



NEW DAY FOR LEARNING FINAL REPORT, 2009-2012

A SUCCESSFUL JOURNEY TO LAUNCH
COMMUNITY SCHOOLS IN SAN FRANCISCO



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San Francisco's New Day for Learning Initiative: A Successful Journey to Launch Community Schools

Final Report, February 2009 – February 2012

Background

San Francisco's New Day for Learning (referred to as New Day in this report) began in early 2009 as an initiative of the San Francisco School Alliance in collaboration with the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD), the Department of Children, Youth and their Families (DCYF) and the Mayor's Office. Its initial purpose was to implement the principles of a report entitled *New Day for Learning* written by the national Time, Learning and Afterschool Task Force that had been convened by the C.S. Mott Foundation. That report declared the traditional school day to be "obsolete." Some of the principles that San Francisco was charged to promote by Mott (and later joined by other funders) were:

- Collaboration and coordination across all sectors
- A comprehensive approach to learning by fostering whole child development
- Expanded definitions of student success beyond the acquisition of basic skills
- Strategies that can amplify and enrich core academic learning in school, after-school and in the community – from early to late in the day and year-round
- The need for new high quality professional development and leadership opportunities
- Seeing education as a community-wide responsibility to provide children with the means to become successful learners and citizens

Established as a three year initiative, the institutionalization of New Day's recommendations and work was to be the benchmark of its success.

Early Policy Support

Two early steps that gave New Day the influence needed to begin the work were: (1) A day-long convening of 30 diverse stakeholders (city department heads, executive directors of community based organizations, SFUSD administrators, and others) led by the Deputy Superintendent to introduce the initiative and solicit input. Several national experts joined the group for the day to offer ideas and enthusiasm for the effort. (2) A launch at the city's community foundation with the Superintendent of Schools to introduce New Day to local funders. As a result, several funders came aboard to support the initiative, and other opinion leaders supported the goals.

Early on, the New Day Director met with every member of the San Francisco Board of Education to introduce them to the initiative. All members expressed strong support for the goals. At the end of 2009, a resolution supporting the goals, urging SFUSD leadership to collaborate closely with New Day, and calling on New Day to develop a Community School plan for the District was passed unanimously by the Board. This gave New Day additional leverage to garner widespread participation in the planning and implementation process.

Early Adopter Schools

When New Day took on its assignment, five schools were designated by the SFUSD as “early adopters.” The first steps were to identify best practices throughout the city and the country and conduct a thorough assessment of the ideas and needs of stakeholders with regard to developing a more holistic approach to learning. New Day staff sought input from over a dozen local groups and over 100 individuals, including SFUSD students and staff, policy experts at local universities, and community agencies. Several months into the project New Day staff led a delegation of the principals of the 5 early adopter schools to New York City to visit the Harlem Children’s Zone school, the Children’s Aid Society Community Schools, and New Vision high schools. It was there that the idea of a *Community School* crystallized as the vehicle to implement the New Day principles. It was also there that members of the delegation were inspired by the potential of the alignment of community partners with schools and developed the notion of “deep and focused partnerships” as a hallmark of success. Without any new money to make it happen, New Day moved to help the early adopters organize around the Community School idea – reallocating existing resources, putting greater emphasis on partnerships with community groups, and increasing parent support and ownership of the school.

Within the first year, the early adopter schools began to embody the basic elements of the emerging San Francisco community school strategy and model.

- *Hillcrest Elementary School* became the flagship of the drive for Community Schools – where new strategies were tried and flourished. Hillcrest was led by a principal dedicated to the vision and, as one of the final Healthy Start grantees in the State, had laid much of the groundwork. Hillcrest created a family resource center at the school, rallied its staff and partners around a Community School strategy focused on common goals, and developed what has become the model for integrating afterschool and school toward the vision of a seamless day.
- *Burton High School* launched its efforts by changing the relationship between a Beacon Center and a school – the principal and the Beacon Director now describe themselves as “married” (a joke, of course, but a metaphor for the mutual trust that has been created). The Beacon Director is a key member of the administrative team of the school; and the activities of the Beacon are planned jointly with the academic leadership of the school. Hence the emphasis on the Beacon running a Saturday school, as well as a host of academically oriented in-school, afterschool and credit recovery opportunities – all without losing its youth development philosophy.
- *Drew Elementary College Preparatory Academy* developed a comprehensive mental health focus, made possible by an early collaboration negotiated with the help of New Day with the Department of Public Health, which also embraced the community school approach. Edgewood Children’s Center partnered with the school to provide some of the most comprehensive mental health services in the District – a continuum that ranges from classroom consultation to therapy. Because of its New Day status, other partners agreed to join the Drew team (with their own funding), e.g. Performing Arts Workshop provided creative writing during the day and African and Latin dance afterschool.

- *Summer Learning Pilot Programs* – Working with a statewide network funded through the David and Lucile Packard Foundation and convened by the Partnership for Children, New Day provided technical assistance and funding for enriched summer learning programs at Hillcrest Elementary, Revere K-8, and through MoMagic in the Western Addition (a community-based partner of Muir Elementary). These programs blossomed and developed project-based learning strategies, partnerships with libraries and cultural institutions, new approaches to literacy, and career exploration opportunities. MoMagic worked in collaboration with 8 Western Addition community based organizations to share art teachers, literacy and math coaches and learning-oriented field trips. All 3 programs were guided in assessing their programs using tools developed by the National Summer Learning Association.

Lesson #1	Vocal support from education and community leaders at the outset of a reform effort can set the stage for early participation of many stakeholders.
Lesson #2	Inspired and motivated principals can work magic at their school sites, and are the single most powerful allies in promoting systemic change.
Lesson #3	Community based organizations and city agencies can partner in new and expanded ways when a collaborative leadership approach is in place at the site and district level.
Lesson #4	Early “wins” are important, and facilitating increased funding (in this case for mental health and summer programming) is particularly effective in inspiring the motivation to experiment with new strategies.
Lesson #5	Site visits to exemplary schools are effective in motivating change.
Lesson #6	The Community School vision can be powerful in galvanizing educators and community partners to rally around common goals.

Convening, Educating, and Collective Development of a Model

Equipped with some successes on the ground and an official policy supporting its goals, New Day staff then spent the next year and a half working with stakeholders to develop and refine the Community School model for San Francisco and foster new types of collaborations and policies to put it in place. This included:

- **Creating a 25-member interagency and citywide advisory body** with representatives from city departments, cultural institutions, community-based service organizations, parent groups, foundations and most importantly, the SFUSD, to learn from and recommend policies from the New Day experience. Key to the success of this body was the leadership role played at every meeting by the Deputy Superintendent. The initial framing of the group was as the Design and Implementation Committee of New Day that

would explore work on the ground at the five early adopter schools from which more systemic issues could ultimately be addressed. This framing was purposely narrow - it did not threaten the turf of any other group, and yet its specificity and the school site players and high level district people it brought to the table proved enough to draw the invited members. In fact, the approach led to rich and concrete discussions that addressed ways that both the public and private agencies represented on the body could contribute real solutions, such as new partnerships, data agreements, and inter-departmental consultation.

Grounded in an understanding of the challenges and solutions at specific schools, the group was then prepared to advise on a general plan for Community Schools. With direction provided by the Committee, as well as several other working groups, New Day put together the first stage of a plan in a 2010 white paper entitled “Key Issues and Recommendations for Community Schools in San Francisco.” The white paper offered a definition for Community Schools, proposed elements of Community Schools, and proposed a policy and strategies for making every school in SF a Community School. When the discussion at meetings began to center explicitly on community schools and more general policy issues, the group renamed itself the SF Community School Council. The Council also laid the groundwork for an approach to summer learning and began identifying new roles in the Community School work for its members. For instance, the Human Services Agency agreed to train school personnel in helping parents apply for Food Stamps and other benefits, with the potential to expand the role of schools in providing family support.

Throughout the duration of the initiative the Council provided a forum for education about the Community School strategy - sometimes meeting just as a group; other times inviting interested stakeholders to sessions, such as ones with Jane Quinn of the National Center on Community Schools and one with a neighboring Superintendent implementing a neighborhood level Community School approach.

- **Engaging hundreds of stakeholders in educational convenings and work groups** to learn and develop models for specific aspects of the Community School approach. This included a citywide conference on Community Schools, with nationally recognized guest experts. The conference was particularly noteworthy in that its 150 attendees represented teachers, principals, city departments, parents, school administrators, policymakers and community agencies – the most diverse cross-section of roles of any conference on youth in recent memory. The result of the conference was a strong consensus about the importance of the central role of a Community School Coordinator.

A work group of CBO’s and ExCEL staff developed an extended day model for Community Schools (primary and secondary levels), and presented its model to the City's After School for All Council. And a behavioral health workgroup, with key CBO partners, SFUSD School Health Programs, and Department of Public Health designed a “whole school” approach to mental health services in the community schools. (see below for more details)

Committees were also convened to discuss indicators of success and evaluation strategies, definitions of Community Schools, and summer jobs. In addition to convening groups, New Day staff participated in other workgroups and committees throughout the city as they related to the elements and approach of the Community School model.

- **Facilitating a new level of CBO-SFUSD partnership.** A 25 member CBO-SFUSD Advisory Committee, co-chaired by the New Day Director and SFUSD Associate Superintendent of Student Support and staffed by New Day, has been a backbone of the successful launch of Community Schools. The Committee has provided a monthly forum for almost three years for information exchange, exploring the potential of CBO-school partnerships, and the development of new policies, strategies and tools for improving partnerships. The Committee enabled New Day to address at a systemic level much of what was being experienced on the ground with CBO partners. The goal has been to improve the alignment of partners with the education goals of the school, and to promote mutual accountability and mutual understanding of and respect for each other's role.

Through the Committee, the contributions of CBO's to 21st century skills were surveyed. This entailed extensive outreach to all types of CBO's (health, environment, arts, etc.). The information gleaned through the surveys proved useful as the District developed its curriculum for 21st century skills. The Committee also addressed the challenge of evaluating CBO's providing services to schools. A framework for evaluating CBO's was developed in collaboration with DCYF although the evaluation was not put in place. Both CBO's and SFUSD personnel were concerned about its complexity and the difficulty of ensuring objectivity. However, a process for increased data sharing between CBO's and schools was an important outcome of the process.

The signature achievement of the Committee has been the development of a process for ensuring alignment and collaboration between CBO's and schools. The Committee started by defining the elements of a *deep and focused partnership*, introduced by New Day, and determined three types of partnerships with schools: Specialized, Aligned and Deep and Focused. A tool for schools and partners to determine the type of partnership needed and develop a shared vision, program strategy and shared accountability was created by the Committee. CBO's and district leadership participated actively in the development of the tool creating a high level of buy-in. At this writing, the tool is being piloted in the Superintendent's Zone, most deeply at three sites. If the pilot proves helpful in better aligning the work of CBO's and schools, the Associate Superintendent of Student Support Services has committed to putting it in place district-wide as part of the MOU/contract negotiating process between CBO's and the school district. This would be a major achievement for the school district, as well as the Community School field.

This regular information exchange has given CBO's a window into District strategies and protocols, and has enabled CBO's to learn from each other about various kinds of partnership strategies. Reflecting on the accomplishments of so many of the partnerships, the Committee considered how to best communicate the potential of partnerships to schools, as well as CBO's, funders and parents. As a result, the treatment for a video on the exemplary partnerships of some of the key participants in the Advisory Committee was developed by New Day and its production is in the works – funded by the SFUSD.

- **Building a city-wide focus on summer learning as a key component of education reform** by initiating and convening the Summer Learning Network, comprised of over 70 organizations. The Network has developed a common set of goals for summer, which it called the *Countdown for Summer*: 5 days a week of active play; 4 new places to visit; 3 fresh fruits and veggies daily; 2 summer projects; 1 once a day with a good book; 0 soda. For two summers, the Countdown has been disseminated through posters, bookmarks, etc. to programs throughout the city. Working with the Network, New Day produced three professional development conferences in two years involving over 500 practitioners in learning new ways to incorporate learning into their summer programs. A website was established to share information and resources. There was outreach to dozens of organizations that provide enrichment activities and services to promote increased access to children's programs. Highlights included an agreement for free MUNI for summer programs (a first ever accomplishment) and free admissions for thousands of children in summer programs to the California Academy of Sciences and other city attractions. In the summer of 2011, the Summer Learning Network promoted and got passed a citywide summer learning policy by the Board of Supervisors which called for an early collaborative planning process for summer using the Countdown as a framework and free admissions to city-funded institutions for summer programs. The National Summer Learning Association was a key partner in this work.
- **Community outreach and communication** - Throughout the three-year initiative, there was steady attention to both communicating with stakeholders and expanding support for Community Schools citywide. This included launching the initiative with a guest editorial by the Superintendent of Schools and the New Day for Learning Director in the city's major newspaper. New Day was also successful in capturing free electronic and print media on several occasions, particularly regarding its work on summer learning. A Summer Learning Day event featuring then House Speaker Nancy Pelosi received significant coverage in print and on television. Other strategies included presentations to civic and neighborhood organizations, guest speaking opportunities at a wide variety of provider and professional organizations and conferences, and introducing the city's major organizing and advocacy groups to community schools. One group (SFOP) adopted community schools as one of its primary advocacy goals. There were also occasional presentations to policy-makers, such as elected officials and public agency administrators. New Day produced a quarterly newsletter that was sent to a mailing list of over 600 - keeping its network informed about progress being made on Community Schools. New Day also produced numerous informational fact sheets and a brochure for the purpose of educating a wide variety of stakeholders.
- **Partnering with national, state and regional community school efforts** has put San Francisco on the radar as a district on the move in the Community School world. New Day worked with and introduced San Francisco to the Coalition for Community Schools, the National Center for Community Schools, and the Bay Area network of community school intermediaries convened by the John Gardner Center at Stanford University. New Day joined a delegation of the California School Board Association at a national meeting in exploring a statewide policy agenda for community schools. As previously mentioned, the National Summer Learning Association also became a key partner.

Lesson #7	Children’s service providers and educators in San Francisco are eager to work together. Planning that starts with and focuses on those doing the work on the ground can often overcome turf and bureaucratic challenges. For a city with a long history of multiple meetings and planning processes, this approach can offer a new way to begin discussions and cross-sector planning.
Lesson #8	Community-wide buy-in developed through inter-agency committees and networks with shared goals helps advance the work on multiple levels.
Lesson #9	Bringing CBO's into a school district planning process as close advisers in improving partnership and contracting practices can yield increased trust and accountability.
Lesson #10	Having school districts formally and objectively evaluate CBO’s is challenging on many counts. It can be more useful to have CBO’s and school personnel co-evaluate their partnership and develop plans together for shared goals, alignment and accountability strategies. The process through which school districts contract with CBO's can be a vehicle for co-planning.
Lesson #11	Improving summer programming is a high leverage strategy for addressing the achievement gap. Much can be accomplished through a broad city-wide coalition.

School Improvement Grant Creates Opportunity

When 10 schools in San Francisco were identified by the state as persistently low performing, the SFUSD had an unexpected and unique opportunity to apply what had been developed so far in the planning and implementation of the Community School approach to a larger cohort of schools – this time with funds for implementation. Thus, the third year of the New Day initiative focused on the task of incorporating what had been learned into the School Improvement Grants (SIG) and transformation process. This allowed the SFUSD, with the leadership of New Day, to test ideas and to move more quickly than anyone could have expected into the development of San Francisco's Community School model. The potential impact of this SIG-funded work in the Superintendent’s Zone was further enhanced by the decision of the SFUSD leadership to use the models developed in the Zone as an incubator of district wide reform strategies.

From the outset, New Day was able to frame the approach based on what had been learned to date - in the early adopters, as well as from the broader field. The SFUSD gave New Day the opportunity to draft the portion of the SIG grant related the Community School strategy. When a \$40 Million+ grant was received by the SFUSD, New Day moved into high gear.

Initially the focus was on developing the role of **Community School Coordinator** (a centerpiece of the SIG proposal). This included developing a completely new position within the SFUSD - with New Day assisting with job descriptions, recruitment strategies and heading up the hiring committee. That was followed by a week-long orientation session for the new Coordinators organized by New Day, which enlisted the National Center for Community Schools, under the direction of Jane Quinn, to assist. Detailed job expectations and priority setting documents were written covering six areas of work, including leadership, coordination and design of student and family support services, and partnership development.

For almost a year, New Day developed and facilitated a professional learning community for the Coordinators, that has included skill development in areas such as meeting facilitation; introductions to SFUSD policies, structures and personnel; community schools research and models; needs assessment and asset mapping; planning key aspects of the SF Community School work such as evaluation, data collection and communications; joint sessions with behavioral health and ExCEL staff from sites and central office; and a great deal of peer support and sharing. New Day staff met with principals and school teams to launch the work of the Coordinators and provided ongoing technical assistance and troubleshooting at sites as needed and requested by the Coordinators.

New Day also developed numerous tools and program frameworks to facilitate the work of implementing the community school strategy. The most important tool is a community school rubric detailing 98 best practices, or standards, in 5 categories (coordination, expanded learning, behavioral health, family support and engagement, and community engagement) that demonstrate a successful Community School. The rubric is the basis of self assessments by school teams, and it helps define what a Community School is for all stakeholders. Community School Coordinators worked with New Day to identify which of these benchmarks should be accomplished in Year One. Other tools developed by New Day included ones for needs assessments, identifying leveraged resources, planning summer and extended day programs and the partnership planning tool previously described.

Increasingly throughout the SIG process, the Community School work was planned collaboratively with New Day staff and the **Directors of Family and Community Engagement**, a position New Day had recommended be written into the SIG grant to support the Community School work. In addition, New Day worked with the SIG Community School Subcommittee (the two Assistant Superintendents overseeing the Zone, the Directors and SIG project manager) on the development and implementation of the Community School model in the Zone. This consisted of bi-weekly meetings to facilitate communication, improve understanding and further development of the community school approach, and troubleshoot numerous issues.

Field trips, organized with assistance from New Day, to the Tenderloin Community School (San Francisco's nationally recognized community school model) and the Helms Community School in Contra Costa County fueled enthusiasm among Bayview parents to rebuild Willie Brown School as a Community School from the ground up – blending architecture, vision and education strategy. (Note: the SFUSD agreed with the parents, and the new Willie Brown Middle School will be built with space for community services, such as a health clinic.)

Interagency and district wide workgroups convened by New Day on two key elements of Community Schools were continued and expanded in scope – behavioral health and extended day. These workgroups cultivated the model and engaged players from all levels of the SFUSD, other city departments, and CBO partners. The Extended Day workgroup developed a “linked learning” strategy for Community Schools. The program design which consisted of deeper integration of afterschool staff into the school day, including shared planning time with teachers, began to create a true “seamless day” for many students. The Behavioral Health Workgroup, comprised of the city’s leading CBO mental health providers, the leadership of School Health, and the Department of Public Health, developed a comprehensive model for the SIG schools. Coordinators were trained in the model; each school assessed the status of its services using the model, and developed a plan of action. School Health is working with CBO’s to create appropriate professional development opportunities to implement the plans of action. Collaborative planning with the Office of Family Engagement at the district level has begun. A first step has been to use the family engagement benchmarks of the community school rubric as a basis for an assessment of family support and engagement strategies at each site.

New Day also laid out a framework and plan for an **evaluation** of the Community School work – identifying goals and objectives, leading indicators, and potential measures, developing surveys and self assessment tools, preparing for the collection of student-level data on program utilization, and negotiating with city partners to share data.

Lesson #12	Collaborative planning and pursuing a dream even when there is no funding allows institutions to launch innovations quickly when opportunities arise. It is important then to seize the moment.
Lesson #13	Investing in cultivating the leadership role of the Community School Coordinator is a high leverage strategy.
Lesson #14	Common agreed-upon benchmarks and strategies for the Community School approach are key to "scaling up" even though every school will have different priorities and needs and will look quite different.
Lesson #15	One of the challenges in promoting the Community School model is linking the work on the ground at the school sites to the central office structures and middle managers that oversee the key elements of the community school strategy. Bridging this work is an essential component of institutionalizing a Community School approach. Engaging middle managers in design committees from the outset is one effective strategy. This works particularly well when high level leaders message to their managers the importance of participation.
Lesson #16	Professional development in all Community School elements and among all stakeholders is key to success. Everyone at a site must have access to training opportunities, and cross-training can be particularly effective.

Lesson #17

Time, time, time is one of the biggest barriers to making the Community School model work. This is heightened in “transformation” schools by the enormous pressure to demonstrate progress according to federally-driven standards, and the laser-like focus on classroom academics. The deeper process of addressing the interplay between social, emotional, family and community needs and long-term student success must receive equal attention.

Elements of San Francisco’s Community School Model

The core of every successful school is quality instruction. The SF Community School model that has been developed through the process described above consists of an additional five elements: coordination, expanded learning, behavioral health, family support and engagement, and community engagement. They are described below with a few examples from the emerging Community Schools which New Day worked with over the past 3 years:

Coordination – Community School Coordinators are the linchpin of San Francisco’s approach – ensuring that it is someone’s job to manage the many student and family support elements of a school. Having a Coordinator takes many burdens off the principal, and ensures accountability to families and students for responding to their myriad needs, the cultivation of new or improved resources and services, and a collective focus among all partners on student success. At Mission HS the Coordinator manages over 40 different partners, collects data on the utilization of partner services, oversees re-targeting services to students most in need, and works with partners to ensure a focus on a college-going culture. The principal often describes the Coordinator as *the most important person at the school*. At Everett there is a coordinated approach to planning. For the first time, CBO partners had an equal seat at the table as the principal led his team through a week long priority-setting process before the school year began. When unmet needs were prioritized (such as extra support for its African American male students), the Coordinator negotiated with community groups to bring new services to the school. The Coordinator at Carver Elementary has become the central go-to person for the non-academic staff and partners at the school. As the right hand of the principal, she works with school staff to do everything from negotiating with service providers to expand programs, to helping a parent in crisis, to overseeing contracts for afterschool, to planning all-school community-building events.

Expanded Learning – A major feature of the School Improvement Grants and of the Community School work is *expanded learning*. This refers to the integration of before and afterschool with school, and weekend and summer programming that meets the multiple needs of students. The SIG funds paid for what has been called *linked learning* - having afterschool staff work during the school day, providing in-classroom academic support as well as support for school climate and behavior coaching, and providing time for common planning with teachers. Hillcrest has excelled at project based learning outside school hours that is seamlessly integrated with the learning goals of the school. Jamestown Community Center, working at both Chavez Elementary School and Horace Mann Middle School has

provided leadership in the development of the expanded learning model. At Chavez, Jamestown collaborates with teachers on parent-teacher conferences and provides support in targeted classrooms on climate activities and attends professional development with school personnel. Its middle school program includes a *Seminar* period where Jamestown and other CBO's offer project-based learning that is integrated into the academic goals of the school. Jamestown leads the school's student leadership development which engages young people in school decision-making. At Muir, Community Grows (a gardening CBO) is aligned with the California educational standards and works with students in the classroom, during the school day and afterschool – an integrated expanded learning approach. Handful Players collaborates with teachers in a classroom setting to develop their own play, which then becomes the focus of the drama afterschool program. At Revere, the Instructional Reform Facilitator trains the afterschool staff so that approaches to behavior and tutoring are aligned. The tutors at O'Connell's afterschool Student Learning Center are integrated into the school day in four subject areas so that their approach and work reflects the needs of the classroom.

Behavioral Health – The Behavioral Health Workgroup convened by New Day developed what it called a “*whole school*” model – ensuring a continuum of services focused on prevention and early intervention. The four elements of the model are: (1) professional development in mental health for all staff at a school site; (2) teacher consultation on handling mental health issues for individual children and for their classroom as a whole; (3) family support; and (4) direct mental health services. The goal is to strengthen the first three approaches so that there will be less need for direct services – particularly less need to pull children out of their classrooms. SFUSD's School Health Department is working to put in place the trainings and support to implement the model. Joint site visits were done at each school by School Health and New Day to introduce the whole school model, and facilitate an assessment on strengths, areas for growth, and support needed. From this assessment, common themes and needs were identified and recommended to the SIG leadership.

Two key recommendations emerged. First, having a Mental Health Collaborative at each school, co-facilitated by the Learning Support Professional (LSP) and the lead mental health partner. This strategy, developed at several schools in partnership with *Instituto Familiar de la Raza*, provides the structure through which both the internal and external service providers align services, share a vision, increase communication, share best practices, and build capacity to support teachers, students and families. Because of the need to focus on strategies that prevent intensive pull-out interventions, a second recommendation was that School Health staff provide additional training to LSPs on classroom consultation, a critical, but often overlooked or inadequately implemented strategy. Both of these recommendations are in the process of being implemented.

Family Engagement and Support – It was important to the early adopters to have a two-pronged approach to the families at their schools – providing both family support services at school sites, as well as engaging parents in their children's education and the decision-making and governance of the school. Bryant Elementary experimented this year with a large event to engage families in developing priorities for the school. Parents were invited to share perspectives not just through discussions, but through art and games – all centered on expressing their vision for the school, including a tree-of-dreams (their school symbol) mural

to be displayed centrally at the school. The roots of the tree were all the commitments made by parents to participate in making their dreams a reality. At Paul Revere, parents were active members of the SIG planning team from the outset, and have continued as the team has requested and received regular program and financial updates from the leadership of the Zone. First year Community School benchmarks include having a dedicated parent resource room, leadership development activities, family support services, communication strategies, and adult education. Coordinators are visiting community resources, such as the recent trip to the Good Samaritan Family Resource Center and the Mission Economic Development Association, to cement linkages with the schools.

Community Engagement – The work to bring community into the school and the school into the community is in its early stage. Part of the future work is developing this aspect of the community school. The Coordinator at Muir is setting the pace for reaching out to small businesses, CBO's, and community activists with the goal of building new kinds of bridges. Teachers at the school were taken by the Coordinator on a tour of the neighborhood, and had the opportunity to see their students in a new light as they engaged in activities at various community agencies. O'Connell's celebration of Martin Luther King Day, which was organized by the Community School Coordinator, is an example of the kind of community engagement that can impact a school. Partnering with the Center for Music National Service, the school held a massive community service day, engaging a broad cross-section of students, families, teachers, partners and community members in making murals, landscaping the school, creating bulletin boards, organizing an art room, and much more. There are plans afoot in the Mission Zone to promote community-wide activities, such as a neighborhood arts event, as a way to promote engagement across individual school communities.

Organizational Issues

New Day for Learning was a three-year initiative, named for the report created by its founding funder, C.S. Mott Foundation. During the three years, additional funders were: SFUSD, San Francisco Foundation, David and Lucile Packard Foundation, Department of Children, Youth and their Families, the Lambert family, National Summer Learning Association, and the Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr. Fund. New Day was fiscally sponsored by the San Francisco School Alliance. It was governed by a collaborative chaired by the Deputy Superintendent, with the Director of DCYF, the Mayor's Education Adviser, and the SF School Alliance. New Day was staffed by a full-time Director and starting in September, 2009, a 4-day-a-week Deputy Director. The initiative has had sporadic administrative support, including support for its summer learning work. Volunteers and student interns have enhanced the capacity of New Day to achieve its goals.

Goals for the Future

Of course there is much more to be done to achieve a culture change as dramatic as one that calls on school districts to lead the charge to make education a community-wide investment in learning and support for students. As San Francisco moves forward with the next phase of the Community School work, some next steps must be to:

- Provide strong support and guidance to ensure that the fragile Community School infrastructure that has been established at each school site is able to succeed. This includes technical assistance to Coordinators, as well as support for the Directors of Family and Community Engagement. Continue to utilize the rubric and needs assessment protocols established for the Community School model to help facilitate the work.
- Continue to develop the design, and implementation strategies for the five Community School elements. Maintain the behavioral health and expanded learning workgroups. Develop a workgroup on community engagement, and work with the Office of Family Engagement to develop the family engagement and support strategies at the schools. Cultivate a forum for inter-agency collaboration, such as the Community School Council started by New Day, to develop and enact a unified vision and ensure maximum participation throughout the public and private sector.
- Continue the work to improve mutually accountable and aligned partnerships between community-based organizations and the SFUSD, including following through on the new strategies for partnership development now being developed in the Superintendent's Zone.
- Continue to utilize the CBO-SFUSD Advisory Committee as a forum for discussion of partnerships, with a goal of having it utilized more fully by all divisions of the SFUSD. Provide staff support through SFUSD to the Committee. Work to engage one or more CBO's in providing leadership and support.
- Connect the work of the SFUSD central office, particularly Student Support Services, with the Community School development on the ground, so that the approach can best become institutionalized district-wide. Ensure that Student Support Services is fully versed the elements they oversee, and provides technical assistance to schools in meeting the Community School benchmarks.
- Convene the Summer Learning Network Steering Committee and determine how the work can be continued under the leadership of an appropriate and willing agency. Facilitate the implementation of the citywide policy passed by the Board of Supervisors.
- Establish a work group to assess the Community School evaluation plan developed by New Day and determine, in collaboration with RPA, next steps.

Perhaps the most important challenge: Seize the unique opportunity created by New Day to integrate the work to improve academics with the work to expand learning opportunities, overcome barriers to learning, and engage the community as education partners. If that can be done, San Francisco will put itself at the forefront of the Community School movement and truly implement the vision of the *New Day for Learning* report.

Community School Movement is Underway in San Francisco

Today the words "community school" - rarely heard in San Francisco before New Day adopted community schools as its driving strategy - echo throughout the city as stakeholders of all kinds plan their approach to school and community improvement.

The new federal Promise Neighborhood grant in the Mission District, one of only 15 planning grants in the country, centers explicitly on the Community School strategy. The grant would probably not have been awarded if Community Schools had not been a focus of the district's efforts to improve its lowest performing schools. In addition, the federal Choice Neighborhood grant that will be used to rebuild housing in Bayview includes two new Community School Coordinators – bringing the Coordinator total to 14. And San Francisco is receiving national recognition for making Community Schools a core part of its SIG-funded education reform strategy. This fall, San Francisco's Deputy Superintendent agreed to join the Coalition for Community Schools' national superintendent's advisory board. And the National Summer Learning Association has targeted the SF's Summer Learning Network as an important strategy that should be replicated in communities throughout the country.

Institutionalization was one of the benchmarks of success of the New Day for Learning Initiative, which functioned for three years as an intermediary. As New Day funding comes to an end, the goal of institutionalization has been achieved. The SFUSD will be creating the infrastructure and a high level position to continue and lead the Community School work!

Lesson #18

San Francisco has made amazing progress in promoting and implementing a vision for Community Schools. This has been possible because of the strong foundation developed over several decades in the city – including many exemplary school-community-city partnerships with a city funding source and city department to support them (DCYF). Yet, the structure of New Day for Learning allowed the change that needed to happen with regard to school-community partnerships and Community Schools to be accelerated beyond anticipation. Two aspects of the initiative structure and approach are the most noteworthy

- A small and focused intermediary that provides a combination of technical expertise, advocacy, strategic planning, meeting facilitation, coalition-building, research, assessment, and outreach was a powerful force in promoting new ideas, structures and systemic change. It should be noted that this is not a high cost strategy – although its potential effectiveness is highly dependent on the skill, credibility and leadership of the intermediary staff.
- Having structures and communication in place that promote the interplay of work at the site and systems level. This allowed policy and systems work to be informed by reality on the ground and work on the ground to be facilitated by ongoing incremental changes in policy and structure. Reform needs to be continuously nurtured and pushed forward simultaneously at both levels.

 *Margaret Brodtkin, Director, New Day for Learning, February, 2012*