TOOLKIT: Coordinators Appreciation Week

Celebrate Community Schools Coordinators!

Sep. 23-27, 2019

#CoordinatorsRock

Learn more: communitieschools.org
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Thank You to our 2019 Coordinators Appreciation Week Co-Hosts and Champions!

Co-Hosts

Champions

#CoordinatorsRock
Introduction
The Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL’s) Coalition for Community Schools (Coalition) and our partners invite you to honor and celebrate the Community School Coordinators in your community. Join us September 23-27, 2019 to celebrate and lift up the amazing work Coordinators do to help students and families thrive for Coordinators Appreciation Week.

The Community School movement has grown across the country and internationally to include more than 5,000 schools. Community School Coordinators work diligently to create and manage the partnerships that allow students to learn and thrive, and their work is the key to successful implementation of the Community School Strategy. Community School Coordinators create a strong, purposeful bridge between schools and communities and it’s their hard work and advocacy that push this movement forward. They deserve recognition and appreciation for all the work they do.

A note from the Coalition Director
Recently we celebrated the 50th anniversary of a successful Apollo 11 journey of mankind walking on the moon. We will forever remember Mike Collins, Buzz Aldrin, and Neil Armstrong, but that accomplishment came as a result of over 400,000 individuals from different walks of life coming together for something greater than themselves. It was one of history’s greatest moments of coordination led by George Mueller. I imagine the pressure to bring about that vision could have been overbearing. However, George not only relied on the ability of the community, but the heart of the community by having our three astronauts visit each of the places the 400,000 worked. This act put faces to names and built relationships that stirred up the responsibility of each person to make sure they came back home safely.

September 23rd – 27th we celebrate Community School Coordinators. Modern day heroes that take on the feat of bringing together community members of different races, beliefs, and backgrounds for a purpose greater than themselves—to advance the future of our children. Every day they are reaching out and engaging the “hidden figures” of our most under-resourced, and under-appreciated neighbors to make sure they are seen, included, and supported. Everyday Coordinators spur on their neighbors to build a community where everyone belongs, works together, and thrives.

Take time to more than recognize your Community School Coordinator this week. Celebrate them!

José Muñoz
Director, Coalition for Community Schools
Vice President, Equity and Community Impact
Institute for Educational Leadership

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How to get involved

The Coalition invites everyone—schools, districts, community school initiatives, community partner organizations, lead agencies, and state and national organizations—to become a Coordinators Appreciation Week Partner. Sign up to celebrate Community School Coordinators during the 2019 Coordinators Appreciation Week (CAW). Coordinators are the heart behind the community schools movement, advancing our values of equity, democracy, and harmony, and we’re proud to celebrate and recognize them for these important contributions.

By signing up as a CAW Partner, you and your organization are pledging to do the following:

- Participate in CAW by celebrating Community School Coordinators,
- Work with and encourage students, families, school staff/leaders, community partners, districts, city, county leaders, and others to acknowledge and thank Coordinators,
- Post to social media at least once a day during CAW using the hashtag #CoordinatorsRock, and
- Request recognition of CAW (i.e., proclamation) from your Superintendent, Mayor, school board, county executive, and/or other elected officials.

Thank you in advance for becoming a Coordinators Appreciation Week Partner. If you have any questions, please email ccs@iel.org.

How to celebrate

No matter who you are, you can celebrate Community School Coordinators. Check out our list of ideas below!

Ideas for anyone

- Get #CoordinatorsRock trending! Post why you appreciate Community School Coordinator on social media. See sample posts and graphics on page 8.
- Make a video about the impact of your Community School Coordinators and post it on social media using #CoordinatorsRock. Our favorite Coordinator videos will be featured in future Coordinator Spotlights that will be shared with the National Community Schools Coordinators Network. Find helpful tips on how to shoot a video on page 9.
Get your elected officials and local leaders to celebrate during Coordinators Appreciation Week. Send your governor, mayor, county executive, superintendent, or school board a proclamation request so they can recognize your Community School Coordinators. See our step-by-step guide and template request on page 10.

Ideas for students and families
- Gift your Coordinator with one of these homemade gifts or some baked goods
- Email or write them a thank you note. Make your own cards or use this thank you card template.
- Give your Coordinator a gift card for coffee, a school supply store, or a bookstore

Ideas for school and district leaders
- Treat your Coordinators to lunch or celebrate them with a party
- Hang Coordinators Appreciation Week posters in your school
- Have school faculty and staff sign a thank you card for your Coordinator
- Award your Coordinator with a certificate of appreciation

Ideas for initiative leaders, lead agencies, community partners
- Promote Coordinators Appreciation Week via email or social media with your networks. See our sample social media posts and graphics on page 8.
- Treat Coordinators to lunch or celebrate them with a party
- Give superlative awards to your Coordinators (best communicator, most positive, most resourceful, etc.)
- Write a story or profile about your Coordinator to share online
Ideas for national organizations

- Host an event honoring the success of community schools
- Promote Coordinators Appreciation Week on your website, eNewsletters, and social media

Need more ideas?
Check out some of the creative ways people celebrated their coordinators during last year’s Coordinators Appreciation Week.

Coordinator Sarah received a shout out from her Superintendent of Skokie/Morton Grove District 69.

Where there’s a Will(iam), there’s a way! At @CrampSchool Will brings joy and enthusiasm everyday, and works tirelessly to make the school a nurturing environment. #CoordinatorsRock ¡Gracias Will por todo lo que haces!

The Philadelphia Mayor’s Office of Education thanked Coordinator William on Twitter.
A middle school in Nashville honored their Coordinator with “Knight of the Month.”

San Francisco Beacons Initiative highlighted each of their coordinators on Instagram.

ABC Community School Partnership danced in celebration after Albuquerque City Council issued a proclamation to honor their Coordinators.

The New York City Department of Education highlighted three of their Community School Directors on their blog.

United Way of Salt Lake shared some yummy treats with their Coordinators.
Social media

Tell the world why they should celebrate Coordinators Appreciation Week. Post on all social media using #CoordinatorsRock.

Tag the Coalition to let us know how you’re celebrating your Coordinators.

Here are some sample posts to promote Coordinators Appreciation Week:

- Sept 23-27 is Coordinators Appreciation Week! Start thinking about how you want to thank your Coordinator now! #CoordinatorsRock
- Community School Coordinators diligently love and serve their students and families. Let’s share our love and appreciation for them Sept. 23-27. #CoordinatorsRock
- #CoordinatorsRock because they ensure all students and families receive the supports and services they need to learn and thrive. Thank a Coordinator Sept. 23-27 for all that they do.
- Community School Coordinators are aiming for your students’ success! Let’s give them a big ‘Thank you’ Sept. 23-27 during Coordinators Appreciation Week. #CoordinatorsRock
- Every Community School Coordinator deserves a high-five and a gold star for everything they do for their communities. Make your Coordinator feel appreciated during Coordinator’s Appreciation Week Sept. 23-27. #CoordinatorsRock

Here are some sample posts to thank Coordinators during the Appreciation Week:

- We appreciate our Community School Coordinators who diligently serve our students and families #CoordinatorsRock
- Coordinators are the unsung heroes of community schools. We see you and we thank you for making a difference in our students’ lives! #CoordinatorsRock
- #CoordinatorsRock because they make our schools and communities stronger, safer, and a more welcoming place for our students and families.
- My Community School Coordinator is awesome because...[fill in the blank] #CoordinatorsRock
- Shout out to all the amazing Community School Coordinators out there who are fighting for equity and social justice for all our students and families. #CoordinatorsRock
- Thank you for all you do to make our communities stronger, our futures brighter, and our hopes higher. Community School Coordinators, you rock! #CoordinatorsRock
Tips on how to post a video

Who should film a video?
Anyone! We want to hear from all who have been positively impacted by their Community School Coordinator including students, families, teachers, principals, district leaders.

What to say in the video?
Tell us a story about how your Coordinator has made a difference. How have they impacted their students and families? How have they changed the school culture and climate? How have they worked with teachers and principals to better support the work they do? How have they impacted the community beyond the school walls?

Filming pro-tips
- Film horizontally
- Prop your phone or camera on a stand or stack of books to keep the frame steady
- Have good lighting. Shoot with the person facing a window or light source to avoid backlighting.
- Do NOT zoom in. Instead, move your phone closer.

Posting your video
Share your video on Twitter, Facebook, or Instagram using #CoordinatorsRock. The Coordinators with the most moving videos will be featured by the National Community School Coordinators Network in a future Coordinator Spotlight.

Need inspiration? Check out these videos from last year.

An elementary school in Nashville made a video highlighting their Coordinator

Child Frist Authority made short videos for each of their Coordinators

Metropolitan Family Service celebrated their Coordinators by sharing exactly how much their #CoordinatorsRock!

Heartland for Children had several people thank their Coordinator Andrea

Chicago Public Schools compiled a video of principals thanking their coordinators

#CoordinatorsRock
Request a proclamation

Request a proclamation or resolution from your governor, mayor, county executive, superintendent, and/or school board to recognize Coordinators Appreciation Week. Here is how to request a proclamation:

1. Share this sample proclamation language with your mayor, governor, or local elected official to recommend a week-long celebration of Coordinators Appreciation Week. Try to send it to them a month in advance of Coordinators Appreciation Week.
2. If you have not heard from your local leader’s office within two weeks, reach out to them again and share resources on the importance and impact of community schools.
3. Once proclaimed, celebrate on social media with the hashtag #CoordinatorsRock to let us know your community is part of the celebration!

**Pro-tip: Your proclamation request will have more power with more people behind the request. Work with other community schools or partner organizations to put a request together.**

Outreach to local media

Sending a press release

Send a press release to share with your local media. We encourage you to send it out the morning of Monday, September 23rd as the Coalition and our Co-Host and Champion organizations will all be sending a press release out at the same time.

Pitch your coordinator story to local media

Crafting an effective pitch to the media is the most important step to any successful campaign. The Coalition wants to celebrate the work of Community School Coordinators, because they create, strengthen, and maintain the bridge between the school and community. This is why the Coalition wants local and national media to be aware of your Coordinators. Here are a few tips and tricks to engaging with your local media:

- **Email subject line must grab attention** | Lead with results or impact
- **Address the why** | Make sure you have a strong argument as to why your coordinator should be featured in the news
- **Got data?** | Make sure you include data or stats if possible
- **Show impact** | What has he/she changed as a result of their impact?
- **Be timely** | Send pitch 2 weeks before a campaign or event

Using the example of a Coordinator who has helped keep their school open by increasing attendance and decreasing student mobility, below are four sample media pitches to help you land an interview and become a media influencer:
Initial pitch (cold)

Email Subject Line: Community School Coordinator Helps Keep [Name of school] Open

Hi [Name of Reporter],

{School or Organization} is joining with the Coalition for Community Schools to celebrate Coordinators Appreciation Week on September 23-27, 2019. Community School Coordinators manage school-community partnerships allowing students to learn and thrive. I would like to alert you to our amazing Community School Coordinator, {Insert Name}. {He/She} led our school in identifying and coordinating resources to provide job training and mental health services for students and families. After implementing these services for a year, we have seen attendance improve by 50% and a decrease in student mobility, helping our school remain open.

{He/She} has helped us bridge the gap with our community. Our school is now known as a place where students feel safe and loved thanks to {Insert Name of Coordinator}.

Please let me know if you’re interested in highlighting our amazing Coordinator during the National Coordinators Appreciation Week. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Pitch for established contact/relationship

Email Subject Line: Community School Coordinator Helps Keep [Name of school] Open

I hope all is well. Thanks again for featuring {Insert Name} in your {Name of Article or Name of Show} on {Date of Publication or Show}. I wanted to reach out about a new story that I thought you might be interested in:

{School or Organization} is joining the Coalition for Community Schools to celebrate Coordinators Appreciation Week on September 23-27, 2019. I would like to alert you to our amazing community school coordinator, {Insert Name}. {He/She} led our school in identifying and coordinating resources to provide job training and mental health services for students and families. After implementing these services for a year, we have seen attendance improve by 50% and student mobility decrease, helping our school remain open.

{He/She} has helped us bridge the gap with our community. Our school is now known as a place where students feel safe and loved thanks to {Insert Name of Coordinator}.

Please let me know if you’re interested in speaking with {Insert Name of Coordinator} about the important work {he/she} is doing in our school and how it has increased attendance at school.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Personalized pitch

Email Subject Line: Community School Coordinator Helps Keep [Name of school] Open

I enjoyed {reading your article or watching your show} and wanted to see if you would be interested in speaking with {Insert Name of Coordinator} about the positive impact {he/she} is
having on our **{Name of School or Organization}**. Our amazing Community School Coordinator led our school in identifying and coordinating resources to provide job training and mental health services for students and families. After implementing these services for a year, we have seen attendance improve by 50% and student mobility decrease, helping our school remain open.

**{He/She}** has helped us bridge the gap with our community. **{School or Organization}** is joining the Coalition for Community Schools to celebrate Coordinators Appreciation Week on September 23-27, 2019. This would be a great story to feature during this week!

Please let me know if you’re interested and I would be happy to set something up. Thank you for your time.

*Follow-up pitch*

**Email Subject Line:** Follow Up: Community School Coordinator Helps Keep **{Name of School}** Open

Hi **{Name of Reporter},**

I just wanted to follow up and see if you were interested in speaking with **{Name of Coordinator}** about how **{he/she}** led the community school committee in identifying and coordinating resources to provide job training, and mental health services for students and families. After implementing these services for a year, we have seen attendance improve by 50% and student mobility decrease, helping our school remain open.

Thank you for your time. Any feedback is appreciated.