

It Takes a Village...

School Districts across the US face a variety of challenges each day as they attempt inspire, develop and educate the future leaders of our country. In most cases – school districts attempt to address all of these issues alone putting tremendous stress on administrators and teachers.

For example - in the area of school climate, a variety of challenges come in to play that often impact a child's ability to succeed in school. It is estimated that 22-25% of children attending public school live in poverty (\$23,050 or less annually). In most cases, poverty leads to a lack of basic resources, low parent involvement, challenges with student health and a variety of issues related to student attitudes and behaviors that are helpful for a classroom setting. How could a teacher possibly be expected to succeed when even a handful of his or her students are dealing with this? Then imagine inner city schools where nearly 100% of the children are facing these challenge. How can the school district be successful educating children when they need to address so many other fundamental issues for their children?

Maybe they need to ask for help...

What if your community's network of local CBO's and businesses came together strategically in support of your school district?

For the past 10 years my teams and I have worked alongside school district administrators in multiple communities to ensure that we were a part of the solution to many of the challenges faced by the children and families in these communities.

The coming together of District administrators and local CBO leaders generates dialogue that identifies specific needs – which ultimately leads to solutions coming from the community who in many cases are the very best resource to move the needle.

Below are some actual examples of this playing out.

School District administrators met with community leaders on multiple occasions to express challenges they were facing. Areas that rose to the top from those discussions included: Leadership Development for their Teachers/Administrators, Leadership Development for Students, and Childhood Obesity. Community leaders went to work to create solutions to these challenges.

In the area for Leadership Development for Staff & Administrators, the Local Chamber of Commerce came up with a plan to include District staff members with leadership aspirations in their Annual Chamber Leadership program at a reduced rate. This 9 month opportunity allowed the staff from the district (alongside other community leaders) to learn from the top business leaders in the region helping to better develop their skills for eventually leading and developing their own teams.

In the area of the Leadership Development for Students – the Local YMCA worked with the Chamber, school district and the City to develop a similar model for high school seniors to better prepare them for success in life. Students ranked between 20-40% in their class were chosen in the hopes the experience would help them develop their own leadership style and encourage them to consider continuing their education after college. After an interactive 8 month experience which included time with local government officials, CEO's, behind the scene tours of business and educational experiences in their community that they were unaware of – students overwhelmingly indicated they had found a leadership style they would like to embrace and nearly all indicated a plan for education after high school.

In the area of Childhood Obesity, folks from the local YMCA, the local healthcare foundation and a local college came together to develop, fund, implement and evaluate childhood obesity prevention programs designed for the entire family to participate in together. More than 400 families were impacted by these programs over a 5 year period. Families – together learned how to shop, cook, eat and exercise better and TOGETHER making for an impactful program.

By bringing the Community to the table real measurable solutions were created and the school district did not have to allocate significant resources to see these results.

We have facilitated these discussions with multiple districts in multiple communities and would love the opportunity to support efforts to engage your local community and ultimately help you better serve your faculty and families.