



# Breaking the Mold

Combining Community Schools with Expanded Learning Time to Help Educationally Disadvantaged Students

Isabel Owen September 2010





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# Introduction and summary

Think schooling in the United States and the image that comes to mind is of a red brick building filled with classrooms each lined with straight rows of desks facing a teacher in front of a blackboard. And when the bell rings every morning at exactly the same time, children enter that red brick school only to exit a few hours later when the bell rings again at exactly the same time every afternoon. School is the place where children are expected to orderly progress through each grade to an eventual high school graduation. This picture of schooling has been ingrained in our daily routine for generations.

In general, our public schools treat the majority of children within a school building the same regardless of their lives outside of school. But what about the students who face nonacademic obstacles to learning? A student who does not have access to preventive health care, for example, may be confronted with impediments to success in school. And what about the student who is struggling academically and could benefit from additional time for instruction and enrichment than what is prescribed under the traditional school calendar?

Teachers and administrators try their best to help students succeed, but they typically lack the capacity to provide additional supports to children beyond academic instruction. Teachers run up against the inflexible confines imposed by the school calendar. They often lack time to cover all material. And the demands of meeting academic standards often mean that enrichment opportunities at school are placed on the backburner. It's time to re-envision how resources can be used to help struggling children succeed academically.

This paper will examine two schoolwide reform models—community schools and expanded learning time—that challenge the rigid boundaries of the conventional school model in order to close the achievement gap.

The reforms analyzed in this paper are targeted toward students who are “educationally disadvantaged” because they live in disproportionately low- or lower middle-income communities—both white and nonwhite—or who attend schools

that are predominantly comprised of minority students. These educationally disadvantaged kids can benefit from both the community-school and expanded-learning-time models.

Community schools, through results-focused partnerships, provide services that attend to the academic, physical, mental, social, and emotional needs of children. They embrace this diverse role recognizing nonacademic factors that go unaddressed during the school day can affect students' well-being and therefore their academic achievement. Since schools are already woven into the social fabric of every community, they are strategically positioned to provide additional services.

Yet even when their health, emotional, and social needs are met, students, particularly educationally disadvantaged students, can often benefit from additional instruction time and participation in other enriching activities. Expanding learning time, or lengthening the school day, week, or year, for all children in a school can help close academic and enrichment gaps. Rather than just tacking time onto the calendar, expanding learning time involves strategically redesigning the school schedule to incorporate extra time for academic instruction, enrichment activities, and professional development and planning for staff.

Schools across the country are experimenting with a community-school model and the expansion of learning time. There are hundreds of community schools in 44 states and the District of Columbia.<sup>1</sup> And there are 655 schools with an expanded calendar in 36 states and the District of Columbia.<sup>2</sup> Yet few schools have taken on the task of implementing both reforms at once.

There are hurdles to implementing a school model that expands the school calendar with wraparound social services for students and their community. Funding is a major obstacle when expanding learning time or implementing community support services. Often schools struggle to blend a mixture of funding streams from various sources—philanthropic; city, district, state, and federal grants; private contributions; and money from community-based organizations—to initiate and maintain services. But as both reform models gain momentum by demonstrating success, more funding opportunities are becoming available. The Obama administration has proposed substantial investments in both models as part of its broader federal education reform agenda. In addition, local, state, and nonfederal national funding streams that can be applied towards both reform efforts are becoming increasingly available.

With the availability of more funding, schools may want to consider how expanding learning time can work hand in hand with a community schools model. Although the reforms are distinct and schools have had successes without coupling the reforms, schools that expand learning time and schools that utilize existing community resources to open up the school's assets both transcend the conventional models of schooling.

Indeed, in many respects these two reforms complement each other. Dr. Gloria Santiago, chairperson of the board of trustees at LEAP Academy University Charter School in New Jersey, which expanded the school day and year in addition to providing support services, says that “the combination of an expanded day and the multiservice community school model... enables students to succeed because it allows the school time to support the development of the whole student—not just his or her academic success.”<sup>3</sup>

This report will examine three schools that have implemented the combined community school model and an expanded school calendar. The first two are elementary schools in Chicago, Marquette Elementary and John C. Burroughs Elementary, both located in neighborhoods that face issues of high poverty and large immigrant populations. The third is a charter school in Camden, NJ, LEAP Academy University Charter School, which is also located in a high-poverty community.

Marquette Elementary, which serves students in kindergarten through eighth grade, provides evening programming to adults and community members and runs a health clinic at the school offering both physical and mental health services. The evening programs are a decade old; the health clinic was open in 2009. Also in 2009 the school redesigned the school day and expanded by one hour for all middle school students, students in grades six through eight. The schedule for the elementary school, kindergarten to fifth grade, was not expanded.

Burroughs Elementary provides evening programming until 8 p.m. every week-night to students, families, and community members, a community service offered for more than a decade. It also partners with a local nonprofit organization to provide mental health services to the community. In addition, the school day at Burroughs was lengthened by one hour for all students almost a decade ago.

Camden's LEAP Academy opened in 1997 with a longer school day and year, as well as providing support services in partnership with nearby Rutgers University. The school day runs from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. for all students and the school year is 200 days. Support services are provided at the school's seven Centers of

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Excellence including health and other social services, pre-college office, teacher development and performance, early education and child care, parents' academy, law clinic, and the family support center.<sup>4</sup> In addition LEAP offers evening programming to community members every weekday from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

At each of these three schools the overarching goal is improving the lives of children by catering to their academic and nonacademic needs.

This paper will not examine all services offered at community schools, or all the ways that schools with an expanded calendar use time. Rather than being prescriptive in how to launch these reform efforts, aspects of the services provided at the three schools will be highlighted to show how support services and an expanded day work in conjunction to break the mold of conventional schooling.

As explored later in this paper, various federal, state, and local funding streams for implementing both a community-school and expanded-learning-time-model exist. In addition there are several pieces of pending legislation that if passed will expand funding options. These funding streams lay the foundation of support necessary to implement support services or expand the school schedule. Using this foundation, combined with dedicated school leaders, we can shift the way we conceptualize the school model to support students and raise achievement.

The report urges policymakers at the local, state, and federal levels of government to take action to enable these reforms to proceed more broadly across our country. Specifically, we will urge:

- The White House and the Department of Education to expand funding and broaden the scope of federal education initiatives by implementing community schools and expanded learning time programs at the nation's lowest-performing schools, including through the Race to the Top program, School Improvement Grants, Investing in Innovation Fund, Full Service Community Schools Program, and the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program
- Congress to pass legislation to increase funding for community schools and expanded learning initiatives and other education reforms, including reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, passage of the Full Service Community Schools Act, Time for Innovation Matters in Education Act, and Developing Innovative Partnerships and Learning Opportunities that Motivate Achievement Act

- State and local governments to follow the lead of Massachusetts’s Expanding Learning Time Initiative and Illinois’s grants for community schools, as well as establish programs providing funding, resources, and support for community schools and expanded learning time programs

We are confident that after reading this report and seriously considering our recommendations, policymakers in Congress and in the Obama administration will recognize the positive, life-changing impacts community schools and expanded learning time models can have on students, their families, and their communities.

# What is a community school?

Let's begin with some definitions. Community schools aim to combat the environmental factors that can pose barriers to student learning by providing support services and academic enrichment to students, their families, and community members within the school. Using already laid brick and mortar, community schools challenge the limits of the physical school building to do more than offer academic instruction.

Various definitions of community schools exist, but the following core principles are shared by most community schools:<sup>5</sup>

- A strong, strategically initiated partnership with at least one community organization to assist in the delivery of services and enrichment. Examples of partner organizations are community-based organizations, universities, nonprofits, private businesses, faith-based groups, recreation clubs, and cultural institutions
- Support services that cater to students, families, and community members, such as health, mental, and dental care
- Programming focused on adult learning such as English as a Second Language, high school diplomacy equivalency programs known as General Educational Development, English literacy classes, and job training
- Extended hours and programming before and after school, and during the weekends and summer
- A leadership council or committee comprised of the school principal, teachers, school administrators, members of the partnering organizations, parents and community members

The comprehensive services offered at community schools are tied to academics and help children succeed. These services are housed at the school to connect students, families, and community members to resources and opportunities in a central location.

Community schools are achieving promising outcomes. An evaluation of three leading community schools efforts—Communities in Schools, the Chicago Community School Initiative, and the Children’s Aid Society in New York City—show impressive gains in student achievement.<sup>6</sup> Evaluations of community schools from around the country reveal academic gains, improved attendance, fewer dropouts, decreases in behavior and discipline problems, increased parental engagement, and greater community access to services.<sup>7</sup>

In addition, teachers in community schools say they have more time to work with students in class as well as more time to prepare for class, the result of not having to take time during class to deal with students’ nonacademic issues.<sup>8</sup>

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# What is expanded learning time for schools?

Test results from across the country expose a stagnant achievement gap between low-income students and their more affluent peers. Research finds that districts with the shortest school days and years are more likely to serve students in poverty.<sup>9</sup> Students nationally—especially educationally disadvantaged students—stand to benefit from an expanded schedule. And some schools are showing that adding time to the school calendar can help turn around low-performing schools.

According to a 2008 survey of Massachusetts teachers in schools with expanded schedules as well as teachers in schools with a traditional schedule about their perceptions of school conditions, only 31.9 percent of elementary school teachers, 38.7 percent of middle school teachers, and 43.4 percent of high school teachers agreed they had “sufficient instructional time to complete the curriculum for their subject(s) and/or grade.”<sup>10</sup> This indicates a serious problem for many teachers and forces them to struggle to squeeze lessons into the time constraints posed by the traditional school schedule. They also find themselves with inadequate time to collaborate and plan with other teachers.

Expanding learning time is a reform strategy that adds time to the school day, week, or year. Many definitions of expanded learning time exist and refer to a range of out-of-school-time activities. The Center for American Progress and the National Center on Time and Learning define expanded learning time to include the following core principles:<sup>11</sup>

- Research shows that more time in combination with quality teaching can lead to improved academic achievement.
- Learning time—the school day, week, or year—should be expanded by at least 300 hours.
- Schools that serve large numbers of low-income students should be the focus of expanded learning time initiatives.

- Expanded learning time should be mandatory for all students to participate in if such a program is implemented at a school.
- Instead of just adding more time to the end of the day or year, schools that expand learning time carefully redesign the schedule, incorporating the extra time to allow additional time for academic instruction while integrating enrichment opportunities into the regular schedule.
- In addition to focusing more time on instruction, the expanded schedule should also add time for professional development and teacher planning.

Schools that expand their school calendar with these principles in mind yield hopeful results. Early research indicates that students at such schools outperform students in schools that do not expand the schedule.<sup>12</sup> One report of student test scores from 2008 shows that eighth graders in schools with expanded schedules have proficiency rates that are an average of 8.1 points higher on math exams and 5.9 points higher on English language arts tests than their peers in nonexpanded time schools in the same district.<sup>13</sup> In addition, schools in Massachusetts that benefit from state funding under the Massachusetts Expanded Learning Time Initiative are posting higher gains in test scores than the rest of the state. In 2009 for example, the percentage of students in schools with expanded schedules who achieved proficiency on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System test increased from 2008 in both math and English language arts at double the rate of student increase in proficiency across the state over that one-year period.<sup>14</sup>

Charter schools lead the movement in expanding the school day, week, and year. Several studies of high-performing charter schools credit time as a key factor leading to impressive academic results.<sup>15</sup> A study comparing public schools and charter schools in Boston, for example, finds that students in high-performing charter schools spend almost two more hours per day in school than students in traditional public schools.<sup>16</sup>

Schools that expand their school calendar with these principles in mind yield hopeful results.

# Each reform model strengthens the other: The benefits of expanded learning time

At the heart of both the community schools and expanded learning time models is raising student achievement by challenging the conventional school model. Implemented separately, each of these models has the potential to make dramatic gains in the lives and academic success of educationally disadvantaged students. Implemented in concert, however, they maximize the benefits and allow schools to address multiple factors in children's lives, raise achievement, and strengthen the school and the community.

Community schools offer essential services to students, families, and community members in a convenient and accessible location. While providing these additional services, community schools must continue to focus on delivering academic instruction. Some of the benefits of a lengthened schedule can strengthen the academic components of the community-school model.

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## Expanded learning time raises achievement

Educationally disadvantaged students often enter school behind their peers and the traditional school day does not include enough time for these students to catch up. For example, low-income students face barriers in developing a foundation for strong literacy skills. According to studies, low-income children enter school with approximately 17,000 less words in their vocabulary than middle-class children.<sup>17</sup> Vocabulary is an indicator of language development, and such an early shortfall can lead to future struggles in reading comprehension.<sup>18</sup>

Principal Richard Morris at Burroughs Elementary School in Chicago decided to expand the school day in an effort “to level the playing field”<sup>19</sup> because the school day in Chicago public schools is shorter than all other districts in Illinois and is approximately 45 minutes shorter than the national average.<sup>20</sup> The day at Burroughs expanded by one hour for all students, and consists of nine 40-min-

ute blocks running from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Morris says the extra time allows for greater flexibility and maximizes time for academic instruction, recess, and physical education.

Students at Burroughs now spend more minutes on core subject (math, science, English language arts, social science) instruction than the district and state in grades three, six, and eight, with the only exception being third-grade math.<sup>21</sup> Eighth graders receive 20 more minutes per day of English language arts, and 11 more minutes in math instruction than the statewide average.

The longer day, combined with the support services offered at the school, have led to academic success, which is clearly demonstrated by Burroughs's impressive test results. Looking at overall school performance on all state tests in the 2008-09 school year, Burroughs, where 93.7 percent of students are low-income, outperformed the district and the state, with 79.3 percent of students meeting or exceeding Illinois state standards, compared to 62.1 percent of students districtwide, and 75.5 percent of students across the state.<sup>22</sup>

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## Enrichment that reaches all students

Too often, educators find they don't have enough time in the school calendar for enrichment activities as well as academic classes. Out-of-school-time programming is one solution to providing enrichment programming and is an important component of the community school model. Out-of-school time provides a vital service to parents and the community by offering a safe place for children to be during the afternoon, weekends, and summer months when parents are at work. In addition, out-of-school-time programs offer enrichment programs, such as tutoring, music lessons, and sports, which broaden students' experiences and help them to better engage academically.

However, educationally disadvantaged students are less likely to take advantage of the enrichment opportunities available at their school or in their community.<sup>23</sup> High-poverty and minority participation rates in out-of-school-time programs have been low since the 1990s.<sup>24</sup> Higher-income families have more time and resources to find enrichment programs for their children. In addition, out-of-school programs, even those aimed at low-income students, often struggle to attract and retain highly disengaged, minority, and older students who most desperately need such programming.

Surveys conducted in 2004 of middle and high school students and parents regarding their attitudes toward out-of-school-time opportunities reveal a sharp difference in opinion between poor and minority families compared to wealthier families about the ease and accessibility of out-of-school-time activities. Sixty-five percent of higher-income respondents and 62 percent of white respondents believe it is easy to find activities outside of school for children that are affordable versus only 30 percent of lower income respondents and 39 percent of minority respondents. In addition, only 45 percent of lower-income respondents and 44 percent of minority respondents believe it is easy to find out-of-school activities that are conveniently located, compared to 72 percent of higher-income respondents and 71 percent of white respondents.<sup>25</sup>

Expanded learning time breaks down the barriers to participation in out-of-school-time activities, obstacles such as fees, accessibility and program information, because all children in a given school participate in the expanded schedule. Incorporating enrichment activities into the schedule and housing them at the school makes them readily accessible. Schools that expand learning time bypass the issue of not reaching all students by adding extra time to the school calendar to integrate enrichment activities into the school schedule so all children, regardless of background, reap the benefits of the activities.

Consider the experience at Marquette Elementary School in Chicago. Beginning with the 2008-09 school year, it expanded the school day to ensure that all students participate in additional instruction and enrichment activities, not just those who sign up for afterschool programs. Marquette expanded the school day for all of its middle school students (grades six through eight) at the beginning of the 2008-09 school year. The middle school is now in session from 8:50 a.m. to 3:45 p.m.—one hour longer than the elementary grades (kindergarten to fifth grade) that are dismissed at 2:45 p.m.

Since expanding the day, the middle school experimented with different variations of the schedule until they arrived at the current schedule, which maximizes time for both instruction and enrichment. At first the extra hour was added to the end of the day without changing the schedule. After realizing that simply adding time to the end of the day did not increase student achievement or engagement, the schedule was redesigned increasing each block to about an hour. Each block in the elementary grades is only 45 minutes.

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## Additional time for teacher professional development, planning, and instruction

The longer day at all three schools (and the longer year at LEAP Academy) allows more time to be devoted to professional development, planning, and instruction—a core principle of expanded learning time. The amount of time and the way the time is used varies across all three schools.

Professional development at community schools is key to allowing teachers and school administrators to learn how the support services and academic components of the school can be used together to the advantage of both students and teachers. The biggest part of the LEAP Academy’s budget, for example, is spent on professional development, which shows it is a priority.<sup>26</sup> Further, one day per month is also allocated for professional development.<sup>27</sup>

About 80 percent of the professional development at LEAP happens in the classroom. Because school administrators believe that teachers can learn best from one another, teachers are required to observe other teachers working with students in the classroom. In addition, each day school administrators and teacher coaches observe teachers and provide feedback.

Observing other teachers in the classroom allows teachers to see firsthand how their peers help students utilize the support services offered at LEAP Academy. In community schools with an expanded schedule, service providers play an elevated role and must be integrated into professional development. As a result, teachers and service providers can both contribute to student evaluations at LEAP. If a student goes to the health center complaining of a headache, for example, the care provider could review the student’s file and notice she has been distracted in class. The student may need glasses, which is causing her to be distracted and suffer from headaches. Since service providers and teachers alike work directly with students, it is important that all parties have access to and participate in student evaluations, allowing connections to be made between students’ academic achievement and their general well-being.

In addition to adding more time for professional development, the longer school calendar allows more time for teacher planning and preparation. Teachers can use this time to work collaboratively with peers and instructional leaders to develop skills and lesson plans.<sup>28</sup> Teachers at Burroughs, for example, have four preparation

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periods per week under their contract. The extra hour each day provided by the expanded time schedule allowed for three additional teacher preparation periods each week. These periods are used for teacher collaboration and planning.

Adding additional time to the school calendar can enhance some benefits of the community supports provided at community schools by boosting academic achievement, ensuring all students participate in enrichment activities, and providing more time for teacher professional development and planning. This relationship between the expanded-learning-time and community-school models is reciprocal, with the support services offered at community schools strengthening the expanded learning time model. To this we now turn.

# Each reform model strengthens the other: Support services of community schools enhance the ELT model

By caring for the nonacademic aspects of students' lives, schools prepare students to take full advantage of the benefits of time spent in the classroom even during a longer day. The services at community schools offer resources to improve students' health, bring parents and families into the school, and allow teachers to focus exclusively on teaching. Let's consider each of these advantages in turn.

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## Healthy students are better learners

A recent report released by the Foundation for Child Development estimates that in 2010, 21.5 percent of children are in families living below the poverty line. In addition, the study found that “when the general trend is one of deteriorating child well-being—as will be the case during the 2008-2010 period—children from most minority racial and ethnic groups, of lower socioeconomic strata, and in communities that have lesser economic resources and reserves experience rates of deterioration that are greater than the national average.”<sup>29</sup>

Educationally disadvantaged children are more likely to start behind and encounter more obstacles to academic achievement than children from wealthier families. For example, low-income children are more likely to be affected by various health problems such as asthma, dental, and vision impairment.<sup>30</sup> In addition, children in poverty often lack affordable options for preventive care; are less likely to receive ongoing care; obtain lower-quality health services; are more likely to suffer from chronic illnesses, vitamin deficiencies, or poor nutrition; and lack parental oversight to supervise medications.<sup>31</sup> These children often live in underserved areas and have limited, or no access to services that cover their health needs. Often their parents can't take time off work to take them to the doctor when they are ill.

Research studies reveal causal relationships between health problems and cognition in school-aged children.<sup>32</sup> If left untreated or ignored, health problems can severely reduce a student's ability to learn. The support services provided at community schools can help assuage some of these stresses.

Common sense dictates that healthy students are better learners. Health and mental services offered at school can help reduce the amount of time students are out of class by providing preventive and ongoing care to deal with minor illnesses and injuries. Teachers are not only suitably placed to identify health-related issues but can also remind students to consistently use remedies prescribed to them, such as inhalers or eyeglasses.<sup>33</sup> By ensuring that students arrive in the classroom ready to learn, time in class is maximized, even during an expanded schedule. Most community schools make the provision of health services at the school a priority and it is often the first support service implemented at a community school.

Here's proof these kinds of programs work. In July 2009 Marquette Elementary opened a health clinic located within the school offering both physical and mental health services. An article noting the benefits of the clinic mentions that prior to the opening of the clinic, "school and community leaders [said] health services are one of the most urgent needs, but the lack of resources has stymied their ability to do much."<sup>34</sup> The health center confronts the lack of resources head on and offers health services to students, families, and members of the community. Now, the Marquette clinic accepts all kinds of health insurance and offers services at low costs. Students can easily access the clinic during the school day as needed.

In addition to providing routine and preventive care, the health clinic offers counseling and is staffed with social workers who hold group sessions on issues facing adolescents. The clinic set a goal to serve 1,000 people in the first year of operation. By October 2009 the clinic had served 500 people,<sup>35</sup> and by February 2010 the clinic had already served 900, indicating extraordinary early success.<sup>36</sup>

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## Family and community engagement

In community schools, parents immediately become more engaged in the school by participating in programming and receiving services. This can bolster family and community engagement, which is necessary for parental support for an expanded school calendar that can be met with some resistance. But parental support of the expanded schedule can have a positive impact on student perceptions and attitudes, consequently making them more willing to engage in the longer day, week, or year. Studies show that across socioeconomic and racial groups, students' academic achievement improves as a result of parental engagement.<sup>37</sup>

Community schools strive to make families a part of their child's education by welcoming family and community members to participate in a variety of classes as well as encouraging them to take advantage of support services. The three schools examined for this report solicit input from family and community members—from surveying the needs of the community before services are developed, to organizing meetings regarding future funding streams.

As families become more stable, their children will do better in school—that is the idea guiding Burroughs principal Morris's vision of strengthening the community. Talking about the importance of providing additional services to families and community members, Morris says, "Our school is the most important building in the community."<sup>38</sup> Morris believes that as parents participate more in programming and take advantage of services offered at the school, they become more involved and begin to feel like the school belongs to them. Once parents feel ownership over the school they hold it accountable to a higher standard and demand what is necessary for their children to succeed academically.

Parental involvement is an integral piece of the LEAP model, too, since it opened in 1997. School administrators want parents to have a relationship with the school. In addition to regularly scheduled adult programming, LEAP offers parent workshops once a week, such as healthy cooking, anti-bullying, and cancer awareness. The parent-program coordinator at LEAP Academy seeks to alleviate all obstacles to parent participation in evening workshops. To make the workshops accessible and convenient, the school provides parking and child care, and serves dinner to participating parents and their children. The strategy worked, and the parent-program coordinator reports that since offering parking, dinner, and child care, parent participation is now much higher than it used to be.<sup>39</sup>

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## Teachers can focus on teaching

Teachers try to help their students in a variety of ways, from caring for minor injuries and illnesses to helping parents obtain necessary services. But addressing nonacademic needs can hinder instruction. In community schools, students have access to a support system caring for some of their nonacademic needs and preparing them for class. In addition, evening programming (such as GED and ESL classes) offered at community schools to family and community members help families become more stable, which can help students to be more focused in school.

Teachers in community schools enjoy the advantages of children arriving in class ready to learn, decreased student absences, and increased parental involvement.<sup>40</sup> These things allow teachers to maximize instruction time rather than taking time away from class to care for an individual student.<sup>41</sup> Also, students who take advantage of support services will be less distracted in class and better prepared to focus. Without interruptions and distractions, teachers and students are able to take full advantage of the benefits of the longer school day. After all, there would be little point in lengthening the school calendar if students are distracted from learning.

Partner organizations can be instrumental in this venture by offering services that attend to students' nonacademic needs, or leading enrichment classes, which free teachers to focus exclusively on academic instruction.

All of these benefits for students and teachers alike accrue when the schools can participate in the everyday needs of the schools' communities, but none of these reforms is easy to institute. The next section will examine the things schools and communities must consider in order to bring the community-school concept and expanded-learning-time model into practice, and then look at the various funding streams available to do so at the federal, state, and local levels.

# Important considerations

Breaking free of the limitations imposed by the traditional school model is not an easy undertaking. Implementing a community-school model and expanding learning time must reflect the needs of students and the surrounding community. Redesigning the school calendar and implementing support services requires a careful and thoughtful planning process guided by dedicated leaders. During the planning process, many things ought to be considered including the parameters of successful partnerships, how data will be collected and analyzed, and how to obtain and sustain funding.

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## Drivers of school reform

Perhaps most important to the success of implementing family and community support services, or expanding the schedule, are leaders who continue to drive reform. Without committed leaders, neither school reform stands a chance of improving the well-being and academic achievement of children. These leaders can be principals, teachers, school administrators, community activists, or staff from partner organizations.

Marquette, Burroughs, and LEAP Academy all operate successfully thanks to the vision and dedication of their principals. At each school, the principal recognized student success required going beyond what is typically offered at school during the traditional six-hour school day, and so challenged the conventional school models of time and space. These leaders do not differentiate between the two initiatives. Rather they think of support services and expanded learning time as parts of the same vision, one geared to improving the lives of all students in their school and helping them achieve.

According to Paul O'Toole, former principal of Marquette Elementary, "the school is a physical edifice that dominates the neighborhood."<sup>42</sup> Due to its presence in the neighborhood, O'Toole saw the physical building as a resource that could be uti-

lized by the whole community as a venue for services. The school offers an array of services to the students and the community, the pinnacle of which is the school-based health clinic. O’Toole partnered with a local organization and together they developed a strong plan to implement reforms at Marquette. They applied for and later received a competitive grant from the Atlantic Philanthropies to build the health clinic and expand the school day.

The Burroughs community faces high poverty and unemployment and has a large immigrant population. Gang activity is common. While talking about combating these challenges with limited resources, Principal Morris says, “We can’t just sit back and accept what the district gives us.”<sup>43</sup> Securing funding for support services is a constant challenge at Burroughs, but for more than a decade Morris has found creative ways to provide services to students and the community along with regular academic instruction. Understanding that no school-based reform effort can succeed without the support of teachers, Morris made sure teachers at Burroughs embraced the idea of expanding the school day and providing support services before either were implemented. Teachers have been instrumental in ensuring the success of both the support services and the longer school day.

Then there’s the experience at LEAP Academy. In the early 1990s professor Gloria Santiago was at Rutgers University conducting research on children in Camden, NJ. Santiago concluded the schools there—facing poverty and high dropout rates—were in crisis and the old ways of schooling were not working. As part of her research Santiago held focus groups and heard from parents and children that they lacked access to health care, college, and legal services. They also voiced concerns about safety.

Realizing that schools and the community needed something more than incremental change, Santiago began to think differently about school design. She decided to open a new school that reinvented the school setting.<sup>44</sup> Following four years of planning, LEAP Academy opened in 1997 in partnership with Rutgers University. With support services and a longer school day and year as part of the model, the school was designed to be the center of the community ensuring access to resources as well as an excellent education.

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## The importance of partnering

Most schools do not have the bandwidth to expand learning time or develop support services unaided. But hundreds of schools across the country have formed partnerships with local organizations to assist in the implementation of these schoolwide improvement efforts. Partner organizations can include, but are not limited to:

- Community-based organizations
- Faith-based groups
- Universities
- Recreation clubs
- Nonprofit organizations
- Cultural institutions
- Private businesses

This range of partners plays a central role by increasing the capacity of the school staff to implement reforms, provide important resources supplying both money and staff, and bring new knowledge to the school.

The specific role of partner organizations will vary from school to school and depend on the type of services delivered and the capacity of school staff and teachers. Partners can assist in the initial needs assessment of the community; help to coordinate resources; conduct outreach to families and community members; administer ongoing evaluations and assessment; and provide enrichment, instruction, and support services to students and community members.

Some of the partnerships formed between the schools and partner organizations at the schools examined for this report are the result of chance relationships between a school administrator and a local organization. While some partnerships formed this way flourish, others may only be beneficial for a short period of time and disappear when the partner organization realizes the incredible amount of time and resources it takes to run, fund, and evaluate high-quality programming.

If these partnerships are formed and planned strategically they have the potential to have a greater impact on students—a core principle of the community schools model. Specifically:

- Partnerships should also be advantageous to the partner organization. It often makes sense for local organizations to partner with a school to further its own vision of improving the community. Working with schools and students can satisfy a partner organization's community service goals thanks to increased access to students.<sup>45</sup>

- Both parties should think realistically about whether or not the partner organization has the ability to serve all children and will contribute to the goals of the school.
- Before outside organizations enter the school, they must understand and be prepared to work within the school culture in order to fully integrate into the school and avoid interruptions in learning. When partner organizations lead classroom instruction or enrichment, students should view them as equal to their teachers. In addition, teachers must be willing to work with staff members from partner organizations and allow them to share their classrooms.

All three schools highlighted in this paper work closely with local organizations, which provide funding and staff and run evening programming and support services. Marquette and Burroughs elementary schools have oversight committees to manage partnerships and monitor budgets—a common factor in both expanded learning time schools and community schools. The oversight committees are made up of representatives from partner organizations, parents, teachers, school administrators, community members, and the principal.

The success of the health clinic at Marquette demonstrates the advantage of partnering with local organizations to provide support services. Marquette is one of five schools to receive money from the Elev8 Chicago grant, an initiative created by the Atlantic Philanthropies. The grant supplies funding for middle schools to expand existing partnerships with local organizations to extend the school day, provide on-site health care, offer mentoring and family support services, increase parental involvement, and use successful models to advocate for similar reform initiatives at the local, state, and national levels.<sup>46</sup>

Using the Elev8 grant, Marquette partnered with three local organizations to establish the school-based health clinic and expand the school day. The Southwest Organizing Project provides mentoring services, Access Community Health Network provides health services, and Metropolitan Family Services provides social workers to help meet the social and emotional needs of students and families. Staff members from the partner organizations are on site at the school every day.

The community partners at Marquette do more than just provide services. During the planning phase for the health clinic, Access Community Health Network

sought input from the community on how the clinic should function and what services should be offered based on the specific needs of the community. Also, the Southwest Organizing Project hired staff to oversee and monitor the entire Elev8 budget and help with parent and community outreach.

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## Data collection and analysis

Data collection and regular analysis of outcomes are vital to determining whether or not the expanded schedule and support services yield positive results. Data can be used to demonstrate success or indicate areas of weakness. If an area of weakness is identified then programming can be adjusted. On the flip side, schools that demonstrate success can continue programming and will be better able to garner the attention of future funders. Data can be collected and analyzed by the school staff, by partner organizations, or by third parties hired specifically to evaluate programming.

In community schools with expanded learning time, a range of indicators must be evaluated. It is important for schools to collect both quantitative and qualitative data.<sup>47</sup> The data collected will depend on the goals of the specific programs and will vary between sites. It should also include a spectrum of indicators to measure academic achievement and well being. In addition intermediary indicators are important because it may take years to see the full impact of a program. Data should be collected from all participants, not just students, since certain services are also geared towards families and community members. Schools and partner organizations should outline what indicators will be evaluated and how the data will be collected before programming begins.

Examples of which indicators and data points to collect and analyze can be taken from existing evaluations of schools that have redesigned and expanded learning time and community schools. A report that examined evaluations of 49 different community school initiatives concluded the following indicators are key to any evaluation:

- Achievement
- Attendance
- Suspensions
- Rate of high-risk behavior
- Parent involvement
- Family functioning
- Community access to services<sup>48</sup>

In community schools with expanded learning time, a range of indicators must be evaluated.

Similarly, there are important metrics that should be evaluated when schools expand learning time. A recent study conducted by the American Institutes for Research compared charter, pilot, and traditional public schools in Boston to assess why students in charter schools are higher achievers. The evaluation concluded that the longer school day and year in charter schools is a key factor to student success. The metrics the evaluation analyzed included student achievement and demographic data, and also surveyed principals regarding six aspects of school management: governance and leadership; budget; staffing; professional development; scheduling and time; and curriculum and instruction.<sup>49</sup>

There are some indicators, such as academic success, that overlap in both evaluations. The examples show the range of data points that can be collected and analyzed, but certainly do not represent all indicators that should be considered when determining whether a community-school model is working effectively with an expanded school schedule.

# Bankrolling community schools and expanded learning time initiatives

Funding is crucial to the planning, development, implementation, and sustainability of community schools that have expanded learning time. Improvements in student achievement and well-being will not happen overnight. It will take years for schools to demonstrate success and thus it is crucial that schools coordinate funding streams for several years during the planning process.

Again, the three schools highlighted in this report rely heavily on philanthropic support and funds from partner organizations and are less dependent on federal, state, and local money. As momentum for both reforms grows so does the need for more federal, state, and local funding streams. President Obama and Secretary of Education Arne Duncan have made implementing reforms to turn around the lowest performing schools a top priority, reflected in funding streams created under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, or ARRA.

The president's FY 2011 Budget Request for Education and the administration's Blueprint for Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, or ESEA, also build on this foundation. Additionally, opportunities for state and local funding are increasingly prevalent. When planning to develop a community school with an expanded schedule, districts and schools must consider blending a mixture of funding streams. And the federal government could promote and help to expand funding for both reform models by tying incentives to funding streams. Let's examine some of these funding streams in more detail.

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## School Improvement Grants and Race to the Top

School Improvement Grants, or SIG, are formula grants authorized under ESEA that are intended to transform school culture and improve student outcomes in persistently low-performing Title I schools, or those schools that serve a large numbers of low-income students. Funding is granted to states, which then make subgrants to school districts.

President Obama and Secretary of Education Arne Duncan have made implementing reforms to turn around the lowest performing schools a top priority.

ARRA significantly altered the way in which federal school improvement grants have been traditionally used. It outlines four models of intervention, targeting persistently low-performing schools: turnaround, restart, closure, and transformation.<sup>50</sup> One of the provisions under the transformation model requires schools to “extend learning time and create community-oriented schools.”<sup>51</sup> The turnaround model also features language concerning “socio-emotional and community oriented services,”<sup>52</sup> which are found in community schools. ARRA added \$3 billion to the \$546 million in funding already appropriated in FY 2009.

The Race to the Top, or RTTT, grant competition uses funds allocated under ARRA to encourage and reward states implementing reform, also bolstered school turnaround efforts and the use of the four intervention models. Governors were invited to apply for funds on behalf of their state, demonstrating their reform plans in four areas:

- Adopting standards
- Creating data systems
- Training and retaining effective teachers and principals
- Turning around the lowest performing schools

Applications for states were accepted in two rounds in 2010. States interested in applying for RTTT funds could build lengthening the school day and community schools into their applications as part of their vision for comprehensive reform, using transformation or turnaround funds.

The administration signaled support to continue funding for the school improvement grant program and RTTT by including funding in the president’s FY 2011 Budget Request, and both the House and Senate have included funding for these programs in their FY 2011 appropriations bills.<sup>53</sup> RTTT is also included in the Blueprint for the Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, broadening the competition to allow districts to apply for funds based on plans for reform.<sup>54</sup>

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## Investing in Innovation Fund

A pot of \$650 million was allocated to the Investing in Innovation fund, or i3, a competitive grant program established under the ARRA. School districts or non-profits partnering with a district or consortium of schools may apply for grants to

develop, expand, or scale-up innovative programs that have a demonstrated track record of increasing student achievement.

Unlike the priorities under RTTT and SIG, applicants for i3 grants are not limited to the four intervention models, or restricted to persistently low-performing schools.<sup>55</sup> School districts can apply for funding to develop and deliver innovative programming, or scale-up existing community schools and expand learning time. Additionally, the funds encourage partnerships between districts and local organizations, which are vital to community schools that expand learning time.

The president's FY 2011 Budget Request boosts support for the i3 fund and is included in the administration's ESEA Blueprint, as well as the Senate and House FY 2011 appropriations bills.<sup>56</sup> Of course it is important to note that RTTT, SIG, and i3 funding under ARRA are temporary. ESEA reauthorization and congressional appropriations can ensure that community schools and expanded learning have a sustainable stream of funding from which to draw upon in the future.

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## 21st Century Community Learning Centers

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program, or CCLC, distributes formula grants that are intended to provide opportunities for children during nonschool hours that will improve their academic achievement. A number of community schools, including LEAP Academy and Marquette, use CCLC funds to support afterschool, summer, and evening programming.

The administration, recognizing that expanding learning time and community schools are complementary school reform models, proposed redesigning the CCLC program to support such models in addition to afterschool and summer school programming in its FY 2011 budget request and ESEA Blueprint. The Senate has proposed \$1.2 billion for CCLC, and as proposed, has opened up the program to include expanded learning time in addition to afterschool and summer school. The Senate's proposal does not expand funding to community schools, however.

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## Promise Neighborhoods Program

The Promise Neighborhoods Program awards one-year planning grants to create developmental and educational services for children in distressed communities, recognizing the relationship between poverty and academic outcomes—similar

to the community-school model. Currently appropriated under the Fund for the Improvement of Education Program, the Promise Neighborhoods Program is modeled on the success of the Harlem Children's Zone in New York City, which serves students and families in more than 100 blocks of Harlem by providing community services available to the whole community as well as operating schools.

Under this program, nonprofits or institutions of higher education may apply for grants and must either operate or partner with a local school. After completing the planning process grantees should have a realistic plan of how they will put developmental and educational services in place. The grant does not require that services and programs be delivered at a school. But since schools are conveniently located they are ideal locations to provide these services.<sup>57</sup> The Coalition for Community Schools takes the position that community schools are at the center of Promise Neighborhoods.<sup>58</sup>

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### Full Service Community Schools Program

The Full Service Community Schools Program awards grants to school districts who partner with at least one organization to develop full service community schools to provide school-based services and programming responding to the needs of students, families, and community members.<sup>59</sup> This is currently the primary federal program that supports community schools.

The services and programming in these schools attend to the well-being of students, making them better prepared to enter the classroom ready to learn. In 2008, 12 Full Service Community Schools Program grants were awarded, and 10 continuation awards were granted in 2009.<sup>60</sup> Funding for the Full Service Community Schools Program was doubled from \$5 million in FY 2009 to \$10 million in FY 2010. The Department of Education estimates it will award 10 new grants in 2010.

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### Full Service Community Schools Act of 2009

In an effort to increase funding for the Full Service Community Schools Program, Rep. Steny Hoyer (D-MD) and Sen. Ben Nelson (D-NE) introduced the Full Service Community Schools Act (H.R. 3545/S. 1655) in September 2009. If signed into law, the bill would provide federal resources to support the planning and creation of full service community schools.

The legislation stresses the importance of engaging local organizations to assist in providing comprehensive services to students making sure they arrive at school ready to learn. The legislation calls for \$200 million in funding per year.<sup>61</sup> In the administration's ESEA Blueprint, Full Service Community Schools fall under the pool of money that has been proposed for 21st Century Community Learning Centers.

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### Time for Innovation Matters in Education Act of 2009

Largely based on the Massachusetts Expanded Learning Time Initiative, the TIME Act (H.R. 3130/S. 1410) was introduced by the late Sen. Edward Kennedy and Reps. Donald Payne (D-NJ) and George Miller (D-CA) in July 2009 to award six-year grants to launch initiatives to expand learning time for all children in a participating school. States, school districts, or districts partnering with local organizations could apply for competitive grants. Funding would be provided to redesign school calendars to increase time for academic instruction, enrichment, and professional development in high-needs schools.<sup>62</sup>

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### Developing Innovative Partnerships and Learning Opportunities that Motivate Achievement Act

The DIPLOMA Act (S. 3595) was introduced by Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-OH) and Sen. Bernie Sanders (D-VT) in July 2010 to incentivize partnerships between school districts and partner organizations that provide holistic services to increase academic achievement. The DIPLOMA Act reflects the core principles of successful community schools by focusing on strong partnerships and providing academic and nonacademic support services at schools, such as tutoring and health services. Money would be allocated to states by formula grants, which could then make subgrants to local consortia that include at least one school district and one partner organization. Funding could be used to provide services at community schools and for extended-day programs.<sup>63</sup>

## How to pay for combined community schools and expanded learning time

A summary of federal funding programs for these two models

### Funding Streams Summary

	Existing funding streams (including ARRA)	Potential funding in President's FY2011 Budget Request	Blueprint for the Reauthorization of ESEA	Could be used for Expanded Learning Time	Could be used for Community Schools
Race to the Top	\$4.35 billion in ARRA (competitive)	\$1.35 billion	Under the section: Fostering Innovation and Excellence	Yes, using the transformation model of intervention	Yes, using either the transformation or turnaround models of intervention
School Improvement Grants	\$545.6 million in FY2009, \$3 billion under ARRA, \$545.6 million in FY2010	\$900 million School Turnaround Grants	Renamed: School Turnaround Grants	Yes, using the transformation model of intervention	Yes, using either the transformation or turnaround models of intervention
Investing in Innovation	\$650 million in ARRA (competitive)	\$500 million	Under the section: Fostering Innovation and Excellence	Yes	Yes
21st Century Community Learning Centers	\$1.31 billion in FY2009	\$1.2 billion	Under the section: Successful, Safe, and Healthy Students	Yes, under the President's Budget Request and the Blueprint	Yes, under the President's Budget Request and the Blueprint
Promise Neighborhoods	\$10 million in FY2010	\$210 million	Under the section: Successful, Safe, and Healthy Students		Yes
Full Service Community Schools Program	\$5 million in FY2009, \$10 million in FY2010				Yes
Full Service Community Schools Act			Bill was introduced September 2009		\$200 million annually for 5 years (funding dependent on passage of act)
TIME Act			Bill was introduced July 2009	\$350 million for FY2010, \$380 million for FY2011, \$420 million for FY2012, \$460 million for FY2013 and \$500 million for FY2014 (funding dependent on passage of act)	
DIPLOMA Act			Bill was introduced in July 2010	\$2.5 billion per year for 5 years (funding dependent on passage of act)	\$2.5 billion per year for 5 years (funding dependent on passage of act)

Sources: "Funds for State Formula-Allocated and Selected Student Aid Programs," U.S. Department of Education, available at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/statetables/11stbystate.pdf>; Time for Innovation Matters in Education Act of 2009 (introduced in Senate), S. 1410, 111th Congress, 1st Session, July 8, 2009; Full-Service Community Schools Act of 2009 (introduced in Senate), S.1655, 111th Congress, 1st Session, September 2, 2009; "Office of Innovation and Improvement; Overview Information; Full-Service Community Schools Program; Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards for Fiscal Year (FY) 2010," Federal Register, June 8, 2010; "Full Service Community Schools Program," U.S. Department of Education, available at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/communityschools/2008awards.html>; "School Improvement Fund," U.S. Department of Education, available at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/sif/funding.html>; "School Improvement Grants," PowerPoint presentation. NASTID, January 2010, available at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/sif/nastid2.pdf>; "Investing in Innovation Fund; Final Rule and Notice," Federal Register, March 12, 2010; "Investing in Innovation Fund (I3)," U.S. Department of Education, available at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/innovation/funding.html>; "Fiscal Year 2011 Budget Summary," U.S. Department of Education, 2010, available at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/budget11/summary/edlite-section1.html>; "A Blueprint for Reform," U.S. Department of Education, 2010, available at <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/blueprint/blueprint.pdf>; "Race to the Top Program Executive Summary," U.S. Department of Education, 2009, available at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/executive-summary.pdf>; "Office of Innovation and Improvement; Overview Information; Promise Neighborhoods Program," Federal Register 75 (86) (May 5, 2010): 24671–24684; Developing Innovative Partnerships and Learning Opportunities that Motivate Act of 2010 (introduced in Senate), S. 3595, 111th Congress, 2nd Session, July 15, 2010; "DIPLOMA Act" Coalition for Community Schools, available at [http://www.communityschools.org/assets/1/AssetManager/DIPLOMA\\_One\\_Pager\\_6\\_9\\_10.pdf](http://www.communityschools.org/assets/1/AssetManager/DIPLOMA_One_Pager_6_9_10.pdf); last accessed September 1, 2010.

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## Local and state funding streams

In addition to various federal funding streams, local, state, and national initiatives have emerged offering resources and supports to both community schools and schools that expand learning time. These funding streams can be combined with federal and philanthropic supports, and demonstrated success will likely spark the creation of more local and state grants in the future. Local and state support not only encourages innovative programming by offering vital funding, but allows schools to implement reform in a supportive environment.

In 2005 Massachusetts launched the Massachusetts Expanded Learning Time Initiative, and is the only state to establish an initiative to expand learning time. Districts can apply for funding and participating schools receive an additional \$1,300 per student to redesign the school schedule by expanding the school day, week, or year for all students by at least 25 percent. High-poverty schools and schools that have established partnerships with community organizations are given preference in the application process.<sup>64</sup>

There are numerous local, state, and national-level community schools initiatives. These models vary in scope and assistance, but all share the goal of improving academic achievement for students by addressing the nonacademic factors that influence each child's life.<sup>65</sup> In 2009, for example, the Illinois state legislature passed House Bill 684 to amend the school code to include a definition of community schools and establish a grant program to fund community schools when funding is available. The law stresses the role that schools can play as centers of their communities. Schools, districts, or a consortium of schools can apply for grants, which are awarded by the State Board of Education. Illinois is the only state to offer grants for community schools.<sup>66</sup>

Burroughs Elementary School is the recipient of a local community schools initiative grant, acquiring support and funding from the Chicago Community Schools Initiative,<sup>67</sup> which provides funding to schools across Chicago to develop comprehensive services that support students, families, and the community. The Chicago Community Schools Initiative is the largest community schools program in the country. In addition to academic instruction, students and families can take advantage of afternoon and evening programming, health and social services, and community supports, all conveniently located at the school. Schools partner with at least one outside organization to provide services and supports with the goal of making the school the center of the community.<sup>68</sup>

# Conclusion

Through no fault of their own, some children face nonacademic barriers to learning. By catering to students' physical, social, and emotional needs, community schools are making important strides that can lead to improved better academic outcomes. Even when nonacademic needs are met, educationally disadvantaged students often need additional time in school to succeed.

When working in tandem, the support services offered at community schools and expanding the school calendar address the academic and nonacademic needs of educationally disadvantaged students. Rather than laying new brick and mortar, existing school buildings can be utilized more fully. Since children spend a considerable part of their day in school, schools are poised to be a convenient location for the delivery of support services. The calendar can be re-engineered to include more time for instruction and enrichment.

Schools and districts can think outside their established purview and push the boundaries of the traditional school model. Going to school is a constant. The way in which schools use time and physical space are variables that can be manipulated to better serve children and expand the notion of what schools and communities can do.

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