

▶▶ HOW SHOULD WE PARTNER WITH A SCHOOL TO BEST SERVE STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES?

ASSESS CAPACITY. Once you have identified a school to partner with, it is important to determine specifically how you will positively impact students at the school. Before committing to particular activities, it is best for churches and ministry organizations to realistically consider their capacity to serve at a school (e.g. how many volunteers and what types of resources are available). It is best to start small and dream big. It is best to under promise and over-deliver as you build a relationship with a school.

RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF RELATIONAL SUPPORT. Try to find ways to serve that will build long-term relationships and empower children and their families to be all who God created them to be rather than creating dependence on your church or ministry organization.

Less relational and empowering:

- Pray for students and their families
- Beautify the school
- Hold a school supply or food drive
- Provide holiday meals or gifts
- Purchase value-based curriculum
- Purchase school uniforms or equipment
- Provide administrative assistance
- Offer your building for school activities

More relational and empowering:

- Offer mentoring, or reading buddies
- Coordinate or sponsor social events
- Provide classes on topics such as leadership, budgeting, literacy or advocacy
- Offer after-school programs
- Provide meals for children
- Offer to meet the personal needs of families (e.g. home repairs, meals)

MAKE A PLAN. Based on the church or ministry organization's capacity and the needs of the school and students, a specific action plan for the partnership should be developed. This plan will include what you will do, who it will benefit and how, the roles and responsibilities in implementing the plan, and individuals from each organization with important roles. Rosaicela Rodriguez, Urban Alliance's Director of Implementation, Children & Youth Initiatives, is available to facilitate planning meetings and conversations to help determine these logistics.

ENGAGE OTHERS. It is important to engage other people at your church or ministry organization to be involved in the partnership. You will need a strategy for communicating about the partnership and practical steps for getting involved. All individual volunteers serving at a school must participate in a UAServe orientation and give permission for Urban Alliance to run a background check.

CELEBRATE, ENCOURAGE AND LEARN. Urban Alliance will coordinate an annual gathering with leaders from churches and ministry organizations that are partnered with schools. This gathering will provide an opportunity for leaders to learn from and encourage one another, and celebrate the ways that God has used Next Generation School Partnerships to positively impact students and their families.



PARTNER WITH A LOCAL SCHOOL TO SUPPORT STUDENT SUCCESS!



▶▶ WHAT IS A NEXT GENERATION SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP?

Next Generation is an Urban Alliance initiative to help churches and ministry organizations reach and serve youth so they develop the character, relationships and skills needed to succeed in their schools and communities.

Through our Next Generation initiative, we facilitate partnerships between schools and churches or ministry organizations in the Urban Alliance network. These partnerships support students with resources and relationships to help them develop the character and skills needed to succeed in their schools and communities.

A Next Generation School Partnership is an ongoing relationship between a church or ministry organization and a school. Through this relationship, student needs are more holistically met through their school because of the active involvement with the local Christian community.

▶▶ WHY PARTNER WITH A SCHOOL?

THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS. Jesus met people where they were and ministered to them at the intersection of communities, such as the Samaritan woman at the well and by teaching at the Temple. The school is a significant place of people interaction in modern-day communities. Therefore, the church should be engaged there, serving people as a demonstration of God's love.

THE NEED. There is tremendous need among students at many schools. Urban Alliance will help match your church or ministry organization with a school where at least 70% of students come from low-income families and where many of their students do not have access to enough school supplies, experience stress associated with living in poverty, come from single-parent families, and live in neighborhoods with high crime rates. Relationships with caring adults help buffer children from the challenges experienced in their lives and can significantly contribute to their positive emotional, academic, and relational development.

THE IMPACT. By building a relationship with a local school, volunteers from your church or ministry organization can help children improve their academic performance, increase their school attendance, build relationships with supportive adults, develop character and improve their self-esteem.

THE BENEFIT FOR YOUR CONGREGATION. Partnering with a school offers people from your church or ministry organization an opportunity to use their gifts and skills to serve and demonstrate God's love in the community. Building a relationship with a school can also lead to increased trust between your church or ministry organization and families in the community, the school district, and other community organizations. This may also open the door for ongoing relationships and other community outreach activities.



▶▶ HOW DO WE FIND A SCHOOL PARTNER?

- 1 TALK WITH URBAN ALLIANCE STAFF.** Rosaicela Rodriguez, Urban Alliance's Director of Implementation, *Children & Youth Initiatives*, is available to meet with leaders from your church or ministry organization to share more information about local schools that are looking to partner.
- 2 LEARN ABOUT THE SCHOOLS NEAR YOUR CHURCH OR MINISTRY ORGANIZATION.** Urban Alliance will share information about local schools that are looking for a partner and some of their needs. Determine if there are existing connections between your church or ministry organization and a school (e.g. church members work at the school or families from your church attend the school).
- 3 IDENTIFY KEY LEADERS.** It is important to identify the key leaders from your church or ministry organization who will be involved in the partnership. These leaders will help determine the specific ways you will support students, engage other volunteers, and regularly check-in with the school to ensure things are going smoothly.
- 4 MEET WITH THE SCHOOL.** Urban Alliance will help by scheduling and facilitating a meeting between the school principal and key leaders at your church or ministry organization to explore possible ways to partner. At that time, Urban Alliance will help you begin to develop an action plan that describes how you will partner with the school to positively impact students.

▶▶ URBAN ALLIANCE IS HERE TO SUPPORT YOU!

We will help you identify a school to partner with, meet key leaders at the school, create a plan for supporting students through the partnership, orient and screen volunteers, facilitate gatherings for leaders to encourage and learn from one another, and leverage additional resources. If you have additional questions or would like to meet to further explore the possibility of partnering with a school, contact Rosaicela Rodriguez at rosaicela.rodriguez@urbanalliance.com or 860.986.6052.