# Cities and Schools Partner for Positive, Transformational Outcomes

After years of addressing youth issues such as homelessness, hunger and public safety as isolated, individual problems, Culver City has developed a strong collaborative effort that is having a transformational impact. Two years after adopting the Culver City Compact, a partnership among the city, schools, local businesses and community organizations, the city is now sharing data and streamlining services to better serve youth in need from "cradle to career."

The partnership has helped secure grant funding from sources such as Upward Bound House (a nonprofit focused on eliminating homelessness in families with children in the Los Angeles area) to assist in homeless outreach and establish shelters for youth who are homeless. In addition, the partnership received $3.7 million to establish a Safe Routes to School program and the infrastructure to support this program. Other partnership outcomes include a student summer jobs program and the installation of fiber optic cable connections to all schools to improve communications and internet access.

> *"Building partnerships is incredibly positive for all of us in Culver City," says Culver City Council Member Meghan Sahli-Wells. "It wasn't always the case, and it took effort to work together cooperatively. The partnership has become transformational. The school district recognizes that children have needs beyond the classroom, and the relationship is fruitful because the city provides services that the entire community relies upon."*

**The Culver City Compact identifies 10 key strategies:**

1. **Build collaborative leadership capacity.**
2. **Share data.**
3. **Map resources.**
4. **Identify, celebrate and expand successful practices.**
5. **Invest in, develop and reinforce high-quality teaching and learning in all classrooms.**
6. **Develop interagency professional learning communities focused on student learning.**
7. **Engage in a purposeful evaluation and assessment of current practices.**
8. **Coordinate advocacy for educational policy and funding issues.**
9. **Partner, create and enhance student pathways for workforce and career.**
10. **Ensure support services for all students and families.**

**Source: http://bit.ly/2jbyTRg**

## Collaborative Solutions: Community-Schools Partnerships

Community-schools partnerships such as the Culver City Compact offer communities the opportunity to support the needs of children and families with an intentional, enhanced and supportive academic, social and emotional health experience. Leadership and administration for these joint services and other efforts can be housed at city facilities or community-based sites, such as libraries and community centers.



*Culver City's Safe Routes to School program makes walking and biking to school easier.*

Successful community-schools partnerships begin by evaluating current programs and services to determine what's working and what can be done more efficiently or effectively. It's best to start small and scale up by leveraging current funding sources to create additional funding opportunities. When developing the partnership's goals and strategies, engage communities and the families that will receive the services to ensure that community needs are addressed, and then tailor the partnership to utilize community assets and strengths.

Strategies to create community-schools partnerships are not one-size-fits-all solutions. The Institute for Local Government's Cities Counties Schools Partnership developed an online toolkit about community-schools partnerships where officials and staff can learn about strategies and models in California.

Photo credit: Jim Shanman; Courtesy of the Institute for Local Government and Culver City