**TOOL: Learning More about Your School Community**

**Collaborating closely with out-of-school time partners?**

 See the [OST-enhanced version of this tool](http://schoolguide.casel.org/uploads/2019/01/tool-learning-more-about-your-school-community-19-OST-2.docx?utm_source=Resources-OST&utm_medium=Download&utm_campaign=OST_Links). ([http://bit.ly/2VVzfPa](http://schoolguide.casel.org/uploads/2019/01/tool-learning-more-about-your-school-community-19-OST-2.docx?utm_source=Resources-OST&utm_medium=Download&utm_campaign=OST_Links))

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| **Community Research** | [Cities](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neighborhoods_in_Chicago) and their various neighborhoods have incredibly rich histories and are constantly changing. Learn more about the neighborhood where you work by:* Spending some time looking up the history of your school’s neighborhood.
* Reading news stories from the neighborhood or join a website such as [www.Everyblock.com](http://www.Everyblock.com) to stay up to date on current community events.
* Connecting with your community’s alderman on social media to stay current on community issues.
 | **Consider…**How might I be different if I grew up here?What beliefs and attitudes might I have?What experiences might I have had? |
| **Interviews** | Talk to staff who were raised in the community or have worked there for an extended amount of time. Talk to local business owners, community members, and students’ families to learn more about the school community by asking:* What do you enjoy about the community?
* Why did you choose this particular community?
* How has the community changed and are they happy about the change?
* Where are the best lunch spots?

Visit the families of students and invite them to speak about their community and their experiences as part of the community. | **Consider…**What are the everyday experiences of community members? What challenges do they face?What joys do they experience?What are they proud of?What beliefs and attitudes might community members have about outsiders? |
| **Community Tour** | Spend time walking or driving around the community. Become more familiar with:* Landmarks, architecture, and street names.
* Community resources (schools, hospitals, churches, grocery stores, shops, services, food banks).
* Parks, green spaces or other youth development organizations (YMCA, Boys & Girls Club, etc.).
* Police presence and the impact it has on the community.
* Interactions between community members.
 | **Consider…**What might it be like to navigate this community on a daily basis? How easy is it to access public transportation, grocery stores, libraries, parks, etc.?What resources are available to community members?What do you feel when you look around the community?What do others feel when they see you in the community? |