
Trust is the Foundation for Successful Community Engagement



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Community Learning Centers provide a student with many social supports that they otherwise would not have access to. Community school must include attributes that extend beyond the facility or school walls.

Educators are increasingly aware of the importance of properly designed and maintained facilities for effective learning and instruction. There is much discussion on approaches to learning in the 21st century and what a 21st century school looks like. In addition, there is a growing body of knowledge citing the merits of Community Learning Centers (CLC) or community schools (Malone & Jacobson, 2014).

The Education Facilities Clearinghouse (EFC) in cooperation with the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) and the Coalition for Community Schools (CCS) sponsored a Community Learning Center study trip to Cincinnati, Ohio, where we examined the factors that influence the success of the CLC's. We can identify the key steps that Cincinnati took as they implemented their 12-year, \$1 billion capital campaign (IEL, 2014). The process involved over one year of public engagement, one year of design, and one and a half to two years of construction for each facility.

During the public engagement planning sessions of the building campaign, Cincinnati community members were asked what was important to them in their neighborhood schools. Once citizens realized their input was valued and incorporated into the final product, a sense of ownership was established among all participants. A sense of ownership built upon trust is at the center of a successful community school, or any school for that matter. Whether a division decides to implement the community school model or not, school administrators need to be reminded how important it is to have the trust of the families they serve.

[Read Full Summary.](#)

References

- Malone, H. & Jacobson, R. (2014, September 8). *Bricks and mortar: community schools as an essential facilities strategy*. Retrieved from <http://www.efc.gwu.edu/resources/library/bricks-and-mortar-community-schools-as-an-essential-facilities-strategy/>
- Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL). (Producer). (2014). *Community school facilities: authentic engagement, shared space, and neighborhood hubs* [Video Webinar]. Retrieved from <http://iel.org/communityschools/webinars/archives/2014-09-15/>

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