School Finance Redesign Project

center on **reinventing** public education

TWO ALTERNATIVE YET COMPLEMENTARY CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS FOR FINANCING AMERICAN EDUCATION

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The School Finance Redesign Project

The School Finance Redesign Project (SFRP) encompasses research, policy analysis, and public engagement activities that examine how K-12 finance can be redesigned to better support student performance. The project addresses the basic question, "How can resources help schools achieve the higher levels of student performance that state and national education standards now demand?"

Check in with us periodically to see what we're learning and how that information may re-shape education finance to make money matter for America's schools. You can find us at www.schoolfinanceredesign.org.

Jacob Adams, Principal Investigator

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Introduction

There are many conceptual frameworks for financing American education, including equity in spending, adequacy, and parental choice (Guthrie et al. 2007). While these frameworks have reshaped how education finance is conceptualized, these approaches fail to sufficiently incorporate two potentially important strategies for improving student performance: systemic standards based reform (SSBR) and out-of-school interventions. The national movement for SSBR, which is codified into federal law in the provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), assumes that improvements in the school system alone are necessary and sufficient for all pupils to reach academic proficiency (McGuinn 2006). On the other hand, out-of-school interventions acknowledge the importance of and attempt to mitigate the effects of out-of-school influences, such as child poverty and lack of health care, on student performance. While SSBR and out-of-school interventions operate under different paradigms, employing these two strategies in concert may result in significant improvements in student performance. This paper details the potential benefits of SSBR and out-of-school interventions and identifies ways in which the school finance system must change to support effective implementation of these two improvement strategies.

This paper begins with analysis of SSBR. First, it presents the theory supporting SSBR, identifying key components of the reform and important operational and policy alignment issues. Then it identifies finance system elements that are necessary to implement various components of SSBR. The second section of the paper analyzes major out-of-school policy initiatives that are featured in the literature. The paper presents policy frameworks that support out-of-school initiatives, and then it identifies key concepts and operational issues as well as costs factors, funding strategies, and alignment issues associated with out-of-school interventions. A final section concludes that while it is unclear whether either of these strategies alone can improve student performance and eliminate the achievement gap as envisioned by NCLB, perhaps a combination can.
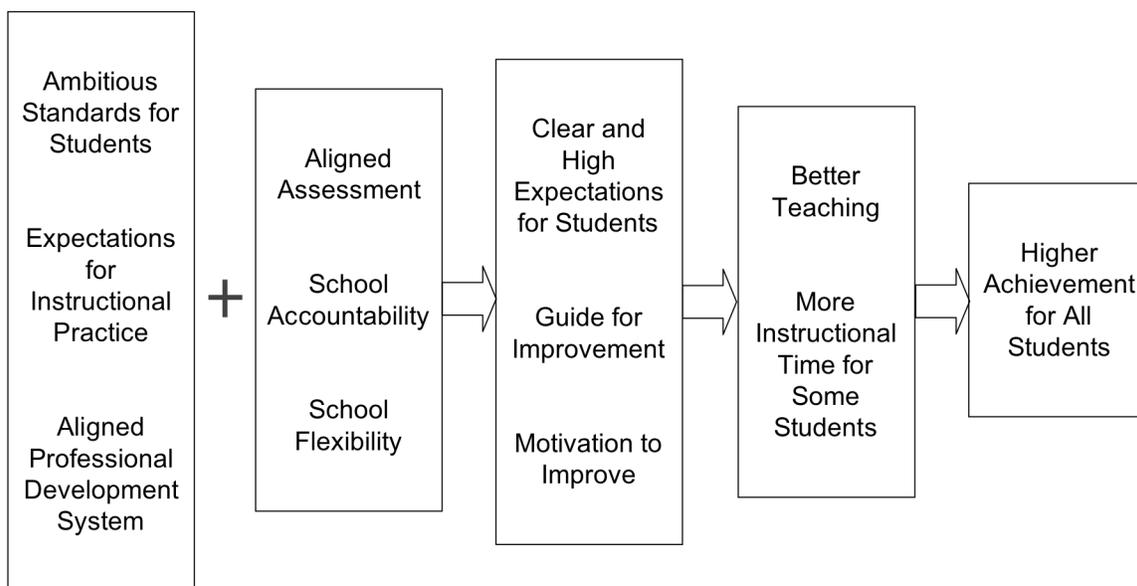
Systemic Standards Based Reform (SSBR)

SSBR began in the late 1980s and has spread across the United States as the dominant conceptual framework for improving K-12 education (Smith and O'Day 1991). It is embedded in federal policy starting with the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 and continuing through the passage of NCLB in 2001. Ironically, the SSBR framework was laid on top of existing state school finance systems, and SSBR and state education finance are not coherently integrated in most states.

Theory of Standards Based Reform

In theory, SSBR involves states establishing challenging content and performance standards for all students and aligning key state policies affecting teaching and learning – curriculum and curriculum materials, preservice and inservice teacher training, and assessment – to these standards. Then, states give schools and school districts greater flexibility to design appropriate instructional programs in exchange for holding schools accountable for student performance.

SSBR has many moving and interacting parts. Figure 1 provides an overview. SSBR must be supported by contextual forces like politicians, the public, business, and professional organizations. It relies upon explicitly aligned standards-based textbooks and instructional materials, initial teacher preparation, professional development, and state, district, and school formative and summative assessments. And teachers must be capable and willing to change their teaching practice in the classroom.

| Ambitious Standards for Students

Expectations for Instructional Practice

Aligned Professional Development System | **+** | Aligned Assessment

School Accountability

School Flexibility | → | Clear and High Expectations for Students

Guide for Improvement

Motivation to Improve | → | Better Teaching

More Instructional Time for Some Students | → | Higher Achievement for All Students |

Source: National Research Council, 2002

Figure 1. Theory of Standards Based Reform

Specifically, SSBR assumes that prior to reform most teachers are proceeding in individualistic instructional practice and student skill/content development. SSBR encourages teachers to have common high expectations for their students. Ideally, teachers integrate and coordinate their teaching content in a more uniform manner, collaborating horizontally across grade levels and vertically up and down the grades (Edsource 2006). Teachers respond to state accountability rewards and sanctions by internalizing state standards as their own school's internal accountability standards (Elmore 2003).

SSBR is not merely an add-on reform like school lunch or vocational education. It penetrates the English, math, and science classrooms that have been the integral core of education. In essence, SSBR is a policy theory for classroom instructional improvement. It asserts that improved instruction stimulated by SSBR will lead to increased pupil performance. It is not sufficient for teachers to know their pupil's instructional strengths and weaknesses; they also must be able to change their teaching to overcome pupil weaknesses. Standards-based accountability assessments are necessary, but periodic diagnostic tests are crucial to understanding and responding to particular student needs.

Aligning State Policy with SSBR Elements

State policies regarding SSBR must focus local attention on student achievement targets. State policy must enhance local motivation partly through state policy rewards and sanctions. But educator capacity must increase as state accountability pressures increase for schools to meet student proficiency expectations (Elmore 2003). Coherent and comprehensive state policies are needed to motivate local actors and improve local capacity. Figure 2 provides an overview of the pieces of state policy that must work together for SSBR to improve instructional practice.
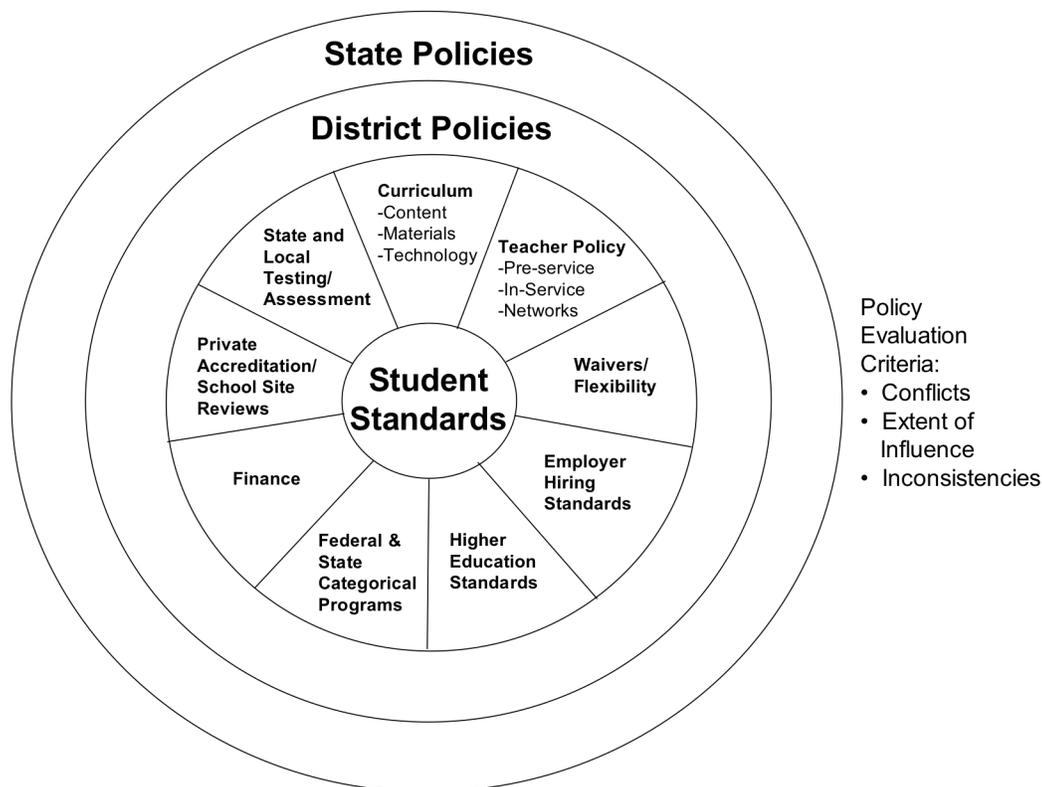
Figure 2. Overview of Systemic Reform

At the center of the wheel are academic content standards. States need to formulate, specify, and align other policies with these standards. Frequent alignment conflicts arise between academic content standards at the center of the wheel and important policy elements, illustrated in this diagram as the spokes of the wheel (Kirst and Venezia 2004; Guthrie et al. 2007, 50-58). For example, a major inconsistency in some state SSBR policies is the failure to connect K-12 standards (especially performance standards) with the performance standards businesses use to hire high school graduates. Another example, which is explored in more detail in a later section of this report, is that no serious work has been done to align state finance systems with standards.

Linking Finance with SSBR Elements

No state began with the concepts and specific policy implications of SSBR as the basis for designing their state finance systems. The adequacy movement has tried to retrofit some SSBR concepts into its calculations with mixed success.[1] Most states have never even tried to link their academic standards to traditional school finance systems. For example, California has over 100 categorical programs and some address standards, but for the most part these programs impede the development of coherent standards-based instructional programs. Several states have new programs to assist students who fail to pass high school exit exams and end of grade tests, but these programs are token efforts compared to the overall spending (Minorini and Sugarman 1999).

Funding SSBR requires adherence to a conceptual and analytical framework that explicitly addresses program components, academic time, teacher attributes, assessment and remediation, and student needs, all of which have cost implications. These elements are described in more detail below, with concrete examples and cost factors provided from California.

Incorporating program resources. William Koski and Hillary Weiss (2004) have attempted to explicitly link finance with a state's academic standards. They identified the specific educational resources necessary for teachers to implement and students to learn some of California's curriculum content standards. They analyzed the text of standards and identified each resource that is implicitly assumed to be available or explicitly required by the standard. The analysis excluded costs associated with infrastructure, support staff, and specialized programs. This evaluation was not a "costing out" exercise; it sought to identify the resources that the state expects all children to have access to. For example, California has explicit content standards and an end-of-course exam for high school biology. This analysis identified the laboratory materials needed for all students to conduct standards-based experiments, including measuring instruments and scientific calculators. Koski and Weiss also identified the computer technology, Internet access, and well-stocked libraries/media centers implied in English language arts and history standards.

Koski and Weiss found many resources that are embedded in the standards but not available in all California school districts. To fully determine the costs of resources to support SSBR, this analysis needs to be extended deeper into classroom instruction and into the re-teaching cycles needed for continuous improvement in pupil outcomes.

Incorporating academic time. Another element of SSBR that needs to be supported is the time a state requires to teach academic standards. California, for example, describes the time for the basic program of reading/language arts, but then lists instructional elements that reinforce and extend the basic program, including (California State Board of Education 2006):

- 30 minutes of extra support for English language learners in K-8
- 30 minutes of extra support for struggling readers in K-8
- 15 to 20 minutes of intensive vocabulary instructional support in K-3
- A minimum of 90 lessons, each one lasting 15 minutes, for each of the five sets of technical skills in a primary classroom reading intervention kit for grades 1-3

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[1] Professional judgment panels have rarely connected specific inputs to subject-based content and performance standards. The "evidence-based" finance approach does not address all the dimensions and components of SSBR. "Evidence-based" also has been under attack for its research base (Hanushek 2006).

Such time allocations have direct cost implications, especially when stipulated on such a granular level.

Incorporating teacher attributes. Research on standards-based reforms supports the necessity of key elements for changing classroom teaching, such as (Furhman 1993):

- Intellectual ability, knowledge, and skills of teachers and other staff
- Quality and quantity of instructional materials and resources
- Social organization of instruction (e.g., teacher collaboration that enhances coherent instruction within and across grades)

Building teacher capacity has direct cost implications, primarily through funding professional development. However, state finance systems do not always cover these costs. For example, California has eliminated most of its state funded professional development, relying primarily on federal Reading First funds that cover only 3% of its elementary teachers. In addition, California has detailed aligned standards for initial pre-service teacher preparation, but it has no system to reimburse state universities for their costs to meet these new standards.

Incorporating assessment and remediation costs. Another essential element of SSBR policy theory is the need for better classroom formative and diagnostic assessment to improve teaching and learning. Annual state accountability tests cannot cover the large number of state standards. Some states have designated "power standards" as the crucial content/skills that teachers need to focus upon, but even this slimmed down standards version cannot spot specific learner gaps and needs.

While necessary to improve instruction and learning, formative and diagnostic assessments can be costly to develop and implement. Purchasing formative assessments can represent a significant cost. Alternatively, developing tests requires significant teacher time. And time is also necessary for teacher preparation, collaboration, and professional development regarding the use of assessment data.

This formative and diagnostic assessment data can help identify additional professional development and student intervention needs; however, fulfilling these needs can also can be costly. Coaches may be helpful in improving instruction, but they add to costs. Low-performing schools may need resource intensive assistance through instructional support teams and mentoring for teachers. And low performing students may require additional resources and time for remediation (Gross and Goertz 2005).

Incorporating student needs. SSBR also requires addressing individual student needs, which have cost implications too. For example, English learners require additional resources to enable them to succeed. Their NAEP scores are very low (about 4% reach the proficient level). They require more instructional time because of the need to enhance their English skills and keep them current on subject matter content. They may need more tutoring and special instructional materials to enhance the regular curriculum program. Secondary schools may not have appropriate course offerings to enable them to master English and be prepared for postsecondary education. And teacher preparation for English learners is often inadequate. In short, school finance based on SSBR for EL students is usually not sufficiently specified (Rumberger and Gandara 2004).

Summary

Aligning school finance with SSBR conceptually means linking resources with the program components, academic time, teacher attributes, assessment and remediation, and student need elements of SSBR that support better student performance. While such alignment may improve student performance, most states have not aligned state resource allocation policies with SSBR standards, curriculum, and instruction. At a practical level, school finance needs to expand its knowledge base to better understand the policy and practice barriers to the implementation of SSBR and to create the knowledge to overcome the finance gap between SSBR's aims, current policy instruments, and school capabilities. Randomized trials are necessary to help us understand complex linkages within SSBR policies.

OUT-OF-SCHOOL INTERVENTIONS

While funding SSBR elements may improve student performance overall, closing the significant achievement gap that currently exists between white students and children of color[2] through implementation of SSBR alone may be very difficult. Critics of SSBR as the sole policy focus contend that out-of-school interventions, services, and support are necessary to close achievement gaps. SSBR may be necessary, but it is likely not sufficient to attain high academic outcomes for all children. Education historian Patricia Graham (2003, 21) recently wrote:

> *Educational problems are most acute among children from low-income families, particularly minority families, whose schools are much weaker and whose homes and communities are less likely to provide resources such as museums, libraries, books, healthy recreational activities, and a culture of success based on educational achievement. Many reforms adopted in the post-Risk [A Nation at Risk] era, such as graduation exams that determine whether students can receive diplomas, tend to punish these students, since they are unlikely to receive, either at home or in school, the instruction that would allow them to score well. Their teachers and parents often did not receive such instruction, and they find themselves unable to teach children what they themselves do not know, however much they may want to do so.*

Graham's editorial supports the idea that areas of concentrated poverty contain numerous pathologies that undermine good outcomes for children, including poor health, crime, high unemployment, bad housing, drugs, and inadequate social services, reinforcing reforms that take the approach that fundamental improvement must rely on an inside and outside school approach (Rothstein 2004; Bronstein and Kelly 1998; Anyon 1997; Anyon 2005; Wilson 1990, 1996). Anyon argues that "macroeconomic policies like those regulating the minimum wage, job availability, tax rates, federal transportation, and affordable housing create conditions in cities that no existing educational policy or urban school reform can transcend" (2005, 2). Ultimately, educational reform must address a range of economic policies that have a direct impact on children, families, and schools, rather than only those reforms narrowly aimed at education outputs, such as standardized tests. Dryfoos states, "American schools are failing because they

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[2] For example, thirty-nine percent of white 8th graders met the NAEP proficiency level in reading, but only 15% of poor students and 13% of black students reached this level (Fordham Foundation 2006).

cannot meet the complex needs of today's students. Teachers cannot teach hungry children or cope with young people who are too distraught to learn" (1994, xv). And Hare (1994) argues that fully 40% percent of children are at risk of educational failure because of complex social, economic, and emotional problems. In contrast to this scenario are the suburban schools where children of parents with more time, money, and education more frequently arrive at school well fed, secure, and ready to learn.

Different Policy Frameworks

There are several policy frameworks that inform out-of-school interventions. The broadest framework focuses on enhancing the jobs and income of parents (Moynihan 1969). This indirect strategy contains a policy theory that higher parental economic and work status will lead to increased school achievement. Policy interventions aligned with this framework include the negative income tax, job placement and training, and revamped welfare policies. And indeed, some family income maintenance studies demonstrate a positive impact on school achievement (Morris, Duncan, Rodriques 2004).

Another policy framework focuses on community development and linkages to schools (Wilson 1996). This framework suggests that low-income, racially segregated ghettos with very high unemployment rates need new industries and economic development strategies and that parents who are working will be more able to enhance their children's education. The Johnson Administration Model Cities program was based on this policy theory. Under this program, the recipients of federal grants were city politicians. New government money was targeted to specific sections of the city where businesses were rare. Schools were one of several local agencies that designed somewhat integrated approaches to economic growth, new business creation, and more comprehensive public services.

A third policy framework promotes school-community linkages and starts with the school as the hub of numerous parent and child services. Known as school-linked services, this approach places fragmented city and county agencies at or near schools for a more coordinated and accessible service delivery to parents and their children. For example, under this model, health care services or health care referrals are often provided because severe illnesses like asthma can lower school achievement. School-linked services are valued as a means to provide direct services to children and families, connect children and families with community services, coordinate services within schools, and facilitate communication among teachers, children, and families (Allen-Meares 1996; Allen-Meares 2006; Comer 1980; Levy and Shepardson 1992). Over time this "school-linked services" approach developed into the broader "community school vision."

The Community School Vision

A community school is both a place and a set of partnerships between school and community. It has an integrated focus on academics, youth development, family support, health and social services, and community development. Its curriculum emphasizes real-world learning through community problem solving and service. By extending the school day and week, it reaches families and community residents. Community schools enhance the academic, social, emotional, and physical development of students. They also support the families and

communities that surround the school. The schools are at the center of the community, and they network adults as well as help children.

As noted above, one component of community schools is integration of school-linked services (Hare 1994). A school with these services, alternatively referred to as a full-service school, provides an "innovative system of delivering services in which community agencies and schools collaborate to provide a variety of health and social services to children and their families at or near school sites" (Hare 1995, 68). Dryfoos (2002, 394) describes a full-service community school as one that includes a number of features:

> *A community school, operating in a public school building is open to students, families, and the community before, during, and after school, seven days a week, all year long. It is jointly operated and financed through a partnership between the school system and one or more community agencies. Families, young people, principals, teachers, youth workers, neighborhood residents, college faculty members, college students, and businesspeople all work together to design and implement a plan for transforming the school into a child-centered institution.*

Furthermore, full-service community schools encourage student learning through community service and service learning, thus expanding students' vision beyond the classroom walls. Community schools also include a family support center, which helps with such things as child rearing, employment, housing, and medical and mental health services. Ultimately, according to the vision of the Coalition of Community Schools, full-service community schools link "high quality education, positive youth development, family support, family and community engagement in decision making, and community development" (Dryfoos 2002, 394).

Community schools intentionally align resources and relationships toward specific results for students, families, schools, and the community. Schools and communities set priorities for action together. Some community schools emphasize particular age groups such as adolescents, teens, or preschool. For students between the ages of 11 and 21, such interventions include residential schools in the city, internships, mentors, sports, gang prevention, Job Corps in rural areas, and mental health services. Sometimes these interventions include youth empowerment to determine what interventions are best for them (McLaughlin, Irby, and Langmann 2001). The military has success with the same low-achieving students through concepts like belonging, teamwork, self-discipline, and structure (Price 2006). Secondary school-based health clinics include birth control and family counseling as well as disease treatment.

According to Dryfoos (2002), in full-service community schools, primary responsibility for high-quality education rests with the school authorities, while the primary responsibility for "everything else" rests with the outside agencies. In other words, the school system continues to pay for education, while other services are supported by an array of non-school sources of funding. These outside services can be related to health, mental health, and social services as well as tutoring, case management, adult education programs. In this scenario—a holistic and inclusive approach to education that includes students, parents, teachers, and the community—programs are ultimately aimed at improving academic achievement in the classroom.

In summary, community schools have advantages that traditional schools, acting alone, do not. They bring more human and financial resources into the schools so teachers and students can focus on learning. They engage and motivate students by fostering social, emotional, and physical growth as well as academic skills. And they build social capital for schools as well as

students. Ultimately, "Community schools build young people's social capital by connecting them to resources and relationships that can help solve problems and open the doors to opportunity. The same advantages apply to school districts. Communitywide partnerships give school districts a voice and a forum in which to bring school needs and perspectives to a wide audience" (Blank and Cady 2004, 27).[3]

Key Components and Operational Considerations

Community schools are a broad concept, and specific finance designs for school-linked services nest within them (Dryfoos, Quinn, and Brakin 2005). While various researchers and advocates have identified important components of community schools, there is insufficient policy theory or experiential data to verify their assertions. Consequently, the following list reflects our best thinking at this time regarding the desirable components of community schools (Blank 2004), but additional experimentation is necessary to verify and refine or perhaps expand this list. Desirable components include:

- A wide range of services provided by public and private agencies.
- Parent education, adult education, and after-school recreation programs funded by various city governments and community colleges.
- Health services including a nurse practitioner who, unlike school nurses, can administer some medications and treat some specific health problems.
- Emergency services provided by private or public agencies.
- Provision of food, clothing, emergency funds, transportation, and childcare.
- Mental health services, including counseling.
- On-site assistance from the social welfare offices for family problems.
- Preschool and childcare programs.

All of these components benefits from community engagement and support and particular attention should be paid to linking after-school programs, sports teams, and resources such as museums and parks to social services such as child protection and job-training (McLaughlin, Irby, and Langman 2001).

In addition to the above key components, there are several specific operational considerations that are important to the success community schools. Several of these operational considerations are described below.

Partnerships with other agencies. As indicated by the list above, partnership is one of the most importance principles of effective community schools. No single entity can provide the needed services, so community schools build partnerships between the school and other organizations and institutions, both public and private (Dryfoos, Quinn, and Brakin 2005). Often, a lead organization coordinates the relationship between the school and its community partners, bringing new expertise to the school and reducing the burden on school staff. The lead organization can be a community-based organization, a public agency, or the school itself.

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[3] "Encouraging this kind of community and school change is what the National Center for Community Education and the Coalition for Community Schools (NCCE) are all about. Since 1962, NCCE has been promoting community schools by providing leadership development, training and technical assistance. The Coalition is an alliance of 170 national, state and local organizations that promotes community schools as the most effective vehicle for integrating schools and community resources to ensure student success" (Blank and Cady 2004, 28).

Lane (1998) looked at partnerships between universities and public schools and identified five factors that contributed to success in this instance and that may contribute to success of other partnerships as well. These factors include (1) development of a specific action agenda in response to ongoing assessments of the strengths and needs of the school system and community services agencies; (2) availability of skilled, ethnically diverse social services personnel who provide consistent leadership and clinical services throughout the project; (3) availability of new funding and contributed resources; (4) understanding of the political context of school-linked services; and (5) long-term commitment to implementation of school-linked services from within the university and the school system.

Efficiencies/effectiveness of co-location. Co-locating services creates considerable access efficiencies for consumers by placing many children and family services in one location. It is much easier to shop at Wal-Mart than to drive or take a bus to six specialized stores. Consequently, service co-location can improve the current situation even if there is minimal collaboration among diverse service providers. Regarding co-locating, the more services at any one site the better. Less effective school-linked services over-rely on referral to scattered agencies and then leave it to parents to find transportation.

While co-locating has advantages, there should be no dogmatic preference for schools as the school-linked services location compared to a community site off school grounds. The key concept is linkage to school services/activities. Some parents and youth have negative experiences and impressions of schools, and many school personnel are not very familiar with local families, gangs, or neighborhoods. Consequently, the co-located services could be initiated by a medical center, a community family center, or other local organization.

Integration with school restructuring. Schools need to connect social services and parent involvement with instructional programs so that teachers know how family needs affect class performance. Unless teachers are invested with ownership in school-linked services, it becomes just a grafted-on project to the academic program. School restructuring that is viewed strictly as a curriculum change or school site decentralization has little to do with children's services beyond the schools.

Development of comprehensive family services. Another important element of community schools is a center that meets parent needs including emergency childcare, food, clothing, and other services that most public or private "programs" do not include**.** The center should include parent outreach and parent staffing at a neighborhood level. These parent centers can expand childcare supply by preparing neighborhood parents to become licensed childcare providers. Parent programs should be family focused and adapt to different cultural needs.

Services through local youth organizations. Finally, community schools should include the involvement and provision of services/activities through local youth organizations that can speak for adolescents rather than labeling and treating them as "problems." Partly as a result of fragmentation and partly as a result of an embedded paternalistic approach toward children and youth, these populations have not been asked to participate in the dialogue of identifying problems and possible alternative solutions. When different needs are served by isolated agencies, young people find it difficult to coordinate their wants or needs. Who is there to help adolescent children? This question cannot be answered if no one is looking at all of the elements of children's lives and considering how they fit together. It is the whole environment that creates the conditions for an adult life of satisfaction and productivity. Few teachers, physicians, workers

in the juvenile court system, social workers, or others focus on the interactive or interdependent nature of their contribution to the experience of youth. Instead they look only at their own performance as members of particular agencies.

Costs Factors, Funding Strategies, and Alignment Issues

School-linked services require start-up funds for planning joint finance arrangements, glue money to continue collaboration among agencies, and capital funds to support additional facility costs (Kirst 1992). As detailed below, some services can be financed by diverting existing streams of children's services funding to a location at or near school sites. Rothstein (2004) extends the reach of out-of-school services to include stable housing, summer programs, and school-community health clinics, which exceed the scope of current children's funding. For example, according to Rothstein (2004, 64):

> *A school-community clinic should include services that middle-class families take for granted and that ensure children can thrive in school. Clinics associated with schools in lower-class communities should include: obstetric and gynecological services for pregnant and post-partum women; pediatric services for children through their high-school years; physicians to serve parents of school-age children; nurses to support these medical services; dentists and hygienists to see both parents and children semi-annually; optometrists and vision therapists to serve those who require treatment for their sight; social workers to refer families to other services; community health educators to instruct young women in proper health habits during pregnancy, or to organize smoking reduction campaigns; and psychologists or therapists to assist families and children who are experiencing excessive stress.*

In addition, Rothstein stresses the fact that the achievement gap grows during the summer when middle-class children read books, visit museums, and travel, all of which reinforces their school-year learning. There are scant studies of the costs of summer programs for lower-income children that would address these issues. As the typical black child now attends a school that is more segregated than in the 1960's (Patterson 2006), financial analysis is also required to determine the cost of improved housing to create racially mixed neighborhoods.

To implement a school-linked services approach, schools should first use existing financing sources to fund programs in health, social services, juvenile justice, and so on, rather than adding social workers and nurses to the school payroll. A school-linked services fiscal strategy involves diverting these funding and program streams and aiming them all at one location at or near the school. Under this strategy, the school stays open from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. to provide city-funded day care, recreation, and adult education. Health clinics at the school are subsidiaries of a local hospital, which provides the necessary medical licenses, eligibility to receive federal Medicaid funds, and liability insurance. The bills for health services are handled by the accounting department of the local hospital, and the health employees at the school site are technically employees of the hospital. Federal services for abused children provide funds for children's protective services, and the federal maternal and child health grant is used for mental health counseling. Federal or state categorical funds for children's services (e.g., drug abuse funds) provide resources for planning and administration. The United Way fills in the cracks where none of the federal or state categorical programs provide coverage, including emergency

needs like clothing and rent payment. City funds are used for after-school recreation and before-school childcare. Community colleges provide programs to help parents become wage earners and improve their parenting skills.

A first principle in the above strategy is that school-linked services primarily use dollars already being spent on children's services. Several examples of this principal are presented in the above hypothetical scenario. The redirection of money from several to one physical location, such as a school, is another crucial theme. Often, funds will be shifted from more restrictive to more inclusive school-linked services. For example, specialized funds to combat drugs and smoking are often combined into a broad children's health prevention approach.

In addition, changes to state and federal funding mechanisms may be necessary to create better alignment and to support efficient and effective school-linked services. If collaboration among agencies is more effective than the current fragmentation, then funding mechanisms should create incentives for collaboration. If flexibility between front line service providers of many agencies (teachers, social workers, public health nurses, etc.) achieves better outcomes, then financing formulas should provide such flexibility. If service interventions are more effective early on or at an early age, then financing mechanisms should be redirected to "front end" prevention priorities instead of back-end treatments. Finally, federal and state funding sources should be re-designed to meld multiple funding sources together and to cut across historically separate children's service domains.

Lastly, school-linked financing strategies, by themselves, are not likely to change service systems enough to create significantly better children's outcomes. Finance changes must be accompanied by related transformations in the governance, technology, and attitudes and capacities of children's services employees up and down the system. Typically, implementation of school-linked services engenders information exchange among service providers and joint projects. However, it does not include changes to categorical program rules or regulations or system changes to facilitate (a) multiple agency intake and assessment, (b) confidentiality waivers, (c) common staff development for numerous child and family professionals and aides, (d) integrated case management, and (e) agreement on common outcomes that would be used for accountability. School-linked services employees stationed at schools from child protective services, for example, may still get promoted based on criteria in their home agency rather than their collaborative performance. System alignment, including the above-cited elements, could significantly improve the effectiveness of school-liked services.

Evaluation Findings and Practical Concerns

While the research is limited on the success of school-linked services and full-service community schools, success stories are emerging in the literature. One example of this success is a community school in Evansville, Indiana that uses site-based decision making to identify student needs and mobilize school and community resources to meet them. Throughout the school, standardized test scores increased dramatically, as did student attendance, mobility, and discipline. According to Blank and Cady (2004), this work affirms what the Coalition for Community Schools found in its recent review of 20 major community school evaluations. In the report "Making the Difference: Research and Practice in Community Schools," Blank, Atelia, and Shan (2003) indicate that community schools show:

- Significant and widely evident gains in academic achievement and essential areas of nonacademic development.
- Increased family stability and more involvement with schools.
- Increased teacher satisfaction and more positive school environment.
- Better use of school buildings and increased security and pride in neighborhoods.

In a recent article by the Coalition for Community Schools, 36 of 49 programs with any form of documentation reported academic gains, such as improved reading and math test scores. There are also reported improvements in attendance, fewer suspensions, lower dropout rates, reduced high-risk behaviors (substance abuse, teen pregnancy), access to services, and higher rates of parental involvement (Dryfoos 2002).

While the above studies demonstrate the potential of school-linked services and community schools, they may not reduce practitioners concerns about implementing such a strategy and they do not conclusively demonstrate that widespread application of this strategy will reduce or eliminate the achievement gap. There is a long history of provision of health and social services in schools, with a major initiative era at the turn of the century. But school leaders are now wary of new responsibilities without adequate and stable funding, and they are increasingly wary of projects funded by soft money. In hard times, health and social services are often the first to be eliminated as cuts are made as far away from the classroom as possible. In addition, community schools are another reform in a long wave of changes in the school role, and they remain a risky venture. The expansion of social service functions engenders strong fears that schools will de-emphasize their traditional academic priorities. Critics argue that the schools have enough trouble teaching complex concepts and skills without taking on the rest of children's services. Moreover, conservative critics believe that more school-linked services such as child care will encourage more women to work with a subsequent loss of "high quality" child rearing done by "homemakers" (Fuller 2007).

Concluding Thoughts

For the past two decades, SSBR has been at the forefront of education reform in the United States. In theory, this reform improves classroom instruction through implementation of aligned standards, textbooks, and instructional materials; standards-inclusive initial teacher preparation and professional development; and state, district, and school formative and summative assessments operating within a coherent system of local and state policy, including the state education finance system. Unfortunately, instead of being guided by the key elements of standards based reform, state finance systems represent a historical aggregation of programs, policies, and spending restrictions that are not aligned with the resource allocation needs posed by standards based reform. To fully realize the promise posed by SSBR, education finance must accurately reflect the costs associated with this reform and effectively support the changes in teaching and learning embodied in this framework. In sum, education finance must be aligned with the elements of SSBR.

However, while creating state finance policies that support and are aligned with SSBR elements may improve student performance, it may not be sufficient to bring all students to standard and eliminate the achievement gap. Achieving this goal may require an intervention strategy that acknowledges and addresses out-of-school factors that significantly influence

student performance. School-linked services and the more extensive full-service community schools provide a wide range of services to students and their families through partnerships with local organizations, thereby attempting to mitigate the numerous pathologies that undermine good outcomes for poor and minority children. The services, which include parent education, after school programs, health services, mental health services, preschool, and on-site assistance from social welfare services, are funded by reallocating resources from various child and family programs.

We posit that the combination of fully funded SSBR and school-linked services/community schools would improve student performance and reduce the achievement gap to a greater extent than either of these strategies could alone.[4] However, we know little about the potential of fully funded SSBR and school-linked services approaches to influence student achievement, and we know even less about the potential impacts of implementing these strategies in concert. Therefore, additional work is necessary to develop policy theories for the combination of the two strategies, to investigate the validity of these theories, and to determine the optimal allocation of resources between in-school standards-based reform and out-of-school interventions.

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[4] Appendix A contains a comparison of these two strategies.

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Appendix A. Comparison of SSBR and School-Linked Services/Community School Strategies

	Systemic Standards Based Reform	School-Linked Services/Community Schools
Assumptions	Assumes accountability in the forms of formal assessments necessary to gauge student performance and improve achievement.	Assumes greater acknowledgment of outside factors and inclusion of community will increase student achievement.
Implementation	Coherent and comprehensive state policy design is needed to accomplish these local effects.	Integrated focus on academics, youth development, family support, health and social services, and community development.
Problem It "Solves"	Students not meeting standards, schools not meeting goals.	Disconnect between community and schools, high drop out and truancy rates, poor student achievement. Consolidates services for students and families.
Policy Theory	Improved classroom instruction.	More coordinated and in-house service delivery to parents and children.
Target of Action	Accountability through K-12 assessment.	High quality education, positive youth development, family support, family and community engagement in decision making, and community development.
Scope of Effort	Starts at federal level, states set standards (NCLB guidelines); Relies upon explicit aligned standards-based textbooks and instructional materials, initial teacher preparation, professional development, and state, district, and school formative and summative assessment.	Federal and state programs, community organizations (public and private), families, schools, local leaders and community members, universities and colleges.
Expected Benefits	All students reach proficient levels.	Real world learning through community problem solving and service. Development of a specific action agenda in response to ongoing assessments of the strengths and needs of the school system and community services agencies.

Appendix A (cont'd). Comparison of SSBR and School-Linked Services/Community School Strategies

	Systemic Standards Based Reform	School-Linked Services/Community Schools
Financial Support	Federal and state funding.	Jointly operated and financed through a partnership between the school system and one or more community agencies (public and private). Require start-up capital for planning joint finance arrangements and glue money to continue collaboration among agencies. Fiscal strategy is to divert these funding and program streams and aim them all at one location at or near the school.
Complications	Concept of "proficient" means different things in different states. Test scores must be directly linked to economic costs. Need for better classroom formative and diagnostic assessment. Finance gap between SSBR's aims, current policy instruments, and school capabilities.	Difficult to create partnerships, coordinate financing, and hire personnel. Less effective SLS over-rely on referral to scattered agencies and then leave it to parents to find transport. Some parents and youth have negative experiences and impressions of schools, and many school personnel are not very familiar with local families, gangs, or neighborhoods. Not a systemic change—limited impact. Expansion of social service functions engenders strong fears that schools will de-emphasize their traditional academic priorities.
Support	Must be supported by contextual forces like politicians, the public, business, and professional organizations.	National Association of Social Workers to unify and advocate for school social workers to take a lead role. Families, young people, principals, teachers, youth workers, neighborhood residents, college faculty members, college students, and businesspeople all work together to design and implement a plan for transforming the school into a child-centered institution. Partnership is one of the most important principles of effective community schools.
Role of the Teacher	Teachers must be capable and willing to change their teaching practice in the classroom. Teachers must integrate and coordinate their teaching content in a more uniform manner, horizontally across grade levels and vertically up and down the grades.	Schools need to connect social services and parent involvement with instructional programs so that teachers know how family needs affect class performance. Unless teachers are invested with ownership in SLS system changes, it becomes just a grafted-on project to the academic program.