coordinator
RD 44808 Liberty Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15224
412 621-0644

Eastside Alliance is a parent-advocacy initiative based on the Alliance Organizing Project in Philadelphia. The goal of Eastside Alliance is to assemble an organized group of parents who are focused on student achievement.

Mon Valley Education Consortium

Linda Croushore, Co-Executive Director
Carmen Sarnicola, Co-Executive Director
336 Shaw Avenue
McKeesport, PA 15132-2917
412 678-9215
mvec@mvec.org
<http://www.mvec.org>

Founded in 1987, the Mon Valley Education Consortium (MVEC) is a member of the Public Education Network and is dedicated to achieving high-quality public education for every child. MVEC works in twenty-five school districts and their constituent communities in southwestern Pennsylvania to restore and build public confidence in the schools and to create strong linkages between the community and the schools. During the 1995–96 school year, MVEC brought together educators and the public in those communities where the Consortium works in a Community Summit to address concerns in their schools and communities.

Parents Union for Public Schools

Sarah Gilliam
311 S. Juniper Street, Suite 602
Philadelphia, PA 19107
215 546-1166
ParentU@aol.com

Parents Union for Public Schools (PUPS) is a citywide, multiracial parents' group formed in 1972 to serve as an informational resource for parents. They maintain a comprehensive library of fiscal and organizational information, such as test scores and attendance rates, on each of the 257 schools in the Philadelphia public school system. PUPS' goal is to provide parents with meaningful and adequate information to be able to have direct conversations with school officials.

Pennsylvania School Reform Network

Timothy Potts, Director
317 North Front Street
Harrisburg, PA 17101
717 238-7171
psrn@elc-pa.org

The Pennsylvania School Reform Network (PSRN) is an independent, nonpartisan organization that works to build public engagement in school reform in Pennsylvania. PSRN works to inform and engage Network members with respect to legislative, regulatory, and other initiatives at the state level that have an impact on students' rights and the quality of education they receive.

Rhode Island

Providence Blueprint for Education (PROBE)

Edward D. Eddy, Chair
Daniel D. Challenger, Director
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Providence, RI 02903
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dchall@aol.com

The Providence Blueprint for Education (PROBE) began in the early 1990s with a two-year study of the Providence public schools. Thirty-nine recommendations emerged from the report. PROBE is an independent community-advocacy group whose mission is to try to get those recommendations adopted, including changes in the teachers' contract and establishment of parent centers in schools. PROBE is developing a public accountability project to allow six schools initially (on a voluntary basis) to prepare school report cards that contain qualitative and quantitative information; the program is to expand in 1998 to twelve schools.

Tiogue Elementary School

Barbara Werchadlo, Principal
170 Shore Drive
Coventry, RI 02816
401 822-9460

After members of the steering committee attended an informational meeting with the Foundation for Excellent Schools, the Tiogue Elementary School formed a core team of the principal, three teachers, and two parents to begin a goal-setting process. The three goals that the team established were to achieve 100 percent family involvement, to initiate a town beautification project, and to have each grade level take on a service-learning project.

South Carolina

Charleston County School District

Meg Howle
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Charleston, SC 29401
803 937-6302

With a task force of community representatives, Charleston created elected, widely representative school governance councils for every school, which are in charge of staff and principal selection and budget and curriculum decisions. The district also is reaching out more to the local business community, African American civic and church leaders, and parents.

South Dakota

Belle Fourche School District

John Swanson
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Belle Fourche, SD 57717-1900
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jswanson@iw.net

The roughly 1,450 students in the Belle Fourche School District, which is part of the Annenberg Rural Challenge, use the community as a focus of study. At each grade level, students research and write on the cultural and historical components of the community. High school students who take a popular historiography course research and interview local elderly citizens and write stories on their lives and experiences. The final documents prepared by students are archived and made available for use by other students, members of the community, and local historians. Sixth-graders study the local government, infrastructure, and economy to create mock towns. These projects are assessed, not by teachers, but by parents, civic, and business leaders, and community members.

Elm Valley School District

Cindy Rall
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Barnard, SD 57426-0006
605 329-2145
rallcbti@gate.com

Educators in the Elm Valley School District, which is part of the Annenberg Rural Challenge, are developing a community-visioning process to engage community members around the strengths and weaknesses of their schools. A variety of ideas, including the renovation of classrooms and addressing housing and elderly needs, emerged from conversations to improve the schools and the towns in the district. Students have been active participants in looking at changes to parts of the curriculum.

Howard School District

Jim Lentz, Principal
Howard High School
P.O. Box E
Howard, SD 57349-0210
605 772-5515
howhisch@santel.net

The Howard, South Dakota, district, which is part of the Annenberg Rural Challenge, has focused on four ideas: place, demographics, sustainability, and social justice. Students at Howard High School developed a cash-flow project that, after examining how much revenues would increase if residents spent more money in their county, led to a 27 percent increase in revenues the following year. Howard High School has also opened a Rural Resource Center that serves as a hub for community activities and interaction. Directed readings by students, parents, and community members have also sparked conversations on the future needs of the area.

Pollock School District

John LaFave
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Pollock, SD 57648-0207
605 889-2831
jlafave@sioux.sodac.net

Students in Pollock, a small town of 400 people and part of the Annenberg Rural Challenge, have spearheaded an effort to address a shortage of housing and a disconnect with senior citizens. After the school developed a Life Skills curriculum, students worked to refurbish a mobile home as assisted housing for elderly residents. The creation of a community center adjacent to the school will also enable school and community members to access a variety of resources and programs.

Program for Rural School and Community Renewal

Mike Johnson, Director
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 South Dakota State University
 Brookings, SD 57005-0095
 605 688-4198
 JohnsonM@ur.sdstate.edu

The Program for Rural School and Community Renewal was started at South Dakota State University. It is part of the Annenberg Rural Challenge and works with eighteen communities. Schools use the community as a focus of study. Educators, students, parents, and community members, as part of a six-to-ten-person core team, ask themselves questions such as “Why are the schools there?” and “What should kids know?” Students are involved in decision making.

Shannon County School District

Terry Albers
 P.O. Box 109
 Batesland, SD 57716-0109
 605 288-1921

The past two U.S. census reports have identified Shannon County, home to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation and the small community of Batesland, as the poorest county in the country. With funding from the National Academy of Sciences and the Annenberg Rural Challenge, the district has provided computers and training throughout the school. The school, managed by a leadership team, has opened up by implementing school-based management and making the community an integral part of its activities.

Tennessee**Betty Phillips Center for Parenthood Education**

Jerold P. Bauch, Director
 Box 81
 Peabody College of Vanderbilt University
 Nashville, TN 37203
 615 322-8080
 jerry.bauch@vanderbilt.edu

The Betty Phillips Center for Parenthood Education is a research, development, and training center of Peabody College at Vanderbilt University. The Bridge Project, developed in 1994, is a national effort with the American Business Collaboration for Quality Dependent Care to improve and expand involvement in the schools. Families receive vital information, through voice-messaging technology, from school each day so they can provide a supportive environment for their children. During the 1995–96 school year, more than a hundred schools in eleven school districts qualified as the first Bridge Project schools.

Partners for Academic Excellence, Inc. (PACE)

Anne Hall, Executive Director
 P.O. Box 4212
 Chattanooga, TN 37405
 423 886-9849
 hall_annie@a1.cps.k12.tn.us

Founded in 1986, PACE is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to generate and facilitate parental and community involvement in the public schools of Chattanooga and Hamilton counties.

Public Education Fund

Steve Prighozy, Executive Director
 100 East 10th Street, Suite 500
 Chattanooga, TN 37402
 423 265-9403

The Public Education Fund (PEF) helped the Chattanooga Public Schools gather support for a referendum to merge the city schools with the surrounding Hamilton County school system. The PEF undertook a get-out-the-vote campaign, emphasizing the need for high standards for students. After city voters overwhelmingly voted to merge, the PEF helped to craft a new plan for the merged district. Through community hearings, surveys, 120 town meetings, and a media campaign, 35,000 people were involved in the process.

Texas**Hispanic Education Committee**

Sister Bernadine Reyes
 216 W. Highland Boulevard
 Boerne, TX 78006
 830 816-8470

A group of parents in Boerne formed the Hispanic Education Committee to address the plight of Hispanic students. In 1992, for instance, while 73 percent of white students in the tenth grade took and passed all three of the state's exit exams, only 22 percent of Hispanic students did. Listening to the Committee's concerns, the School Board subsequently incorporated a goal in its 1994 and 1995 annual plans to work with parents and community members to narrow this achievement gap. Since then, the gap has been reduced, and both groups are performing at higher levels. In 1997, 55 percent of Hispanic students and 87 percent of white students in the tenth grade took and passed the exams.

Industrial Areas Foundation

Carrie Loughlin
 Texas Interfaith Education Fund
 1106 Clayton Lane, Suite 120W
 Austin, TX 78723
 512 459-6551

Founded in the 1940s, the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) is a national network of more than forty umbrella groups of organizations that work to improve the quality of life in disadvantaged communities. The Alliance Schools Project, established in 1992 as an outgrowth of IAF's work, aims to increase parent and community involvement in schools. Alliance Schools focus on fostering and building parental leadership, making student achievement the top goal of school restructuring, and building community relationships around education reform.

Intercultural Development Research Association

Aurelio Montemayor
 5835 Callaghan Road, Suite 350
 San Antonio, TX 78228-1190
 210 684-8180
 IDRA@idra.org
 http://www.idra.org

Founded in 1973, the Intercultural Development and Research Association (IDRA) is an independent, nonprofit advocacy organization dedicated to improving educational opportunity. IDRA conducts research and development activities; creates, implements, and administers innovative education programs; and provides teacher, administrator, and parent training and technical assistance.

Just for the Kids

Brad Duggan, Executive Director
 301 Congress Avenue, Suite 375
 Austin, TX 78701
 800 762-4645
 512 320-4150
 JFTK@just4kids.org
 http://www.just4kids.org

Founded in 1995, Just for the Kids (JFTK) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that educates, engages, and energizes individuals in every community in Texas to provide the opportunity for all children to maximize their potential in the public school system. JFTK's Community Engagement Chapters brings together parents, educators, and business and community leaders to set clear and measurable goals, to use student achievement data to evaluate where a community stands relative to the goals, and to form partnerships to hold all stakeholders accountable for their roles to reach these goals and to sustain improvements over time.

**Sam Houston Elementary School
(Lower Rio Grande Valley)**

Connie Maheshwari, Principal
2000 North 23rd
McAllen, TX 78501
210 971-4484

Shortly after becoming a member of the Industrial Areas Foundation's Alliance School Project about three years ago, teachers and staff from Sam Houston Elementary School began to visit parents' homes. They soon learned that safety was a major concern, along with a desire to see cleaner alleys around the school building. The school worked with the local police to assign two more police officers to the area outside of the school, and with parents who now have cleaned up and monitor the school's alleys. These new relationships with parents have led to the development of a contract of expectations signed by teachers, parents, and students and to the creation of report-card nights where parents visit the school every six weeks.

Zavala Elementary School

Loretta Caro, Principal
310 Robert Martinez Jr. Street
Austin, TX 78702-4536
512 414-2318
<http://www.austin.isd.tenet.edu/schools/elementary/zavala.html>

In 1990, Zavala initiated a partnership with the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) to build and strengthen relationships with the community. The school began to restructure itself by organizing teachers to begin a visioning process, mainstreaming all students, and introducing a gifted reading program. Zavala's focus has always been to improve student achievement which, along with increased student attendance, has soared to where 93 percent of fourth-graders now pass the state's writing-proficiency test.

Vermont

First Day Foundation

Terry Elrich
P.O. Box 10
Bennington, VT 05201
802 447-9625
<http://www.firstday.org>

Nearly 1,200 parents and "parent equivalents" in five Vermont towns kicked off the 1997-98 school year by visiting eleven schools. Participating schools have the flexibility to design their own programs to welcome parents, discuss the upcoming school year, and to help parents understand the integral role they can play in their children's academic success. One hundred twenty-four area businesses signed onto this partnership by pledging to give their employees time off to visit their children's schools.

Foundation for Excellent Schools

Rick Dalton, President
RD 4, Box 480
Middlebury, VT 05753
802 462-3170
fes@panther.middlebury.edu
<http://www.fesnet.org>

Founded in 1991, the Foundation for Excellent Schools (FES) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the quality of American public education (K-12). FES sponsors programs designed to increase the opportunities and improve the academic performance of all students by bringing together educators, students, parents, and the local business community.

Virginia

Gloucester Department of Community Education

Christi Lewis, Director of
Community Education
Gloucester County Government
P.O. Box 1306
Gloucester, VA 23061
804 693-5730

The Department of Community Education, founded in 1976, coordinates school programs that are geared toward involving the community in schools. The Department coordinates volunteer activities and partnerships for civic associations, individuals, and businesses. In addition, the Department directs after-school enrichment programs and publishes newsletters for all of the schools.

Knowledge Network

Dr. Kent Lloyd, Chairman and President
Dr. Diane Ramsey, Vice President
1511 Lincoln Way, Suite 304
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In the spring of 1997, the Knowledge Network published a resource book, *Reclaiming Our Nation At Risk: Lessons Learned for Reforming Our Elementary Schools*, to kick off a nationwide public engagement campaign. The information, strategies and models of successful reform contained in the book were drawn from interviews with forty-four nationally recognized school reformers and educational leaders. The idea for this guide came from an April 1995 summit, sponsored by the Network, with 150 educational, political, business, parent, and community leaders.

National Association of Partners in Education, Inc. (NAPE)

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Formed in 1988, NAPE provides leadership in the growth and formation of educational partnerships between businesses, schools, and the community to ensure success for all students. NAPE's Ambassadors for Education program aims to raise the level of awareness around education. NAPE trains people at the national level who, in turn, train "ambassadors" in their state and locality to get involved with schools and the issues facing them.

Washington

Alliance for Education

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Formed in 1995, the Alliance for Education works in partnership with the Seattle Public Schools to ensure that the district has the essential resources and leadership to prepare Seattle students for success in postsecondary education and the world of work.

Cascade Consortium

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The Cascade Consortium is a partnership between five Washington rural school districts. Its goal is to examine ways that the districts can work together, expand collaborative opportunities, and share resources.

Methow Valley School District

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Methow Valley School District, with 800 students, strives to engage the public by increasing student involvement in the community, providing adult role models and mentors, strengthening the relationship between the schools and the community, and emphasizing that students can build a successful life and career by staying locally upon graduation. The district's Methow Valley As a Classroom program enables every high school student to take part in an apprenticeship program half a week for each of fifteen weeks.

Parent Organizing Project

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The Parent Organizing Project (POP) has helped to create and sustain site councils in seventeen schools in eastern Washington. POP works to engage parents in conversations about public education. Parent organizing within each school is initiated by a team of the principal, three-to-four teachers, and six-to-ten parents. POP provides training to members of site councils and to members of the school's organizing team.

Partnership for Learning

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After the Washington school improvement act passed in 1993, the Washington Business Roundtable helped to form the Partnership for Learning (PFL). PFL's main goal is to promote public awareness about the state's efforts to raise student standards and enhance student achievement. PFL works primarily with opinion leaders and policymakers and develops print materials for a database of 20,000-to-25,000 people.

Powerful Schools

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Begun in 1989, Powerful Schools is a coalition of elementary schools in Seattle that is partnered with two community organizations. Its mission is to improve student performance for all children, strengthen the community by establishing schools that serve as community hubs, and create an effective and cost-efficient model for school-reform that is replicated elsewhere. A parent-incentive program has hired twenty-five to thirty low-income parents to work in schools and classrooms as tutors and aides or in other positions.

Seattle Young People's Project

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Seattle Young People's Project is a youth-empowerment organization made up of 620 members, all under nineteen-years-old. Its mission is to provide youth with a chance to speak out on issues that affect them and to work toward positive social change in their schools and communities.

Wenatchee School District #246

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Following the buy-out of the former superintendent's contract and a failed bond levy during the 1995-96 school year, the new superintendent initiated community forums to dialogue about the school district. Three hundred twenty people took part in five public forums. This outreach to the community led to the passage of a major bond levy in March 1997. The district has continued to engage the public through a strategic planning process with community members, the initiation of a "CEO dialogue," and the creation of parent advisory committees.

West Virginia

Atenville Elementary School

Darlene Dalton
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About six years ago, Atenville, one of the communities involved in the Responsive Schools Project, began working to increase family involvement in the schools. Atenville Elementary School hired a parent coordinator, opened a family center, coordinated home visits, and established tutoring centers in local churches. Parents were given more decision-making authority through serving on school committees that set short-term and year-long goals. Both students and families now develop portfolios to track their progress.

West Virginia Local Education Fund

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Started in 1983 by state business, civic, and educational leaders, the West Virginia Local Education Fund is a catalyst for business and community involvement, leading to enhanced educational opportunities and student achievement. The Education Fund has three primary goals: to provide grants and awards to schools for innovation and recognition of achievement; to foster community and business involvement in schools; and to provide research for policy makers.

Wisconsin

Arts in Community Education

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Arts in Community Education (ACE), a program of the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, is an education partnership that seeks to advance a child's overall learning and development by integrating music and arts into the daily school curriculum. ACE begins in kindergarten and is designed to follow children sequentially through each grade level. An ensemble presentation at the end of each year brings children and their families together at school, and an ACE newsletter keeps parents informed about activities and ideas for involvement at school and at home.

New Paradigm Partners

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New Paradigm Partners is a consortium of six rural school districts. Their goal is to build social capital and to make students more enterprising and entrepreneurial. They coordinate apprenticeships, tutoring, and service learning for students.

Parent Project

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The Parent Project began in the late 1980s as an outgrowth of an initiative between the Milwaukee Writing Project and the Joyce Foundation. Parents meet two hours each week for six weeks to build agendas around their own concerns and, after interviewing them, the interests of their children. Parents discuss the literacy work that their children are focusing on during the day and then develop an application to work with their children at home.

Wausau School District

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The school board has embarked on a long-term strategic planning process that will develop community understanding and capitalize on public input. A Community Resource Committee, comprising twenty-nine individuals from the community, synthesized information gathered from a community survey and two public forums. The Committee chose six strategic directions for the school board to consider as it begins its planning process.

APPENDIX C TYPES OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Types	Parent Participation	Community/ Parent Organizing	Standards Development/ Implementation	Strategic Planning/ Community Visioning
Motivations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> strengthen parents' ability to serve as critical partner in student success enable parents to serve as important link to community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> foster improvements in schools create parent and community constituencies for schools develop community capacity to identify concerns, demand change develop stronger sense of community while improving schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> reach common agreement on what all students should know and be able to do increase expectations for student performance create more highly skilled workforce forge stronger relationships among schools, families and communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> create a community-supported plan for the future of schools, districts or communities examine role of schools in achieving preferred community future
Actors/ Drivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> parents community agencies administrators teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> community organizers churches parents social service and community organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> policymakers administrators, teachers business people community members parents coalitions of these groups students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> community residents community-based organizations school administrators, teachers students
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> training/workshops access to information inclusion on school management teams access to information and tools/know-how to interpret and use it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> grassroots organizing use of data to identify needs face-to-face meetings door-to-door canvassing public, house, church meetings develop parents' leadership skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> public opinion research (surveys, focus groups) public hearings, deliberation inclusive process that enables people to weigh in on contents of standards media, public information materials that explain complex concepts in simple terms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> open, deliberative forums, supported by smaller meetings around particular issues creation of strategic plans citizen task forces
Achievements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> improved student performance, behavior, attendance improved self-esteem of parents improved communication between parents and schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> better communications collaboration between parents and schools improved services for parents/families additional resources for schools, communities improved student achievement regular sharing of school and student achievement information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> dialogue has taken place on what students should know improved understanding and support of common expectations for student, school performance political consensus for student, school performance benchmarks for progress toward them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> improved services for residents collaborative decisions process that enables new community alliances and civic capacity (a "place" where other decisions can be made)
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> developing resources for ongoing support overcoming perception of school authorities balancing insider/outsider roles reaching diverse audiences building trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> limiting perceptions of confrontation creating collaboration among once-divided groups building capacity of disenfranchised groups to participate powerfully gaining access to information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> describing standards in meaningful language sustaining support over time overcoming fears/concerns about "gatekeeper" tests generate subsequent support for professional development or reconstitution required when schools fail to meet standards dealing with public anger when standards aren't met 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> moving from planning to action including all stakeholders in the process mediating competing and deeply held beliefs and vision for school integrating plans into district/schools' work

Public Conversation and Deliberation	Governance/ Shared-Decision-Making	Legislation and Policy Development	Types
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • connect citizens to each other • bring members of the community together to talk about tough issues • build effective partnerships among churches, non-profit agencies, elected officials, citizens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enable parents and community members to have a voice in education decisions, such as hiring, budgeting and curriculum • devolve responsibility from central bureaucracies to schools and communities • respond to mandates from state or local policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop and pass new legislation to improve education practices, resources, and environments • increase awareness and understanding of public policy affecting schools • resolve desegregation and equity lawsuits 	Motivations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • community, school district leaders • trained facilitators • community residents • students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • parents • teachers • administrators • community members • students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • education leaders • community-based organizations • business leaders • parents • policymakers • legislators • elected and appointed officials • state education department 	Actors/Drivers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strategic planning process • town meetings • education roundtables 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • creation and development of collaborative school site councils • training • collaborative decisions concerning staff and principal selection, budgeting and curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • advocacy for legislation • training • parent training institutes • local meetings and forums • drafting legislation 	Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • community consensus on the purposes of public education • respond to new education policies • resolution of specific community problems or concerns • renewed commitment to partnerships within communities • broad inclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased representation of parents and other community members • leadership development • improved relationships between schools and their communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased support for reform legislation in some states • improved climate for reform • resolution of equity and desegregation lawsuits 	Achievements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • moving from talk to action • connecting to actual work of the district • including all stakeholders • mediating divisive beliefs/issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensuring truly representative participation on site-based and other councils • securing representation of traditionally disenfranchised groups • building capacity of participants (parents, teachers, others) to create level playing field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensuring ongoing citizen comment/ input after policy/legislation is passed • evaluating results over time • sustaining support for legislation/ policy as administrations change • maintaining support through policy implementation • role of state education department in implementation and monitoring • Responsiveness of legislative/ policy leaders to equity issues 	Challenges

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