

Community self-empowerment through community schools

Workshop Proposal for 2013 Community Schools Conference

Cincinnati, OH

High-Performing Community Schools

HIGH-PERFORMING COMMUNITY SCHOOLS: Workshops will showcase individual community school—their results, what they do, how they are creating opportunity and pursuing equity, how they are organized and financed, what challenges they have overcome, and how they are sustained as well as how they are addressing other cognitive and non-cognitive factors to improve student success. We look for applications focused on all levels of schooling, as well as alternative schools, charter schools, university assisted community schools, magnet schools and others. We encourage applications from rural, suburban and urban community schools, as well as schools that are at various stages of development.

APPLICATION

WORKSHOP NUMBER: B1

Presenter Background, Workshop Type and Title

1. **Workshop Title:** Community self-empowerment through community schools

2. **Lead Presenter**

- Name: John Harris Loflin
- Title: Member
- Name of Organization: Education-Community Action Team
- Address: 2455 Shelby ST #1
- City/Town: Indianapolis
- State/Province: IN
- Zip/Postal Code: 46203
- Phone Number: (H 317-788-6604 C 317-400-6549
- Email Address: johnharrisloflin@yahoo.com

3. **Please describe your home community:**

- **Urban:** X
- **Suburban:**
- **Rural:**

4. **Lead Presenter Brief Bio:**

John Loflin is a product of public education and a retired public school teacher. He has presented on 5 continents and is published globally on authentic alternative schools, democratic education, and student voice. He is currently supporting the pro-democracy movement in our public schools via teacher, parent, student and community-cultural empowerment.

Sub-Strands

Please select the appropriate sub-strand for your workshop

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| • Elementary School: X | Schools: X |
| • Middle School/Junior High: X | • Alternative Schools: |
| • High School: X | • Charter Schools: |
| • University-Assisted Community | • Other? Please specify |

Expected Participant Type

1. Please select your target audience. Check all that apply.

- **Community Partners:** X
- **Community School Coordinators:** X
- **Funders:** X
- **Higher Education:** X
- **Lead Agencies and Local Intermediaries:** X
- **Local Government Leaders:** X
- **National Leaders:**
- **Parents and Families:** X
- **School Leaders and Educators:** X
- **State Leaders:** X
- **Youth:** X
- **Community Organizers:** X
- **Other (please specify):**

Level of Community School Development (Select All That Apply).

We want to reach people who are in different stages of developing their community schools. Please consider whether your workshop is most appropriate for people who are:

- **Inquiring:** Heard about community schools and want to know more: X
- **Planning:** In the midst of the planning process: X
- **Emerging:** Just getting services and programs off the ground: X
- **Maturing:** Solid base of experience; ready to face challenges that scale-up to more sites: X
- **Established:** Successfully scaling up and need to ensure continuous improvement: X

Description & Format

1. **Brief Workshop Title and Description:**

“Community self-empowerment through community schools”: Does today’s community schools concept represent a 20th century view of urban schools and communities? Intending to improve education, does the model actually help or is it a paternalistic paradigm enabling a neo-colonial approach actually making schools and communities dependent? Can community schools be centers of change--where communities meet their own needs through self-reliance and self-determination?

2. **Full Workshop Description:**

The workshop intends to critique the community schools model and present a narrative which challenges the coalition and current community school initiatives to consider the current model’s limitations. A short presentation will be made about what a school and community would look like and be like as a result of implementing the Transformational Community School concept. Following a “What? So What? Now What?” approach, a dialogue will commence, notes will be taken, and future ideas will be discussed.

Tentative Agenda

--Introductions

--Passing out the 2-page proposal: Transformational Community Schools

--What?: Present an example of a transformative community school

--So What?: Dialogue and debate

--Now What?: Plans and actions will solicited from the attendees

Description: Under the transformative community schools model, now become centers of community change, open to everyone to work for personal and community self-empowerment--all day, every day, evenings, and weekends as the community works its way to meet its own needs itself through self-reliance and collective self-determination. The initial supports, wrap-around service provider entities, and agencies needed to sustain the community slowly “withdraw” and enable the school-community-families-citizens to control their own destiny/ies. Children and families then have an array of supports from within the community which they have helped “grow” and establish directly at their school. For example, a doctor or nurse working in the school-based clinic would also mentor students or community members to come into the medical profession. The

doctor/nurse and the school-community would encourage these persons to return to the community to live and practice. Communities and schools can now leverage their self-empowerment and self-sufficiency to enable the community's physical and human assets to help children succeed. As a consequence of a transformational community school and over time, the changed community will have eliminated the need of many services by eradicating the very social toxins which required them. This describes the American dream in action: grassroots democratic self-government.

Using public schools as hubs, transformational community schools bring together many partners. The initial goals of these "hubs" offer a range of supports and opportunities to children, youth, families and communities. The longer-term goal of the partners/providers serves to "work themselves out of a job." Here "success" becomes the self-determination of the community with the creation of its own resources with its own people. By building relationships with providers from outside the community, who have a professional goal to enable the creation and use of similar provided services but from within the community, the coordinators eventually fosters the creation of "community-grown" entities and persons who will provide the same services. A major purpose of a community school becomes acting as transformative agent for all concerned—clarifying for students, teachers and school staff, providers and partners, individual community members and the community itself, the purpose of American democracy.

Presenter Information

3. Please fill out the following information about the additional session speaker: Presenter 2.

- Name: Mike Sage
- Title: Psycho-therapist who provides case management services to children in foster care in Marion Co., Indianapolis
- Organization/School Name: Branches of Life Foster Care

