



# The District's Role in the Community

October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015



SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS  
KNOWLEDGE CENTER

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# Webinar Logistics & Participation

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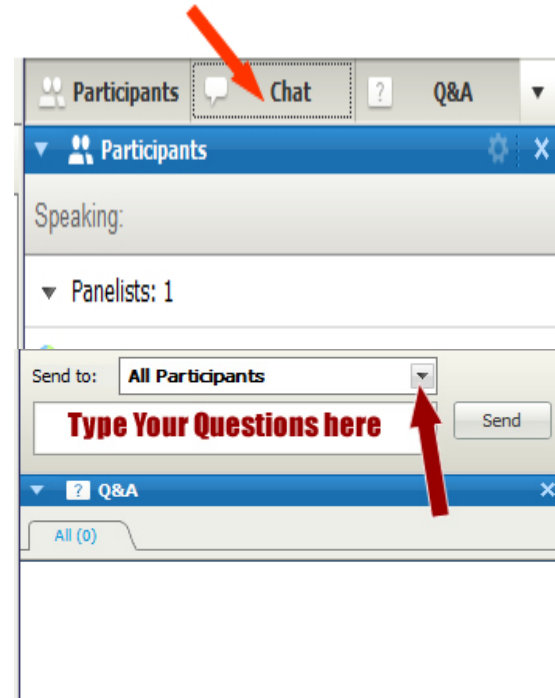
- Access Code

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➤ There will be time for questions at the end of the webinar, but you may submit questions at any time using the Chat function.



# Cindy Warner



## About Cindy

Cindy Warner has served as Public Relations and Community Education Supervisor for the Shelby County School District since 2002. Prior to joining Shelby County Schools, Warner worked for five years at the Literacy Council of Central Alabama as their Community Outreach Coordinator and five years as a reporter/news editor for a local newspaper.



## About Shelby County School District

- Suburb of Birmingham, AL
- 20,000 students
- 31 schools
- 2,600 employees

# Agenda

- Shelby County's mission and goals
- Challenges in the community
- Role of schools in the community
- What community engagement means to us
- Building a supportive learning model
- Our results

# Our Mission



*To make*  
**EVERY STUDENT**  
*a GRADUATE*  
*and every*  
*graduate*  
**PREPARED**



*To be the*  
*model for*  
**EXCELLENCE**  
*in EDUCATION*



*Beliefs*

*Collaboration*  
**for RESULTS**

*Commitment to*  
**EXCELLENCE**

*Community*  
**PARTNERSHIPS**

*Continuous*  
**IMPROVEMENT**

*Culture of* **SUCCESS**

## Logo Tagline

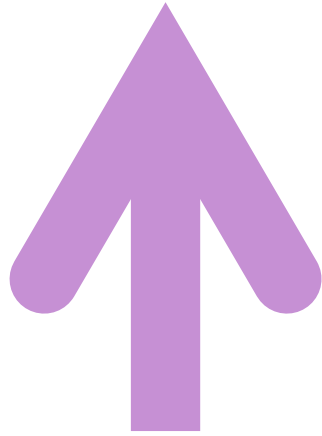


# Shelby County Schools

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*Prepared for the Journey*

# Challenges – Keeping up with a growing and diverse community



8,000 new students over a ten year period 2000 - 2010

- 98<sup>th</sup> on the Census Bureau's list of 100 fastest growing counties in the United States (2011)
- 36.1% population increase - gained 51,806 people from 2000 to 2010
- Need for new schools and expanded facilities



- Total of 56 languages
- Socioeconomically (68% F/R lunch in one community vs. 10% in another community)
- Areas with wealth and poverty
- Mix of suburban and rural

# Challenge within a challenge



- Our communities are all very unique and different
- Ideas that work well in one community might not be the best approach in another



# Role of Schools in the Community



“Rural schools traditionally have played a central role in their communities. Besides providing for basic education, they often have served as a cultural center in the community. Athletics, drama programs, music and other social activities conducted at schools have played a vital part in rural community life and identity formation dating back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century.”

Author: Bruce Miller

Source: ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools Charleston WV

# Role of Schools in the Community

“Public schools are intimately linked with communities. They serve as centers of learning. They employ residents and they connect neighbors with one another. As place-based institutions, they are part of a neighborhood’s physical fabric, impacting local housing markets and influencing the aesthetic character of a community.”



**Connie Chung**

# Community Schools

The Center for Strategic Community Innovation

## Schools

## Districts



# Community Schools



Community Education Programs also provide vital services to both parents and students, including:

- After school care
- Enrichment programs
- Adult enrichment/job training

Partner with local city groups and county governments to:

- Host church events
- Serve as venues for civic groups
- Facilities for youth athletic programs

# Community Engagement

## Summary of a Listening Tour Across Illinois Findings



Participants expressed that community engagement is important because children and young people need to feel as though someone cares about them. They need to feel supported by and understood by adults (including but not limited to parents, other family members and teachers).

# Community Engagement

When children and young people see adults working together on students' behalves, they feel supported, valued and included in the broader community.



# Community Role – Student Advocacy

To be prepared and successful – students need adult advocates (both at their local schools and at the district level) to help them navigate through challenging life circumstances.



# Unified and Comprehensive Learning Support Model



- <http://web.alsde.edu/general/ALDOEDesignDocument.pdf>
- A systematic, strategic approach
- Identifies both school and community resources
- Identifies barriers in each community
- Community engagement one of six support areas



# Learning Supports Model

“Learning supports are the resources, strategies, and practices that provide the physical, social, emotional and intellectual supports that directly address barriers to learning and teaching, and that **re-engage disconnected students.**”

-Alabama State Department of Education



# Learning Supports Model (Barriers)

## Barriers



- High absenteeism
- Lack of motivation
- Missing prerequisite skills
- Varying learning rates
- Low self-esteem
- Discipline referrals
- Health problems
- Limited engagement
- Unacceptable behavior
- Truancy
- Learning styles

# Learning Supports Model

- Matches school resources with community resources in order to serve students and families. Avoids duplication of services.



# Community Resources

- Department of Human Resources
- Department of Youth Services
- Crisis Prevention/Intervention Services
- Housing Programs/Youth Shelters
- Substance Abuse Treatment Center
- Mental Health Services
- Mentoring Programs
- Family Counseling Programs
- Parenting Programs
- Teenage Pregnancy/Parenting Resources
- Domestic Violence Shelters
- Homeless Programs/Services
- Emergency Assistance
- Food Banks
- Sexual Abuse Resources
- Special Needs Student Resources

# Communication

- Learning Supports Community Resources Meetings
- Year-long Professional Learning Unit on Community Engagement (Learning Supports)
- Key Leaders (Key Communicators) Network
- Blackboard Connect (Outreach calls)
- Social Media
- Website
- Email

# Results – School Year 14 – 15 vs 13 - 14

## Discipline Data

- Suspensions – Overall decrease of **35%**
- High Schools – **58%** decrease
- Alternative School – **26%** decrease
- All-Day In-School Suspensions – **21%** decrease

# Results

Average Daily Attendance for 20-day reporting periods

– Highest – **96.9%**

– Lowest – **93%**

Schools involved in Learning Supports over the past two years saw a reduction of 733 fewer unexcused absences

# Questions and Answers



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