

# Developing Effective Community Schools

## July 23, 2015

**Drema Brown, Vice President of the School Age Division**  
**Janice Chu-Zhu, Senior Director, National Capacity Building**

# Presentation Overview



- Defining Community Schools
- Core Community School Concepts
- Stages of Development of a Community School
- Preparing to Become a Community School

# Defining Community Schools

# “So What is a Community School?”



A community school is both **a place** and **a set of partnerships** between the school and other community resources. Its integrated focus on academics, services, supports and opportunities leads to **improved student learning, stronger families** and **healthier communities**.

**Coalition for Community Schools**

# The Developmental Triangle



# Core Community School Concepts

# Key Ingredients



- **Education First**
- **Lead Agency** that has a **Full-Time Presence**
- **Joint Planning**, particularly **between Principal and Community School Coordinator, Receiver & Lead Agency**
- **Community school staff** integrated into **Governance and Decision-Making Bodies of the school**

# Sample Program Components



- Early Childhood Education
- Expanded Learning (after school & summer)
- Parent Engagement
- Adult Education
- Medical, Dental, Vision & Mental Health
- Social Services
- Community and Economic Development

# Underlying Principles & Capacities



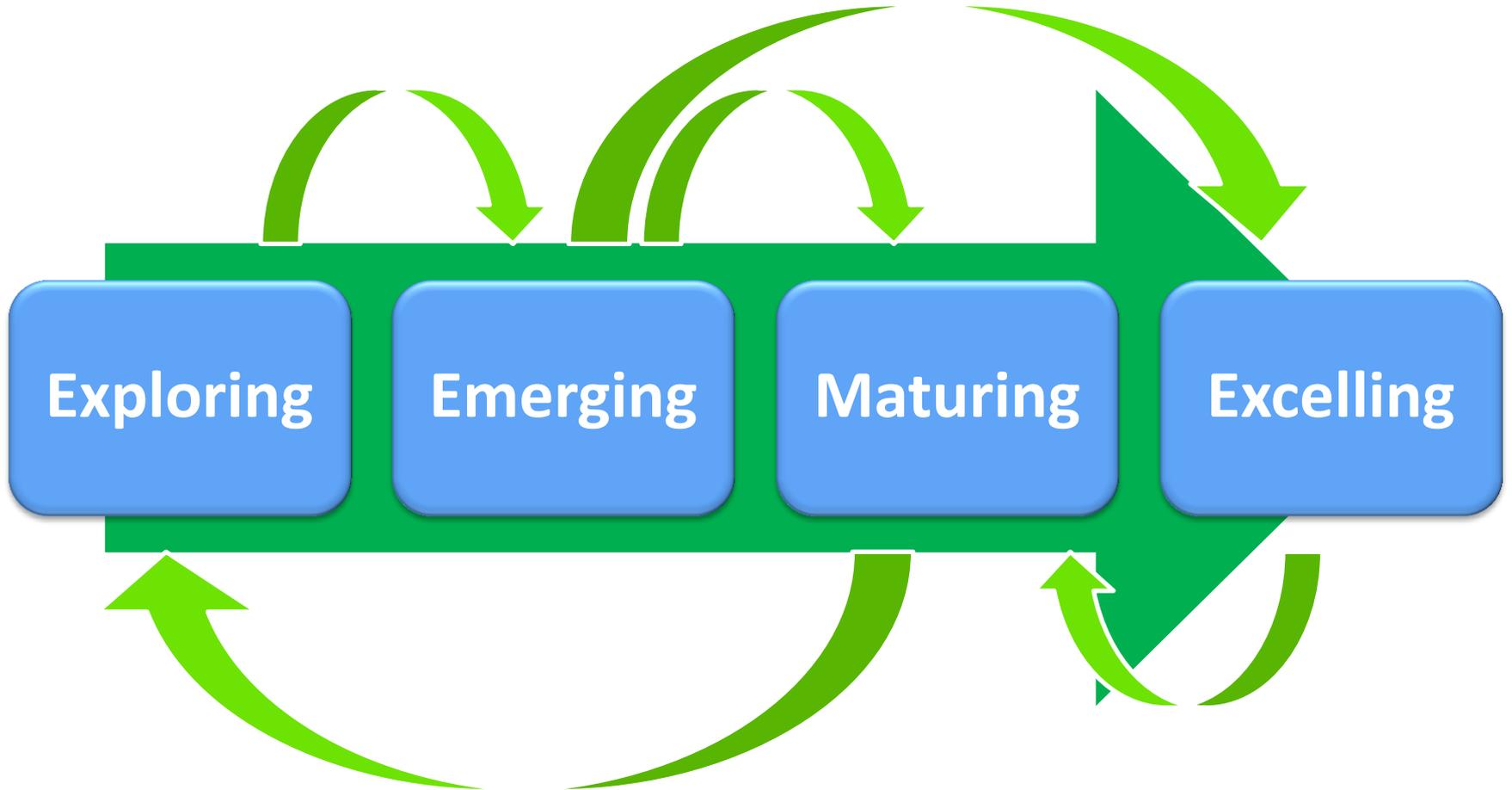
1. **Comprehensiveness:** Responding to the documented needs of students and families
2. **Coordination:** Structured and meaningful involvement of ALL stakeholders
3. **Coherence:** Supports & services are aligned (integrated) with the core instructional program
4. **Commitment:** Partners view community schools as a long-term strategy, not a project or program, & do everything to make the partnership work

## Five Essential Ingredients:

1. Principal is the driver of change; inclusive leadership approach
2. Real family and community engagement
3. Ability to build professional capacity
4. Student-centered school climate
5. Coherent curriculum

# Stages of a Community School

# Stages of Development



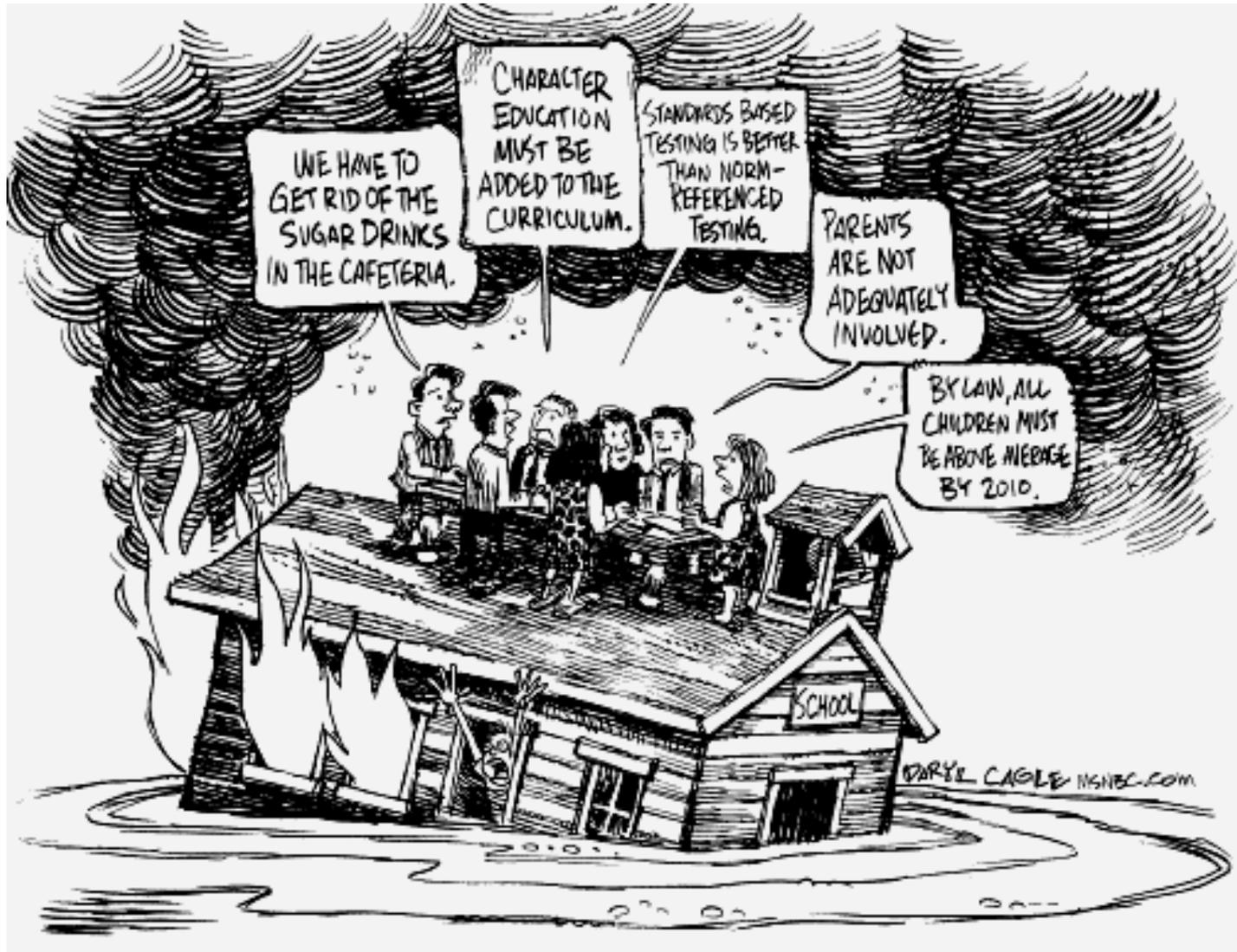
# Results of Mature Community Schools



- Improved academic performance & behavior
- Improved student and teacher attendance
- Reduced dropout rates & higher graduation rates
- Gains in indicators of positive youth development
- Greater parental involvement
- Positive Community benefits
- SROI

# Preparing to Become a Community School Under Receivership

# What are the needs in this School?



# Resource Inventory & Needs Assessment



- Identify the programs and services available for each developmental domain – **physical, cognitive, social, emotional and moral**
- Identify the needs of your students within each of the domains
- Align programs and services with the developmental domains
- Determine the unmet need and what can be done to address the gaps

# Importance of Chronic Absence



**Average Daily Attendance:** % of enrolled students who attend school each day

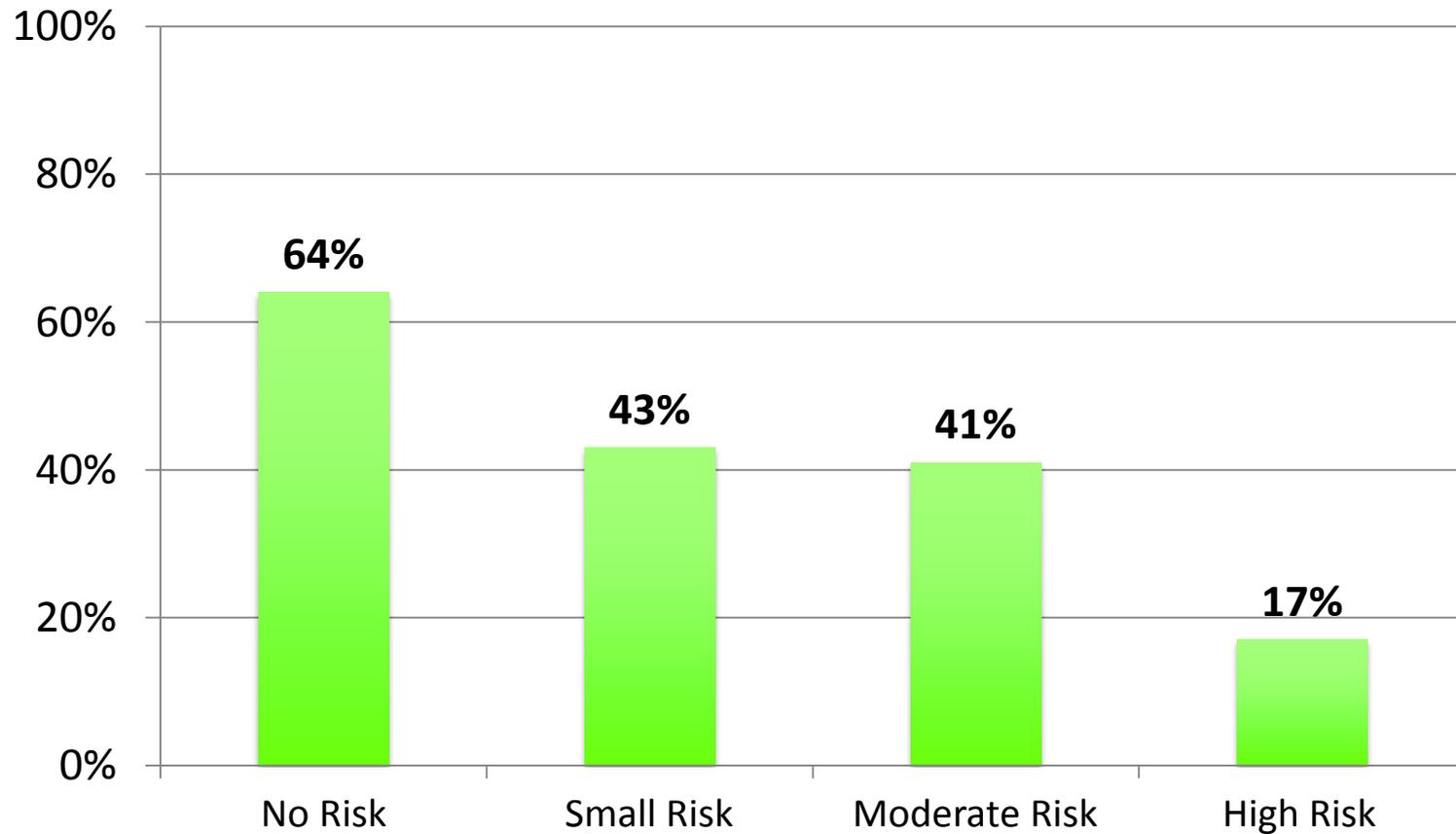
**Chronic Absence:** missing 10% or more of the school year - **2 days missed each month for 10 months**

**Severe Chronic Absence:** missing 20% or more of school per year (approximately two months)



## Students Chronically Absent in K & 1<sup>st</sup> Grade are... Much Less Likely to Read Proficiently in 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade

% Proficient or Advanced on 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade ELA



**Risk level, according to Kindergarten & 1<sup>st</sup> Grade absences**

# Sustaining Your Community School

# Leveraging Human & Financial Resources



- **Medicaid** can support medical and mental health services
- **Early Head Start and Head Start**
- **21<sup>st</sup> Century CLC** for after school & summer programs
- **Title I** can support parent engagement and schoolwide coordination services
- **Redeploying existing staff lines** to support students and families

# Sustaining the Strategy



- **Develop a vision, comprehensive plan & results oriented framework**
- **Determine and forecast expected fiscal needs**  
(includes in-kind)
- **Adapt** to changing conditions
- Build a **broad base of community support**
- Develop and implement **strong internal systems at the school and district level**

# Roadmap for a Strong Start



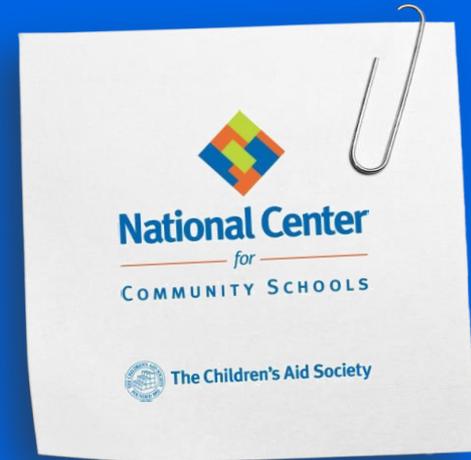
## NOW- OCTOBER (3 months)

- Form a steering group/guiding coalition (e.g. principal, teachers, parent leaders, CBO reps & student support staff)
- Orient everyone to what a community school is
- Identify your lead CBO and community school coordinator
- Conduct needs assessment/resource inventory
- Assess school climate culture; identify issues to address
- Communicate instructional vision and priorities early and often
- Determine 2-3 key priorities of strategy, the programs and services needed to address those priorities, and measures of success

## NOVEMBER – JANUARY (6 months)

- Continue building on your services and programs and ensure quality implementation
- Identify system breakdowns and address
- Communicate and celebrate quick wins and early successes
- Steering committee collects and analyzes data to determine progress towards goals





**THANK YOU!**

**[nationalcenterforcommunityschools.org](http://nationalcenterforcommunityschools.org)**

**Drema Brown, [dbrown@childrensaidsociety.org](mailto:dbrown@childrensaidsociety.org)**

**Janice Chu-Zhu, [janicec@childrensaidsociety.org](mailto:janicec@childrensaidsociety.org)**