

2025 CAW Toolkit:



SAVE THE DATE!

**September
14 - 20
2025**

**COORDINATORS
APPRECIATION WEEK**



Institute for
Educational
Leadership 60+
Years Strong



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A Note from IEL President Eddie Koen

Celebrating the Champions Behind Community Schools

Community Schools thrive because of the extraordinary leaders at their core—Coordinators! At the Institute for Educational Leadership’s Coalition for Community Schools, we deeply honor the pivotal role these dedicated professionals play in strengthening our schools and communities. Community School Coordinators are more than facilitators—they are strategic leaders who build bridges between families, educators, and community partners to ensure every child is supported and empowered to succeed.

As we mark this year’s annual **Community School Coordinators Appreciation Week**, taking place **September 14–20, 2025**, I invite you to join us in lifting up these often-unsung heroes. Their daily work to align resources, elevate student voice, and create inclusive learning environments is transforming education from the inside out.

This celebration has grown tremendously year after year, reflecting the increasing recognition of Coordinators’ impact nationwide. Whether you’re a parent, educator, policymaker, or community partner, your voice matters in expressing gratitude and amplifying the stories of Coordinators who lead with purpose and heart.

Let’s continue building momentum—share your thanks, highlight Coordinator stories, and spread the word about the power of Community Schools. Together, we’re forging a future where every young person has the opportunities and support they need to thrive.

With appreciation,



Eddie Koen
President

A Note from the CCS Coordinators Network Co-Chairs

This week, we shine a spotlight on the unsung heroes of our schools — our coordinators. They are the bridge-builders, the problem-solvers, and the champions for every student and family. Behind every resource connected, every partnership formed, and every success story told, there's a Coordinator working tirelessly to make it happen.

Coordinator Appreciation Week is more than recognition — it's a celebration of the passion, dedication, and heart they bring to their work. They don't just connect services; they inspire hope, open doors, and create lasting change.

We beg of you; never underestimate the difference you can make in the lives of others. This week, let's tell your stories, amplify your voices, and celebrate the extraordinary impact you make every single day.

*“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.” – **Margaret Mead***



Neomi Martinez

THS Community Schools Coordinator, Taos Municipal School



Jarvis Hamilton

*Community School Coordinator, United Way of the Chattahoochee Valley
(Columbus, Georgia)*

How to Get Involved

The Coalition invites everyone—schools, districts, community school initiatives, community partner organizations, lead agencies, and state and national organizations—to partner with us as we celebrate Coordinators Appreciation Week. Coordinators are the heart behind the Community Schools strategy, advancing our values of equity, democracy, and harmony, and we’re proud to celebrate and recognize them for these important contributions.

Partnership can include:

- Participating in CAW by celebrating Community School Coordinators.
- Working with and encouraging 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!
- [Request recognition of CAW \(i.e. proclamation\) from your Superintendent, Mayor, school board, county executive, and/or other elected officials.](#)
- [Continue to reach out to your members of Congress to request that they fund Full Service Community Schools at the highest level possible.](#)
- Print out one of our [CAW posters](#) and share pictures with it online.

Thank you in advance for joining us in celebrating Coordinators Appreciation Week. 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 a Community School Coordinator on social media. See sample posts and graphics on page 9.
- ★ Make a video about the impact your Community School Coordinators and post it on social media using #CoordinatorsRock! Our favorite Coordinator videos can 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 11.

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 Canva [thank you card template](#).
- ★ Give your Coordinator a gift card for coffee, a school supply store, or a bookstore.
- ★ Consider how you can more intentionally involve students - refer to our [Youth Voice in Community Schools guide](#) for strategies around engaging students in this campaign and exploring opportunities together to help build their understanding of and advocacy for the Coordinator role. [Learn more here](#).

Communities In Schools of Charlotte Meckle... + Follow
3,651 followers
11mo • 🌐

Do you know that it's Coordinator Appreciation Week across the U.S.? CISE te #CoordinatorsRock because they know that #BeingPresentM...mo



Community Schools Coordinator Spotlight! 🌟

Kristi Gilmore is our coordinator at Christenberry Elementary. She works hard to connect with community partners and bring people together to provide necessities for students and teachers and beautify the school grounds. Christenberry Elementary Assistant Principal Christine Furman shared, "Kristi's impact is being seen and felt by students and staff. She is incredibly proactive and extremely productive. She has become part of our Christenberry family and we believe we hit the jackpot with her!"

Thanks for bringing people together to make an impact on our community, Kristi!

#CoordinatorsRock #CoordinatorAppreciationWeek



Ideas for School and District Leaders

- ★ Treat your Coordinators to lunch or a food delivery service gift.
- ★ Hang Coordinators Appreciation Week [posters](#) in your school or send out flyers digitally.
- ★ Have school faculty and staff sign a [digital](#) or physical thank you card for your Coordinator.
- ★ Award your Coordinator with a certificate of appreciation.

Maryland State Department of Education is celebrating the dedicated Community School Managers and Coordinators who work tirelessly to ...more



Ideas for Initiative Leaders, Lead Agencies, and Community Partners

- ★ Promote Coordinators Appreciation Week via email or social media with your networks. See our sample social media posts and [graphics](#) on page 12.
- ★ Treat Coordinators to lunch or celebrate them with a virtual 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 a digital or in-person event honoring the success of Community Schools.
- ★ Promote Coordinators Appreciation Week on your website, in your e-Newsletter, and social media.

Need more ideas?

Check out some of the creative ways people celebrated their coordinators during previous years' Coordinators Appreciation Week:

Create a video or GIF



What are community schools and why do they matter? Well, the answer depends on the needs of individual communities. At Arcola Elementary, community school liaison Heather Hunter and her colleagues have made an amazing program that has to be seen! [@mceanea](#)



youtube.com

Why Community Schools Matter: Arcola Elementary

Nearly one-third of all Maryland public schools will be identified as community schools thanks to funding from t...



Daysi Castro @csspecialist77 · Sep 23, 2024
[#coordinatorsrock](#) @MD4CS @CommSchools



Dr. Lakeisha Lashley @DrMadd_Lashley · Sep 19, 2024

Huge shout out to Tristen Day, our Community School Liaison during Community School Coordinator Appreciation week! Thank you for all you do for our school community! @CSconnect_MCPS @CSMCPS_Leader



Capture quotes or insights from Coordinators to lift up their voices



United Way of the Chattahoochee Valley · 2nd
Leading the UNITED WAY forward.
11mo · 📍

✓ Following

"The difference Jarvis is making is to help bridge the gap with parents ... they see how approachable and humble he is and always willing to help. That helps families see school in a different light." -Ms. Bentley-Brown, Principal of Brewer Early Innovation Academy



Transformation Waco

909 followers
11mo · 📍

✓ Following

Happy [#CommunitySchoolCoordinators](#) Appreciation Week! Today, we're celebrating G.W. Carver Middle School's Lakendra Williams, who shares what she focuses on to support students and families as a Community ...more



— — ” — —
As a Community School Specialist, my most important roles include bridging gaps, serving as the voice and advocate for parents, and connecting our campus and families with the right resources. I aim to be the go-to person, always focusing on learning and providing a clear perspective to help address the needs of our students and families.
— — ” — —

LAKENDRA WILLIAMS
COMMUNITY SCHOOL SPECIALIST
G.W. CARVER MIDDLE SCHOOL

Use the opportunity to share about CS in your state, like Maryland did (shown below).



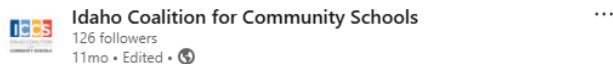
It's Community School Coordinator Appreciation Week!

MSDE is celebrating the dedicated coordinators who work tirelessly to connect students, families, and school communities with essential resources. These incredible individuals are the driving force behind Maryland's community schools, ensuring students and families have the support they need to succeed. [#CoordinatorsRock](#)

Learn more about community schools in Maryland:
blueprint.marylandpublicschools.org/community-schools/



Create a post or thread of all your Coordinator spotlights, like Idaho Coalition for Community Schools did:



It's National Community School Coordinator Appreciation Week, and we want to bring attention to the phenomenal people supporting students and strengthening communities across Idaho! ...more



Social Media

Tell the world why they should celebrate Coordinators Appreciation Week. Post on all social media using **#CoordinatorsRock**. [Download social media graphics here](#).

Tag IEL and the Coalition to let us know how you're celebrating your Coordinators.

LinkedIn: [@ielconnects](#)

Bluesky: [@ielconnects.bsky.social](#)

X (Formerly known as Twitter): [@CommSchools](#)

Instagram: [@Coalitionforcommunityschools](#)

Facebook: [Coalition for Community Schools](#)

Here are some sample posts to promote Coordinators Appreciation Week ahead of time:

- Sept. 14 - 20, 2025 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. 14 - 20, 2025. #CoordinatorsRock
- #CoordinatorsRock because they ensure all students and families receive the support and services they need to learn and thrive. Thank a Coordinator Sept. 14 - 20, 2025 for all that they do.
- Community Schools Coordinators are aiming for your students' success! Let's give them a big 'Thank you' Sept. 14 - 20, 2025 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. 14 - 20, 2025. #CoordinatorsRock

Here are some sample posts to thank Coordinators during Coordinators 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 future brighter, and our hopes higher. Community School Coordinators, you rock! #CoordinatorsRock

Here are some sample posts that share the importance of efficient and effective funding for full-time Coordinator positions and Community Schools:

- Schools need funding for FT Community School Coordinators to ensure quality implementation of Community Schools! Coordinators increase return of investment by leveraging civic engagement and community resources toward desired outcomes.
https://www.communityschools.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/11/ROI_Coordinator.pdf
#CoordinatorsRock
- #Community Schools are a good investment. When school and community resources are organized around student success, they are more efficient and effective at boosting educational outcomes - and Coordinators play a key role. #CoordinatorsRock

Get more tips to help communicate about Community Schools on page 73 of the [Community School Playbook!](#)

Share a recent Community School/Coordinator spotlight:

- [Why Community Schools Matter: Arcola Elementary](#)
- [Stewards for Students: Saluting Little Rock's Community Schools Site Coordinators \(Guest Blog Post\)](#)
- [Community School Coordinator Spotlight: Cheryl Marks](#)

Tips on How to Post a CAW 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, and 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

- Prop your phone or camera on something steady.
- Create good lighting. Shoot with the person facing a window or light source to avoid backlighting.
- Try to use an external microphone, like a lapel mic, if someone is speaking
- Make sure to add captions to make it accessible!

Posting your video

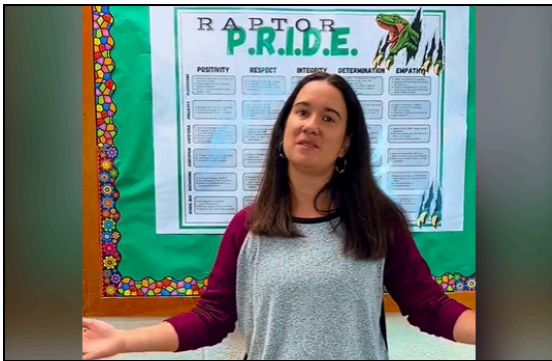
Share your video on X, Facebook, or Instagram, or even Tik Tok, using #CoordinatorsRock. Coordinators, schools, districts, or other organizations with great videos might be featured by the National Community School Coordinators Network in a future Coordinator Spotlight.



Need inspiration? Check out these videos from previous years.



[2024 Community School Coordinator Appreciation Week - United Way of Chattahoochee Valley](#)



[Stamford Cradle to Career CAW Compilation](#)



[The Importance of the Community School Coordinator \(CA Partnership for the Future of Learning\)](#)

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 governor, mayor, or local elected official to recommend a week-long celebration for 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 a 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 out the morning of Monday September 15, 2025 as the Coalition and our Co-Host and Champion organizations will all be sending press releases out at the same time.

Pitch your Coordinator story to local media

Crafting an effective pitch to the media is an important step in any campaign. The Coalition wants to celebrate the work of Community School Coordinators because they create, strengthen, and maintain the bridge between the school and the community. That is why the Coalition wants local, state, and national media to be aware of your Coordinators. Here are a few tips and tricks for 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 date or statistics if possible.
- **Show impact** | What have they changed as a result of their impact?
- **Be timely** | Send your pitch two 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 14-20, 2025. 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/They} 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/They} 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 14-20, 2025. I would like to alert you to our amazing community school coordinator, {Insert Name}. {He/She/They} 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/They} 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/They} 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 14-20, 2025. 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/They} 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.

For Coordinators

Promote Yourself!

What better way for people to learn about the role of Community School Coordinators than by you telling them! Listed below are three fun ways to self-promote you and your colleagues during Coordinators Appreciation Week.

Represent on Social Media

Consider adding a Coordinator Appreciation Week frame and/or graphic to your social media profiles. [Click here for graphics](#).

Post a Short Video to Social Media

Create and post a short, fun video on social media! Listed below are some potential prompts.

- **Origin Story:** In this type of video, share your why you became and/or are proud to be a Community School Coordinator
- **Celebrate Success:** In this type of video, identify a challenge you've overcome, and highlight results you've achieved as a Community School Coordinator.
- **Informational Video:** In this type of video, describe your role and/or what a typical day looks like for you. Stay positive, be creative, and feel free to inspire/encourage other Community School Coordinators.

Potential Script

- My name is X and I'm a Community School Coordinator.
- I've been a Coordinator for [insert amount of time] and [One sentence about why you're proud to be a CS Coordinator, and/or how you got into this role].
- A challenge you overcame this past school year [acknowledge the challenge], emphasize the outcome!
- End saying "Community School Coordinators; We Rock!"

Write a Blog and Post it on LinkedIn

Write a blog post about your experience as a Community School Coordinator and tag @Institute for Educational Leadership. The content can be based on one of the prompts listed above, Q&A format, or something else.

Build your Leadership Capacity!

We know that leadership plays a vital role in uniting the varied knowledge, skills, and talents within local communities to promote equity. Coordinators are a key part of that work!

[At the Institute for Educational Leadership](#), home to the [Coalition for Community Schools](#), we work hand in hand with communities like yours, teaming up with local organizations to bolster local leadership at all levels, driving positive change through education and interconnected systems. To do this, we build innovative programming, experiences, and [services](#) to help leaders change education systems, including Technical Assistance, Professional Development, Events and Initiatives, and Networks & Causes such as the Coordinators Network.

Great options for Coordinators include:

- [Microcredentials for School & District Leaders](#)
- [Professional Development for Coordinators](#)
- [Data Capacity Building and Evaluation Support](#)
- [Everyone: An Advocate Suite](#)
- [National Community Schools and Family Engagement Conference](#)

See our full menu of services at iel.org!