

England

Several years ago, the British government established a national goal to have all of England's 23,000 schools become "Extended Schools" (community schools) by the year 2010. The Children's Aid Society assisted this effort in several ways and continues to have active working relationships with leaders of the Extended Schools work in the United Kingdom.

Summary

The Children's Aid Society and our National Center for Community Schools supported national policy development and reform implementation in England over a ten-year period through several sets of activities: hosting numerous study visits for national policymakers, including members of the British Parliament, to our schools in New York City; offering several on-site consultations, including a presentation to the British Parliament on community schools; providing materials, books and other tools; and working collaboratively for many years with key staff from ContinYou, the leading community school technical assistance provider in the UK. Under the Blair administration, England came close to meeting its ambitious national goal of *every school an Extended School*, and a national evaluation led by Professor Alan Dyson documented impressive results. Under the Cameron administration, Extended Schools lost political favor and support but much of the work continues to this day through the changed practices and relationships between schools and community partners. Lessons learned and tools developed through this effort, including standards of practice, are being disseminated internationally through the work of the International Centre of Excellence for Community Schools, which is based in Coventry, England, led by Chris Jones, formerly of ContinYou.

Full case study

Capacity-Building Case Study

National Policy, Funding and Capacity Building Lead to Systemic Change

A Marriage of Expertise and Infrastructure

As we think about trying to support efforts to take community schools to scale across the United States, the England experience can be very useful—not only because it serves as an 'existence proof' that scale is possible but also because it shows how relatively modest investments in capacity-building can support national policy and help to translate that policy into good practice in a short time.

Jane Quinn, Director, National Center for Community Schools

Brief History

Community education has a long and proud history in England, going back to 1980 when John Rennie founded an organization called the Community Education Development Centre (CEDC), with support from Coventry City Council, the Mott Foundation, and the Bernard Van Leer Foundation. The goal of these efforts was to promote, support and develop community education and community schools across the midlands region and, subsequently, across England and Wales. The organization developed a structure of regional advisers (generally from local government authorities and/or schools) and networks of practitioners who worked in community schools and community education settings across the country. Gradually CEDC, its staff and its network members became a unique resource and reservoir of expertise, including concrete planning tools.

Following the election of the Labour Government in 1997 and the publication of the

report *Building Britain Together*, a number of Policy Action Teams were formed to advise the Government on specific social policy issues. One Policy Action Team (Schools Plus: Building Learning Communities) used a report entitled *Raising Standards: Opening Doors*, to encourage schools to create strategic partnerships with community resources in an effort to raise attainment. This Team drew expertise from industry, education, social health and local authorities; and the National Children's Bureau. Another member of the Team was CEDC, represented by its Chief Executive Officer Phil Street, who had extensive experience with the earlier community education work and who also had links with the Children's Aid Society Full-Service Schools in New York.

Street encouraged this Policy Action Team to look closely at the Full-Service Community Schools work in the U.S., and by 2000, he had persuaded the British Department for Education and Skills (DfES) to fund the development of a network of community schools that would share ideas and demonstrate cutting-edge practice through publications, networking events and a new website. Thus the reservoir of knowledge and expertise continued to grow. In 2001, Julian Piper was appointed to manage the growth and development of the Community Schools Network (CSN). At the same time, DfES agreed to fund a small-scale pilot of 'Schools Plus Teams,' designed to test the theory that schools could get better attainment results by engaging with the help of an experienced team of consultants.

This project was developed and managed by Education Extra (specialists in the development of out-of-school time learning opportunities) and CEDC. Six schools across England piloted the program with assistance from a specialist consultant (generally retired head teachers or senior community education staff). The effectiveness of the program encouraged the Government to go further and, following research by the National Foundation for Education Research demonstrating the value of schools addressing the needs of the 'whole child,' the British Government outlined a "core offer" of services that it expected schools to make available. Further, the Government established a national goal that all schools would become Extended Schools (with the core offer) by the year 2010. A 2002 report entitled *Extended Schools, Providing Services and Opportunities for All* outlined this goal and was introduced at a conference in London sponsored jointly with the Local Government Association.

Other key steps in the movement to have every UK school become an Extended School included: the implementation of a new school inspection system in 1993, which led to initial achievement gains, followed by a period of levelling off and even declines; a mass exodus of teachers, under pressure from the inspectors to continually deliver higher standards, but with a workload that was almost unbearable (leading to Workforce Reform and Remodeling); and the tragic death of young Victoria Climbié at the hands of her relatives, which led to a major national report and policy shift (Every Child Matters) bringing Education and Social Services together. There was a growing understanding that, to achieve sustainable improvement in standards, it was necessary to consider the 'whole child' and for schools to work collaboratively with a wide range of partners.

Capacity-Building Activities

The Children's Aid Society maintained a relationship with the work in England throughout the development of this major national policy shift. Key capacity-building activities included:

- In December 1997, Phil Street, Executive Director, British National Center for Community Education, who had been researching community schools, was referred by leading researcher Joy Dryfoos to visit I.S. 218 and was very impressed by the Children's Aid model.
- In 1998, a highly reputed education journalist spent several days at Children's Aid community schools, and wrote an objective article that highlighted challenges and opportunities. With the latter being more numerous.
- A speech by then-Chief Executive Officer Philip Coltoff of The Children's Aid Society to the British Parliament in 1999, which key informants in England report was very influential in generating national policy interest in community/extended schools.
- Children's Aid's then-Chief Operating Officer C. Warren (Pete) Moses spoke at the above-mentioned 2002 London conference that launched the report on Extended Schools.
- Children's Aid organized several study visits for British officials to its schools in New York City; and shipped hundreds of its guide, *Building a Community School*, to be distributed to key stakeholders.
- In 2003 CEDC and Education Extra merged to form ContinYou. Phil Street had developed a model, based on his knowledge of Children's Aid and its NCCS technical assistance, that would provide schools and local authorities throughout the UK with support for the development of Extended Schools, which were increasingly at the heart of Government policy.
- By September 2003, the Government allocated funding to create a national capacity-building effort, led by ContinYou. Julian Piper was appointed as the Director of the Extended Schools Support Service and a regional team of part-time, experienced staff was appointed quickly to work with the pilot 'Full-Service Extended Schools'. A team from ContinYou visited New York in 2004 to find out more about the Children's Aid's full-service schools and its National Center for Community Schools, and to learn how this model might be further adapted for the British system.
- ContinYou staff have participated in, and presented at, several of the Children's Aid community school Practicum conferences over the years. In addition, NCCS Director Jane Quinn was part of a Children's Aid Society staff and board delegation that traveled to England in 2006 to exchange ideas with British education policy leaders around the continued expansion of Extended Schools.

Results to Date

By 2004-5 it was clear that Full Service Extended Schools were showing significant signs of success (particularly in bringing areas of Government policy together but also in

raising achievement, as evaluation reports were showing) and DfES was impatient to roll out the program across all schools – setting a target of 2010 for the achievement of this goal. It was recognized that the full-service model was too costly and ineffective for all schools to take up and the ‘core offer’ of 5 key areas of development was established as the criterion for being an Extended School. The branding evolved into ‘Extended Services’ in an effort to signify more accurately the rationale behind the policy.

The National Remodeling Team of high-powered consultants from industry had been successful in ensuring that all schools had taken on board the ingredients of Workforce Reform and Remodeling over a three-year period, and DfES felt that they could also be the ‘engine’ that would drive the targets for Extended Schools to ensure that it would be achieved by 2010 as set out. In April 2005, on the renewal of the grant to ContinYou, it was agreed that the support would be offered jointly and in a complementary fashion through four delivery partners: DfES, ContinYou, 4Children (a small charity with particular expertise in child care) and the Training and Development Agency (TDA). The Training and Development Agency staff were the developers of various tools and processes to help schools and local authorities achieve the targets and, as a public agency, were able to put considerable pressure on local authorities and regional development offices to ensure that targets were met. ContinYou and 4Children were the reservoirs of expertise on how to deliver the services, demonstrate quality and measure the outcomes. In 2008, ContinYou received another multi-year technical assistance contract in a competitive bidding process and expanded its work with schools and community partners until 2010, when dramatic political shifts took place in England.

Since the new Coalition Government in the UK came to power in 2010, there has been little talk of Extended Schools or the Extended Services policy. But, observes Piper, not all has been lost. Policymakers continue to discuss the feasibility of supporting early intervention and integrated services, which is encouraging at times of significant budget cuts to public services, and there are many schools where staff understand and support the rationale behind the Extended Services policy. “These schools will continue to deliver a wide range of services to children and families, believing—and increasingly seeing the evidence—that children can achieve their potential when their needs are met. The hope is that a future government will realize that education is not just about teaching and learning and that it will return to the true notion of community schools once again,” observes Street. In addition, Chris Jones (a former ContinYou team member) now directs the Mott-Foundation funded International Centre of Excellence for Community Schools, which is assisting other countries in learning from the England experience and disseminating tools, standards and other resources developed during the heyday of Extended Schools in England. NCCS continues to partner with the International Centre on multiple projects, including webinars, publications and occasional international consultations.

Lessons Learned

- Key to the scaling up of Extended Service Schools in the United Kingdom was the government’s willingness to create pilot schools and providing quality technical assistance to expedite the process
- The merging of Community Education Development Centre (CEDC) and Education Extra formed a stronger technical assistance provider, ContinYou

- ContinYou's relationship with the Training and Development Agency for Schools, the lead governmental agency for teachers training, was key to going to scale quickly
- Strategic partnerships of leading technical assistance providers –to offer joint and complementary support and relevant timely information—facilitates the process
- The Policy Action Team on Education was instrumental in educating the Government about Extended Schools and Extended Services
- The development of a network of community schools that would share ideas and demonstrate cutting-edge practice through publications, networking events and a new website has enormous potential
- Evaluation results of the pilots were very important in influencing national policy
- Studying the American full-service schools model (in particular the Children's Aid model) and bringing it to the attention of policy-makers were very helpful to making the Extended Schools part of the national education reform agenda
- Development of Extended Schools Clusters has made the provision of support more manageable
- Creating networks of experienced community schools practitioners and drawing on their knowledge was also very helpful in speeding the Extended Schools reform process
- National education policy can have a dramatic effect on reform efforts, by supporting or reversing specific on-the-ground initiatives and trends.