

Full-service Schools Roundtable Newsletter



September 2009

Dear Colleagues,

After a quiet but productive summer, I am delighted to reconnect with you as we all gear up for a new school year full of possibility and hard work!

We have exciting plans for this year, including:

- Thinking through Roundtable membership and ways to better connect with you.
- Exploring various full-service models that are being implemented in Boston and producing some short reports over the course of this year on good work happening locally.
- Hosting convenings on relevant policy topics.

We hope you will stay tuned for more information on our plans for the year.

As always, thank you for your continued interest in our work! We look forward to working together over the coming months.

Best regards,
Abby R. Weiss
Executive Director
Full-service Schools Roundtable

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The mission of the Full-service Schools Roundtable is to advance the healthy development and success of students in Boston through integrated school/community partnerships.

The Full-service Schools Roundtable is grateful for generous support from The Boston Foundation, Children's Hospital Boston and an anonymous foundation.

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FOR YOUR INFORMATION



The Economy's Impact on Back to School

A new national poll of K through 12 parents shows that the recession may have a silver lining for schools -- a 20 percent spike in parent volunteers during the school day, a desperately needed helping hand in a time of steep budget cuts for schools. At the same time, many parents don't know how to be helpful and feel unprepared for Back to School:

- Nearly two in three parents (64%) believe that, because of the recession, it is more important for them to volunteer at school. A majority of parents (53%) plan to volunteer at their children's school this year versus 44% last year. This volunteerism trend is most pronounced among African American parents, 60% of whom plan to volunteer - up from the 23% who say they volunteered last year.
- Parents may still not know how best to help schools. 1 in 2 parents (49%) cite a lack of volunteer opportunities provided by their child's teacher or school as one of the main challenges they face to being more involved in their children's education.
- The economy is driving parents to shop smarter for school supplies this year. With 74% of families expecting their economic situation to worsen or stay the same, a majority of parents (nearly 90%) plan to take cost-saving steps when shopping for school supplies.
- Parents may not have been fully prepared for the start of school. While 93% of parents planned to buy school supplies ahead of time, only 47% of parents find out which subjects their child will be learning, only 39% have their kids start reading more often, and only 33% reduce their kids' TV/video game time.

What is behind parents' drive to volunteer?

- Has President Obama's emphasis of the importance of parents had an impact on behavior?
- Are unemployed and under-employed parents channeling their free time into schools for good?
- Does this signal a new activism among parents?
- What can parents do to help their children succeed academically?

Read more on the report [here](#) and connect with GreatSchools network of parents.



Spotlight on school climate

In a commentary in Teachers College Record, authors Jonathan Cohen, Arnold Fege, and Terry Pickeral ask educational leaders to think broadly about the responsibility that federal and state departments of education have for the well-being of children and families in schools. The authors identify six ways to close a gap that now exists between school climate research, policy, practice guidelines, and teacher education. First, they advocate that education leaders define school climate in ways that are aligned with recent research. Second, they propose that schools routinely and comprehensively evaluate school climate, recognizing student, parent, and school

personnel "voice," as well as the major dimensions of safety, relationships, teaching and learning, and overall environment. Third, they recommend that school systems adopt standards for positive school climate, and climate assessment procedures. Fourth, they propose that climate assessment be a measure of accountability. Fifth, they recommend that teacher preparation programs give teachers and administrators the tools to evaluate classroom and school climate, and use these findings to promote a climate for learning in schools. Finally, they call for increased research on the evaluation and dissemination of resources focused on improving school climate.

Read the full [report](#).



Harvard Family Research Project

Strengthening and Sustaining Family Engagement in Out-of-School Time

As national dialogue elevates the importance of out-of-school time and of complementary connections among learning supports, family engagement in OST has become a critical issue for program staff, policymakers, educators, administrators, and parents. In this Issues and Opportunities in Out-of-School Time Evaluation [brief](#), Harvard Family Research Project explores the benefits of and strategies for engaging families in OST programs, as well as the role of systems and intermediaries in supporting family engagement in OST.



Programs for Children and Youth in a Community Context

This Child Trends [brief](#) provides insights from a recent Child Trends Roundtable with leaders of community initiatives that incorporate evidence-based and evidence-informed programs. Insights include recognizing the value of using data to guide and shape programs; taking both program implementation and sustainability seriously; planning carefully; and being sure that missions are well-aligned across programs, community initiatives and education systems.



Academic Development Institute

New Issue of The Community School Journal Available!

The latest (Vol. 19, No. 1) issue of The School Community Journal is now available online at www.adi.org. You can download the [entire issue](#) or search individual articles.

The latest issue includes:

- Walking the Walk: Portraits in Leadership for Family Engagement in Urban Schools, by Susan Auerbach

- An Urban School District's Parent Involvement: A Study of Teachers' and Administrators' Beliefs and Practices, by Natalie Conrad Barnyak and Tracy A. McNelly
- The Bridge is Built: The Role of Local Teachers in an Urban Elementary School, by Wayne A. Reed
- Spirituality and Respect: Study of a Model School-Church-Community Collaboration, by Jenny Tripses and Lori Scroggs
- School Contexts and Student Belonging: A Mixed Methods Study of an Innovative High School, by Lisa S. Johnson
- School-Parent-Community Partnerships: The Experience of Teachers Who Received the Queen Rania Award for Excellence in Education in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, by Osamha M. Obeidat and Suha M. Al-Hassan
- It Takes a Village to Raise a Reader: Reflections on an Intergenerational Literacy Program, by Ray Doiron and Jessie Lees
- Parenting Classes, Parenting Behavior, and Child Cognitive Development in Early Head Start: A Longitudinal Model, by Mido Chang, Boyoung Park, and Sunha Kim
- Achievement for All: A Book Review, by Ward W. Weldon



**New Ready by 21 Materials Now Available
Ready by 21 Video**

A ten-minute video providing an overview of the Ready by 21 Approach and Challenge is now accessible on the Ready by 21 Web site. The video presentation features Karen Pittman, Merita Irby, Brian Gallagher, president and CEO of United Way of America, the Ready by 21 signature partner and leaders from Richmond, Va., who have taken on the Ready by 21 Challenge.

[Watch the video here!](#)

Ready by 21 Brochure

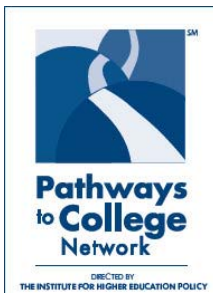
A Ready by 21 brochure outlining the Approach and listing the Partners is now available in a downloadable format. These new information tools are ideal for introducing state and local decision-makers to the Ready by 21 Approach and Partnership.

[Read the brochure.](#)

Removing Roadblocks to Rigor:

Linking Academic and Social Supports to Ensure College Readiness and Support

Pathways to College Network, a new program of the Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP), is launching a national initiative to ensure that student needs for integrated academic and social support strategies are being addressed. This report offers a broad definition of academic and social support aligned with rigor and focus on integrating a range of intentional strategies that enable students at all levels to successfully undertake challenging coursework through the identification of specific examples of support strategies in schools and higher education institutions. View the full [report](#).



The Benefits of and Barriers to Out-of-School Programs for Youth
Research suggests that participation in out-of-school time programs and activities can lessen the

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