



What factors are involved in developing successful community school models?

Community schools appeared in Britain and the U.S. in the 1970s. The expression was used in a 1982 Quebec government white paper to designate a hub where the community and the school work together for their mutual benefit. Though several models exist, they all feature this type of synergy between a school and its community. School communities involve multiple partnerships and focus their services on student learning and community health. They are distinguished by two tendencies: **the partners support the school's mission, and the school contributes to the community's development.**

Community schools are therefore relatively unified hubs, depending on their partners' needs and intentions: **(1) shared schools** welcome partners and services that are not tied to the school's mission; **(2) schools open to the community** welcome partners whose activities are tied to the school's mission; **(3) schools rooted in the community** respond to the needs of young people, and to the development of the community. Community schools can contribute to the revitalization of linguistic minority or declining communities. The following three factors are involved in developing successful community school models.

- 1. Plan the development.** Planning is the cornerstone of any development, even though strategic agility is starting to take the place of strategic planning: it is necessary to adapt proactively to any constraints and opportunities in the organization's environments. A resource kit used for holistically planning action for educational and community change, based on a grounded theory, can help implement a school-community collaboration in five stages: explore, initiate, plan, implement and evaluate.
- 2. Provide inspiring school leadership.** There are numerous types of leadership, but research has shown that transformational leadership is more relevant than transactional leadership. In this regard, motion leadership, another theory grounded in facts and observed practices, has been successful in schools and uses mobilized stakeholders and actions that are more effective and easier to understand.
- 3. Have all partners rally around an educational philosophy.** Community schools offer a spirit that inspires schools in their ways of being, thinking and acting. In addition to having an education program, each school, along with its partners, rallies around an educational philosophy. For example, the International organization of conscious entrepreneurial community schools (OIECEC) proposes an inclusive, responsible and humanist path, which operates in synergy with the community, while the UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network endorses the principles of sustainable development, intercultural learning and democracy. Community schools are also hubs of shared values.

For online resources as well as the research references that inform this issue, please visit:
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