

NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES
Institute for Youth, Education, and Families

First in Their Class: City-School Partnerships That Make the Difference
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Speakers:

Dick Guthrie, Director of Human Services, Claremont, California.
Dr. Michael Silver, Superintendent of schools in Tukwila, Washington.
Richard Murphy, Director of the Center for Youth Development and Policy
Research at the Academy for Educational Development in Washington, DC

KYLE: My name is John Kyle with the National League of Cities' Institute for Youth, Education, and Families. We have three speakers today to help us talk about city/school partnerships that can make a difference. We have Dick Guthrie, who is the Director of Human Services in the city of Claremont, California. And we have Dr. Michael Silver, who is the superintendent of schools in Tukwila, Washington. And we have Richard Murphy, who is Director of the Center for Youth Development and Policy Research at the Academy for Educational Development in Washington, DC.

With this panel we have someone from the city government side of things who has been working on city/school partnerships. We have somebody from the school district/school administration side of things who has been working on these kinds of partnerships. Then, we have someone with perspective from working in dozens, if not hundreds, of communities across the country about effective collaborations to have good outcomes for youth.

What I'd like to do is ask each of you to give us a couple comments about how this topic sits with you and how it appeals to you and what goals you have for working on this kind of topic. May I start with you, Dick?

GUTHRIE: Good morning, John. Probably our city is up to almost ten years of some serious work in this area. And we've really looked at it in working with the district to leverage the services that we provide to our young people and families in the community. It has been an effort that really was generated through a community collaborative called "The Claremont Youth Master Plan," which is a strategic planning effort. But the parents of that effort were the school district and the city. And that effort led to a lot of other really positive things or lessons learned during the years. So the value has been proven many times over in terms of developing strong relationships between the city and the school folks.

KYLE: Michael, what's going on in Tukwila that makes you want to be part of this call?

SILVER: Tukwila is a community in the current census of 17,000. And the student population is 2,600, from kindergarten through 12th grade. What we discovered is that the children are able to receive many more benefits through partnerships between the schools and our city government. Over the last decade, we've really been able to bring people together to talk about some demographic issues as well as partnership issues for programs that can benefit student learning. We have lots of examples we can share today.

KYLE: Richard, these two cities in Washington and in California are showing examples of what they've done locally. From a national bird's eye view, are there lots of cities where you're seeing some collaboration between schools and cities? Is this common, newly developing, somewhere in between?

MURPHY: I would say newly developing and getting better, John. And I'm really glad to be here because we have this large mantra of how do you increase outcomes for children, youth, and families? Ten years ago a lot of advocates for that sort of distanced themselves sometimes from the schools. Today, I think everyone is realizing you cannot have a good community for children and youth without having a close, working, real relationship with schools, which we know is tough, but possible.

KYLE: I think one of the interesting things that we see at the National League of Cities is that more and more local elected officials are running on an education platform.

MURPHY: Exactly.

KYLE: At the same time, most of those local elected officials don't have any governmental or authoritative responsibility for public schools or public education. Yet, the public wants them to have that in their platform and the candidates want to include it. It sounds like both Tukwila and Claremont have had a decade or so of history here -- what was it like in Claremont ten years ago? What kind of stage were you in, in terms of relationships? I'm sure we've got people on the call that were at various points -- beginning, medium, advanced. Where were you ten years ago and how did you decide to do something different?

GUTHRIE: I think ten years ago there was a fair amount of pain in California. The economy was not good at all, and in fact both the school district and the city were sharply cutting back services and facing funding cuts. The schools had eliminated services and after school kinds of programs. All the after school sports in the schools had been eliminated except for the high school. The city had closed park sites for after school. And while we had a fairly good history of the board and the city council talking with each other and we were fortunate to have, and still have, a superintendent and city manager who are close personal friends and communicate almost daily, there was a lot of concern.

I think what happened was a classic example -- the board and the council agreed to meet together as a part of a workshop. They traded places. For a half a day, the board became the council and the council became the board. The board had to deal

with potholes and the council had to deal with test scores. It was a real eye opening experience. Subsequently, that really led them into a joint effort of meeting regularly and putting a whole series of initiatives into place to become more proactive together to deal with issues, as opposed to reacting to issues.

KYLE: In Tukwila, where was the city in terms of relationships with the school district from your point of view a decade or so ago?

SILVER: Prior to 1990, there were some partnership activities occurring, but they really weren't within a framework and a thought process of deliberately thinking collaboratively. In June 1990, the school district held a summit. It was a community summit to discover partnerships. As a result of that summit, which involved the city council and the mayor and the department heads within the city as well as other community leaders, both from non-profits and agencies and the chamber and informal leadership within the community as well, we developed some, what we called "compacts to connect." The city at that time developed their "compact to connect" to develop a Department of Human Services that had not been established prior to 1990. And they delivered on that. Currently, the city is brokering many human services. They have a staff person who coordinates that department and also developed a human services advisory board where many people in the community serve to advise the city in terms of needs and how to maximize the services that are available. So it seems to me that that was a real groundbreaking point in terms of establishing a strong partnership to work together on many different projects.

KYLE: You each just mentioned a kind of signature event -- a summit in Tukwila, a workshop of some kind in Claremont. Did it take a visionary to say, "We ought to do this?" Did it take a concerted effort? Was there a single person? Was there a driving force that made either of those events happen?

SILVER: In Tukwila it was a superintendent that basically laid out the question, "How can schools improve student achievement without having any partners?" It's a job that surpasses any individual teacher or any individual school or school district. So that became the foundation of reaching out to the community and of course the city became a primary partner.

GUTHRIE: I think it really does take that kind of strong leadership. Here, it certainly was that the city manager and the school superintendent had reached a conclusion that they needed to work closely together. And, that, from the city's perspective, strong schools mean strong community. It protects property value. People choose to live here. And so we have a vested interest in the strength of the schools. And they were able to convince the policy makers -- the board and the council -- to step up to the plate. You need that kind of strong leadership.

KYLE: Richard, when you look at communities across the country, is there a single person or a driving force of some kind regularly? How do you figure that out or identify that or associate with that?

MURPHY: I think you're right, John, that it is a strong person and some nucleus. I have a question before I finish answering your question, John, though, of Michael and Dick. It seems like in both your places, you really did not need additional resources to have this collaboration working. It was a leadership person and the determination to do something. Or, did you need extra support? I don't mean big money, but I just mean who convened the meeting? Who sent out the notices? Who kept it going?

GUTHRIE: That's a good point. There was recognition that we needed someone to bring it together. The first venue was to create a strategic plan. The city and the school district jointly agreed to move forward with this. We chose to fund bringing in the facilitator to help that process. And that facilitator spent about 17 months with us to guide us through a process that really included a community blue ribbon task force to advise the school system and the city on the development of this plan.

SILVER: In Tukwila, it really was not to impose another structure or create another department for partnerships. It basically was to make sure that people came together. And for that initial summit in 1990, the school district was the host. We repeated that process in 1996, and it was around some other issues. But the city and the school district worked together more closely to sponsor that particular summit.

MURPHY: John, I would say in some other areas of the country, a local United Way community foundation and sometimes a university have played that role really as part of their mandate. They have provided the resources, then location, and in a way, a neutral meeting place. And in all these cases, a small amount of resources goes a long way in triggering and keeping going the dialogue that I think moves into a partnership.

KYLE: Let's talk about some of what has actually been going on in your communities of Tukwila and Claremont. What do you think are hallmarks of the effective collaboration that's been going on between these two entities in Tukwila, Michael?

SILVER: Let me give some event type of examples, and also a couple of longer enduring relationships. Tukwila is a community that has experienced a lot of immigration of newly landed immigrants. And many are in refugee status. So we first started noticing that schools are probably a better barometer for change than the community at large because we actually see the whole population daily. Between 1988 and 1998, we had about a 1000% increase in newly landed immigrants in our population and schools. So currently we're at about 25%. Or, one out of four children is new to this country in the last five to seven years. We have children from 40 different countries and five continents, so there's a lot of diversity of culture and a lot of economic diversity and students of color as well.

Out of that came the question of how can we bring together the parents. Depending upon different cultures, many of them shy away from being involved in school or even coming to school. We created an event that's held in the beginning of the school year called "New Friends and Families." And the school district basically hosts a

spaghetti dinner for four to five hundred parents who are new to the community. We have translators available in the eight most predominant languages. And then the Mayor and myself welcome all the people. Then we break out into groups, mostly by culture and language. The city council members, heads of departments, police chiefs, fire chiefs, and the Mayor, circle through these different groups. In the course of about an hour and a half, both the school and the city introduce themselves with the help of the translator to these new parents.

Then the event shifts to a resource fair. And we'll have 25 to 30 different community resources setting up booths and displaying services and agency services that are available for people coming to the community. That's an event that's been widely well received, and it's something that is jointly done and seems to have good results.

KYLE: It sounds like an event that needn't be predicated on there being different cultures or new cultures, new to the community. That any community can do such a beginning-of-the-school-year event for all of the kids and parents at which department heads and elected officials and school officials would circle through breakout groups. It just seems like you can broaden that idea beyond the needs you expressed it for.

SILVER: I agree.

MURPHY: And John, it sounds so basic, but having the kind of food that Michael was talking about is a major plus. It totally gives the community a different view of that school when they sit down and actually eat in that school as an adult. It totally changes it. It sounds like such a simple act, but I've seen more places now across the country doing that. Some of these new community schools have, at least once a month, a family dinner night, usually on a Friday. And again, it involves the community and the "government" side including the education side in a way that has big pluses the following Monday.

SILVER: Besides food, it's important to have childcare. And we always offer childcare.

KYLE: Dick, do you want to tell me something about your activities or programs?

GUTHRIE: Let me highlight a few things. One is that the Youth Master Plan that we developed has really been a road map that we follow in terms of providing additional services to the community. It was presented to the community in 1995, so we've had several years now to begin implementation. But one of the things that came out of that was an agreement that the city and the school district would co-fund every other year assets survey out of the Search Institute of Minneapolis. We've now done this survey five times, and we are now using it as a tracking device to tell us where we're seeing some improvement or whether there are issues that we need to continue to work with. As well as to benchmark some things that we want to highlight to the community.

We've also worked to open the Teen Center right next to our comprehensive public high school. Claremont's district has about 6,000 students. We're a community of about 35,000 people on the eastern end of L.A. County. And likewise,

we've had a huge demographic shift over the last ten years. The school district has gone from probably 70% Anglo to about 50% Anglo. So we have the same kind of change that's going on through most of L.A. County.

We have used the Teen Center cooperatively with the high school. We have a joint management team that works on the social services side of that. While it has the traditional kinds of programs for drop-in activities and special events, there's a strong social service component. The Teen Center is going to be expanded this year to add a youth and family support center that the school district and the city and our mental health agency have been cooperating on.

And we've been really focusing on a fairly unique program for us that is called "Tracks," which is geared at our junior high school age group. We don't integrate the junior high teens and the high school age teens. They're in separate programs. The junior high program is unique because we co-fund the staff person in charge of that program. We both put in dollars. This person is on campus during part of the day and is funded by the district, and on campus after school, with the rest of her staff, and she is funded by the city. That's really helped the school staff to feel like this person was one of the school culture and would understand the classroom situation and understand the norms of the campus. At the same time, it put this person on campus in the day when the kids were there, so there's this continuity. This is a cafeteria-based kind of program. Kids can choose from a multitude of activities after school, from sports to tutoring to cultural activities to other kinds of events. So that's been a totally cooperative program between the two.

The city has worked with the district to provide some additional funding for a higher level of counseling on the school sites. The school district, as most in California have, has cut back on the funding for that particular emphasis, and we back-filled with additional funding to ensure that there was a higher level of campus counseling available to kids. So we've been very directed towards some very specific program functions.

The other thing I would mention is that we are putting into formal documents or formal agreements things like campus security and safety agreements. This is not unique to us -- we're seeing a number of cities moving in this direction with school districts. We have a master facility agreement with "what's ours is theirs" and "what's theirs is ours" in the regular school district, in which we use each other's facilities without fees. In addition, our city yard now takes care of all the school district vehicles. So we have a joint yard at this point. So there's a lot of economy of scale on some of those things.

KYLE: I'm glad, Dick, actually that you got into some of the more logistical or bureaucratic or physical ways of school districts and city governments working together, in addition to the programmatic things. And I want to go to yet a third area of interest to me and to others, in terms of what efforts are going on jointly about curriculum, school reform, school innovation. We talked early in the call that mayors and council members are not ordinarily responsible for the schools or for public education. Yet candidates are running on education platforms, so we're hearing candidates talk about test scores or talking about what kind of curriculum is offered or not offered, etc. Are there examples of some cooperation on what is actually going on in the school? Either an elected official

using the bully pulpit to advocate for reform or rallying the community to be more supportive of the school system and what it's doing, or helping to affect some change, or encouraging charter schools, or things like that? Are there some patterns of that in your experience in Tukwila, Michael, that you can talk about, or where you know of that going on in other communities?

SILVER: I would say that of my recollection of individuals running for either mayor or city council, educational reform per se has not been a mantra. As compared to people running for statewide office, i.e. running for governor or for other state positions in the House or the Senate. But what our schools and our city government have formed in collaboration with a couple of other partners is a Tukwila community schools collaboration. This was begun two years ago. We've developed a common vision to enhance the living, working, and learning of children and families. It goes on by building sustainable, coordinated services with community school, government, foundation, and private resources through the Tukwila schools.

Together with Casey Family Programs, which is located in Seattle and is a charitable giving group from UPS, the city, the school district and our state Department of Social and Health Services, we have formed a very viable collaborative. One of the major activities thus far has been to author after school programs. We're currently benefiting about 15% of our students who are involved in a three-hour extended day program every day in our schools. We don't have all the results in yet because it's too early to tell, but it's very promising to see that children who are in need of more time for learning, but who are also given nutrition, health, and some other components as well, can really benefit from extended time. It's well supervised in key time slots with communities that are concerned about the presence of youth who are maybe latchkey kids.

GUTHRIE: I think from the perspective of council members, I would agree that we are more likely to have candidates on the statewide office run on a platform of education reform. But, the council has strongly supported the district's efforts to improve its facilities. Last June, we had a bond measure -- the first one we've had in many years -- put before the voters. The early prognosis for bonds out here had not been good. But council was very supportive and joined the board in being advocates for it. It passed surprisingly easily. And that was I think a great victory for the school district.

Additionally, we've been supportive of a partnership that has arisen over the last three or four years called the Claremont Educational Partnership, which is a collaborative between the school district, the seven colleges in Claremont, and the city to enhance education and opportunities for kids to take advantage of the rich educational resources that are available here because of the colleges.

KYLE: Richard, I was identifying through this call some cooperation that had to do with program initiatives, some that had to do with school outcomes, some cooperation that had to do with funding or financing or bond issues, and some more mundane issues like joint purchasing and sharing of physical resources like the yard for repairs of vehicles that Dick mentioned. Are those good categories from your perspective, seeing lots of communities? Are there other categories? Am I minimizing? What would you

add to that list?

MURPHY: I think the whole issue sometimes of insurance and liability and where some cities have taken on the responsibility for the liability issues that might be incurred if a school is kept open on a Saturday or a Sunday. Or where the city has said, “We’ll pay and make it possible for the school to be open on Saturday.” I think we have to acknowledge the role of afterschool and the explosion of afterschool services sort of begun by the federal “21st Century Community Learning Centers” initiative, which has really opened up and forced the issue of collaboration between schools and the local government. As a matter of fact, a new regulation within the 21st Century school application is that a local educational authority cannot submit a proposal now unless they have some true collaborative arrangement with a local government or with a local group of non-profit organizations. Once you start dealing with that issue, a local government inevitably forces the issue of “What are the outcomes we’re looking for, both after school and during school?” And I think that is only going to increase.

GUTHRIE: I would concur, Richard. One of the things we found with the Search Institute surveys is that it has allowed us to measure the levels of participation in afterschool activities, the number of volunteer activities kids are committed to, what are the average hours home alone. Those kinds of measurements are really dramatic when you can look at them and really see something occurring. It’s been very well received by the community and by the funders.

MURPHY: And I assume it brings the two sides together automatically. They have to own it jointly.

GUTHRIE: Yes.

KYLE: One incident amazed me when I began to get involved in this issue of collaboration between schools and municipal governments. I held a meeting where a school board member came and a city council member came. And it was at my meeting where they met for the first time. I think that was kind of extreme, but what kinds of communication are you seeing in your communities between the elected city council members and mayor and between elected school board members? Are those relationships being fostered? Are they difficult? Are they competitive? What are you seeing?

SILVER: I think that it’s important that elected officials are brought together. I think many times it’s informal, especially based on the size of the community. In Tukwila, being a community of about 17,000, people do see each other in informal ways, whether it is at the grocery store or at school or at church on Sunday, whatever it might be.

In a formal way, our city council and the school board hold their joint annual meeting. Mutually, an agenda is formed, and many of the agenda items are updates. School board members and city councilmembers ask questions of each other as well as of staff who are present about the level of activity and what can be done to further and extend and maybe forge some new ideas to bring people together.

But besides that kind of annual effort, let me just share a couple of other structures that are in place to ensure that the city and the school district come together here.

One is an equity and diversity commission that by design several years ago is composed of nine members. Three seats are city seats, three seats are community seats and three seats are school district staff seats. But the point of it is to focus on some common objectives dealing with the diversity in the community, act as a resource, and bring recommendations to the city as well as to the school board regarding ways to better address cultural diversity issues.

A second one is a community care network. This was based on a summit in 1996. City councilmembers, board members, the mayor and myself and some other staff from both the city, the school district and the chamber come together monthly. It's kind of a dynamic, but loosely structured, network. The idea is to discuss ways in which to build upon a common vision for a better community and for a safer, healthier community. It grew out of some incidents that brought about this community care network in 1996.

And a third would be a public safety partnership with our city's police department and the school district where we meet monthly -- the police chief and several other city officials. We have a DARE program. We also have a SRO -- a school resource officer -- provided by the city and housed in our high school. That provides a way for our school administrators and myself to meet directly with police on public safety issues. We conduct these networking meetings in order to provide for the health and safety of our kids.

GUTHRIE: I would agree that a lot of ours is informal. In a community of 35,000, that happens also. But we do have some formalized structures. The city council and the school board have a joint committee. It's called "Six Pack," and it's the mayor and the mayor pro tem, the board president and board vice-president, and then the superintendent and the city manager. And they meet quarterly. There is a joint meeting of the full board and council twice a year. There is a school district point person to the city, and I'm the city point person to the school district. My counterpart and I meet every month for lunch to go over some specific things that we're working on together. We probably talk almost daily on other things.

We have a joint campus security and safety committee that meets monthly. It's representative of the student safety folks over at the school district and our police department. Then, we have what's called the Claremont Youth Partnership, which is, again, parented by the city and the school district. But, it is a community collaborative now where community members plus representatives of the district and the city participate to ensure that there is good coordination among programs and services to youth and families, and that we're paying attention to the goals of the Youth Master Plan.

KYLE: In terms of those kinds of relationships that you've seen, Richard, perhaps in some of the more medium-sized cities that I think you've been working in, although I know you worked in large cities as well, what kinds of things are you seeing? Are these patterns similar? Both Michael and Dick have pointed out that they are in smaller communities, and I know there are lots of those in the audience, and certainly in the NLC

constituency, so I was particularly glad to hear about that. But what about in other cities that you've seen? Is there a common kind of pattern, or are there different kinds of structures that make the relationships work between the elected bodies and the staffs that support them?

MURPHY: I think the kinds of collaborations and groupings mentioned previously are there. I want to just mention two others that I think are emerging. One is participation by a community foundation. In Indiana, each county has a community foundation, and they often play that mediating role and catalytic role. And it's beginning to spill over in terms of what do we want in terms of outcomes for young people. For example, one community we're working with is looking at not just the reading and math scores, but also at the number of afterschool programs we have or how many community service slots we have in that community. So in a sense, there's a joint ownership on both sides -- what the local government is responsible for and also what the educational authority. And while this is just beginning, I think the more we can work toward some common outcomes by these two bodies and have joint ownership, it's going to save a lot of time on finger pointing when reading and math scores come out. Or, the reverse of that, the dropout statistic or the teen pregnancy rate or the juvenile justice rate is sort of owned by local government, and the educators own the reading and math scores. And how can we get a couple of other outcomes.

KYLE: Michael, you seemed to talk about outcomes when you talked about the afterschool program and how that was enhancing the outcomes for the youth who are participating. It has given them more study time, for instance, and more interaction with respected adults, turning into school outcomes. Are the partnerships that you're working on in Tukwila addressing the outcomes in some of the other areas that Richard was just mentioning in terms of dropouts or test scores more generally or teen pregnancy rates? What kinds of outcomes are you seeing that you think are at least in part affected or impacted by the fact that you've got effective relationships between a city and a school?

SILVER: I think every school community is concerned about raising student achievement. And of course, we seem to be addressing different standards because every state has adopted different standards that they expect students to meet and achieve. The ability of the schools to teach students well and meet these standards given the 180-day calendars that most school districts have is insufficient. In our case, what we have to do is reach out to provide extended learning time. The problem is that state funding doesn't do that. So you have to provide other ways of finding the resources. In our case, it's launching this collaboration and trying to seek both private and other public agency resources to do that.

Where the outcomes come into play are several. One is academic outcomes for the targeted population that we're seeking to get involved in the extended learning time. And that includes things like improving school attendance, higher grades, better achievement scores, reducing the dropout rate. But it also looks at some social and emotional types of issues in terms of students' outlook on school and behavioral problems and students' ability to be more competent in terms of having communication and social skills. So that's one set.

Another set looks at the school environment. By working with groups in an extended way, can you have a safer school? Would the program be well run after school and what does that have to do with the connections to the day program? And I guess another part would be the instructional features of what you're doing in the program after school. There's academic support, there's social development, and then there's the enrichment. I'll give you an example. We have a lot of students who are newly landed immigrants. And what we're finding is art-based projects after school are universal in terms of having students work together. And all students being smart enabled to pull some strings for the students and to provide that level of outcome and achievement. So those are some strategies that we're using to launch the afterschool program and connect it to student outcomes.

KYLE: Do you think that somebody listening today could talk to their city councilmembers or to their mayor and use as an argument for a closer relationship between them and the school board members or between the school administration the fact that they will get improved outcomes from the kids who are in school?

SILVER: One of the things that we know about learning is that time is a variable. And our proposition basically is that by extending learning time for students who need that extended time, achievement will improve. And so far, we are demonstrating that. So I would be very encouraging of schools and cities to come together to provide the resources to extend learning time for children.

GUTHRIE: Also the issue is, from a city perspective, that this is about creating youth and family friendly communities. And the partnership with the school district is critical for that. While people definitely want to see results, and these kind of measurements are extremely important, I think what you're really trying to do is create an across-the-board -- whether it's the public agencies, the community-at-large, faith-based communities, or private non-profits -- collaborative effort to create a community in which children are valued and families are valued.

MURPHY: Toward that end, John, I think the recent surveying that's been done by the Mott Foundation has shown that there is humongous bipartisan support among citizens for these kinds of activities after 3 p.m. And they are even willing -- dare I say the word? -- to pay additional money for it. I know that's still a gap, because they say it, and they may not vote for it. But I think -- from what I'm hearing from Dick and Michael -- is that neither one has suffered by opening their door and reaching out. As a matter of fact, it seems like they have only gained and been able to do their job better.

GUTHRIE: Absolutely. There is every reason to do it, both in the actual end result of higher quality of life and in improved education for children. But you're right, the taxpayers say, "It's our dime, regardless of whether it's spent on the school side or the city side, we're still paying the dime. We expect you to do it."

KYLE: Dick, you mentioned earlier conducting the survey using the assets approach from the Search Institute. And you're using that as a baseline. You've done

that four or five times now?

GUTHRIE: Five times now. We do it every other year.

KYLE: Does it show something that you think ties into this collaboration?

DICK: Yes, I think the most dramatic thing it has shown is that we have seen a dramatic increase in the number of kids who are involved in afterschool activities. Correspondingly, we have seen a dramatic decrease in the number of kids who are home alone after school, and a very dramatic increase in the number of kids who are involved in volunteer activities in the community. These are things we were hoping to see, and, I think, underscore the values that we talked about, in terms of lengthening that enrichment beyond just the school day into other hours.

KYLE: One of the questions we have, Dick, is in terms of the Youth Master Plan that we talked about. Stepping back from that a bit . . . I know that you've talked to some other communities that have done the same thing or similar things. Can you give some perspective as to a Youth Master Plan? Can you cite some examples in other places, not necessarily by name, where they have done something different? What would you have done differently? If you were going to a new community and were going to do a Youth Master Plan, what would you first do about that? Where would you look for assistance with it? What are you seeing about youth master planning?

GUTHRIE: The first thing is you have to have the buy in -- a passionate buy in, if you would -- from your top leadership in the community -- your city manager, your school, superintendent and your elected officials. That's what gives it the oomph to go. A lot of times we go to conferences, and staff will go, "This is a great idea. We really need this. It will be tremendous for the community." But unless that motivation is coming from the folks who can release the resources to get it done, it's very difficult. So the first thing is getting folks on board who can send the message that this is an important thing to do. It's critical to make it successful.

KYLE: We talked about the relationship and cooperation, or lack thereof, between elected school board members and elected city government officials. What about the turnover of elected officials -- both school board members and city council members? And also there is turnover in staff positions. Do these types of collaborations weather those kinds of changes in your experience, Michael?

SILVER: Well, there is going to be turnover, and I think that the degree of success of any of these efforts is how it's institutionalized. That means that there has to be an attitude that becomes part of the fabric of the organization. So, as an example, we have some guiding principles in our school district. And of course we have some core values and goals and so on. But one of the guiding principles talks about utilizing collaborative approaches to build lasting beneficial relationships. So when we hire new staff, that has to be a part of the thinking process and a part of the actions that occur. I think the same thing with integrating new board members, that the board members understand that our

culture is one of partnerships. We've been focusing today on partnerships with the city, but we also have partnerships with universities and partnerships with non-profit agencies. So that sense of building collaborative approaches is one that is essential to the dynamic of teaching and learning in our school district.

GUTHRIE: I would say that Michael has hit it right on the head. You have to build this into the organizational culture, both for staff and for elected officials. We just had an election and have a new council member. The first thing out the gate he got was the Youth Master Plan and some information on our commitment to collaboration with the school district and that it's part of the organizational culture so that it can survive those changes in both staff and elected officials.

KYLE: Institutionalization, institutionalizing, making it part of an organizational culture -- what do you see, Richard, as methods or thoughts about institutionalizing these kinds of collaborations in the various communities you've worked in?

MURPHY: I think having some small third-party support from people who are supposed to be doing this, such as a United Way, a community foundation, or a university can really help institutionalize it. We heard about the Search Institute survey. Having some kind of annual mark like that, I think, does it. Other surveys I've seen cities do interview the adults about their views on youth and what they would do have been very successful in a couple of communities. And I might add, it's a very modest cost to do that kind of surveying and it could lead into a youth plan for that community. But again, something that's going to be done every year, some kind of event. . . . If those are in place, the event will still happen, and you would want it to happen year after year. And a lot of them are not complicated events. There just has to be a commitment -- "We do this every year, no matter who's in the position."

KYLE: Michael noted that we were focusing on particular relationships between schools and cities, but that there are other kinds of collaborative partnerships with other people involved. Let me start with you, Richard. Your work involves multitudes of partners. Can you talk a little bit about how you see the role of non-profit organizations, youth-serving organizations, or other community partners in the kinds of collaborative efforts we're talking about? Who are optimum ones to include that you shouldn't miss, and how do they fit?

MURPHY: They're beginning to fit. I would say five years ago, a lot of the non-profit organizations -- the youth-serving organizations -- were not dealing enough with schools. They felt that "that's a world over there, we'll do our own little thing." I think that's beginning to change. One successful collaboration that involves schools, the government, non-profits, and foundations is around -- actually I know this in several cities -- getting common outcomes for the out of school time. All of those players -- the government, the school, the foundations who are funding a lot of this at the edges, plus the non-profit organizations -- are committing to common application forms as well as common reporting forms. So everybody is working toward what do we really want to see this time used for and trying to figure out how they measure what they do. That's forcing

everyone to have more honest conversations about what they do and can't do. It is so important for those non-profits to be at the table so that they're not on the outside throwing rocks. I know some communities where one or two organizations can be such dissidents that you can't move forward on the other side.

KYLE: Michael, what other partners are you including in Tukwila that you would like to include, or encourage communities to look at and try to include?

SILVER: I think one of the big pieces of educational reform is connecting the preparation of teachers, for example, with real world experiences in schools. Here at the University of Washington, we forged what's called the Professional Development School concept. The idea is that you have a cluster of eight to nine student teachers in one school. The professor actually comes to the school to conduct some of the seminars. With that cohort group, you also have some of your teachers who attend, so you start more of a rich discussion between practice and theory about what's happening in schools.

Another example is a human services network that comes together monthly. And it's almost a religious task that you really have to be together for an hour and a half monthly. But the benefit in having a whole variety of government as well as other non-profit agencies is that this group discusses and develops ideas constantly about meeting human service needs of students and their families in the Tukwila community. Bringing people together is the beginning of any good collaborative partnership. We view that as our role in order to provide better services and just more resources for kids.

GUTHRIE: John, there's one other, which is the community of faith. We've had some successful partnerships between the city and the school district and one of our local congregations to develop an afterschool enrichment program for at-risk kids that we all jointly fund. And it's been very successful.

KYLE: Great. I want to ask you all one last question. And that's to give to the mayor, the councilmember, the community leader, city hall staff member, or school system staff member who is listening today -- "I've been thinking about this. I've been wanting to get into this arena." What is the best piece of advice you can give them in terms of getting started? You know, people who have already started, but they're at the beginning stages or haven't really tackled it yet and were trying to use this call as a fulcrum.

In your concluding remarks, Michael, Richard and Dick, in addition to the advice, if there is a particular website or publication or place to get further information you want to quickly mention, please feel free to do that.

GUTHRIE: The advice I would give is that this is really about building relationships. I think it works best when we work real hard to build strong relationships with our counterparts with the schools and be willing to invest in learning about each other. That's what helps survive changes in personnel or institutionalizing things into the organizational culture. It certainly helps smooth the way when you reach the bumps along the way.

One of the things that quickly came out of our Youth Master Plan was

that, for the first time, we brought the management staff together of the school and the city. And, for the first time, really understood how each organization worked. We worked from that point to develop relationships so that people could pick up the phone and deal with issues and solve problems. So I think it's really about building relationships. I'd start there. I'd go find someone else -- if you're a city person, go find a school person who can get fired up with you.

KYLE: Richard, your parting words of advice?

MURPHY: As you go find somebody, also think of a good facilitator for these dialogues, especially at the beginning, and realize probably for the first six months you'll maybe not want to go to the meeting that's scheduled. But by the seventh month, you'll get something out of it.

KYLE: Michael, the last piece of advice from you, please.

SILVER: I think that if you want to act as an individual, find a counterpart, if it's school to city or city to school. And start with a conversation about the work you are doing. What are some goals? What are some areas of growth that you're involved in? And look for those mutually beneficial areas on which the two of you can work together to provide some synergy.

I think if you want to do it more systemically, and I'm an advocate of working systemically, then I think you need to bring people together. It needs to be around a very compelling question that's very embedded in that community, something that people will buy into and will agree that this is really important to come together for. Because taking people's time these days has to be for a compelling reason. And I agree, you have to have a good structure and facilitator in order to make the time meaningful for those who attend. But I think coming out of it, people will come up with some strong relationships, accessibility, interaction, and just the ability to listen and respond to each other's concerns is a great start to forming work groups.

KYLE: I was also thinking of the summit you had and also remembering the summit that the former Mayor of Seattle had eight or ten years ago that took place in neighborhoods all over the community. So it doesn't matter that it's a city of 17,000 or a city of a half a million, those kinds of organizing events and trying to work systemically can occur. And I think you just need to apply it to the size your city is. And I think the same is with individual relationships.

SILVER: Peter Benson of the Search Institute's has said, "Mobilizing individuals for action may seem inefficient and time consuming. It is harder to show progress on a grand scale. But one by one, individuals can have a tremendous impact." (www.search-institute.org)

KYLE: I think those are suitable words. Peter is on the advisory council for NLC's Council on Youth, Education, and Families, so I'm glad to hear him brought up. Thank you all for participating today.