

Table 9.6: Examples of activities for connecting schools and community partners

Key activities	For educators	For community leaders
FIND OUT about each others' interests, needs, aspirations and resources.	Find out about the neighborhoods where your students live. What are the local issues? What assets are out there? What resources do they offer? How can you capitalize on them to help students and the school? What can you provide them?	Find out about your local schools, including their performance records, their needs and their recent innovations? What opportunities do they offer for engagement and partnership? What opportunities can you help the schools develop?
REACH OUT to potential partners on their own turf with specific offers of assistance and opportunities to work together.	Reach out to community agencies invested in children's learning, healthy development and success in school. Tell them what you offer them and what they can provide in return. Be specific about the value of partnerships and your plans for developing them. Offer the school's facilities for programs and services that help advance the school's mission.	Reach out to principals, teachers and other school staff by attending school functions and offering help in concrete ways. Make educators aware of all you do with kids and families, emphasizing how your work helps them and the students. Develop concrete strategies for communicating, connecting and collaborating.
SPELL OUT the purpose of the partnership and the terms and conditions of joint efforts, including who will do what, with whom, when, where and how.	Spell out the areas that are "off-limits" for partnerships, emphasizing the need for partnerships to be linked directly to school improvement. Draft MOUs and inter-agency agreements that specify outcomes, responsibilities and resources.	Spell out how complete success in your work depends on successful schools. Also spell out how your work can make schools successful. Be clear on what you want to do, through the partnership, and how the partnership will benefit the schools.
WORK OUT the kinks as they arise and change your approach as indicated by the feedback you receive.	Work out the issues, especially the conflicts because conflict is unavoidable and good things happen when it is resolved. Develop trouble shooting procedures to fix problems "on the fly."	Work out the problems that always occur when you establish partnerships with schools and need to abide by their rules, procedures and policies. Help educators think about alternatives and remain flexible as you align some of your operations with theirs.
BUILD OUT as you experience success by sharing positive results and promoting more innovative programs and services.	Build out by sharing positive results and success stories with staff, parents, district leaders and school board members. Use your successes to seek resources from governmental officials and funding agencies.	Build out by sharing success stories with other community organizations, local governments and the media. Proudly announce your achievements and use them to recruit other partners and supporters.

Taken From: Anderson-Butcher, D., Lawson, H., Bean, J., Boone, B., Kwiatkowski, A., et al. (2004). *Implementation guide: The Ohio Community Collaboration Model for School Improvement*. Columbus, OH: The Ohio Department of Education.