



## **The Obsession of Hope, The Victimization by Poverty: Full-Service Community Schools and Urban Education**

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### **Abstract**

Almost half the world, nearly three billion people live on about one euro a day. One-third of that number, one in two children, live in poverty with no access to safe water, health care, or to proper shelter to the extent that 25,000 children die every day because of poverty. Daily in the United States 5.5 million children don't have enough to eat and less than 50% of our nation's preschoolers have basic immunizations. Of the developed world, the U.S. has the most children who live in poverty, despite our wealth and perceived sophistication.

Rather than race, ethnicity or gender, it is poverty, socio-economic class and deprivation that account for poor performances in school to the extent that young people from poor families are three times more likely to drop out of school. Alone neither schools nor communities can address all the changes and needs in demographics, economics, politics and social welfare; alone they cannot help children become successful students and productive citizens for the problems they and their families face are complex, contextually interacting and overlapping. But if schools could collaboratively offer quality, equitable education at the same site in which access to requisite health and human, social and cultural services for children and families is provided, both educational and psycho-social outcomes would be enhanced.

These full-service community schools, often referred to as 'hubs of services' for their local neighborhoods, and most frequently given birth to in urban environments, become regenerative catalysts for economically compromised communities. They challenge teachers to become advocates who think critically, contextually, conceptually, creatively, culturally and collaboratively. Issues of social justice, collective identity and the common good become the neighborhood norm. Schools, born of the praxis of hope and transformation, become more connected to neighborhoods that become healthier.