

Cities, Counties and Schools

Playing Well Together Pays Off for Children and Families



City and county officials are working with schools and others to create and sustain partnerships aimed at providing essential services and support to children and families. These community schools partnerships are transforming communities.

The Cities Counties Schools (CCS) Partnership (www.ccspartnership.org), a collaborative effort of the League, California State Association of Counties and California School Boards Association, has developed an online toolkit for local officials and staff.

The toolkit provides a way to learn more about strategies that connect the resources of cities, counties, schools and community-based organizations. It offers examples of successful partnerships in urban, suburban and rural communities along with best practices and resources from California and national organizations.

Some of the partnerships highlighted in the toolkit focus on the joint use of facilities, providing direct services to children and families or aligning limited resources to accomplish joint goals. Every collaborative effort is unique, but each addresses specific needs with resources and assets within the community.

[The City of Brentwood, the Brentwood Union School District and Liberty Union High School District](#)

have several ongoing partnerships. These include joint-use agreements for identified school and city facilities, city-provided emergency preparedness trainings for both school districts and ongoing capital improvement and maintenance costs for three facilities in the Brentwood Union School District. [The Brentwood Police Department](#) also offers an after-school program at a middle school and provides school resource officers to both school districts.

The [City of Pico Rivera](#) collaborates with the [El Rancho Unified School District](#) to provide a safe and nurturing after-school environment for students from kindergarten through 5th grade. The [Department of Parks and Recreation](#) operates the [Recreation and Education Accelerating Children's Hopes \(REACH\)](#) program at various school sites. Pico Rivera also joins forces with the school district and surrounding churches and businesses to seek volunteers and help offset event costs.

The [City of Sunnyvale](#), the [Sunnyvale Elementary School District](#), [Advanced Micro Devices](#), Sunnyvale residents and numerous community agencies partnered to guide programs and operations of the [Columbia Neighborhood Center](#) (CNC). Launched in the fall of 1994 in conjunction with the opening of the [Columbia Middle School](#), the center uses a one-stop model to provide a connected network of services and programs in North Sunnyvale. Its goal is to support and empower youth and families so that children will develop the life skills necessary to succeed. CNC is open to all community residents and provides services and activities year round, seven days a week, including evenings. Categories of programs and services provided include community education, health and mental health services, recreation, enrichment and youth and neighborhood safety.

“We cannot seek achievement for ourselves and forget about progress and prosperity for our community... Our ambitions must be broad enough to include the aspirations and needs of others, for their sakes and for our own.” –Cesar Chavez

[Union City](#) has a very long history of collaboration with the [New Haven Unified School District](#). The city staffs a student crisis intervention counseling program that serves several sites in the school district. Additionally, Union City helps provide a school resource officer at [James Logan High School](#) and collaborates with the district’s [Kids’ Zone Initiative](#), which offers “Cradle to Career” services to children in the Decoto neighborhood. The Kids’ Zone collaboration involves community members and local elected officials and includes more than a dozen local service organizations that offer services ranging from early childhood education and health care service to youth violence prevention programs and job training. School board and city council members meet regularly to discuss issues of mutual interest and importance, as do staff from each agency.

[The City of Pasadena](#) and the [Pasadena Unified School District](#) participate in a cooperative agreement known as the School-City-Community Work Plan. The plan’s goal is to foster critical thinking, problem-solving and media and communication skills to improve student outcomes. This in turn supports the local economy and helps ensure that the city grows as a local and global center of innovation. The plan identifies and integrates resources and services into a system-wide approach for service delivery and realigns existing funds to address gaps and avoid duplication of services. It encourages partnerships with the business community to align school curriculum and job training programs. Future activities for the city and school district include developing an Infant, Children, Youth and Family Master Plan.

Because strategies to create community schools partnerships are not a one-size-fits-all solution, lessons learned from models throughout California can help support the efforts of cities, schools, counties and community-based organizations.

Generous support from Kaiser Permanente, the Stuart Foundation, United Way of the Bay Area and the three CCS partners made the toolkit project possible. For more information on the examples provided here, the Community Schools Partnerships Toolkit and additional resources, visit www.ccspartnership.org. To learn about community schools partnerships taking shape throughout California, visit www.ccspartnership.org/resources/community-schools-partnerships.