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CINCINNATI COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS NAMED NATIONAL COMMUNITY SCHOOL AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE WINNER

(Washington, DC) – Cincinnati Public Schools’ Community Learning Centers were named a National Community School Award for Excellence winner this month by the National Coalition for Community Schools.

The Community Learning Centers initiative has been an important force behind remarkable academic achievement and civic growth underway in Cincinnati. A review team of community school and education leaders from around the country praised the commitment of Cincinnati Public Schools, and community agencies and organizations across the health, mental health, college and career, youth development and other sectors for establishing a shared vision and strategy for how they work together to help students succeed.

“There’s a reason why Cincinnati Public School is the highest-rated urban school district in Ohio, and Community Learning Centers have a lot to do with it” says Martin J. Blank, Director of the Coalition for Community Schools and the President of the Institute of Educational Leadership. “Cincinnati has become a model of efficiency and effectiveness that many other school districts and communities are looking to replicate. It is the embodiment of a top-notch community school district.”

Using public schools as hubs, *community schools* bring together community partners to offer a range of supports and opportunities to children, youth, families and communities. Together, they collaborate on setting goals for the school and work cooperatively to achieve those desired results. Community school initiatives are sprouting up all across the country in every type of locale; from Oakland, CA to Tulsa, OK and Ogden, UT, to Baltimore, MD.

All around the country, community schools are making more efficient use of school and community resources through partnerships that provide innovative and high-quality learning opportunities and support for their students and families, and the entire community.

In Cincinnati, graduation rates have increased by 31%, while the achievement gap between African American students and their white counterparts has narrowed to 1.2% since the implementation of Community Learning Centers in 2000. The impact of CLCs has also helped to reverse the downward trend in enrollment in Cincinnati as more and more families move back to the city to attend public schools.

The Coalition for Community Schools has been proud partners and supporters of CPS’ Community Learning Centers since its inception. Our partners at the Community Learning Center Institute have been instrumental in helping other Ohio cities including Cleveland and Toledo develop community schools, and have hosted many other communities such as New York and Knoxville do the same.

Leaders from the Cincinnati Community Learning Centers, including Board Chair Eileen Cooper-Reid and Superintendent Mary Ronan will be presented the National Community School Award for Excellence during the 2013 Community School Education Day June 6th on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C.

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The Coalition for Community Schools is an *alliance of national, state and local organizations in education K-16, youth development, community planning and development, family support, health and human services, higher education institutions, government and philanthropy as well as national, state and local community school networks. The Coalition advocates for community schools as the vehicle for strengthening schools, families and communities so that together they can improve student learning. It is a program of the Institute for Educational Leadership.*

For more information on community schools please visit: www.communityschools.org.