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# COMMUNICATION

School Community Compact  
and Self-Rating Forms



## School Community Compact

Many schools have developed Compacts that outline the responsibilities of students, teachers, parents/families, and sometimes principals. Title I schools often call these “Learning Compacts.” Some schools use the U.S. Department of Education’s “Reading Compact” process.

A school needs only one Compact, whatever it is called. Some of the items in the Compact may vary by grade level. The sample Compact on the next page provides a model. If the school already uses a Compact, that Compact can be modified to include the essential elements listed below.

Please note that “parent” (wherever used throughout) includes any family member or guardian acting in the parental role for a student.

### Essential Elements of a Compact

- \_\_\_\_\_ **Includes goals for reading, study habits, and respectful/responsible behavior.** Other goals may also be included, and the suggested goals below may be modified to fit the purposes of the school. Schools should include special attention to the three areas of greatest shared responsibility between the school and the home—reading, study habits, and respectful/responsible behavior—as well as ways students, teachers, and parents communicate with one another.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Lists the responsibilities** (some schools prefer the term “expectations”) of parents/families, students, and teachers. May also include list for principal.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Provides guidelines for homework and home study habits.**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Provides guidelines for parent–child reading and teacher’s reading assignments.**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Provides guidelines for encouraging respectful, responsible behavior.**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Provides guidelines for communication within the school community.**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Encourages attendance at parent–teacher–student conferences and open houses.**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Encourages parents to participate in parent education programs offered by the school.**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Outlines ways the school partners with families to enhance students’ learning and mastery of standards.**

Look over your school’s Compact if it has one. Consider the example of a School Community Compact on the next page. Develop one Compact for your school that includes the essential elements above. Check the items above to be sure they are included in your Compact. Submit your Compact for inclusion in the School Improvement Plan. Distribute the Compact to teachers and parents/families (it’s a good idea to have a parent/guardian and the student sign a copy and return it to the school). Include the Compact on the agenda of parent–teacher–student conferences. Talk about it at open houses. Review it at faculty meetings.

If your school includes a preschool program, or if you would like to include guidance for parents about their preschoolers, consider how each “responsibility” in your Compact might apply to preschool children. For example, preschoolers may not have homework, but it is still a good idea to encourage interactive, parent–child learning activities. You may want to add specific “responsibilities” that clearly apply to preschoolers. If your school includes a preschool program, then it should be clear that parents of preschoolers are included in open houses and parent–teacher–student conferences.

## FRANKLIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SCHOOL COMMUNITY COMPACT (EXAMPLE)

### I. GOALS

We, the Franklin Elementary School community, establish this School Community Compact so that:

- **Goal 1: Reading.** Every student will learn to *read well, read often, and enjoy reading* through a focused alliance of family support and powerful classroom instruction.
- **Goal 2: Studying.** Every student will *become a self-directed learner* through teaching that incorporates study skills, homework practices that build study habits, and parental guidance.
- **Goal 3: Respect & Responsibility.** Every student will *develop a sense of responsibility and respect* for self and others through consistent support from the family and the school.
- **Goal 4: Community.** The *school will function as a community* of its constituents – families, students, teachers, and other school personnel.

### II. RESPONSIBILITIES

#### A. Parent’s and Family’s Responsibilities

We will:

#### Goal 1: Reading

- Read with, or to, our child for 15 minutes each day, five days a week (Grade PreK–1) or read with, or to, our child for 30 minutes each day, five days a week (Grades 2–3).
- Establish family reading time as a family activity.

#### Goal 2: Studying

- Monitor our child’s study time, offering praise and encouragement.
- Check our child’s assignment notebook at least once each week.
- Assist our child with study resources by providing books and taking him/her to the library.

#### Goal 3: Respect and Responsibility

- Expect our child to behave responsibly and treat other people with respect.
- Model good citizenship and encourage our child to demonstrate good citizenship in the classroom, school, home, online, and community.

#### Goal 4: Community

- Attend parent–teacher–student conferences and open houses and communicate frequently with our child’s teacher, through notes and conversation, about how well our child is doing and what we can do to help.

#### B. Student’s Responsibilities

I will:

#### Goal 1: Reading

- Read regularly for pleasure as well as to learn.
- Talk about reading with family members, friends, and teachers.

#### Goal 2: Studying

- Finish and turn in my homework on time and make sure it is complete and written neatly.
- Welcome help from my family on my homework and papers.

- Keep an assignment notebook to record assignments, due dates, work completed, and grades.

### Goal 3: Respect and Responsibility

- Pay attention to my teachers, family, and tutors, and ask questions when I need help.
- Help other people (family members, teachers, friends) each day.
- Demonstrate good citizenship in the classroom, school, home, online, and community.

### Goal 4: Community

- Attend parent–teacher–student conferences and keep my parents informed about what I am doing in school.

## C. Teacher’s Responsibilities

I will:

### Goal 1: Reading

- Keep parents informed of the reading skills their children are learning and how they can reinforce the skills at home.
- Teach students methods for reading for the purpose of mastering the material.

### Goal 2: Studying

- Assign homework regularly and collect, correct, and return homework promptly, marking the work with comments particular to the student as often as possible.
- Use homework assignments to help students master material rather than to introduce new material.
- Teach students how to study and to monitor their own learning.

### Goal 3: Respect and Responsibility

- Encourage students to behave responsibly and treat other people with respect.
- Teach and encourage attentive listening skills.
- Model good citizenship and encourage students to demonstrate good citizenship in the classroom, school, home, online, and community.

### Goal 4: Community

- Communicate frequently with parents about their children’s progress and show them how they can help.
- Hold at least two parent–teacher–student conferences a year.
- Encourage parents to participate in parent education programs offered by the school.

## D. Our Family–School Partnership

Our school helps strengthen the family–school partnership to enhance our students’ learning through our parent–teacher organization, School Community Council, family resource library, family nights, series of courses for parents, home visits, and communication about students’ progress toward learning standards. A schedule of parent activities is available in the office and on the parent bulletin board.

### Pledge and Signature Page

We have read the School Community Compact and will do our best to meet our responsibilities.

[Include spaces for all parties to sign and date on the pledge page]

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## WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SCHOOL COMMUNITY COMPACT (EXAMPLE)

As a teacher, I, \_\_\_\_\_, will strive to:

- Believe that each child can learn.
- Respect and value the uniqueness of each child and his or her family.
- Provide an environment that promotes active learning.
- Assist each child in achieving the essential academic learning requirements.
- Document ongoing assessment of each child's academic progress.
- Maintain open lines of communication with students and parents.
- Seek ways to involve parents/families in the school program.
- Demonstrate professional behavior and a positive attitude.

As a parent/guardian, I, \_\_\_\_\_, will strive to:

- Believe that my child can learn.
- Show respect and support for my child, the staff, and the school.
- See that my child attends school regularly and is on time.
- Provide a quiet place for my child to study at home.
- Encourage my child to complete all homework assignments.
- Attend parent-teacher conferences.
- Support the school in developing positive behaviors in my child.
- Talk with my child about his or her school activities each day.
- Encourage my child to read at home and apply all his/her learning to daily life.

As a student, I, \_\_\_\_\_, will strive to:

- Believe that I can learn.
- Show respect for myself, my school, and other people.
- Always try to do my best in my work and my behavior.
- Work cooperatively with students and staff.
- Obey the Washington "Bees" in the classroom and throughout the school.
- Come to school prepared with my homework and supplies.

As members of the Washington educational community, together we are partners in your child's education as we uphold the intent of this compact.

As principal, I, \_\_\_\_\_, represent all Washington School staff in affirming this compact.

**Action Plan for Compact**

- ◆ Who will annually review and revise the Compact? When?
- ◆ How and when will the annual Compact be distributed?
- ◆ How will we handle the signature page?
- ◆ Who will prepare the Compact to be distributed so that it is attractive?
- ◆ What other information might be included on the Compact or with it?

**Notes**

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The School Community Compact should be distributed annually to families, students, and teachers, and discussed with students, families, and teachers. The Compact may be attractively presented as a booklet and may include other important information such as school contact information. The signature page may be distributed separately or two copies of the Compact given to parents so that they have a copy to refer to when they return the signed copy. You may want to introduce the Compact and other new policies at the beginning of the next school year.

## Self-Rating Forms

Self-rating forms have two purposes:

- 1) to encourage every teacher, student, and parent to think seriously about how they fulfill the responsibilities outlined in the Compact, and
- 2) to gather information so the school can give attention to areas where teachers, students, and parents are having difficulty. Giving attention may mean providing education programs or information.

A self-rating form is nothing more than a list of the responsibilities included in our Compact and a scale by which a teacher, parent, or student estimates how well he or she is meeting that responsibility.

Create self-rating forms for teachers, parents, and students and decide how to administer them. Decide how to word the “categories” for the scale and how to administer the forms and calculate the results. The forms are always completed anonymously and then collected so you can calculate which responsibilities may need more attention. Parent-teacher-student conferences are a good time to administer the forms, but they may also be done at another time. Students may complete them in class or with their parents.

An example of a self-rating form for teachers is located on the following pages. It is followed by instructions tabulating the self-ratings and reporting the findings. Then several pages of sample forms follow for various groups. Look at them, and then decide how to construct your own for teachers, parents, and students.

Please note that “parent” used on this page and throughout the forms and instructions to follow includes any family member or guardian acting in the parental role for a student.

## School Community Compact Self-Rating for Teachers (Example)

Please rate yourself on the following school community responsibilities from our Compact, according to the following scale:

### Rating Categories

3 = I meet this responsibility consistently and well.

2 = I meet this responsibility some of the time and fairly well.

1 = I seldom meet this responsibility.

NA = Not applicable to my grade level.

<b>Reading</b>				
3	2	1	NA	Keep parents informed of the reading skills their children are learning and how they can reinforce the skills at home.
3	2	1	NA	Provide time for students to read and encourage discussion and writing about reading.
3	2	1	NA	Participate in professional development on how to teach reading and how to communicate with families.
3	2	1	NA	Read to students at least twice each week.
3	2	1	NA	Require students to read each day.
3	2	1	NA	Make "Writing about Reading" assignments each grading period.
3	2	1	NA	Encourage class discussion about reading.
3	2	1	NA	Teach students methods for reading for the purpose of mastering the material.
<b>Studying</b>				
3	2	1	NA	Assign homework regularly, including reading assignments, and collect, correct, and return homework.
3	2	1	NA	Use homework assignments to help students master materials rather than to introduce new material.
3	2	1	NA	Grade homework and return it promptly to students, marking the work with comments particular to the student as often as possible.
3	2	1	NA	Count homework grades toward the report card grade.
3	2	1	NA	Teach students how to study.
3	2	1	NA	Teach students to monitor their own learning.
<b>Respect and Responsibility</b>				
3	2	1	NA	Encourage students to behave responsibly and treat other people with respect.
3	2	1	NA	Teach and encourage students to be helpful.
3	2	1	NA	Teach and reinforce table manners and phone manners.
3	2	1	NA	Teach students to make proper introductions and greet people warmly and respectfully.
3	2	1	NA	Teach and encourage students to look for the good in people and to pay and receive sincere compliments.
3	2	1	NA	Teach and encourage attentive listening skills.
3	2	1	NA	Clearly apprise students of assignments to be completed and hold students responsible for meeting obligations.



3	2	1	NA	Teach and model acceptance of responsibility for the positive and negative outcomes of personal behavior.
3	2	1	NA	Teach and model responsible decision making.
3	2	1	NA	Model good citizenship and encourage students to demonstrate good citizenship in the classroom, school, home, online, and community.
<b>Community</b>				
3	2	1	NA	Communicate frequently with parents about their child's progress and show them how they can help.
3	2	1	NA	Hold at least two parent-teacher-student conferences a year.
3	2	1	NA	Encourage parents to participate in parent education programs offered by the school.

### Comments and Suggestions

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**Thank you!**

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### Tabulate the results of the Self-Rating forms and report the findings.

Constructing self-rating forms is simple enough. Make a separate form for teachers, parents, and students. For preschool and early primary students, you might use a happy face, straight face, and frowning face on the scale and ask students to circle one when the parent or teacher reads and explains the responsibility.

You may want to change the definitions of the scale. Discuss the scale and decide if changes need to be made.

Our scale categories will be worded as follows:

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When and how will the self-rating forms be administered?

To preschool students

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To primary grade students

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To intermediate grade students

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To upper grade students

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To teachers

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To parents

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Set a date by which the self-rating forms will be administered and collected. Decide who will take on the task of tabulating the results and preparing a report. Maybe other parents or teachers can be enlisted to help.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Sample Self-Rating Forms*

## M.L. King Elementary School Community Compact Self-Rating Form for Students (Intermediate Grades)

Please rate yourself on the following school community responsibilities from our Compact, according to the following scale.

Rating Categories

3 = I meet this responsibility consistently and well

2 = I meet this responsibility some of the time and fairly well

1 = I seldom meet this responsibility

0 = Not applicable to my grade level

Reading				
3	2	1	0	Ask my family to read to me or with me for 30 minutes each day (K-3)
3	2	1	0	Read regularly for pleasure as well as to learn
3	2	1	0	Talk about reading with family members, friends, and teachers
Studying				
3	2	1	0	Study at home in a quiet place at least 10 minutes per grade level per day, (4) four days a week (example 4th grader – 40 minutes)
3	2	1	0	Complete my homework on time, written clearly and neatly
3	2	1	0	Welcome help from my family on my homework and papers
3	2	1	0	Keep an assignment notebook to record assignments, due dates, work completed, grades, and parent signature
Respect and Responsibility				
3	2	1	0	Come to school on time and ready to learn
3	2	1	0	Pay attention to my teachers, family, and tutors and ask questions when I need help
3	2	1	0	Recognize and accept the positive and negative outcomes of my behavior
3	2	1	0	Demonstrate good citizenship (behavior) in the classroom, school, home, online, and community
Community				
3	2	1	0	Keep my parents informed about what I am learning and doing at school

Comments \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## M.L. King Elementary School Community Compact Self-Rating Form for Students (Primary Grades)

Directions: Please rate yourself by circling the face that best describes you, according to the scale.

SCALE



= Always



= Sometimes



= Never

### Reading



I ask my family to read to me or with me every day (K-3).



I read to learn and for fun.



I talk to my family about reading.

### Studying



I have a quiet place to study at home.



I do my homework neatly and turn it in on time.



I ask for help when needed.



I keep my homework folder neat and up to date.

### Respect and Responsibility



I come to school prepared to learn.



I pay attention in class and ask questions.



I follow rules and am responsible for my behavior.



I behave well at school, home, and in the community.

### Community



I always tell my parents about what I have learned.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## M.L. King Elementary School Community Compact Self-Rating Form for Teachers

Please rate yourself on the following school community responsibilities from our Compact, according to the following scale:

Rating Categories

3 = I meet this responsibility consistently and well

2 = I meet this responsibility some of the time and fairly well

1 = I seldom meet this responsibility

0 = Not applicable to my grade level

<b>Reading</b>				
3	2	1	0	Keep parents informed of the reading skills their children are learning and how they can reinforce the skills at home
3	2	1	0	Participate in professional development on how to teach reading and how to communicate with families
<b>Studying</b>				
3	2	1	0	Assign homework regularly, including reading assignments, and collect, correct, and return homework
3	2	1	0	Use homework assignments to help students master materials rather than to introduce new material
3	2	1	0	Grade homework assignments to help students master materials rather than to introduce new material
<b>Respect and Responsibility</b>				
3	2	1	0	Teach and encourage students to look for the good in people and to pay and receive sincere compliments
3	2	1	0	Clearly apprise students of assignments to be completed and hold students responsible for meeting obligations
3	2	1	0	Model good citizenship and encourage students to demonstrate good citizenship in the classroom, school, home, online, and community
<b>Community</b>				
3	2	1	0	Communicate frequently with parents about their child's progress and show them how they can help
3	2	1	0	Hold at least two parent-teacher-student conferences a year
3	2	1	0	Encourage parents to participate in parent education programs offered by the school

Comments \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## M. L. KING ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COMMUNITY COMPACT

### Self-Rating for Parents

Please rate yourself on the following school community responsibilities from our Compact, according to the following scale:

Rating Categories

3 = I meet this responsibility consistently and well

2 = I meet this responsibility some of the time and fairly well

1 = I seldom meet this responsibility

0 = Not applicable to my grade level

<b>Reading</b>				
3	2	1	0	Make sure that your child attends school regularly, is on time, and is prepared to learn, with homework completed.
3	2	1	0	Know what skills your child is learning in reading and other classes each day.
3	2	1	0	Do activities at home, like the School–Home Links (K–3) that continue your child’s classroom learning at home.
3	2	1	0	Read with or to your child for 30 minutes each day, (4) four days a week (K-3).
3	2	1	0	Encourage your child to read for pleasure and to learn.
3	2	1	0	Get a library card for your child and encourage your child to bring reading materials from the library into the home.
3	2	1	0	Visit the library with your child.
<b>Studying</b>				
3	2	1	0	Provide a quiet place for your child to study and read.
3	2	1	0	See that your child spends at least 10 minutes per grade level per day, (4) four days a week, studying and completing homework at home (example: 4th grader – 40 minutes).
3	2	1	0	Monitor your child’s study time, offering praise and encouragement.
<b>Respect and Responsibility</b>				
3	2	1	0	Expect your child to behave responsibly and treat other people with respect.
3	2	1	0	Model good citizenship (behavior), and encourage your child to demonstrate good citizenship (behavior) in the classroom, school, home, online, and community.
<b>Community</b>				
3	2	1	0	Attend parent–teacher–student conferences and communicate frequently with your child’s teacher through notes and conversations about how well your child is doing and what you can do to help.
3	2	1	0	Participate in programs offered by the school for parents, including workshops and courses.

Comments \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



### Resources for Developing a Compact

The following information is from *Beyond the Bake Sale: The Essential Guide to Family-School Partnerships*, by Anne T. Henderson, Karen L. Mapp, Vivian R. Johnson, and Don Davies (p. 199).

<b>Compact Do's and Don'ts</b>	
<b>Do</b>	<b>Don't</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep the pledges about equal—no more than 10 items for each group.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• List 15 obligations for parents and only 5 for teachers.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be specific: “I will read to my child 20 minutes a day.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be vague: “I will read to my child regularly.”</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be respectful: “I will talk with my child about the need to get at least 9 hours of sleep every night.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patronize parents: “I will make sure my child is clean and rested.” (Parents say: “Why do they think I don't do that?”)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow up with tip sheets, such as hints for checking homework, negotiating TV/screen time, and fun math activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complain that parents aren't doing their job.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Send home interactive learning kits and reading materials.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wonder why parents don't get books from the public library.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask “Are we sticking to our pledges?” at conferences and meetings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hand out the compact at the start of the year and never mention it again.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revisit the compact every year.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the same compact year after year.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask families, students, and staff what would make it better. Update it using the current student achievement data.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forget to ask whether families and staff actually use the compact.</li> </ul>

Henderson, Anne T., Mapp, Karen L., Johnson, Vivian, R., & Davies, Don. (2007). *Beyond the Bake Sale: The Essential Guide to Family-School Partnerships*. New York, NY: The New Press.



## School Community Compact Rubric Worksheet

### Compact Rubric

Date Completed: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Compact Rubric</b>		
Score Guide: 0 = no evidence of criterion being met, 1 = evidence that criterion is met		
Elements of a Compact	Score	Criteria for Scoring the Compact
1. States the school's responsibility to provide high quality curriculum in a supportive and effective learning environment		
a. Clearly states school goals to meet student academic achievement standards.		Lists key academic goals, typically based on state standards, for core subjects.
b. Lists the responsibilities of the parents/families, students, and teachers that support achievement goals.		Lists specific responsibilities related to each academic goal for each group – parents/families, students, and teachers.
c. Lists the responsibilities of the parents/families, students, and teachers to create a supportive and effective learning environment.		Lists ways that each group – parents/families, students, and teachers – can provide or access resources that create supportive and effective learning environments at home and at school.
2. Describes ways in which families, teachers, and students are responsible for supporting academic and social learning that are appropriate to elementary, middle, and secondary students.		
a. Provides guidelines for parents/families, teachers, and students on homework and home learning and study habits.		Includes the school's homework policy or otherwise provides guidelines for each group – parents/families, students, and teachers – for assignment, completion, and correction/scoring of homework and guidance for families on promoting responsible homework and home learning and study habits.
b. Provides guidelines for parents/families, teachers, and students on home reading activities.		Provides suggestions, in grade-appropriate language, that develop literacy skills and love of reading in school and at home.
c. Provides guidelines for parents/families, students, and teachers on encouraging respectful, responsible behavior.		Describes ways, in grade-appropriate language, that teachers, families, and students can model and encourage respectful, responsible behavior at school and at home.
3. Stresses the importance of communication between teachers and families on an ongoing basis and how this will happen.		
a. Encourages attendance at conferences, during which the Compact is discussed as it relates to the individual child's achievement.		Describes how parents/families, teachers, and students, as appropriate, will participate in regularly scheduled conferences.
b. Outlines how two-way, meaningful communication practices will be established and maintained between home and school.		Describes ways, in grade-appropriate language, that teachers, parents/families, and students practice two-way, meaningful communication.

<b>Compact Rubric</b>		
Score Guide: 0 = no evidence of criterion being met, 1 = evidence that criterion is met		
<b>Elements of a Compact</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Criteria for Scoring the Compact</b>
c. Outlines ways the school frequently reports to parents/families on their child's progress.		Describes the school's procedures for reporting to parents/families on their children's school progress, including student report cards and state assessment results.
4. Outlines the activities that the parents/families, school staff, and students will undertake to build and develop a partnership to help the student achieve state standards.		Describes the parent education programs, parent leadership opportunities, parent-teacher communication opportunities, and other methods the school employs to build a partnership with parents/families and how these activities relate to students' achievement of state standards.
5. Provides parents opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class and to observe classroom activities.		Explains the guidelines and procedures for parents/families to visit classrooms and to volunteer to help at school.
<b>Total Score</b>		

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[www.schoolcommunitynetwork.org](http://www.schoolcommunitynetwork.org)