Community Outreach for Involvement and Support: A Self-study Survey

Schools can do their job better when they are an integral and positive part of the community. For example, it is a truism that learning is neither limited to what is formally taught nor to time spent in classrooms. It occurs whenever and wherever the learner interacts with the surrounding environment. All facets of the community (not just the school) provide learning opportunities. *Anyone in the community who wants to facilitate learning might be a contributing teacher.* This includes aides, volunteers, parents, siblings, peers, mentors in the community, librarians, recreation staff, college students, etc. They all constitute what can be called *the teaching community.* When a school successfully joins with its surrounding community, everyone has the opportunity to learn and to teach.

Another key facet of community involvement is opening up school sites as places where parents, families, and other community residents can engage in learning, recreation, enrichment, and find services they need. This encompasses outreach to the community to collaborate to enhance the engagement of young people to directly strengthen youngsters, families, and neighborhoods. In this respect, increasing attention is paid to interventions to promote healthy development, resiliency, and assets.

For schools to be seen as an integral part of the community, outreach steps must be taken to create and maintain linkages and collaborations. The intent is to maximize mutual benefits, including better student progress, an enhanced sense of community, community development, and more. In the long run, the aims are to strengthen students, schools, families, and neighborhoods. Outreach focuses on public and private agencies, organizations, universities, colleges, and facilities; businesses and professional organizations and groups; and volunteer service programs, organizations, and clubs. Greater volunteerism on the part of parents, peers, and others from the community can break down barriers and increase home and community involvement in schools and schooling. Over time, this area can include systems and programs designed to (a) recruit a wide range of community involvement and support, (b) train, screen, and maintain volunteers, (c) reach out to students and families who don't come to school regularly – including truants and dropouts, (d) connect school and community efforts to promote child and youth development, and (e) enhance community-school connections and sense of community.
Community Outreach for Involvement and Support

Indicate all items that apply.

**I. Planning and Implementing Outreach to Recruit a Wide Range of Community Resources**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. From which of the following sources are participants recruited?</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>but</th>
<th>more of this is needed</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>If no, is this something you want?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. public community agencies, organizations, facilities, and providers</td>
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<td>2. private community agencies, organizations, facilities, and providers</td>
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<td>3. business sector</td>
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<td>4. professional organizations and groups</td>
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<td>5. volunteer service programs, organizations, &amp; clubs</td>
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<td>6. universities and colleges</td>
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<td>7. other (specify)</td>
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<tr>
<th>B. Indicate current types of community involvement at the school</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>but</th>
<th>more of this is needed</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>If no, is this something you want?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. mentoring for students and families</td>
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<td>2. volunteer functions</td>
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<td>3. a community resource pool that provides expertise as requested, such as</td>
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<td>&gt;artists</td>
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<td>&gt;musicians</td>
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<td>&gt;librarians</td>
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<td>&gt;health and safety programs</td>
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<td>&gt;other (specify)</td>
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<td>4. formal agency and program linkages that result in community health and social services providers coming to the site, such as</td>
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<td>&gt;after school programs coming to the site</td>
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<td>&gt;services programs providing direct access to referrals from the site</td>
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<td>&gt;other (specify)</td>
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<td>5. formal arrangements that involve community agents in</td>
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<td>&gt;school governance</td>
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<td>&gt;advocacy for the school</td>
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<td>&gt;advisory functions</td>
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<td>&gt;program planning</td>
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<td>&gt;fund raising</td>
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<td>&gt;sponsoring activity (e.g., adopt-a-school)</td>
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<td>&gt;creating awards and incentives</td>
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<td>&gt;providing job-shadowing opportunities</td>
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<td>&gt;creating jobs</td>
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<td>&gt;other (specify)</td>
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<td>6. formal arrangements that connect school and community for enhancing child and youth development</td>
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### Community Outreach for Involvement and Support (cont.)

C. With specific respect to volunteers

1. What types of volunteers are used at the site?
   - nonprofessionals
     - parents
     - college students
     - senior citizens
     - business people
     - peer and cross age tutors
     - peer and cross age counselors
     - paraprofessionals
   - professionals-in-training (specify)________
   - professionals (pro bono) (specify)________
   - other (specify) _______________________

2. Who do volunteers assist?
   - administrators
   - assist teachers
   - assist other staff
   - others (specify) ______________________

3. In which of the following ways do volunteers participate?
   - providing general classroom assistance
   - assisting with targeted students
   - assisting after school
   - providing special tutoring
   - helping students with attention problems
   - helping with bilingual students
   - helping address other diversity matters
   - helping in the cafeteria
   - helping in the library
   - helping in computer lab
   - helping on class trips
   - helping with homework helplines
   - working in the front office
   - helping welcome new enrollees & their families
   - phoning or emailing home about absences
   - outreaching to the home
   - acting as mentors or advocates for students, families, staff
   - assisting with school up-keep and beautification efforts
   - helping enhance public support by increasing political awareness about the contributions and needs of the school
   - other (specify) _______________________

### II. Systems to Recruit, Screen, Prepare, and Maintain Community Resource Involvement

A. Are there systems and programs specifically designed to

1. recruit community stakeholders?  
2. Orient and welcome community stakeholders who have been recruited for school involvement and support?  
3. enhance the volunteer pool?  
4. screen volunteers?  
5. train volunteers?  
6. maintain volunteers?
III. Reaching out to Students and Families Who Don't Come to School Regularly – Including Truants and Dropouts

Which of the following are used to enhance school involvement of hard to involve students and families?

A. Home visits to assess and plan ways to overcome barriers to
   1. student attendance
   2. family involvement in schooling

B. Support networks connecting hard to involve
   1. students with peers and mentors
   2. families with peers and mentors

C. Special incentives for
   1. students
   2. families

D. Other (specify) _______________________

IV. Connecting School and Community Efforts to Promote Child and Youth Development and a Sense of Community

Which of the following are used to enhance community-school connections and sense of community?

A. Orientations and open houses for
   1. newly arriving students
   2. newly arriving families
   3. new staff

B. student performances for the community

C. school sponsored
   1. cultural and sports events for the community
   2. community festivals and celebrations
   3. topical workshops and discussion groups
   4. health fairs
   5. family preservation fairs
   6. work fairs

D. Other? (specify) ____________________________
Community Outreach for Involvement and Support (cont.)

V. Capacity Building to Enhance Community Involvement and Support

A. Are there programs to enhance broad stakeholder involvement in enhancing community involvement and support?

B. With respect to programs used to meet the educational needs of personnel related to community involvement and support
   1. Is there ongoing training for learning supports staff with respect to enhancing community involvement and support?
   2. Is there ongoing training for others involved in enhancing community involvement and support? (e.g., teachers, administrators, volunteers)?
   3. Other (specify) ____________________

C. Which of the following topics are covered in educating stakeholders?
   1. understanding the local community – culture, needs, resources
   2. how to recruit, train, and retain community resources and volunteers
      >in general
      >for special roles
   3. how to move toward collaborations with community resources
   4. how to outreach to hard-to-involve students and families
   5. understanding how to create a psychological sense of community
   6. developing systematic social supports for students, families, and staff
   7. Other (specify) ____________________

D. Indicate below other things you want the school to do in enhancing community involvement and support.

   • Indicate below other ways the school enhancing community involvement and support.

   • Other matters relevant to enhancing community involvement and support are found in the surveys on

      >Classroom-based Approaches...
      >Home Involvement in Schooling
      >School-Community Collaboration