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## THIS COMMUNITY RENOVATED THEIR SCHOOLS INSTEAD OF TEARING THEM DOWN. THE RESULTS ARE IN. AND THEY'RE SPECTACULAR.



In the early 2000s, Cincinnati had public schools like those found in many urban areas of America. Educationally and financially, they were badly neglected and had been allowed to become run-down as middle-class families with resources fled to the suburbs. A once mighty system that had enrolled 90,000 students had dwindled to 28,000 by 1999.

But in 2005, school board members made a visionary choice: They decided to remodel their schools.

This was no cheap and easy fix-and-flip done on the fly: The district did the equivalent of taking the system down to its studs and rebuilding it in a manner that was research-based, comprehensive, and thoughtfully constructed over time. By the time it was over, every campus in the district had become a community school.

Community schools partner with families and local organizations to offer well-rounded educational opportunities. In Cincinnati, they offer wraparound services such as school-based health centers. They offer students and community members extended learning opportunities by keeping buildings open until 10 pm. They treat families and communities as partners by actively engaging them in decision-making. They embrace collaborative leadership practices such as neighborhood advisory councils and partnerships with local nonprofits.

The results speak for themselves: Rather than allowing its schools to continue to crumble, Cincinnati has restored them to their former glory and beyond, increasing their value to the community rather than permitting them to descend into blight.

Enrollments are up to 34,000 without a corresponding increase in birth rates or population. The achievement gap is shrinking between black students and whites. Academics are heading in a positive direction that spans grade levels and indicators. The same community that once rejected property tax increases to support its schools recently voted overwhelmingly in favor of a levy.

How did this happen? How can this happen in other cities? To help answer these and other questions, on Tuesday, October 15<sup>th</sup>, the Partnership for the Future of Learning, a partner organization of the National Education Policy Center, is releasing a series of four free online films about the educational renovations in Cincinnati. A free webinar about the films will be held at 1 pm Eastern that day.

### **Interested in learning more about community schools in Cincinnati?**

The films will be available [here](#) on the website for the Partnership for the Future of Learning.

A free webinar about the films will be held at 1 pm Eastern on October 15<sup>th</sup>. Click [here](#) to register.

Click [here](#) to read research from The Center for Popular Democracy, the Coalition for Community Schools, and the Southern Education Foundation about community schools in Cincinnati and other areas of the nation.

### **Interested in learning more about the concept of community schools?**

Click [here](#) to read the *Community Schools Playbook*, a report published by the Partnership for the Future of Learning, in collaboration with NEPC, the Learning Policy Institute (LPI), the Public Leadership Institute, the Coalition for Community Schools, and Research for Action.

Read *Community Schools*, a 2019 book edited by JoAnne Ferrara and Reuben Jacobson, with a forward by NEPC Fellow Jeannie Oakes.

View this NEPC/LPI online research compendium on community schools.

## **NEPC Resources on Community Schools**

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