

## **Profile:**

### **Securing mutual commitments in Rochester, NY**

**Rochester school leaders have used very specific accountability indicators to engage their community around school improvement issues.** Their efforts have resulted in getting input from their key stakeholders about what counts and to have parents, business leaders and community members work cooperatively with school leaders to set measurable goals and make specific commitments to reach those goals.

The benchmarking process in the mid-1990s ended with a broad-based coalition developing 40 specific indicators of progress, everything from percentage gains on state and national reading and math tests to more students taking Advanced Placement courses.

**More powerfully, each stakeholder group made specific commitments to help students succeed:**

- *county government*, for example, pledged to locate several new health clinics in schools
- *local businesses* offered job guarantees to graduates who met the district's standards
- *local universities* guaranteed admission
- *the coalition* annually sponsored a major event to document progress, discussing indicators where the annual goal was met or exceeded and indicators where they fell short.