

# THE OHIO COMMUNITY COLLABORATION MODEL FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

LESSONS LEARNED FROM SCHOOL AND DISTRICT PILOTS : JUNE 2008



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In the end, our hope is that this report will inspire other schools and districts as they consider expanding their improvement processes to include important school-family-community partnerships organized around both academic and non-academic barriers to student success.



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IS A PRIORITY IN NEARLY EVERY SCHOOL AND DISTRICT IMPROVEMENT PLAN. UNFORTUNATELY, “COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT” OFTEN DOES NOT MATERIALIZE IN PRACTICE.

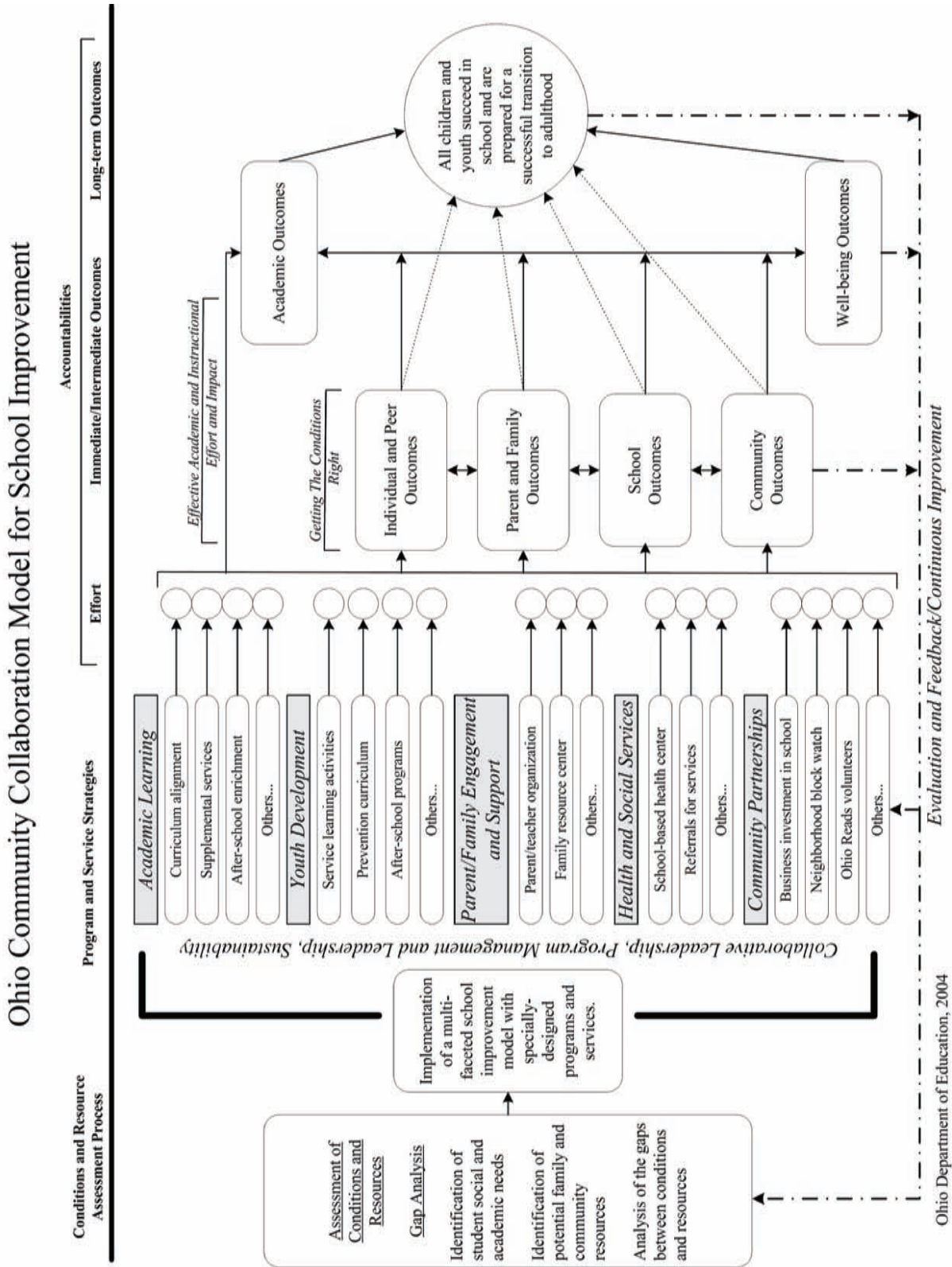
One reason is that community engagement has multiple meanings. Another reason is that educational leaders do not have ready access to formal, research-supported, and field-tested school improvement models that specify how best to achieve genuine community engagement, especially the better results it yields.

The Ohio Community Collaboration Model for School Improvement (OCCMSI) was developed and implemented in Ohio school and district pilot sites in response to these needs. Jointly developed by representatives from the College of Social Work at The Ohio State University and the Ohio Department of Education (ODE), the OCCMSI is a formal, research-supported, and field tested model. It specifies how community engagement can be a powerful school improvement resource. Offering a generic improvement planning template, the OCCMSI also is designed to be tailored to the needs, problems, assets, and opportunities evident in each local community.

Implemented successfully, the OCCMSI provides a different and better way to improve schools. For example, with community collaboration, school and district improvement planning no longer is “walled in”—with community resources and voices “walled out.” Schools and districts become hubs of community engagement and development, helping to unite school boards, the business community, community agencies, and governments. Above all, educators no longer must shoulder alone responsibilities for learning, academic achievement, success in school, and transitions into productive citizenship. With the OCCMSI, these outcomes become common purposes. Educators, families and community members develop a sense of collective responsibility because everyone benefits when good outcomes are achieved, and everyone is affected by the consequences when they are not.

The OCCMSI is summarized in a formal organizing framework. *Figure 1* on page 4 presents this logic model. It introduces what schools need to do to improve results. This model emphasizes improvement priorities, processes, and mechanisms for organizing and mobilizing school, family and community resources in support of young people’s learning, healthy development, and success in school.

Figure 1. The Ohio Community Collaboration Model for School Improvement Logic Model



The OCCMSI emphasizes five core improvement priorities. They are: (1) academic learning, especially connections between in-school learning and learning during out-of-school time; (2) youth development, (3) parent/family engagement and support, (4) health and social services, and (5) community partnerships. More than a list of improvement priorities, the OCCMSI provides an **organizational framework, causal pathways that lead to desired outcomes, and concrete implementation processes for realizing the benefits associated with each, at the same time ensuring that these priorities and their implementation processes are coordinated and harmonized.**

The OCCMSI also provides a prescriptive planning and implementation process. Marked by key phases and guided by progress markers called milestones, the OCCMSI fits with existing school improvement models because of its emphasis on assessment-based planning, data-based decision-making, and evaluation-driven, continuous learning and improvement mechanisms. In other words, the OCCMSI **does not compete with standards-based reforms and other current improvement models; it complements and strengthens them.**

When the OCCMSI is implemented successfully, a mutually-beneficial synergy among its five core components is evident. And when this synergy develops, school improvement outcomes improve as reform processes are enhanced. Foremost among these improvement outcomes is a dual contribution. More young people come to school ready and able to learn. And schools are ready for the learning, academic achievement, and healthy development of an increasingly diverse student population.

Put differently — and using ODE’s terminology — the OCCMSI enables schools, families, and community partnership to “get the conditions right for learning.” The OCCMSI gets the conditions right when it enables educators, families, and community members to join forces. Community members collaborate with educators to address barriers to learning and academic achievement, simultaneously capitalizing on resources and opportunities during out-of-school time to enrich, expand, and connect young people’s learning in and outside of school.

Clearly, the OCCMSI is as complex as it is collaborative. Significantly, this complex, comprehensive model challenges the status quo and raises a number of important questions:

- *What does it take to implement (with fidelity) the OCCMSI?*
- *What professional development and technical assistance needs are evident?*
- *What new organizational capacities and personal competencies are needed?*
- *How do schools and districts develop operational bridges to families and community organizations?*

- *How does local school and district uniqueness impact implementation and outcomes?*
- *What barriers arise, and what “barrier-busting strategies” prove to be effective?*
- *What are the progress markers and success indicators in the short term, and what pathways need to be developed to get to important, long-term, desirable outcomes (e.g., increased graduation rates, increases in postsecondary education without remediation, reductions in drop-out rates)?*

Questions like these were instrumental in the development of two, related implementation experiments. Six pilot schools began implementation of the OCCMSI in 2005. These initial sites were joined one year later by six pilot districts. These pilot schools and districts’ implementation experiences were examined in detail by a research and development team. The team’s goals were to develop knowledge and understanding about what it takes to implement the OCCMSI; to learn about the multiple benefits accompanying successful implementation; and to improve the OCCMSI logic model and companion implementation resources based on pilot experiences.

This report provides relevant details. It provides capsule descriptions of each of the six pilot schools and the six pilot districts. Each pilot’s innovations, new capacities, and implementation-related needs and challenges are explored. Importantly, key findings are shared, including:

- *Significant process and product innovations*
- *Stakeholders’ descriptions of OCCMSI-related successes*
- *School- and district-specific outcomes*
- *Cross-pilot findings and lessons learned*

An important implication also is presented. *The implication is that the OCCMSI provides a generic template that extends and strengthens nearly every kind of school and district improvement model.* Significantly, both the five core components (e.g., health and social services, parent/family engagement and support) and the assessment-driven improvement planning process guided by the OCCMSI logic model (refer back to *Figure 1*) add new dimensions to school and district comprehensive, continuous improvement plans. In a nutshell, the generic features of the OCCMSI give life to the “comprehensive” part of school improvement planning because of the emphasis accorded to family and community resources and the bridges and linkages schools and districts develop to access and capitalize on them.

The findings, lessons learned, and developing success stories introduced in this report can inform others in Ohio and elsewhere as they take on these important community engagement agendas.



## OVERVIEW

THE OHIO COMMUNITY COLLABORATION MODEL FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT (OCCMSI), INTRODUCED IN THE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND REPRESENTED IN FIGURE 1, PROVIDES A NEW, BETTER, and more comprehensive way to improve schools and achieve better outcomes for students. The OCCMSI also improves community engagement in schools and districts, facilitating the development of common purposes and a sense of collective responsibility schools, their resource and support needs, and their outcomes.

More concretely, schools, districts, and their surrounding communities benefit when they adopt and implement the OCCMSI. For example:

- *Schools and districts address both academic priorities and nonacademic barriers to students' success.*
- *Schools and districts optimize and coordinate school, family, community, and neighborhood resources and supports.*
- *Schools and districts broaden their already existing school improvement teams to allow for buy-in and input from a variety of school and community stakeholders.*
- *Schools and districts integrate community planning processes, especially those focused on children and youth, with school improvement planning processes. Wasteful, unproductive competition and duplication are eliminated at the same time that program gaps are bridged and service cracks are filled.*

This public report focuses on the OCCMSI. The report provides salient details about what schools, districts, families, and communities can accomplish together, in a very short time, when they are guided by a formal logic model and are provided with implementation assistance and resources. Together these schools and districts demonstrate the promise of genuine, pragmatic community engagement in school improvement. Engagement is genuine and pragmatic when it reflects and promotes common purposes and collective responsibilities for young people and their success in school, paving the way for tangible benefits not realized when schools and districts are forced by circumstances to rely exclusively on “walled in” planning frameworks and improvement models. With the OCCMSI, there is a focus on the best of these “walled in” frameworks and models, but also the addition of the missing components (i.e. school-family-community partnerships).

The report begins by providing details about this new, complex improvement model. Specifically, details are provided about this model's implementation in pilot schools and pilot districts. Next, cross-site findings, lessons learned, and implications are shared. And, finally, two appendices are provided that provide additional resources, including access to a detailed implementation guide developed specifically for the OCCMSI and several research and development publications, as well as more specific information about each pilot school and district's local context.



# INTRODUCING THE OHIO COMMUNITY COLLABORATION MODEL FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

THE OCCMSI IS SUMMARIZED IN A FORMAL ORGANIZING FRAMEWORK CALLED “A LOGIC MODEL.” AS PRESENTED IN FIGURE 1, THE OCCMSI EMPHASIZES IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES, PROCESSES, AND mechanisms for organizing and mobilizing school, family, and community resources in support of young people’s learning, healthy development, success in school, and productive citizenship. Supported by sound theory and research, this logic model is action-oriented and practical. Implemented with fidelity, the OCCMSI helps educators, families, and community partners (broadly defined) to get from “here” (the current state of affairs) to “there” — marked by better results for young people, schools, and entire districts.

## THE FIVE CORE CONTENT AREAS

The OCCMSI emphasizes five core improvement priorities. They include: (1) academic learning, especially connections between in-school learning and learning during out-of-school time; (2) youth development, (3) parent/family engagement and support, (4) health and social services, and (5) community partnerships. Each will be described briefly next.

*Academic Learning:* Academic learning involves traditional school improvement priorities focused on the alignment of curriculum to instruction, the creation of standards-based accountabilities, student intervention, and quality teaching and instruction. It also includes out-of-school time strategies such as tutoring, homework assistance, and enrichment programs aimed toward enhancing student learning. The OCCMSI is designed to forge solid connections between inschool teaching and learning and “anytime, anywhere, anyone learning” during out-of-school time.

*Youth Development:* After-school programs, mentoring, peer counseling, social recreation, arts, sports, values education, service learning, community service, volunteerism, leadership development, extracurricular activities, conflict resolution, life skills programs, youth employment, career counseling/job skills training, academic enrichment, and prevention programming all fit under the umbrella name of “youth development.” Research indicates that these strategies decrease the risk factors and enhance protective factors related to academic achievement and healthy development.

***Parent/Family Engagement and Support:*** Parent/family engagement and support strategies involve traditional parent involvement activities such as parental volunteerism, fundraising, and engagement in their child's learning. Family engagement and support also involves schools supporting families through referral and assistance, continuing education, parent-to-parent support, and other linkages to vital services in the school community.

***Health and Social Services:*** Health, mental health, social, cultural, economic and family barriers, individually and in various combinations, limit some students' learning, academic achievement and success in school. Further, they complicate the work of teachers, principals and student support professionals. Health and social services are designed to address and prevent these non-academic barriers. They include school-and community-based resources such as mental health services, financial and housing assistance, child welfare supports, and dental and medical services.

***Community Partnerships:*** Community partnerships and collaboration include formal arrangements schools have with individuals, associations, private sector organizations, or public institutions to provide a program, service, or resource within the school or community. Example community partnerships evolve through effective neighborhood associations, business partnerships and sponsorships, and community block watches. These community partnerships are used to enhance both the programs and services offered at the school as well as increase resources for both the schools and the community partners.

More than a list of these five core improvement priorities, the OCCMSI provides an organizational framework, especially causal pathways that lead to desired outcomes. It also provides concrete implementation processes for realizing the benefits associated with each, at the same time ensuring that these priorities and their implementation processes are coordinated and harmonized. When the OCCMSI is implemented successfully, a mutually-beneficial synergy among these five components is evident; and when this synergy develops, school improvement outcomes and processes are enhanced.



## THE PLANNING PROCESS: KEY PHASES AND MILESTONES

Several key phases characterize the OCCMSI planning process. The most important examples are: (a) building the “school-community table”; (b) assessing needs/conditions and resources; (c) analyzing gaps; (d) developing new partnerships and collaborative leadership, along with companion school-community infrastructures; and (e) developing resources and programs, implementing them, and using evaluation for continuous learning and improvement. Each will be described briefly next; however, *Figure 2* outlines milestone steps in more detail.

***“Building the Table”:*** This phase involves the establishment of district and school level planning teams comprised of community, family, and school stakeholders from multiple backgrounds and perspectives. All have a stake in supporting school improvement, especially student achievement and healthy development. Table members often include district and building level leaders, teachers, supportive services staff, parents/residents, community-based mental health professionals, youth development leaders, juvenile justice and local law enforcement, and other community partners who are vested in better outcomes for schools and young people.

***Needs/Conditions and Resources Assessment:*** Together participants at the school -community table examine key data on academic achievement, as well as other data related to priority non-academic barriers within the school community. These data include individual, school-wide, peer, family, or community barriers to student achievement and healthy development as well as untapped resources and opportunities. This part of the process also involves the identification of current school and community practices, strategies, and resources available along the prevention, early identification, and treatment/intervention continuum.

***Gap Analyses:*** Gap analyses focus on student, family and school needs as well as resource needs. Specific improvement priorities emerge from this process, allowing for the targeting of priority academic and non-academic barriers to student success

***Resource/Program Development and Implementation:*** Once top priorities are established, there is the need for the development of new or expanded resources, interventions, and partnerships to address identified gaps and conditions. The focus in this planning phase follows from this need. The focus is on the integration of evidence-based practice principles and programs into classroom and program designs, as well as ensuring that programs and services are culturally responsive and respectful of diversity.

***Partnership, Collaborative Leadership, and Infrastructure Development:*** The multiple tasks, activities, and processes within the school and community must happen simultaneously in systematic, coherent, and integrative ways. To make this happen, partnerships among organization and collaboration among people are practical necessities. In turn, collaboration and partnerships require new leadership and management structures, especially ones that bridge schools, districts, and community agencies. Collaborative leadership infrastructures that distribute power, authority and responsibility across the table or group also are necessary. These infrastructures allow for shared ownership and accountability for student achievement, school success, and healthy development.

***Evaluation and Continuous Feedback:*** During all stages of the processes of assessment, design, and implementation, evaluation is a critical component. Evaluation occurs at multiple levels, including school-wide in relation to core achievement and climate data, but also program-specific in relation to an identified strategy's targeted outcome (e.g., social worker-led group on anger management measures anger and problem solving indicators). These data are monitored regularly and become central to the school and district continuous improvement planning process.

Together, these six phases comprise the overarching process associated with the implementation of the OCCMSI within schools and districts. However, to help planning teams at school-community tables determine if they are “on track,” enabling them to take stock of their progress, planning process milestones have been developed. These milestones, or progress markers, are listed in *Figure 2*.

The following sections of this report present the school and district pilot sites that worked through these key OCCMSI milestones, and the outcomes that resulted through this process.



**Figure 2. OCCMSI Milestone Checklist**

	<i>Engage the school – develop strategies to ensure that the model is understood and accepted as a viable process for school improvement in the school itself</i> (A primary goal of the model is to support teachers in the classroom – teacher and staff understanding and acceptance of the model is critical to our success)
	<i>Engage the community – ‘Build the Table’ – establish a pilot team with broad school and community representation</i> (Start the process of partnering and the development of a positive culture for change both within the school and across the community)
	<i>Clarify language</i> (Define what we mean by various terms and processes)
	<i>‘Fill in the Boxes’ – Current School and Community Practices Inventory</i> (Fill in the boxes in the OCCMSI model to establish the local context for subsequent work – especially honoring prior efforts to do collaborative problem-solving)
	<i>Assess Conditions</i> (Identify the most pressing barriers to learning for students in the school)
	<i>Assess Resources</i> (Identify community resources available, available but insufficient, and/or needed to help address the most pressing barriers)
	<i>Analyze Gaps</i> (Identify resources that are needed but not available; or those that are available but aren’t of sufficient quality and quantity, to address the most pressing barriers)
	<i>Develop Resources</i> (Develop needed but unavailable or insufficient community resources)
	<i>Develop Key Partnerships</i> (Link community resources to barriers to learning)
	<i>Develop Infrastructure</i> (Develop a collaborative leadership structure, single points of contact, and structural components in relation to the model and priorities; Prioritize linkages and connections across systems and components in relation to overall objectives; Develop and strengthen ongoing relationships, communication channels, etc., between and among partners)
	<i>Develop Programs and Strategies to Address Key Barriers</i> (Work with partners to decide what you are going to do to address barriers)
	<i>Develop a Set of Program Logic Models to Elaborate All Program and Strategy Pathways</i> (Use logic models to develop the operational detail of programs and strategies)
	<i>Develop an Effort and Outcome Tracking Strategy</i> (Identify key data elements; develop data management, data analysis and reporting capacities)
	<i>Implement Program and Strategy Operation</i> (Implement programs and strategies)
	<i>Collect Data to Track Program Operation and Outcome</i> (Implement the data system)
	<i>Implement Evaluation and Feedback Processes</i> (Ensure that data collected during the operation of programs and strategies links back to school and community decision-making – commit to continuous improvement)





## THE IMPLEMENTATION PILOT SITES

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OCCMSI OCCURRED IN SIX PILOT SCHOOLS AND SIX PILOT DISTRICTS. THE SIX PILOT SCHOOLS BEGAN IMPLEMENTATION IN 2005, WHILE THE SIX PILOT DISTRICTS WERE ADDED in 2006. Implementation-related research and development ended in 2007. Therefore, in short, pilot schools enjoyed two years of implementation experience and assistance, while pilot districts enjoyed just one year. Work in almost all pilots continued after these preliminary efforts, especially within the schools; however, only initial progress indicators are overviewed here.

### OCCMSI PILOT SITES

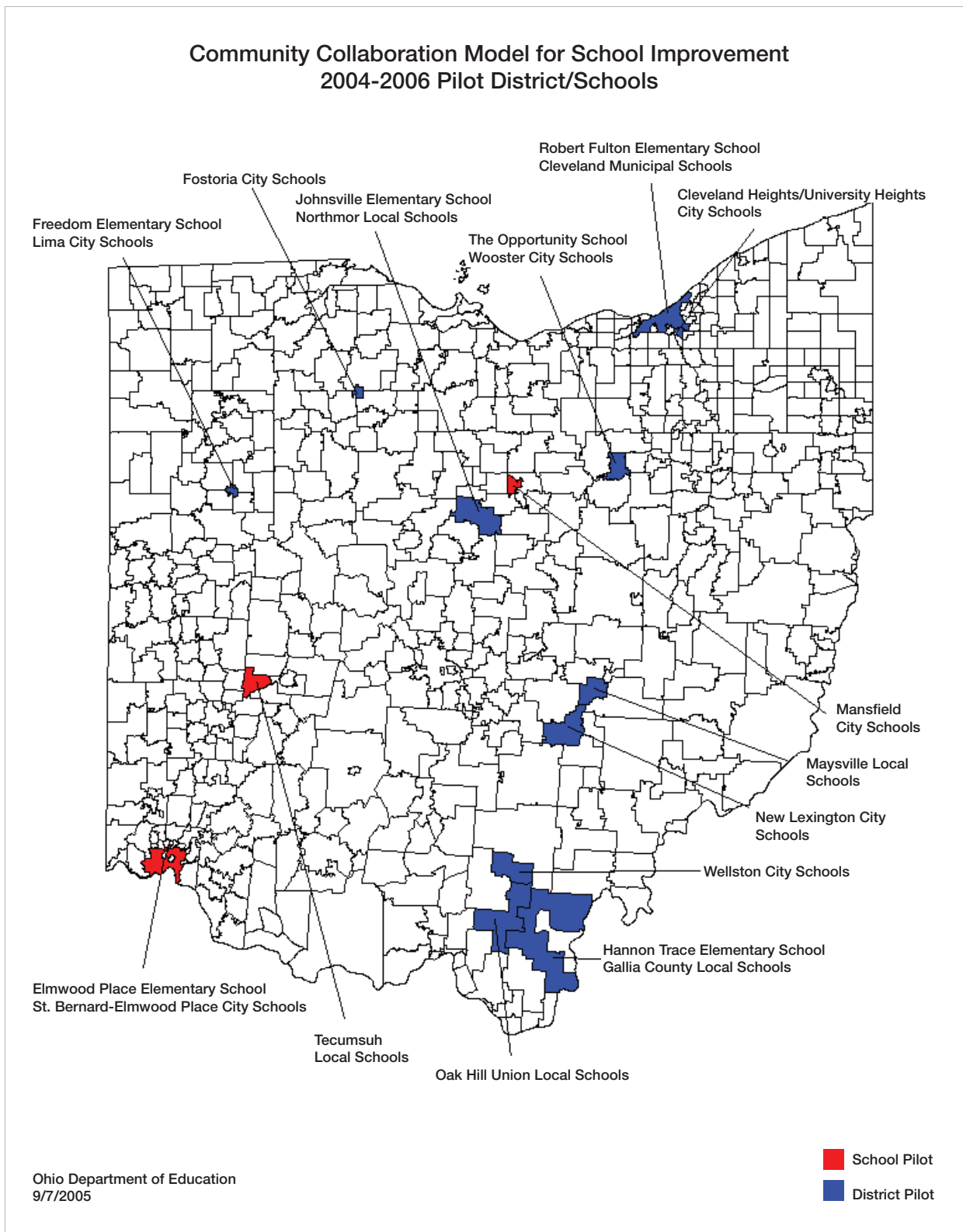
Six pilot schools were selected from a pool of applicants in 2005. Schools were selected based on their readiness, commitments, capacities, and representativeness of Ohio's schools overall. These schools were: Freedom Elementary School, Elmwood Place Elementary, Hannan Trace Elementary, Johnsville Elementary School, Robert Fulton Elementary School, and the Opportunity School.

Six pilot districts were added in 2006. As with the pilot schools, selection was based in part on readiness, commitments, capacities, and representativeness. The six districts were Cleveland Heights/University Heights, Fostoria Community Schools, Maysville Local School District, New Lexington City School District, Oak Hill School District, and Wellston School District.

*Figure 3* indicates the location of each pilot school and district within the state of Ohio. Furthermore, each school and district along with its surrounding community are described briefly in Appendix B.



Figure 3. Location of Pilot Schools and Pilot Districts



## CROSS-PILOT FINDINGS AND LESSONS LEARNED

SEPARATE, SPECIALIZED PUBLICATIONS PROVIDE DETAILS ABOUT EACH PILOT SITE'S ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS (SEE THE REFERENCES LISTED IN APPENDIX 1). TO ILLUSTRATE HOW MUCH SITES accomplished in a very short time, and to stimulate curiosity about the detailed resources provided in Appendix A, this report provides merely a representative sampling of cross-site findings and lessons learned. For the purposes of this report, these findings and lessons learned are little more than brief “snapshots” of complex planning involving new competencies, fresh approaches to school improvement planning and teamwork, and new school-family-community connections.

Specifically, this section of the report briefly presents several of the key findings and lessons learned within the evaluative research conducted on the implementation of the OCCMSI. These include the pilot sites' development of innovative new capacities, the OCCMSI implementation facilitators and con-straints/barriers, and specific pilot school site outcomes. Each will be discussed in turn.

### DEVELOPMENT OF INNOVATIVE CAPACITIES

Collaboration with family and community stakeholders and the creation of new partnerships with community organizations require new bridging and connective mechanisms, new decision-making structures and processes, and, all in all, an infrastructure for governing, managing, and improving school-familycommunity working relationships. Most schools and districts have limited experience with these school-community planning and implementation requirements. Little wonder, then, that pilot schools and districts needed to develop innovative capacities to capitalize on family and community resources for learning, healthy development, academic achievement, and overall success in school.

In brief, pilot schools and districts developed an impressive inventory of innovative capacities for community engagement and collaboration through implementation of the OCCMSI. These innovative capacities lend competence to schools, families, and community agencies alike. A separate research publication provides more explicit details (see Anderson-Butcher, et al., under review—as listed in Appendix A); however, for the purposes of this report, the categories harboring these innovative capacities and an example of each are provided in *Table 1*. Please note *Table 1* is continued on the following page.

*Table 1. Categories of Capacities with Accompanying Pilot Sites*

CAPACITY CATEGORIES	SELECT PILOT EXAMPLES
<b>Expanded Professional Development and Learning</b>	In one pilot school, building leadership conducted a “book study” session with staff where they had a structured discussion regarding each component of the model. In a district pilot, building teams of pupil services staff participated in a two-part planning process designed to enhance the linkage and referral system related to the provision of student interventions in the school and district.
<b>Enhanced and Expanded Funding Streams</b>	One pilot school determined that they needed a student services coordinator who addresses transitions work across the district and within the school. As such, the school worked collaboratively with both the school board and the community to generate the funds to support this new position. Three pilots worked collaboratively with their county Jobs and Family Services Departments to access TANF dollars to support access to mental health case coordination services for students and families.
<b>Changes in Policies and Procedures</b>	One pilot school created a single point of contact for teacher referrals at the school so that the referral process would be more streamlined. They also created a new referral sheet that served as a baseline assessment tool which could be used for guiding student interventions and measuring outcomes.
<b>Enhanced Systems and Structures</b>	To enhance linkages between teachers and other service providers supporting students, one pilot school had their building coach (i.e. assistant principal) attend monthly county inter-systems wrap-around meetings. Reciprocally, the county wraparound service coordinator (also called a Family and Children First Coordinator) began attending the school’s monthly intervention assistance team meetings. All pilots developed new teaming structures based on top priority needs and gaps. These “tables” worked collaboratively to address these new and/or improved services.
<b>Changes in Roles and Responsibilities</b>	One pilot school changed the school social worker’s role to include more school-family-community coordination as opposed to direct practice and the delivery of services. New relationships were created with community-based mental health providers who in turn changed their roles by delivering more strategic school-based and linked services, as opposed to those isolated previously in the community.
<b>Enhanced Integration with Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plans (CCIPs) and School Improvement Plans (SIPs)</b>	In one pilot district, an additional goal was created that focused on the mental and behavioral health needs of students as a strategy for reducing truancy. Others developed CCIP goals focused on fostering community and family engagement in support of student learning.
<b>Expanded Use of Multiple Data Sources</b>	One pilot district examined data sources such as achievement test results, discipline data, drug and alcohol data, and parent data to guide priority setting within their district. Nearly all pilots collected new types of data exploring the social and emotional needs of students. Some also conducted school climate surveys, while others conducted parents surveys.
<b>New and Expanded School-Family Community Partnerships</b>	All districts and schools expanded membership of their improvement teams to include community and family stakeholders. One pilot district developed new partnerships with their local library and an early childhood organization. Another developed strategic linkages between the elementary and middle school to support student transitions across the educational pipeline.

CAPACITY CATEGORIES	SELECT PILOT EXAMPLES
<b>Enhanced Programs and Service Delivery Models and Strategies</b>	All pilot sites had 21st CCLC programs. Prior to the OCCMSI, however, these programs were not integrally connected to the classroom. All pilot sites redesigned their program model to enhance these linkages. For example, one pilot school hired teachers within the school to help with curriculum and homework support. These teachers were able to enhance the connection between the school day and out-of-school time.

Of course, schools and districts differ, so it is not surprising that not every school and district developed the same capacities. Key facilitators and barriers helped to explain inter-school and inter-district differences in these capacities. These facilitators and barriers/constraints are discussed next.

### OCCMSI IMPLEMENTATION FACILITATORS

Considerable interest resided in the factors and forces that eased and accelerated OCCMSI implementation and led to the development of many of the capacities discussed above. Striving for simplicity, practicality, and clarity, relevant forces and factors were called “facilitators” with due understanding of their import for cultivating readiness, speeding adoption, and fostering integration.

Evaluative research conducted throughout the OCCMSI project served to identify several key facilitators.

These facilitators included:

- *Having strong site-based leadership, especially principal leadership*
- *Having central office administrators who support the project, especially as it “allows” schools to develop their own local strategies for improvement and to foster linkages to outside community resources and supports*
- *Embedding the model within the comprehensive, continuous improvement process (CCIP)*
- *Having the ability to tailor the model and the process to take into account local needs, resources, and assets*
- *Possessing willingness to consider new ideas and strategies*
- *Having educators and other school improvement leaders who see the value of doing the work on non-academic barriers*
- *Targeting priority “show-stopping barriers” in order to help engage educators and to provide a focus for continuous improvement processes and the development of strategic partnerships, programs, and services*
- *Creating buy-in among diverse groups of stakeholders*
- *Having school leaders opening their doors and welcoming partners*
- *Accessing consultants and liaisons with content-specific expertise in order to assist schools with moving forward in their improvement strategies*

## OCCMSI IMPLEMENTATION CONSTRAINTS AND BARRIERS

While many pilot sites developed innovative new capacities because of the facilitators indicated above, many pilot sites also encountered several constraints and barriers that served to deter the development of others. Evaluative research served to identify several key constraints and barriers. These constraints and barriers included:

- *Having resistance among some stakeholders who do not want to change their way of doing things*
- *Having time and effort challenges related to the design of new infrastructures, the redesign of roles, and the alteration of past ways of doing things in order to implement the OCCMSI*
- *Viewing the model as an “added on” health and social services strategy, or as a way to add more programs, as opposed to a comprehensive school improvement model with multiple components*
- *Having some site members that expect “cookie cutter” approaches with “follow the numbers” implementation protocols and that are not used to critical thinking and planning, and so they encounter challenges with the model and its complexities*
- *Lacking knowledge regarding how to address the complex underlying issues that must be targeted simultaneously when show-stopping barriers are analyzed intensively*
- *Experiencing turnover among staff and transitions within all areas of the project leads to instability, particularly district and school leaders*
- *Lacking commitment to a long-term improvement process*
- *Lacking resources and funding for schools and community partners to address the targeted non-academic barriers to learning*
- *Experiencing the year-to-year cycle of grants and funding streams that limits long-term, consistent work related to common directions*
- *Experiencing various socio-political considerations within local communities and schools*
- *Lacking understanding, awareness, and value of the model among school and district leaders*

Despite these identified constraints and barriers, local leaders and teams made progress where they could and saved the hard work of “barrier-busting” until such time as they had sufficient understanding of the OCCMSI and had experienced initial successes. Fortunately, some local leaders and teams began to discover strategies for addressing barriers like these and working within constraint systems. And, even if teams did not discover strategies, the mere fact that they identified significant barriers was an important contribution. Knowing what the barriers are paves the way for anticipatory, proactive work directed at helping all students succeed.

In summary, pilot schools and districts implementing the OCCMSI yielded both identical and comparable findings and lessons learned. Pilot sites developed and gained new capacities, as well as experienced similar facilitators and barriers to OCCMSI implementation. At the same time, however, each site also experienced unique outcomes based on their “local” OCCMSI configurations. These unique, site-specific findings will be discussed next.

## SPECIFIC PILOT SITE OUTCOMES

THERE WERE MANY FINDINGS AND LESSONS LEARNED ACROSS THE TWELVE PILOT SITES. IN ADDITION TO THESE CROSS SITE FINDINGS AND LESSONS LEARNED, EACH SCHOOL AND DISTRICT pilot also experienced their own unique outcomes as a result of OCCMSI implementation. Data collected from key stakeholders , as well as sample case studies, illuminate these findings.

### SCHOOL PILOT SITE OUTCOMES

Before providing case examples of site-specific pilot school outcomes, it is important to discuss two related outcomes that occurred across OCCMSI pilot school sites: (1) the enhancement of student referral and support systems; and (2) stakeholders' satisfaction with their OCCMSI experience.

#### *Enhancement of Student Referral and Support Systems*

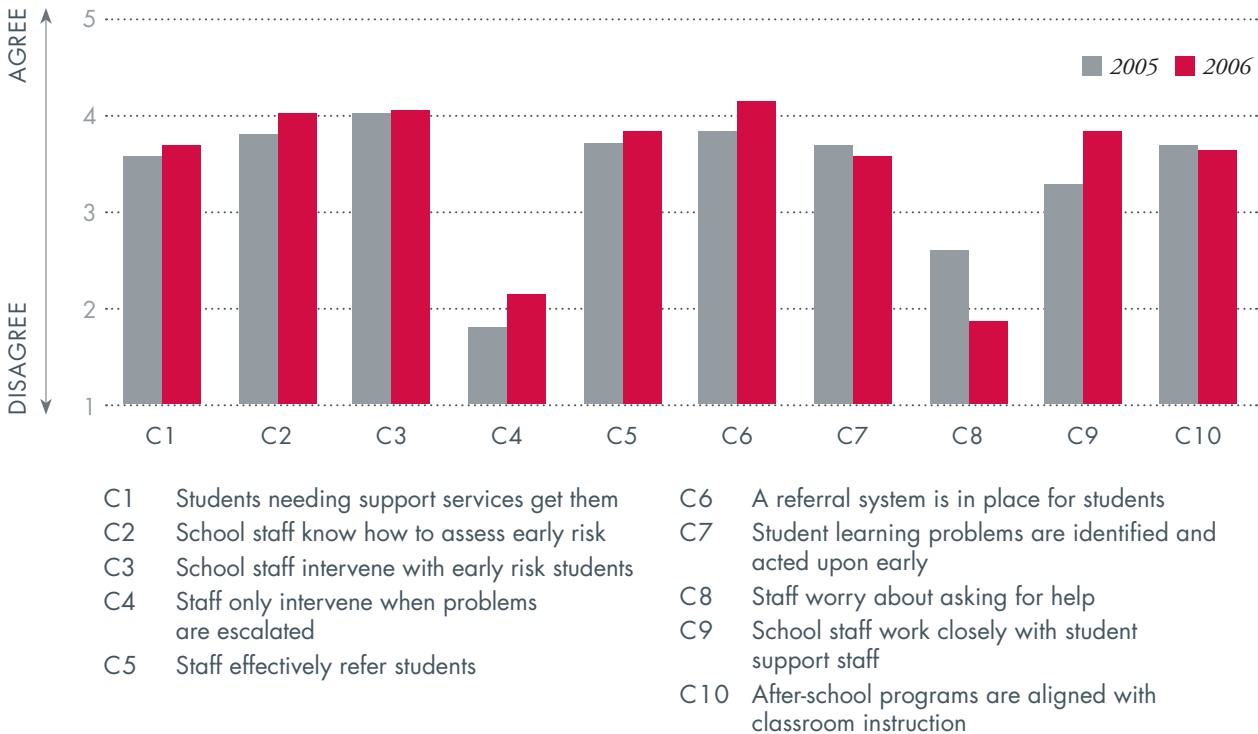
The OCCMSI was designed to help schools and districts develop new systems that accomplished three related goals. First, these systems would enable the identification of students with barriers to learning, healthy development, academic achievement, and success in school. Second, these systems would include referral mechanisms, especially teacher-initiated referral mechanisms. And third, these systems would encompass people, protocols, and programs needed to address young people's barriers, including both school-based and community-based (school-linked) programs and services. Clearly, a solid, effective student referral and support system must encompass all three goal areas.

The main question for evaluative researchers followed suit. Did the pilots develop these systems in the short period of time they were helped and studied? To answer this question, the research team developed a specific set of survey research measures. Respondents in the pilots answered various statements/questions using an "agree-disagree format." Example items included "students in need of extra learning supports are able to get them" and "teachers and staff know how to assess early signs of risk among students." *Figure 4* presents the complete list of items in this section.

*Figure 4* also presents the results of responses to these student referral and support items for both years of project implementation (2005 & 2006). A total of 172 teachers and school staff from five pilot school sites complete the surveys. Generally, teachers and staff rated these items in a direction indication that, on the average, pilot schools had reasonably good systems in place for students and families in need. This is

especially true for items C1, C2, C3, C5 and C6 — items that directly address family and student support. Again, it should be noted that this aggregation of all schools does make some variability in the response pattern of individual schools.

*Figure 4. Teacher and School Staff Student Referral and Support Items — All Schools*



### *Overall OCCMSI Satisfaction*

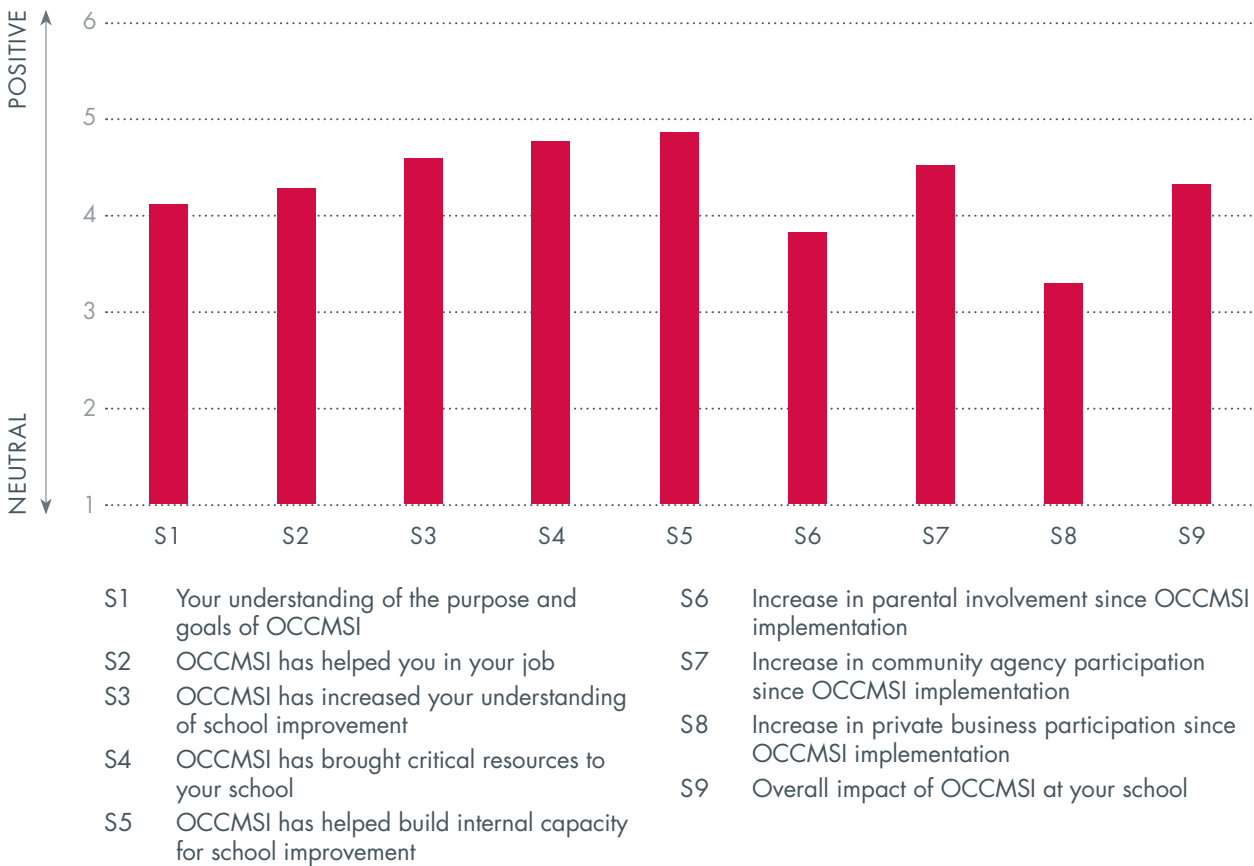
At the end of OCCMSI implementation, the evaluative research team was interested in the overall satisfaction pilot schools had with the experience. This was particularly important so that future efforts aimed towards this end could be enhanced and improved based upon this feedback.

To answer this question, the research team developed a specific set of survey research measures. Respondents in the pilots answered various statements/questions using a neutral to positive format. Example items included “how well do you understand the purposes and goals of the OCCMSI as it has been implemented in your school” and “to what extent has participation in the OCCMSI brought critical resources into the school to support student nonacademic barriers/concerns.”



Results from five of the six pilot schools (n = 111) on the retrospective rating of the OCCMSI impact, as well as a complete listing of items for this section, are shown in *Figure 5*. These ratings are, on the average, very positive. Teachers and school staff clearly understood the purpose and goals of the OCCMSI project. They perceived the project as having helped them in their job and agreed that the model helped them understand expanded school improvement. They viewed the project as having helped to build internal capacity in the school and as increasing community participation in the school. The only two marginal areas were staff perceptions that the OCCMSI helped to increase parent/caregiver involvement and the consistent view that the project did not necessarily increase private business participation in the school.

*Figure 5. Overall Staff OCCMSI Impact Ratings*



To summarize, the pilot school sites all experienced two similar outcomes. They experienced enhancements to their student referral and support systems, and stakeholders reported satisfaction with their OCCMSI experience.

In addition to these outcomes, each pilot school site also experienced unique outcomes relative to the strategies they adopted to address their identified priority needs. Two case examples illustrate this point.

## A CASE EXAMPLE: ACADEMIC LEARNING

One of the OCCMSI Pilot Schools prioritized their efforts within the academic learning core component of the OCCMSI, focusing their efforts on curriculum alignment, curriculum-based measurement, and parent/family “state core” awareness strategies. An additional strategy involved teachers use of short-cycle assessment data to guide daily instruction. (Please note this pilot school also simultaneously focused on the health and social services and parent/family engagement and support core components, although outcomes data are not provided here.)

Based on these efforts, this pilot school jumped two places in school designation for academic proficiency data in one year. More specifically, Pilot School 1 moved from Academic Emergency to School Improvement. Table 1 highlights the quantitative data associated with this significant two place jump. Significant increases in proficiency in relationship to key subgroups of the student population were found at both the 3rd grade and 4th grade reading level.

*Table 1. Reading Proficiency Scores from an OCCMSI Pilot School*

SUBGROUP	3RD GRADE		4TH GRADE	
	2004-2005	2005-2006	2004-2005	2005-2006
African-American	32.0	42.9	40.9	52.2
White	51.9	53.8	51.6	46.2
Non-Disabled Students	52.1	48.6	55.3	63.6
Students with Disabilities	33.3	38.5	15.4	38.9
Economically Disadvantaged	49.1	43.9	46.9	56.1
Female	48.1	52.6	38.5	58.6
Male	47.2	41.4	52.9	54.5



## A CASE EXAMPLE: HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

One OCCMSI pilot school focused on enhancing behavioral and mental health supports for students and families experiencing significant non-academic barriers to learning. Through the OCCMSI process, the school, in conjunction with the community, funded a school social worker, re-designed the roles and responsibilities of various student supportive service staff, and developed a wrap-around team known as STARS (Study Team for At-Risk Students) that provides case management services to children and families in need.

Based on these efforts, this pilot school provided mental health services to children and their families five days a week. Within a span of two years, the STARS team cased over 40 families. Results from satisfaction surveys have indicated that approximately 90% of the children and families are satisfied with the services they receive. Additionally, teacher and staff perceptions regarding their student referral and support systems changed over the duration of OCCMSI implementation. Table 2 presents some of the data highlighting these enhanced teacher/staff perceptions.

*Table 2.*  
*Perceptions of Student Referral and Support Systems from School Staff at an OCCMSI Pilot School*

STUDENT REFERRAL AND SUPPORT SYSTEM	2005 SAMPLE MEAN	2006 SAMPLE MEAN
Students needing support services get them	2.78	3.73
School staff know how to assess early risk	2.87	3.80
Staff worry about asking for help	3.77	1.73
School staff work closely with student support staff	2.27	4.20



## DISTRICT PILOT SITE OUTCOMES

Pilot districts only enjoyed one year of OCCMSI implementation. Despite this relatively short time frame, however, these districts also experienced important outcomes. Interviews/focus groups with 15 key district stakeholders, including district superintendents, assistant superintendents, a curriculum director, and a data and assessment coordinator, highlighted these results. More specifically, stakeholders were asked “What are the major accomplishments or successes the district has experienced as a result of the model?”

One key theme that emerged from these qualitative data was the creation of new community partnerships. The following is an example quote:

*“The model [OCCMSI] has helped the district to think about connections to community agencies. The OCCMSI has linked the district to the CARE team [community wrap-around system] very well.” Stakeholder, Pilot District 1*

District pilot stakeholders also discussed collecting new types of data as a result of OCCMSI implementation. Example quotes that constituted this theme include:

*“The surveys required for title programs—this year is the only time we will have a very viable survey with data on parents, etc.” Stakeholder, Pilot District 2*

*“We have used the constructs of the OCCMSI to survey our OCCMSI team members and our parents and our agency providers to determine needs and have also built a districtwide plan.” Stakeholder, Pilot District 3*

Another emergent theme was that district pilot sites enhanced their linkage and coordination of services and supports for youth. One stakeholder indicated:

*“As far as impact, we did add to the expanding discussion to link services and how we would do that. We also began to work with the superintendent and link academic and social service programs.” Stakeholder, Pilot District 4*

From these qualitative data, there is evidence that many of the pilot districts experienced similar successes through OCCMSI implementation. Pilot districts also experienced their own unique outcomes based on the strategies they implemented to address their top priority needs. A case example is provided next.

## A CASE EXAMPLE: HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Like one of the OCCMSI pilot schools, one pilot district also prioritized their efforts around enhancing mental health supports for students and families experiencing both academic and non-academic barriers to learning. However, these efforts “looked” different in comparison to a pilot school who undertook similar efforts because of the ability of the OCCMSI to be tailored to fit the local context. More specifically, Pilot District 1 engaged their three local county Alcohol, Drug Addiction, and Mental Health Services Boards (ADAMHS) in order to develop a collaborative Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). This MOU outlined a three-way distribution of costs to fund three new mental health workers within the district.

As a result of these efforts, perceptual data collected from teachers before and after the addition of these workers demonstrated an increase in the perception that students in need of supports and services are able to receive them. In addition, perceptual data also suggested that students are able to receive more timely and efficient services due to the reduction in paperwork that resulted from the development of these collaborative school-community partnerships.

In conclusion, each pilot school and district site experienced their own unique outcomes and successes. This uniqueness is both predictable and desirable in the OCCMSI because it is not a top-down, “one size fits all” model for school improvement. It is structured to provide justifiable commonalities and, at the same time, to encourage local tailoring and accommodation. The findings and lessons learned presented in this section indicate that these salient features of the OCCMSI actually materialize during implementation in Ohio’s schools and districts.





## CONCLUSION

THE OCCMSI, WITH ITS EXPLICIT PRIORITIES FOR NON-ACADEMIC BARRIERS, OUT-OF-SCHOOL LEARNING AND RESOURCES, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, IS A COMPLEX MODEL.

In today's school improvement climate, many schools and districts may not be ready, willing, and able to consider, adopt, and implement such a complex model. However, the first conclusion from this research and development initiative is that clearly some schools and districts know that complexity is unavoidable. That is, many schools and districts are ready, willing, and able to expand their existing school improvement frameworks in order to better serve their student populations and community constituencies.

Another conclusion from this research initiative is noteworthy. Notwithstanding the differences among the six pilot schools and six pilot districts, including differences in the quality of guidance they received from consultants and the amount of time and resources they committed to implementation, all of the pilot school and district leaders developed an appreciation of the import, value, and benefits of the OCCMSI. Their appreciation appeared to derive from the firm connections between the school and districts' self-identified barriers to student achievement and the OCCMSI's import for addressing and preventing them. More specifically, because the OCCMSI can be tailored to fit the needs within the local context, school and district leaders understood the value that this non-traditional, complex model. The third conclusion is that the OCCMSI is not a competitor to existing school improvement planning processes. In other words, the adoption of the OCCMSI does not entail "out with the old, and in with the new" dynamics. This conclusion merits more explanation.

The current emphasis on standards-based reform and alignment, with a focus on standards, accountability for outcomes and data-based decision-making, is both desirable and necessary, and this is why they are threaded throughout the OCCMSI. However, the OCCMSI emphasizes the need to also consider the implications of non-academic barriers, out-of-school time, and community collaboration in support of students' achievement. Indeed, the findings of this research indicate that school and district pilots were able to expand their existing models and processes.

In summary, the OCCMSI has import for nearly every kind of school improvement framework and model. Despite the idea that "community collaboration" may not have equal appeal to every school and district leader and constituency, the OCCMSI's five core components and assessment-based and data-driven

planning and implementation processes are relevant for every school and district. Even with the advent of comprehensive systems of learning supports—which appeal to educators because of the language used to describe these systems—the fact remains that these learning support systems will not achieve their potential without a strategic, comprehensive way to enlist and engage the supports and resources offered by family and community leaders, other stakeholders, and organizations. So, even if it is not politically prudent or fashionable to talk about “community engagement” and “community collaboration”—as the OCCMSI encourages—this new model’s main ideas, causal pathways to better outcomes, and expanded, “outside the walls” improvement framework have special relevance to schools and districts, which, despite good intentions and their best efforts, continue to leave children behind.





## APPENDIX A: SUPPLEMENTARY REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

Anderson-Butcher, D., Iachini, A., & Wade-Mdivanian, R. (2007).

*School linkage protocol technical assistance guide: Expanded school improvement through the enhancement of the learning support continuum.* Columbus, OH: College of Social Work, Ohio State University.

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Capacity-related innovations resulting from the implementation of a community collaboration model for school improvement.

Flaspohler, P., Anderson-Butcher, D., Bean, J., Burke, R.W., & Paternite, C. (2008).

Readiness and school improvement: Strategies for enhancing dissemination and implementation of expanded school mental health practices. *Advances in School Mental Health Promotion, 1*(1), 16-27.

Iachini, A.L., Dorr, C., & Anderson-Butcher, D. (2008).

Fostoria Community Schools' innovative approach to refining and coordinating their school-based mental health service delivery system. *Report on Emotional and Behavioral Disorders in Youth, 69-75.*

OCCMSI website: <http://www.csw.ohio-state.edu/occmis/OCCMSI.html>

## APPENDIX B: BRIEF DESCRIPTIONS OF PILOT SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS

### FREEDOM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

*The School:* Freedom Elementary School is a K-4 school located in the city of Lima, Ohio. It is one of five elementary schools in Lima City School District. The annual enrollment is approximately 350 students, approximately 85% of which are deemed economically disadvantaged.

*The Community:* The City of Lima has approximately 40,081 residents with a median income of \$27,067. 76% of the citizens of Lima have a high school degree or higher and only 10% have a bachelor's degree. The ethnic composition of the surrounding community of Lima is 68.4% White Non-Hispanic, 26.5% African-American, 2% Hispanic and 2% other races. Challenges faced by this community include sub-standard housing, loss of traditional employment, parent involvement, teenage pregnancy, drug abuse, and truancy. A staggering statistic is that almost 10% of citizens in Lima are unemployed.



### ELMWOOD PLACE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

*The School:* Elmwood Place Elementary School (EPE) is located in Hamilton County and serves Pre-Kindergarten through Sixth Grade children. The school is one of two elementary schools in the St. Bernard-Elmwood Place City School District, which is surrounded by the city of Cincinnati. Annual enrollment is between 275 and 325 students with approximately 75% of these students deemed economically disadvantaged. The annual student turnover is roughly one-third.

*The Community:* The Village of Elmwood Place has 2,681 residents with a median household income of \$29,017 and a per capita income of \$13,466. Within the Village, 33.8% of those over 25 years of age have a high school degree and 2.9% have a bachelor's degree. The school reflects the community: 12.3% of the student population is African-American, 81.8% are White, and the remaining 5.9% are a mix of Asian, Native American and Hispanic ethnicities. While EPE has less than 1% Hispanic population, the community adjacent to Elmwood Place has a large Hispanic population and overflow is anticipated in the next few years.



HANNAN TRACE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

*The School:* As part of the Gallia County Local School District, Hannan Trace Elementary School serves children grades K-8. The school has an annual enrollment of between 350 and 400 students, and approximately 99% of the students are Caucasian. Located in a rural Appalachian area of southeastern Ohio, approximately 65% of the school’s students are considered economically disadvantaged, and 68% of the community does not have formal education beyond high school. The school district is approximately 420 square miles and on an average day district buses travel 4,800 miles due to the lack of public transportation.

*The Community:* The Gallia County Local School District supports a holistic philosophy of education that involves all academic support partners in the student’s educational program. The school district superintendent serves as President of the county Family and Children First Council (FCFC). The Gallia-Vinton Educational Service Center (ESC) superintendent is an active member of the FCFC. Both the local school district and the ESC were very active participants in the development of Gallia County’s Partnerships for Success (PFS) initiative. The PFS team identified “school success” as the number one priority for Gallia County.



## JOHNSVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

*The School:* Johnsville Elementary School, located in Morrow County, serves students in Kindergarten through Sixth Grade. Johnsville is one of two elementary schools in the Northmor Local School District. The annual school enrollment is between 300 and 350 students with approximately 99% of the students being Caucasian, and 41% deemed economically disadvantaged.

*The Community:* Johnsville is part of the Northmor School District which encompasses approximately 250 miles. The average family income in the district in 1998 is \$30,000 and the average educational attainment level is high school. The surrounding community is “highly agricultural” with 23% of residents involved in agriculture. Most adults are employed outside the district, as less than 1% of industry and manufacturing are located within the district limits. Prior to becoming a pilot school, Johnsville was in the process of developing and cultivating community and agency partnerships. In addition to community partnerships with the school, the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) after-school program had extensive agency and community partnerships prior to becoming involved with the OCCMSI pilot. There are a long list of individuals and agencies that rotate in participation in after-school activities within the 21st CCLC program.



## ROBERT FULTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

*The School:* Robert Fulton Elementary School is part of the Cleveland Municipal School District. Robert Fulton is a large city school that, in the past, has served kindergarten through fifth grades. It began serving kindergarten through eighth (K-8) grades during the 2005-2006 school year, and also includes an early childhood program. The school has an enrollment between 475-525 students, with 87.3% deemed as economically disadvantaged. The annual turnover in students is about 75%.

*The Community:* For the last eight years, Robert Fulton Elementary has increased attendance and test scores in a community which is not known for its success. Academic scores and attendance at the school ranked fourth highest in Cleveland Municipal among elementary buildings last year. Recognizing that the school cannot meet all the needs of the students and their families, the school has developed several community partnerships. Some of these partnerships include a parent focus group, the Mt. Olive Baptist Church, the Mt. Pleasant Community Council, the Collaborative for Organizing Mt. Pleasant, Inc., the Murtis Taylor 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) grant provided by the Murtis Taylor Community Center, the Mt. Pleasant Branch Cleveland Public Library, Beechbrook, and the C.B. Richard Ellis Management Company. These partners provide tutoring services, after-school and summer programs, financial support, technical assistance, use of their facilities, volunteer persons, consultation, and technology contributions.



## THE OPPORTUNITY SCHOOL

*The School:* The Opportunity School is an alternative school administered by the Wooster City School District (WCSD) for students in grades 7-10, located in Wayne County. The annual school enrollment is between 30 and 40 students. The Opportunity School offers a suspension and regular school program in which seats are available for purchase to any local school district served by the Tri-County Educational Service Center. Each student is provided with a variety of supports and services designed to help them be successful in academics, behaviors, and attendance at school. The school has been in existence for 12 years.

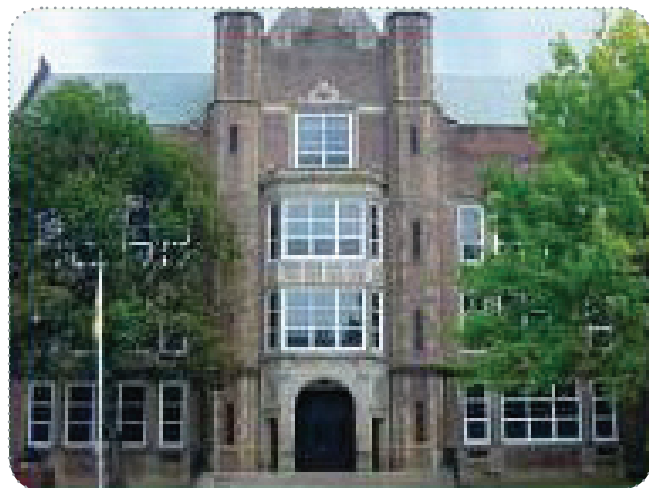
*The Community:* The City of Wooster has approximately 25,322 residents with a medium income of \$37,400. According to the 2000 census, over 90% of the residents are Caucasian. The Opportunity School, WCSD, and the Wooster community have a very long history of successful collaborations. Prior to becoming an Ohio Community Collaboration Model for School Improvement (OCCMSI) pilot school, The Opportunity School already had a number of programs and partnerships at work to help improve the academic achievement of their students. The 21st Century Community Learning Centers provides a number of programs and services geared towards youth development and academic learning. They have built a parent resource center located directly in the Opportunity School for all parents to access.



## CLEVELAND HEIGHTS-UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS

*The District:* Cleveland Heights-University Heights (CHUH) school district is situated in Cuyahoga County, Ohio. The average annual student enrollment is approximately 6,451 students. This suburban school district is comprised of eight elementary schools, three middle schools, one high school, an early childhood center, and an alternative school that serves children grades 6-12 with behavioral concerns. CHUH has taken its only high school with approximately 2100 students and structurally created five smaller high schools within that original high school facility in order to provide students with a “small” school experience. CHUH has a wide variety of diversity and the student population is comprised of 76.2% African-Americans and 18.1% Caucasians. 16% of the student population has disabilities and 48.7% of the students are deemed economically disadvantaged.

*The Community:* CHUH School District is a combination of two Cleveland suburbs, Cleveland Heights and University Heights. Cleveland Heights and University Heights are both diverse and vital suburbs of Cleveland, which are located about twenty minutes from downtown Cleveland. Cleveland Heights has a population of approximately 49,998 while University Heights is much smaller with a population of only 14,146. Both communities that make up the school district share a rich ethnic background with a mixture of Caucasian, African-American, Latino, Chinese, Asian Indian, and American Indian residents. In 2000 the median family income in University Heights was \$61,635 while in Cleveland Heights it was \$46,731. Both suburbs are well-educated; over 90% of residents over the age of 25 have a high school diploma, over 50% have a bachelor’s degree, and over 25% have a professional or graduate degree.





## FOSTORIA COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

*The District:* Fostoria Community Schools (FCS) is a rural school district stretched across three counties, Seneca, Hancock, and Wood. Within the district, there are three elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school. The district serves approximately 2,176 students, with approximately 56.2% of these students deemed economically disadvantaged. The district is comprised of 69% Caucasian students, 8.6% Hispanic, and 7.3% African-American.

*The Community:* Fostoria is located in Seneca County in northwest Ohio. It has population of roughly 13,931 residents. The ethnic composition of residents of Fostoria is 83% white non-Hispanic, 7.9% Hispanic, and 5.7% African-American. Fostoria is also fortunate in that they are located within 40 miles of three major state universities, the University of Findlay, Bowling Green State University, and the University of Toledo.



## MAYSVILLE LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

*The District:* Maysville Local School District is located on the outskirts of Zanesville in Muskingum County. Maysville is a small rural district that has one elementary, one middle school and one high school. They also have one alternative high school. The district serves approximately 2,200 students, with approximately 33.2% of these students deemed economically disadvantaged and 14.7% of students have disabilities. 97% of students in the Maysville Local School District are Caucasian and 1.6% are African-American.

*The Community:* The Maysville Local School District is comprised of a number of small towns and therefore census data is unavailable, however data from Muskingum County will be shared in order to provide a community context. In 2002, the per capita personal income in Muskingum County was \$24,540 and the median household income was \$35,185. Within Muskingum County, 44.2% of residents have a high school education, 24% have an associates or some college education, and only 13% have a bachelor's degree or higher. The ethnic composition of residents in Muskingum is 93.8% are Caucasian, 4.1% are African-American, and 0.6% are Latino.



## NEW LEXINGTON CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

*The District:* New Lexington City School District is located in the town of New Lexington in Perry County. New Lexington is a small rural district that has two elementary schools, one middle school and one high school. The mission of the New Lexington City School District is to promote the highest level of educational achievement, maximizing all students' potential, while challenging them to become life-long learners and socially responsible citizens. The district serves approximately 1900 students, with approximately 48.2% of these students deemed economically disadvantaged and 14.3% of students have disabilities. 99% of students in the New Lexington City School District are Caucasian and less than 1% are African-American.

*The Community:* New Lexington is located in Perry County about 50 miles southeast of Columbus. The city of New Lexington has approximately 4,700 residents. The ethnic composition of residents in New Lexington is 98.5% White Non-Hispanic and 0.5% American Indian. In 2000, the median household income was \$28,406. Within New Lexington, 76.8% of residents 25 years or older have a high school diploma, 7.4% have a bachelor's degree, and 3.5% have a graduate or professional degree.



## OAK HILL SCHOOL DISTRICT

*The District:* Oak Hill Union Local School District is located in Jackson County. This rural school district contains one elementary, one middle school and one high school. The middle school and high school are co-located in the same building. The average annual enrollment for all the schools combined is 1,274 students. 99.5% of the student population at Oak Hill is Caucasian and approximately 60% of the students are deemed economically disadvantaged. The annual turnover in students is roughly one-third.

*The Community:* The Oak Hill Union School District covers 165 square miles and the city proper has over 3,000 residents. The median household income is \$25,010. 60% of Oak Hill students attend college and 15% of the adult population has a college degree. The ethnic composition of the community is 98.2% white, non-Hispanic, and 1% American Indian. The school population is reflective of the community's composition.



## WELLSTON CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

*The District:* Wellston City School district is located in Jackson County in Southeast Ohio. The school district services approximately 1,700 students in four schools: Bundy Elementary and Wellston Intermediate, Middle and High Schools. Over half of the students are economically disadvantaged and one-fifth has disabilities.

*The Community:* The city of Wellston has just over 6,000 residents with the majority being Caucasian. The median household income is \$24,205. Within the city, of those 25 years and older, just over 12% have a college degree or higher. The city is supported by mostly industrial companies, with the Sands Hill Coal Company and the Pillsbury Company being the largest employers.









FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MATERIAL PRESENTED IN THIS PUBLIC REPORT PLEASE CONTACT DR. DAWN ANDERSON-BUTCHER AT ANDERSON-BUTCHER.1@OSU.EDU OR (614) 292-8596.

