

APPENDIX

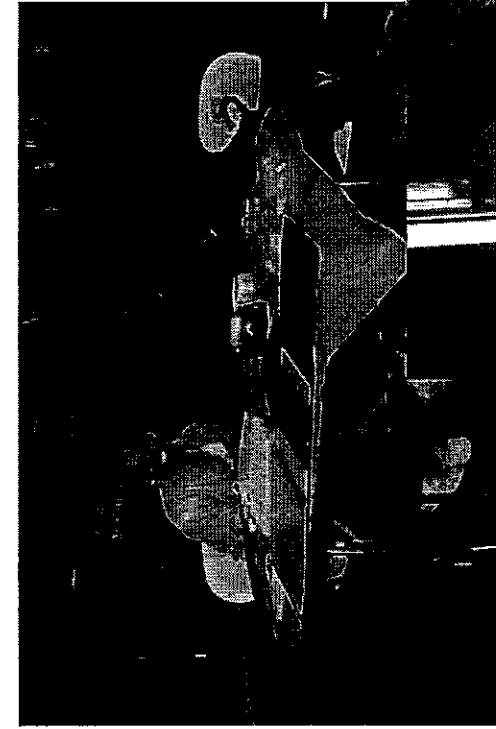
Presentation to the Joint Committee on the Public Schools
of the New Jersey Legislature

Community Schools: An Equity Strategy for School Improvement

Mary Kingston Roche
Director of Public Policy, Coalition for Community
Schools

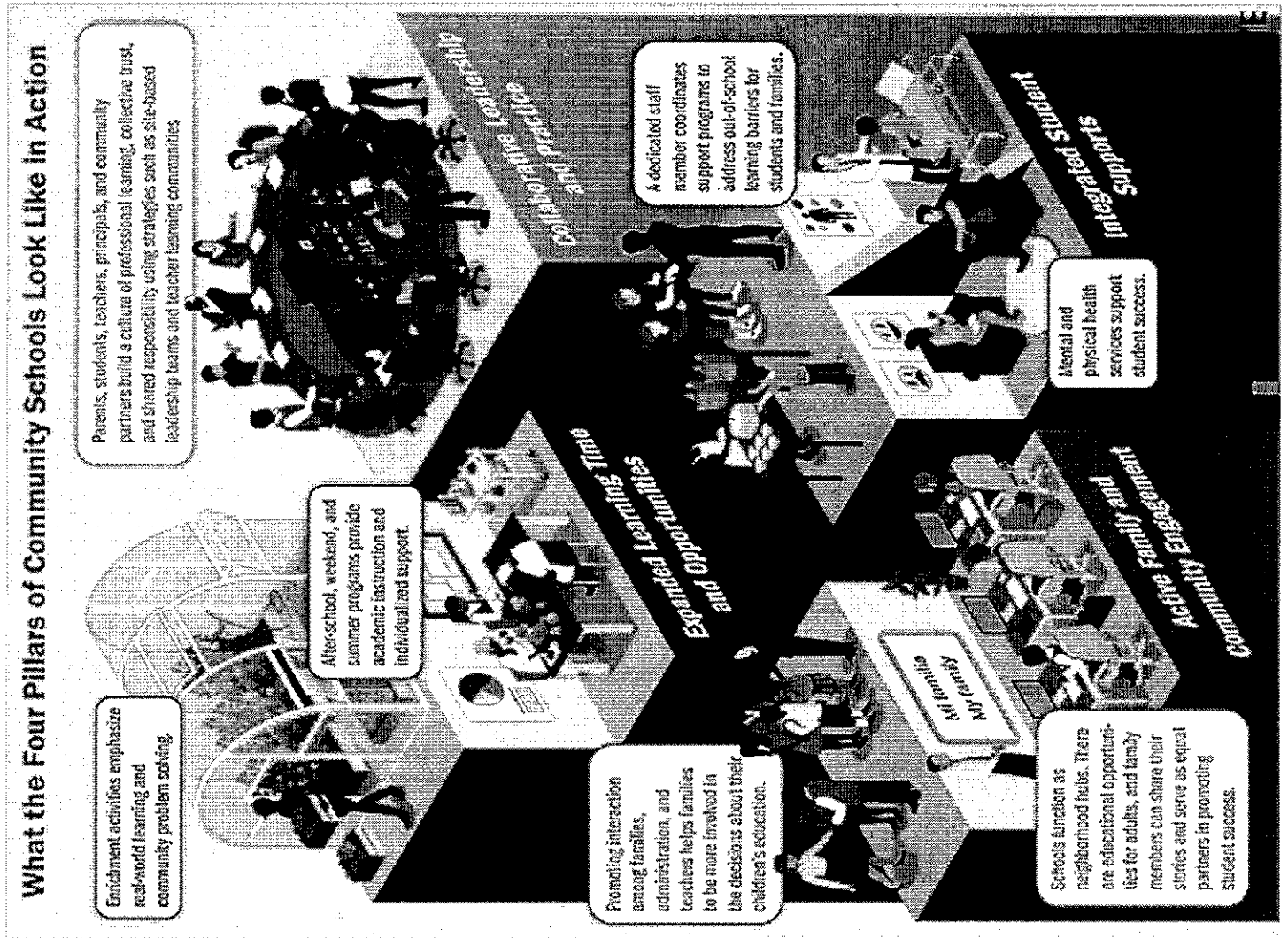
April 11, 2018

The Power of Community Schools



A Community School

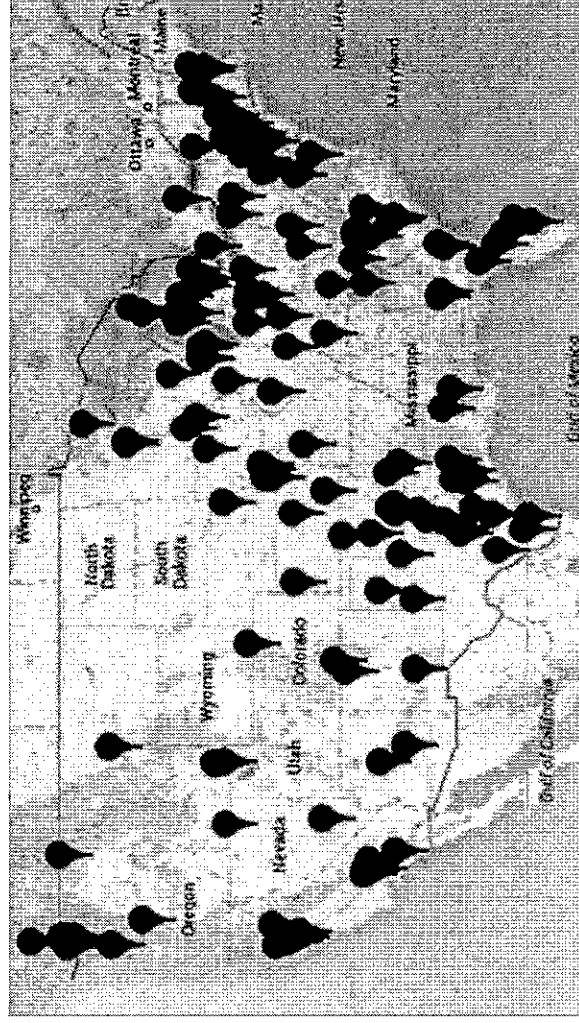
Is a strategy, not a
program, to align
resources for
equitable school
and community
improvement.



Value-Add of Community Schools

- Garner additional resources to reduce demand on school staff
- Provide learning opportunities to develop cognitive, social, emotional, physical and civic competencies
- Build social capital—networks and relationships that support learning and create opportunities for young people

Growing Systems of Community Schools



Coalition for Community

Schools directly supports:

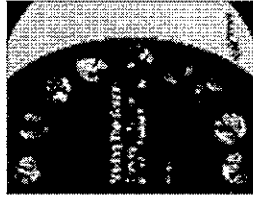
- 75 initiatives across 32 states
plus D.C. & 72 cities
- 15 state coalitions
- Dozens of local United Ways

Evidence-Based Strategy

Academic Achievement:
Tulsa Community Schools
outperformed
non-community schools
in math by 32 points and
Reading by 19 points.

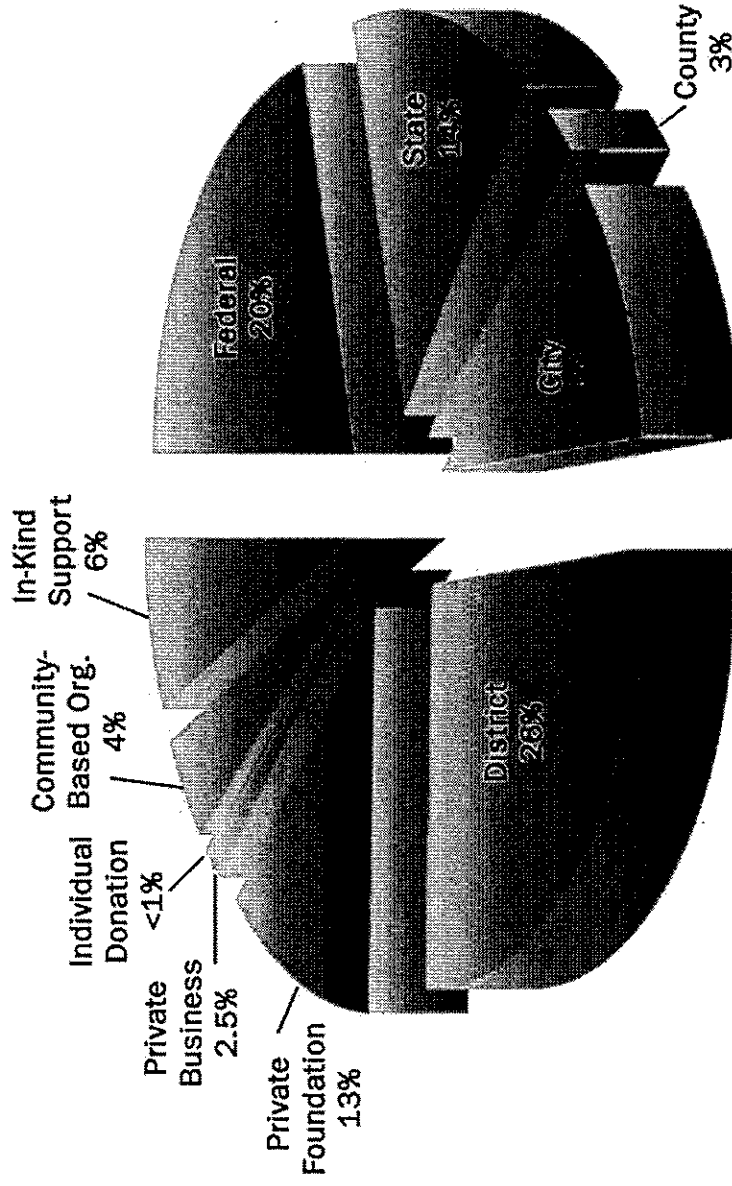
In a 2017 report, The
Learning Policy Institute and
the National Education
Policy Center recommend
community schools as an
**evidence-based strategy for
ESSA implementation.**

Chronic Absence:
Community Schools
operating for 5+
years had fewer chronically
absent students. Students
in grades 6-8 were 48%
less likely to be chronically
absent in Baltimore, MD.



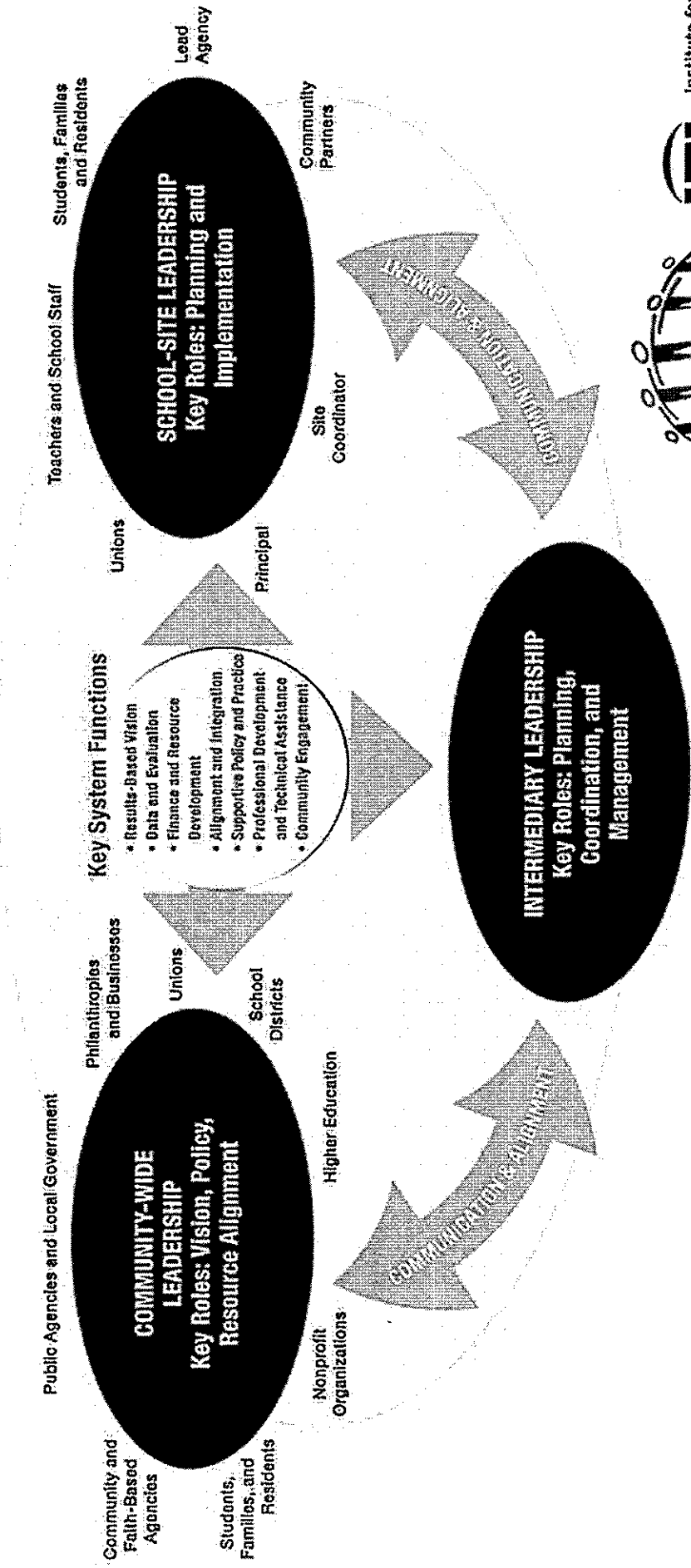
A 2014 report by **ChildTrends**, a nonprofit, nonpartisan research center, synthesized rigorous evaluations of community school initiatives, particularly integrated student supports, and concluded that there is growing evidence that community schools reduce grade retention and dropout rates, while increasing attendance, math achievement, and grade point average.

Diversified Funding Toward a Comprehensive Approach



Greater Collaboration at the School and Community Levels

A Collaborative Leadership Structure for Community Schools



Federal Support and State Momentum

Federal:

- Full-Service Community Schools program authorized in ESSA
- FY 18: 75% increase from \$10 to \$17.5 million
- FY 18: \$1.1 billion for Title IV-A

State:

- Community schools referenced in ESSA state plans
- In 2016, supportive legislation and/or funding passed from
CA, MN, MD, NY & introduced in many other states

Community Schools Support the Goals and Requirements of ESSA

- Well-rounded education
- Chronic absenteeism
- Needs assessments
- School improvement
- Expanded reporting requirements
- Stakeholder engagement

Fit for New Jersey

- Equity Strategy
- Hyper-local and Nimble
- Framework for Partnerships
- Effective Use of Funds
- Alignment with ESSA
- Builds Ownership for Sustainable Success

Thank You

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www.communityschools.org



Full Service Community Schools **Parent** Asset and Needs Assessment

Parent/Family Involvement

1. Let's begin by talking about what "parent involvement" means to you. What is the first thing that comes to mind when you hear the term "parent involvement"?
2. What do you think the school expects of you?
 - **Probe:** To help with homework? To be in contact with your child's teacher? To be involved in decision-making?
 - Do you agree with such an expectation?
 - What is your relationship with your child's teacher?
3. I'd like to turn now to examples from your own experience. What kinds of activities do you participate in school? Describe the activities and your motivation to attend.
 - Would you like to see more of these activities? What other activities would you like to participate in? (e.g., employment workshops, computer/education workshops, parenting workshops)
4. Are there any skills that you would like to offer the school? If so, what are they? Are you able to showcase those skills?
5. Tell me what you know about SMIT and FST (Family Support Team).
 - What is your expectation of SMIT and FST (Family Support Team)?
6. In what ways do you get involved in your child's schoolwork?
 - During a typical week, how often are you able to look over your child's homework?
 - Are you able to help them with the homework?
 - Are you able to help with school projects? Go on school trips?

Student Support Services: Co-Curricular and After-School Activities

1. How many of you have your children in before and/or after-school programs? In/out of school?
 - Describe the program, i.e., what kind of program is it, where is it located?
 - How often does your child attend?
 - What is your level of satisfaction?
2. For those without children in after-school programs, what do they do on a typical afternoon?
3. Would you like to see more before and after-school activities?
 - What kinds of activities? (e.g., homework help, recreational, enrichment activities-- such as chess, poetry, book clubs, etc.)
4. What do your children do during the summer?
 - If enrolled in a summer camp, what kinds of things do they do?
 - If not a program or summer school, what do your children do?
 - If in summer school, what do they do once summer school ends?
5. Tell me which activities your children participate in outside of school -- e.g., faith-based groups, boys/girls scouts, camps, YMCA, Boys & Girls Clubs of America, mentoring program (big brothers/big sisters), etc.
 - How often do they participate?
 - Do your children like those activities?
 - Would you like to see some of them in the school?

Student Medical and Mental Health Status, Need, and Resources

1. Tell me about the counseling services available to students at your child's school.
 - What additional counseling services do you feel/think is needed at the school?
 - What kinds of things does the counselor do with the children? (problem-solving)
 - What kinds of counseling services are available in your community for children and families?
2. Tell me about the medical services available to students and their families at school.
 - Where do you go for medical services for your child?
 - What additional medical services do you feel/think is needed at the school?
3. Is substance or physical abuse among parents/families an issue?
 - If so, what effects do you think its having on the children?
 - What services are available?
4. What are the major health issues in the Paterson community?
 - Probe: Asthma, AIDS, Lead

"Adapted from Children's Aid Society and the work of Dr. Jackie Jones, University of Connecticut at Stamford Institute for Children, Youth and Families, 2003."



A City We Can All Believe In

Joint Committee on the Public Schools

April 11, 2018

Good morning, Committee Co-chairs, Senator Ronald A. Rice, Assemblywoman Mila M. Jasey, the members of the Joint Committee on the Public Schools and other interested parties here today. My name is Antoinette Baskerville-Richardson. I serve as Chief Education Officer in Mayor Ras J. Baraka's Office of Comprehensive Community Education.

The push for Community Schools was initiated by a core of Newark community members who were involved in fighting back against a barrage of reforms that resulted in a destruction of the culture of neighborhood schools, particularly in Newark's South Ward. Community schools were called for in the school district's strategic plan. Newark residents made a conscious educated choice to pursue a community schools model. This choice of Community Schools aligned with the beliefs of Mayor Baraka, who experienced remarkable academic growth and culture and climate change as principal of Central High School, in a community schools pilot, the *Global Village Zone*, which ended under State Appointed Superintendent Cami Anderson.

The current South Ward Community Schools Initiative (SWCSI), was conceptualized by Mayor Baraka and then Superintendent Christopher Cerf, and funded by a \$10 million grant from Chan Zuckerberg Foundation in December of 2015. Despite this historic cooperative effort, the road forward was difficult, but I am happy to report that many of the obstacles have been overcome and we are actively working on the rest.

The current SWCSI includes 5 schools in the South Ward of Newark; 1 high school and 4 elementary schools that can feed into the high school. The mission is to organize resources around the needs of children and families to remove the barriers that keep children from coming to school and doing their best. While a community school does not have to be a neighborhood school in the traditional sense, in Newark we are refocusing neighborhoods around schools, and the idea of the SWCSI is to increase academic success by strengthening families and communities and sharing the responsibility of educating our children and improving our city.

The SWCSI is completing its second year of full implementation. It has been transformed from a rushed initiative (6 months planning time) with few pieces in place and a leadership team that struggled to find common ideological ground, to a community schools initiative that has made tremendous strides and is working consciously to implement best practices. The SWCSI is managed by a leadership that consists of representation from the Newark school district, the Mayor's Office, and the Newark Trust for Education, which is hired as an intermediary for the initiative. A National Advisory Board meets quarterly and has advised the initiative on best practices for organization and finance. The Newark Children's Cabinet meets by-monthly and has active sub-committees comprised of city agencies and that align resources to support the efforts of the community schools. The most active committees Health, Safety, and Arts. Examples of their support work are a Community Safe Haven Initiative, a Trauma Informed Initiative (Newark Cares), and a Safe Haven logo contest. A special assistant supports the organization and activities of all 5 schools.

I will give you a few examples of where we started, and where we are now.

I will talk about challenges, wins, and more challenges.

Challenge: Ideological pedagogical differences.

Win: We now have developed a logic model which includes a mission statement, "Schools will become supportive, nurturing hubs where students and families can access the resources they need to engage and thrive in education, career and community", and 6 Core Elements:

1. High Expectations for Learning; Clear Instructional Vision, Rigorous Instruction Practice, Integrated Student Supports.
2. Capacity to address Student Health and Mental Health.
3. Quality In-School and Expanded Learning Time Opportunities
4. Community f Engaged Supportive Adults
5. High Capacity Partnerships and Resources
6. Integrated Student Data Information Systems and Approach to Learning Analytics

Challenge: Convincing the district that each school needs a dedicated community schools coordinator.

Win: All the schools have community schools coordinators, although in some schools they have dual titles.

Challenge: A large part of the \$10 million dollars was used the first year.

Win: Under the guidance of the Trust, school teams participate in fiscal planning and are responsible for fiscal decisions.

Challenge: Shabazz High got a late start in planning and implementation.

Win: Rutgers University is now engaged with Shabazz in a university assisted partnership model.

Challenge: Governing and leading the Initiative. The first year felt disastrous and disheartening.

Win: Hard conversations, bringing in a new intermediary (the Newark trust for Education) and 2 years of experience, studying best practices visiting and learning from community schools districts with rich experience and lessons, working closely with the Children's Aid Society, the Coalition for Community Schools and the AFT have allowed us to identify problem areas and plan and implement best practices.

Challenge: The need to structure and broaden the leadership group to be inclusive of more invested partners.

Challenge: Visibility; digital footprint, information sharing.

Win: A website is in the final stages of revision.

Challenge: Who's flying the plane? Many important pieces are in place, and the need for a Community Schools Director who can develop, lead, and grow the initiative is apparent.

Challenge: The initial funding of \$10 million by the Chan Zuckerberg Foundation will be finished at the end of SY 2019.

Win: Each of the community schools won a SIG Grant, which is a 5-year grant.

Challenge: As Mayor Baraka says, "Money must be important because they keep taking it". Part of sustainability is developing new and diversified funding streams.

Win: We have your ear. The time seems right for the sharing of information about how community schools in other states have sustained and the discussion of developing funding and sharing resources in New Jersey.

Challenge: Via the National Board, which was established as an advisory body for the initiative, we are looking at sustainability and are in discussion with the National Coalition of Community Schools around developing a sustainability plan that speaks to finance, partnerships, leadership, academic rigor, etc. etc., but we are clear that in addition to developing diverse funding streams, we must do the hard work of supporting the shared responsibility for education, children and schools in each school and community.

Challenge: How are we really doing?

Win: We have an independent evaluator and are in the final stages of development of the evaluation tool.

Lessons: Every district is different; every school is different; lessons are continual; self-evaluation is key; buy-in is crucial; silence is destructive. XXX

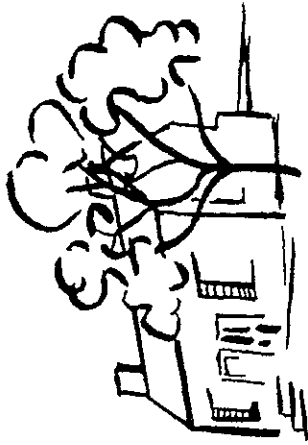
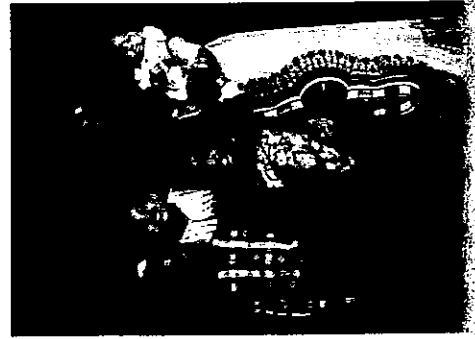
SUPPORTING FAMILIES

The Mercer Street Friends Parenting programs utilize evidence-based practices to help nearly 450 fragile families break the cycle of child abuse and neglect.

The Parent/Child Center offers a safe and supportive environment where parents and caregivers can learn and practice the skills needed to establish nurturing and responsive parent-child relationships.

The center is a resource for counselor-facilitated support groups to help parents manage challenges. It also links women and children to medical care, including immunizations, prenatal care, and diagnostic services.

The highly trained staff of Mercer Street Friends' home visiting program provides intensive services that include helping parents develop and strengthen positive interactions with their children. Participants learn stress management techniques and practice using them in everyday situations.



MERCER STREET FRIENDS

Reducing Hunger

The Mercer Street Friends Food Bank leads the community response to hunger in Mercer County, linking food and hunger prevention programs to children and adults who face hunger and food insecurity on a daily basis.

Breaking the Cycle of Abuse and Neglect

Mercer Street Friends works with fragile, at-risk families to provide them with tools and strategies to help them lead healthier and safer lives.

Closing Education Disparities

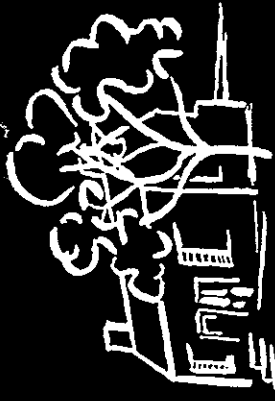
Our centers of learning help children, youth, and adults overcome education and achievement gaps, giving them a better foundation for academic success and job preparedness.

For more information about our programs, to volunteer or to make a donation, please visit our website at www.mercerstreetfriends.org

Mercer Street Friends
151 Mercer Street
Trenton NJ 08611

Phone: 609-396-1506

Email: info@mercstreetfriends.org



MERCER STREET FRIENDS



Community Schools

Food Bank

Parenting & Adult Education

EDUCATING YOUTH

The nurturing and intellectually stimulating classrooms at Mercer Street Friends **Preschool** give Trenton children between the ages of three and five years old an early education experience that engages them as learners and supports their health and safety.

The Preschool operates year-round in order to minimize the "summer learning gap," a particularly challenging problem for children in low-income communities.



Mercer Street Friends leads the **Community Schools** initiative in Trenton. Community Schools provide support, within the structure of the public school system, to help kids overcome the challenges that impact many low-income student's academic success. These challenges may include chronic absenteeism and tardiness; food insecurity; mental health issues; a lack of stable/secure housing; family issues; and fear for personal safety.

Mercer Street Friends staff organizes services to address the basic needs of students and their families and also manages programs that give students

EDUCATING ADULTS

The Mercer Street Friends **Adult Education Program** works with 200 adults (age 16 or older) each year who wish to obtain a high school diploma or improve the basic academic skills that they need to secure and retain employment or pursue postsecondary education and training.

Students receive one-on-one and small-group instruction in reading, writing, social studies, science, math, and computer literacy from a staff teacher or volunteer instructor. The program is free to all students and complies with the Common Core standards.



The **Community Work Experience Program** helps nearly 250 adults receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) improve their job readiness skills.

Trained staff helps participants identify and address personal and structural barriers to employment, including educational needs.

Participants learn problem-solving skills and strategies to increase self-sufficiency; then practice utilizing the skills

REDUCING HUNGER

Mercer Street Friends **Food Bank** is the largest provider of donated and government-sourced food for charitable providers in Mercer County. It supplies a network of food pantries, shelters, soup kitchens, and meal sites. The Food Bank also manages critical programs designed to reach children and adults who struggle with food insecurity.



Send Hunger Packing (SHUP) is a partnership with schools that provides students from food-insecure families with easy-to-make weekend meal packs each Friday. Many of these students rely on school feeding programs and without SHUP meals, they would have little to eat over the weekend.

Summer Feeding programs in Trenton and Hamilton provide breakfast and lunch for low-income children who face meal gaps over the summer when school-based breakfast and lunch programs are unavailable.

Through the **Mobile Pantry**, the Food Bank delivers monthly meal boxes to low-income seniors, as well as weekly deliveries of fresh fruits and vegetables to senior centers, subsidized housing communities, and

Joint Committee on the Public Schools
Community Schools Panel - April 11, 2018 at State House Annex

*Dr. G. Kennedy Greene, Superintendent, Newton Public Schools, 57 Trinity Street, Newton, NJ 07860
973-383-7392 (phone) – 973-383-5378 (fax) – kgreene@newtonnj.org*

In Newton, our self-identification as Community Schools (CS) has happened organically over the past several years. I was doing some reading and research into the CS model and spoke with colleagues in the Lehigh Valley, PA region about their experiences. CS kept coming back to me as a useful framework to help us organize and coordinate a variety of initiatives in our schools, which would help us more fully realize our mission to “educate the whole child.”

Key district stakeholders engaged in discussions about CS in the Spring of 2016. The Board of Education adopted a goal in July 2016 to “develop a Newton-specific model for community schools to increase student achievement” with the following action steps to be accomplished by January 2017:

1. Understanding CS theory and practical examples
2. Identifying, contacting, and confirming community partners
3. Creating a district steering committee and identifying key members for school teams
4. Developing and administering needs assessments
5. Reviewing the assessment data and building school-specific model elements
6. Finalizing community schools model for board approval

Once the model was adopted and communicated, we reached out to the United Way of Northern NJ (UWNNJ), as their sister organizations had been key collaborators in CS initiatives elsewhere. We had some initial discussions with UWNNJ and NORWESCAP Head Start around expanding preschool. We also partnered with UWNNJ on a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation grant application to build out our CS model by “catalyzing local momentum for cross-sector collaboration, engaging diverse partners to build healthier communities...” We seemed a good fit for the grant, though ultimately our application was unsuccessful (only 6 proposals were funded from throughout the country).

What came out of the grant application was the development of a Design Team of community stakeholders committed to assisting the district with implementing CS in Newton. Their role is twofold: (1) provide guidance and support at the macro-level to the district’s model; and (2) engage in partnerships at the micro-level that employ organizational strengths and provide mutual benefits.

Design Team members include representatives from:

- Center for Prevention & Counseling, a local nonprofit whose vision is “to develop the capacities of adults and children to sustain healthy lifestyles by providing services designed to foster addiction-free lives, emotional wellness, financial stability and safe communities.”;
- Newton Medical Center, the regional hospital affiliated with Atlantic Health System, whose mission is “designing and delivering high quality, innovative and personalized health care, to build healthier communities and improve lives for patients, consumers, and caregivers.”;
- Newton Public Schools, whose mission is, in part, “to educate the whole child.”;
- Northwest New Jersey Community Action Partnership (NORWESCAP), a private, non-profit corporation whose mission is “to strengthen communities by creating opportunities that impact poverty.”;

- Pass It Along, a local nonprofit whose mission is “to build confident, resilient, compassionate teenagers through self-discovery, volunteer and leadership opportunities.”;
- Project Self-Sufficiency, a local nonprofit whose mission is “to support and empower low-income individuals and families to improve the quality of life for themselves and for their children through comprehensive family stability and personal and economic self-sufficiency services.”;
- Thorlabs, a global leader in photonics headquartered in Newton;
- Town of Newton, our municipal government;
- United Way of Northern NJ, whose mission is to “improve lives by mobilizing the caring power of communities to advance the common good.”; and
- Zufall Health, a community health center whose mission is “to provide quality, affordable, and culturally competent health care in partnership with our patients and the community in northern and central New Jersey.”

Needs Assessments

- District-developed CS Instrument (2016) - 903 responses from students, staff, and parents
- School Climate Team Surveys (2015, 2016)
- United Way ALICE Report (2014)
- Center for Prevention & Counseling PRIDE Survey of Halsted Middle School (2016)
- Project Self-Sufficiency Toy Shop Survey of Participants (2016)
- NORWESCAP Head Start and Early Head Start Community Assessment (2017)
- North Jersey Health Collaborative Community Health Needs Assessment (2016)

School-Specific Model Elements

- Mental and Behavioral Health Services
 - On-site wellness and mental health services provided through the Center for Prevention & Counseling, Pass It Along, and Youth Advocate Programs.
 - Wellness-based pathways to mental and behavioral health through student self-discovery, leadership, and volunteerism provided through Pass It Along, ThorLabs, Newton Medical Center and the DreamGirls Initiative.
- Expanded Preschool
 - Expanded to an additional classroom this year by allocating district funds
 - Meetings with United Way and NORWESCAP to discuss expansion to free, universal opportunities for all eligible 3- and 4- year olds.
- 21st Century Community Learning Center
 - After school program for grades 3-8 providing academic remediation and extension, nutritious snack and physical activities, social-emotional development, and STEAM-based enrichment.
 - The initial grant (2013-18) was spearheaded by Project Self-Sufficiency. The school district has applied as lead sponsor for an additional five years (2018-23).
 - Collaborators and partners moving forward include the Greater Newton Chamber of Commerce, Sussex County Dept of Health & Human Services, Sussex County 4-H, YMCA of Sussex County, Sojihuggles Children’s Foundation, and the DreamGirls Initiative in addition to most of the Design Team members previously identified.

Newton Public Schools

Community Schools Overview - April 2018

What are community schools?

Community schools (CS) have transformed traditional American education for over a century. They are both a place and a set of partnerships between the school and other community resources that have an integrated focus on academics, health and social services, youth development, and community engagement. They have been proven to lead to increased school attendance, decreased disciplinary incidents, stronger families, healthier and safer communities, and improved academic outcomes.

What demographic data reflect needs in our community?

School Performance Report (2016-17 data)	<u>Newton HS</u>	<u>Halsted MS</u>	<u>Merriam ES</u>
School Enrollment	745	336	491
Economically Disadvantaged	20%	46%	50%
Students with Disabilities	14%	19%	23%
English Language Learners	2%	2%	4%

United Way ALICE Report (2014 data)	<u>Town of Newton</u>	<u>Sussex County</u>
Population	7,999	144,909
Households	3,170	54,174
Poverty	15%	6%
ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed)	40%	27%

What specific student and family needs have we identified?

1. District and school level CS teams conducted needs assessments and developed a model that was publicized in January 2017. In the spring, a Design Team with representatives from regional nonprofits, government agencies, corporate entities, parents, and the school district was created and performed a broader needs assessment as part of a national grant opportunity. In November 2017, the Design Team analyzed existing community needs assessments conducted by their organizations.
2. Merriam Avenue School identified a need to improve early literacy and childhood wellness. Research literature on early literacy and childhood wellness is supported by analysis of our current preschool program, where 78% of kindergarten students who attended our preschool met the early literacy benchmarks in DIBELS, 89% met the benchmarks in our Early Screening Inventory, and parents have reported increased wellness on the part of their children.
3. Halsted Middle School and Newton High School identified a need for greater access to mental health and behavioral services dealing with topics such as management of grief, anxiety, anger, and substance use. 34% of Grade 5-8 students are identified as needing such services that cannot now be met beyond crisis intervention. Over 50% of Grade 9-12 students identified stress, anger, generalized anxiety, and school phobia as significant issues for themselves and their peers.

4. The assessments also identified a district-wide need for coordination of existing community services of which there were upwards of 36 established initiatives involving 15 community organizations.

What are our big goals?

1. By September 2019, we will provide greater access to on-site wellness services for children and families (*baseline = no dedicated space, minimal on-site services*).
2. By September 2020, full-day preschool for 4 year old children will be free and available to all residents (*baseline = tuition-based, limited availability*).
3. By June 2021, the percentage of middle and high school students identified as needing counseling and behavioral services will be reduced by 50% (*baseline = 34% of middle school students identified and 54% of high school students self-identified as in need*).
4. By Spring 2026, 68% of 4th grade students will demonstrate proficiency in English Language Arts as measured by New Jersey state assessments (*baseline = 51% proficiency*).

What partnering initiatives are underway?

1. Our Design Team of committed community organizations meets regularly to provide guidance and support at the macro-level to the district's CS model, and engage in partnerships at the micro-level that employ organizational strengths and provide mutual benefits.
2. Our School Coordinators have inventoried existing initiatives for areas of synergy and collaboration.
3. We work with the Center for Prevention & Counseling, Pass It Along, Youth Advocate Programs, and Newton Medical Center to provide on-site wellness and mental health services.
4. We engage Pass It Along, ThorLabs, and the DreamGirls Initiative in wellness-based pathways to mental and behavioral health through student self-discovery, leadership, and volunteerism.
5. We coordinate with NORWESCAP Head Start, United Way of Northern NJ, and other local providers to expand toward free, universal preschool for all eligible children.
6. We collaborate with the Sussex County Department of Health & Human Services and Sojihuggles Children's Foundation to contribute basic services to needy children and their families. We also enlist the Town of Newton and the YMCA of Sussex County to provide recreational activities.
7. We applied for a second 21st Century Community Learning Center grant to continue our successful, STEM-themed, afterschool program for grades 3-8. Thirteen local organizations, including the initial lead agency Project Self-Sufficiency, have committed to collaborating with us as we move forward. For example, the Greater Newton Chamber of Commerce provides career speakers in STEM fields and Sussex County 4-H offers STEM-based activities as part of the program.
8. We partner with United Way of Northern NJ to pursue external funding sources strategically. An initial effort was a grant application to foster local momentum for cross-sector collaboration.

Sean M. Spiller
NJEA Vice President
April 11, 2018

**Testimony before the
Joint Committee on Public Education**

Community Schools in New Jersey

My name is Sean Spiller and I am the Vice President of the New Jersey Education Association, representing over 200,000 members in our great public schools. In addition, I am a member of the National Education Association Community Schools Task Force that is finalizing a comprehensive report after an extensive eight months of research and meetings drawing from national data, experience, and experts.

Based on the testimony we have heard today, and the experiences of our members in the schools, it is clear we have a lot great work going on around the state with respect to community schools. NJEA members are involved with the examples of success you have heard about today – as classroom teachers and support staff contributing to the collaborative approach is foundational to community schools.

At the heart of community schools is nothing new and in many ways it is returning to the basics and prioritizing what we all know is important. Guiding community schools is the recognition that schools should be at the center of our neighborhoods and that educational outcomes are best accomplished when we consider the whole child. In the 2017 NEA Community Schools Toolkit, community schools are defined as:

A center of the community that brings together academics, health and social services, youth and community development and community engagement under one roof, leading to improved learning, stronger families, and healthier communities

Nationally we see that transformative community schools practice six key pillars that, when interconnected, change the culture and academic outcomes of schools. These pillars are:

- A strong and proven curriculum
- High-quality teaching
- Inclusive leadership
- Positive behavior practices (including restorative justice)
- Family and community partnerships
- Community support services¹

¹ <http://www.nea.org/communityschools>

Many of our schools employ one or more of these six pillars already and see some benefits. But national studies demonstrate that transformative results occur when all six of these pillars are implemented and integrated into the school to address the needs of the whole child. In New Jersey we have pieces in place but can make more strides to adopt all six pillars within schools as well as support additional schools starting this journey.

This is not an overnight transition. It is a slow process that must start by building stakeholder support and commitment to the process and the strategy at the local level. This is a ground up strategy that must resist at all times the tendency towards top down mandates. The choice of where to start and what to prioritize is based on intensive needs assessments and strategic plans that are developed collaboratively at a shared leadership table.

NJEA members have a strong record of implementing programs that support a community school strategy. Our Priority Schools Program, started about six years ago, focuses on three pillars – strong, proven, curriculum; high quality teaching; and inclusive leadership – in districts across the state. This program provides intensive training and support for our members and fosters collaboration between educators and administration to improve academic outcomes of our students. Over the past decade, we have worked in 15 districts across the state and the program continues to expand now in the context of community schools.

In the Camden Public schools, which is a district where the NJEA has taken a lead role in supporting the community school strategy, in part through our Priority Schools Program, we see a number of the pillars developing. For example, the Thomas H. Dudley Family School has a student mentoring program for students in 6th grade and a Reading Buddies program for 3rd graders and Kindergartners. They invite the Optical Academy in to provide discounted glasses to the students and their families, where books donated from the Bridge of Books Foundation are distributed. Wegman's donated all the materials for the students to build a small community garden on the school grounds. Another success story is the Alfred Cramer College Preparatory Lab School which has a cooking program thru the VETRI Community Partnership in coordination with the Philadelphia Inquirer is taught by a retired NJEA member. In this program students learn how to set a table, kitchen safety and how to cook a variety of recipes. Yorkship Family School has received and dispersed food to families donated by the Canon Financial Corporation. Yorkship offers a family training opportunity for parents to attend workshops on resume writing, nutrition, healthy living and wellness. Students received a book donation from the Bridge of Books Foundation for the holidays.

In addition, for nearly two decades the NJEA has supported the Family and Schools Together Works for Children program (known as F.A.S.T.) to develop strong family engagement in student's education. This program focuses on two pillars of community schools – family and community partnerships and community support services. Under the F.A.S.T. program our members host a variety of after school activities with families to support academic success and overall student health and wellbeing. In many districts where our members implement F.A.S.T. there is a focus on providing information in languages spoken at home and on connecting families to needed social services.

4

In Trenton, Rivera Community Middle School partners with the Mercer Street Friends housed in the basement of their school. Together they find resources for the students and their families, particularly one-on-one counseling, grant funding, after school programs, etc. Last year Stony Brook Watershed provided scholarships and bus transportation to summer camp. Several Rivera students attended camp. 8th graders are studying black artists and then creating works on art based on a student music selection and art genre as part of the Hipp Grant, "Pencil Dancing." Students participate in the behavior program WINWIN. It is a year-long, school wide program in which students earn "points" for positive behavior. At the end of the school year, if students have earned enough points they receive a \$100 Visa gift card. Students participate in an advisory period each week. During that time students participate in activities to produce positive behavior. These programs also highlight our commitment to the pillar regarding positive behavior practices.

NJEA members, through professional development, have been able to partner with districts in addressing issues of discipline in our schools. We know that discipline issues are best addressed proactively and positively, rather than through suspensions and lost learning time. This year, in my home district of Montclair, the Montclair Education Association has begun a Restorative Justice Program, using an NEA grant, to overturn the "no tolerance policy" in the district and look at each situation on a case-by-case basis. This type of program allows the school administrator and the students to really figure out what provoked the behavioral infraction and help both the students and their family to find stability. In addition, Montclair Education Association hosts a Wrap & Roll program every December in which the schools and community join together to wrap donated presents for needy children in the community.

NJEA members have shown over time our commitment to community schools, as this strategy fosters the collaboration that treat our members as the professionals that they are and provides a student focused approach to achieve success. Within that spirit, the NJEA is working with the Rutgers Labor Management Collaborative to foster both the collaboration among teachers and between teachers and administrators where student learning is at the center.

The NJEA has the support of the National Education Association's commitment to community schools. The NJEA has sent teams of educators, administrators, and community partners to national NEA trainings to learn best practices and see full community schools in action. Together with the NEA, we connect members and community partners to the Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools, a national network built of community, parents, and union members all working together to support successful initiatives like community schools. The NEA has built extensive resources available on line as well as cross-divisional national staff with expertise to support all areas of community schools. And in the next few weeks the NEA Task Force will release its final report that will inform NEA policy to further the support of Community schools.

The legislature can support this pathway to improve educational outcome in a number of ways. There are many programs in existence and proposed that can support community schools. The challenge is to foster coordination and facilitate making schools hubs for priorities such as

family health care and job training. Taking inventory of all programs that address education, family support and early childhood development in the various departments would be the first step towards maximizing opportunity to see the schools as hubs for a wide variety of services.

New legislation could be evaluated in the context of community school strategies. For example, Senator Ron Rice's bill, S-371, is a new proposal that fits well within a community school strategy. The bill establishes a pilot program to foster family economic self-sufficiency in low-income households by delivering academic and job readiness support services across two generations within the same household. As the recommendation is that this program run out of the DOE, it would be logical to see it implemented through our schools. Nationally, we see family resource centers attached to community schools provide a range of services for families including job training, resume preparation, and English language learning.

By looking at proposed legislation and current programs through the lens of the "whole child" both education and service bills, we can better integrate and coordinate resources that already exist along with new proposals. As with community schools at the local level, it is more about integrating the existing services than creating new ones. Coordination and integration are the major challenges at the state and local level.

This task of analysis and integration could be accomplished by a state level community school coordinator in the Department of Education who could become a resource for schools and districts interested in adopting pillars of community schools. In addition, seed money to support the initial intensive needs assessments would benefit districts who may be able to leverage funding down the line, but need support with the start-up investment.

And the Department of Education could become the hub of best practices to inform and advise districts interested in community schools, knowing that every community is different and the approach needs to be bottom up.

The most important role state government and the legislature can provide is to open pathways and remove barriers. Where interdepartmental collaboration might be challenging, we need to make it easier. Where public schools might find it challenging to partner with non-profits, we need to support making that easier. Where restricted funds may limit the flexibility to invest in the development of pillars, we need to support strategic plans by allowing the money to go where it is most needed. Foster making schools community centers by removing barriers wherever possible.

NJEA looks forward to continuing our work with both these state and national partners to help grow the community school strategy across New Jersey. We recognize that the work is slow, and grows from the bottom up starting with the intensive needs assessment that determines what the community school needs to prioritize in each school or district. We know that when we work on these six pillars, success can be seen at every stage, leading to dramatic transformations that once again make our schools the heart of our communities.

THE SIX PILLARS OF COMMUNITY SCHOOLS TOOLKIT

NEA RESOURCE GUIDE FOR
EDUCATORS, FAMILIES &
COMMUNITIES





THE SIX Pillars OF COMMUNITY SCHOOLS TOOLKIT

NEA RESOURCE GUIDE FOR EDUCATORS, FAMILIES & COMMUNITIES

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THE SIX PILLARS OF COMMUNITY SCHOOLS TOOLKIT

NEA RESOURCE GUIDE FOR EDUCATORS, FAMILIES & COMMUNITIES

OVERVIEW

COMMUNITY SCHOOL: A center of the community that brings together academics, health and social services, youth and community development and community engagement under one roof, leading to improved learning, stronger families, and healthier communities.¹

NEA COMMUNITY SCHOOLS TOOLKIT

The National Education Association vision is a *great public school for every student*. We know that partnerships with families, communities, and other stakeholders are essential to quality public education and student success. We believe that individuals are stronger when they work together for a common goal and the common good.

Every student deserves a well-rounded curriculum that will nurture his natural curiosity, imagination, and desire to learn. All students deserve schools that have the resources and programs to support, encourage, and inspire students at every level. They deserve schools that provide things like a band; teachers who are certified to teach physics and calculus; counselors to help students make life-altering choices; caring and supportive staff who welcome families into the school; theater class; girls' volleyball; a chemistry lab; classes that offer college credit; debate; robotics; foreign languages. The new pre-k-12 education law, the Every Student Succeeds Act or ESSA, will get us closer to achieving that goal for all students if we make our voices heard in how it's carried out.

The 2015 reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) is full of opportunities for stakeholders to make decisions together in the best interest of students. In fact, many decisions about the implementation of ESSA require collaboration with key stakeholders like educators, parents, and community leaders. This is no accident. NEA members, along with other coalition partners, advocated to make sure that the people who know and understand the needs of students best are included in the decisions that affect them the most.

Funding for community schools has several possible levers in the new law. Policymakers can use Title I funding to support a Community School Coordinator responsible for integrating school and community resources. Title IV programs, including 21st Century Learning Centers, Student Support and Academic Enrichment, and Full Service Community Schools, allow funding to support after school programs and Community School Coordinators through a combination of entitlement and competitive grants.

¹ For more on NEA's position and resources on Community Schools, go to www.nea.org/home/66319.htm



According to the United States Department of Education,² “Full-Service Community Schools provide comprehensive academic, social, and health services for students, students’ family members, and community members that will result in improved educational outcomes for children. These services may include: high-quality early learning programs and service; remedial education, aligned with academic supports and other enrichment activities, providing students with a comprehensive academic program; family engagement, including parental involvement, parent leadership, family literacy, and parent education programs; mentoring and other youth development programs; community service and service learning opportunities; programs that provide assistance to students who have been chronically absent, truant, suspended, or expelled; job training and career counseling services; nutrition services and physical activities; primary health and dental care; activities that improve access to and use of social service programs and programs that promote family financial stability; mental health services; and adult education, including instruction of adults in English as a second language.”

NEA supports Community Schools because this strategy is one way to advocate for racial justice in education and remove obstacles that stand in the way of some students.

- ➔ In far too many cases, there are still students—usually minority students—who are tracked into classes that do not prepare them for college and careers. **Instead**, we support the community schools strategy as a way to provide challenging and culturally relevant curricula to students while providing a robust selection of classes.
- ➔ In too many schools, differential discipline practices remove disproportionate numbers of minorities from the classroom, denying them the opportunity to learn. **Instead**, we stand behind the use of positive behavioral supports and restorative practices to foster a healthy school climate, and to move away from zero-tolerance discipline policies that over-emphasize suspension and expulsion. Our members in Denver, Colorado, are using restorative practices throughout the district to improve and repair student-adult relationships, leading to a decline in out-of-school suspensions.
- ➔ It is shameful that school funding and resource allocation still favor students from wealthy neighborhoods. **Instead**, community schools are places where resources are made available to students, families, and the neighborhood at the school site, including medical and psychological care, after-school programs, and other services that meet the particular needs of the community.
- ➔ In neighborhoods where public schools are threatened with takeovers or shutdowns, the promotion of for-profit charter schools often takes root. With their lack of accountability and transparency, for-profit charters rarely achieve good outcomes for diverse students. They seldom invest adequately in the Specialized Instructional Support Personnel (like school counselors or school social workers) who are needed to help students overcome a variety of challenges and succeed in class and in life. We see community schools as a way of bringing communities together without wasting resources or causing destructive competition that leads to the underfunding of neighborhood schools.

So what is the union role in this work? We know how to organize people, and can serve as the first mover in getting a community to survey its needs and commit to moving forward with the community school strategy. We can lead community conversations; serve on planning teams; raise public awareness about student needs and resource equity gaps, and explain how community schools can meet them; and we can make sure our members understand their roles at the school building level.

FEDERAL EDUCATION POLICY AND SCHOOL REDESIGN

While most public schools are located within a community, the majority are not “community schools.”

The conventional perception of schools is that they focus almost exclusively on academics and extensions of learning through extracurricular activities and athletic programs. Schools are organized by classroom in which teachers teach and students learn. Much like a rotary dial phone, this singular focus follows long-established customs and routines.

While this conventional model has existed for decades in most of our schools, much has changed since President Lyndon Johnson signed the Elementary and Secondary Education Act into law on April 11, 1965 with his childhood teacher at his side.

ESEA is primarily an entitlement statute that sends funding to high-need schools to address educational deficits of students living in poverty. High-poverty schools, those with at least 40 percent of students eligible for Free or Reduced Price Lunch, are often called Title I schools.

Through its various reauthorizations up through the 2015 Every Student Succeeds Act, ESEA has attempted to provide funding and guidance so that students attending high-poverty schools achieve at or near the same levels as their more advantaged peers. For the past 20 years, ESEA regulations and guidance have become more specific by, for example, incentivizing states that accept federal funding to adopt curriculum standards; requiring states to implement annual testing in reading, mathematics and science; mandating redesign models for schools with poor test results; requiring most educators to be deemed “highly qualified”; and encouraging states and districts to evaluate educators, in part, through their impact on student learning.

Beginning with the 2001 reauthorization of ESEA as the No Child Left Behind Act, all students were required to make Adequate Yearly Progress toward a state-defined measure of proficiency. Those schools that failed to do this were subject to progressive sanctions labeled “corrective action” and eventually “restructuring.”

While all schools must adopt most ESEA-driven policies, high-poverty schools that receive the bulk of Title I funding have been the primary focus of school accountability and redesign mandates. Recipients of the 2009 Race to the Top (RTTT) competitive education redesign grant were required to identify low-performing schools that had to adopt one of four “turnaround” models:

- **TURNAROUND** required replacing the principal and 50 percent of the school staff; providing job-embedded professional development, financial and career incentives; expanding student learning and teacher planning time; and focusing on a community orientation.
- **RESTART** required shuttering the school and reopening with a new operator, generally an Education or Charter Management Operator.
- **TRANSFORMATION** required replacing the principal; providing job-embedded professional development; implementing educator evaluation systems with financial and career rewards; expanding learning time; and focusing on a community orientation.
- **SCHOOL CLOSURE** required shuttering the school and enrolling students in other higher-achieving schools.

Subsequent to RTTT, the federal School Improvement Grant program recipients were also required to impose one of the four turnaround models. Finally, any state seeking a waiver from the school accountability mandates of No Child Left Behind was required to do the same. So over the past 15 years, hundreds of high-poverty, low-performing schools have been labeled as “failing” based on student test scores and forced to adopt a one-size-fits-all model of school redesign.



While no one would argue with a goal of having no school in the “low-performing” category, the notion that the top-down imposition of federally mandated solutions is the answer fails to acknowledge the diversity and demands of individual schools.

Instead, many high-poverty schools have transformed themselves without the imposition of federal models. The Community School model, which is not one of the four turnaround models, is based on implementing proven improvement strategies in a collaborative and collegial process resulting in high-performing schools even in high-poverty neighborhoods.

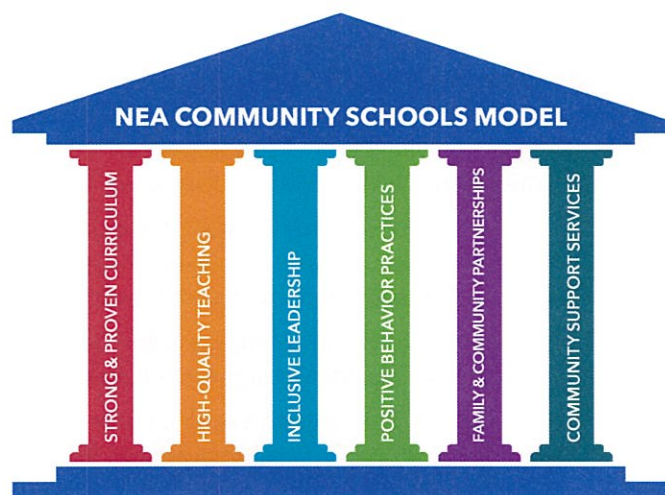
SCHOOL REDESIGN: THE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS MODEL

In community schools, as in all schools, teachers teach and students learn—but with a focus on the whole child: an integrated focus. Much like a smart phone, this integrated approach encompasses many new features: before and after school programs beyond the traditional extracurricular and athletic programs; learning opportunities for family and community members; and health and wellness support. Partnerships with community organizations and businesses broaden the educational and experiential scope of learning making the school a hub of community activity.

These schools are often based on the Sustainable Community Schools (SCS) model, which considers the needs of students and their families; services that are currently provided at the school; the availability and capabilities of local provider agencies; and the willingness of school personnel to change course and accept a new way of operating. The Community School concept has been embraced by single schools; entire school districts, cities, and counties; and, in one case, an entire state (Kentucky). The result has been deeper engagement and greater overall academic success. Community Schools lead to:

- ➔ Lower rates of absenteeism;
- ➔ Better work habits, grades, test scores, and behavior;
- ➔ Higher enrollment in college preparatory classes; and
- ➔ Higher graduation rates.

The Community School Model advanced by NEA includes six pillars of practice. Like most public education models, they are adaptable to the needs of an individual school’s students, staff, families and community.



THE SIX Pillars ARE:

✓ **STRONG AND PROVEN CURRICULUM** -



Educators provide a rich and varied academic program allowing students to acquire both foundational and advanced knowledge and skills in many content areas. Students learn with challenging, culturally relevant materials that address their learning needs and expand their experience. They also learn how to analyze and understand the unique experiences and perspectives of others. The curriculum embraces all content areas including the arts, second languages, and physical education. Rigorous courses such as Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate are offered. Learning and enrichment activities are provided before and after the regular school day, including sports, the arts, and homework assistance. The needs of parents and families are addressed through English-as-a-Second-Language classes, GED preparation, and job training programs.

- ### ✓ **HIGH-QUALITY TEACHING** - Teachers are fully licensed, knowledgeable about their content, and skillful in their practice. Instructional time focuses on learning rather than testing. Individual student needs are identified and learning opportunities are designed to address them. Higher order thinking skills are at the core of instruction so that all students acquire problem solving, critical thinking, and reasoning skills. Educators work collaboratively to plan lessons, analyze student work, and adjust curriculum as required. Experienced educators work closely with novices as mentors, coaches, and "guides on the side," sharing their knowledge and expertise. Together, educators identify the methods and approaches that work and change those that are not meeting student needs.



- ### ✓ **INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP** - Leadership Teams with educators, the Community School Coordinator, and other school staff share the responsibility of school operations with the principal. This Leadership Team ensures that the community school strategy remains central in the decision-making process. The team plans development and implementation that includes thinking about sustainability that involves not just fund-raising but also organizing resources in new and more effective ways. A Community School Committee inclusive of families, community partners, school staff, youth, and other stakeholders from the school's various constituencies works in collaboration with the Leadership Team.



- ### ✓ **POSITIVE BEHAVIOR PRACTICES** - Community school educators emphasize positive relationships and interactions, and model these through their own behavior. Negative behaviors and truancy are acknowledged and addressed in ways that hold students accountable while showing them they are still valued members of the school community. Restorative discipline practices such as peer mediation, community service and post-conflict resolution help students learn from their mistakes and foster positive, healthy school climates where respect and compassion are core principles. Zero-tolerance practices leading to suspension and expulsion are avoided.



- ### ✓ **FAMILY AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS** - Families, caregivers and community members are partners in creating dynamic, flexible community schools. Their engagement is not related to a specific project or program, but is on-going and extends beyond volunteerism to roles in decision-making, governance and advocacy. Their voices are critical to articulating and achieving the school's overall mission and goals. When families and educators work together, students are more engaged learners who earn higher grades and enroll in more challenging classes; student attendance and grade and school completion rates improve.





- ✓ **COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES** – Community school educators recognize that students often come to school with challenges that impact their ability to learn, explore, and develop in the classroom. Because learning does not happen in isolation, community schools provide meals, health care, mental-health counseling, and other services before, during, and after school. These wraparound services are integrated into the fabric of the school that follows the Whole Child tenets.² Connections to the community are critically important so support services and referrals are available for families and other community members.

NEA COMMUNITY SCHOOLS STRATEGY WEBINARS

In September and October 2016, NEA offered and recorded six webinars focusing on elements of the Community Schools model. Each webinar is approximately one-hour divided into four parts: an introduction; two PowerPoint presentations by experts on the topic; and a Q&A with those participating. With each are web links to online resources and downloadable files. School leadership teams and community schools planning teams may find these webinars useful, not only for enhancing their own understanding of this model, but there are resources and links that may be useful to community partners, families, and others interested in working with the school.

- ✓ **COMMUNITY SCHOOLS: A STRATEGY FOR TRANSFORMING STRUGGLING SCHOOLS**
- ✓ **THE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS TRANSFORMATION PROCESS: KEY PLAYERS**
- ✓ **INSIDE A COMMUNITY SCHOOL: WORKING TOGETHER TOWARDS A SINGLE VISION**
- ✓ **COMMUNITY SCHOOLS: BEST TRANSFORMATIONAL PRACTICES**
- ✓ **COMMUNITY SCHOOLS: FUNDING & SUSTAINABILITY**
- ✓ **SCALING UP COMMUNITY SCHOOLS: STRATEGIES ACROSS THE COUNTRY**

COMMUNITY SCHOOL MODEL IMPLEMENTATION

The process of adopting a community school model requires collaborative leadership from administrators, teachers, other school staff, families, youth, community members and potential school partners. This **COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PLANNING TEAM** should focus on four key elements of the planning and implementation process. Because some planners are not educators, having a shared vocabulary about key educational terms is essential. For each handbook section, educational terminology will be defined using the ASCD's Lexicon of Learning.³

- STEP 1. ASSET AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT:** An inclusive process which includes families, students, community members, partners and school staff who define “what we have” and “what we need.” Asset assessment articulates the strengths and capabilities available within the school, the community and by potential partners. Needs assessment defines specific issues, concerns, and deficits to be addressed.
- STEP 2. STRATEGIC PLAN:** Describes the school's vision, values and mission. The plan articulates how assets may be used to address needs with the goal of high academic, civic and personal outcomes for all students. The plan focuses on curriculum, high-quality teaching, wraparound services, positive behavioral practices, parent and community engagement and inclusive leadership.

² For more information on The Whole Child Tenets developed by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, go to <http://www.ascd.org/whole-child.aspx>

³ ASCD Lexicon of Learning available at <http://www.ascd.org/Publications/Lexicon-of-Learning/C.aspx>

STEP 3. ENGAGEMENT OF PARTNERS: Organizations, businesses and community-based entities that historically have not engaged with the school are recognized as assets and their expertise is critical to implementing the community school pillars.

STEP 4. COMMUNITY SCHOOL COORDINATOR: The Coordinator facilitates the development and implementation of the strategic plan in collaboration with school and community members/partners; oversees the alignment of assets with needs; and manages the integration of before and after school programs and wraparound services with the academic program and schedule. The Coordinator may also engage in fund raising activities.

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PLANNING TEAM

A Community School Planning Team should include representatives from the various constituencies that will work with and/or benefit from the school's academic, enrichment, and social programs. The questions below will help in developing a process for identifying team members. Remember that having different voices and viewpoints is a powerful method for getting "outside the box" thinking.

Key Question	Response	Potential Team Member(s)
Who are the key stakeholders that should be part of our team?	☐ Teachers ☐ Families ☐ Administrators ☐ Community members ☐ Paraprofessionals ☐ Businesses ☐ Students ☐ Health & Welfare organizations ☐ Other: _____	

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

- Who will take responsibility for scheduling meetings [site, date, time] and communicating to the team members?
- Who will take responsibility for writing notes in a timely fashion and circulating them to team members?
- Who will communicate with stakeholders about the team work as it progresses: students, families, community members and partners should be kept informed.
- Will the Planning Team have subgroups that work on specific issues or pillars? If so, how will this be done?
- How often are the meetings and for how long?



Discussion Questions for Stakeholders	Response
Who are the students and families that our school serves?	
What do they need?	
What is the current mission of our school?	
What might be the mission of our Community School?	
What will our school look like when a Community Schools Model is in place?	
What will students' and teachers' experiences in the school look like?	
When we walk through our Community School what will it look like? Sound like?	
Are there schools near us that we can visit to gather information and ideas?	
How will we develop a sense of shared purpose?	
What communications methods will we use to share our thoughts and work with the larger school community?	
How will we collect feedback about our work from students, families, community members, and partners?	
How will we make decisions about our school design process?	
Who will be responsible for what as we move through this work?	
How will we get the support of the school community for our final plan?	

SWOT ANALYSIS

The first step that the Planning Team may take is completing a SWOT Analysis.⁴ Strengths, Weakness, Opportunity, Threat are the elements of SWOT analysis, the purpose is to develop a fuller awareness of what exists as a means of moving forward with strategic planning and decision making. Doing this at the beginning of the planning process helps the team to come to communicate and understand the different perspective represented. In addition, this basic analysis tool may be useful as the Planning Team presents its work and ideas to stakeholders.

4 Adapted from University of Kansas Community Tool Box, Section 14: SWOT Analysis. Available online at <http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/assessment/assessing-community-needs-and-resources/swot-analysis/main>

List your internal factors: **Strengths (S)** and **Weaknesses (W)**.

- **Human resources** – educators, parent and community volunteers, community partners, families, students,
- **Physical resources** – your location, building, play grounds or playing fields, equipment
- **Financial** – federal, state and local funding; grants funding, other funding sources
- **Activities and processes** – teaching and learning experiences, before and after school programs, extracurricular and athletic programs
- **Past experiences** – building blocks for learning and success, your reputation in the community

Don't be too modest when listing your strengths. If you're having difficulty naming them, start by simply listing your characteristics (e.g., we're small, we're connected to the neighborhood). Some of these will probably be strengths.

Although the strengths and weakness of your school are your internal qualities, don't overlook the perspective of people outside your group. Identify strengths and weaknesses from both your own point of view and that of others, including those you serve or deal with. Do others see problems—or assets—that you don't?

List your external factors: **Opportunities (O)** and **Threats (T)**. Cast a wide net for the external part of the assessment. No school group, program, or neighborhood is immune to outside events and forces. Consider your connectedness, for better and worse, as you compile this part of your SWOT list. Forces and facts that your school does not control include:

- **Future trends in education**
- **The economy** – local, national, or international
- **Funding sources** – local taxes, state taxes, federal entitlements and grants, other sources of funding
- **Demographics** – changes in the composition of the student body and their families
- **The physical environment** – physical plant and grounds, furniture, classroom size, other instructional and learning spaces
- **Legislation** – state and federal education laws and regulations
- **Local, national or international events**

USE OF SWOT ANALYSIS

Understanding the factors that currently affect the school will help in defining what the Team needs to learn from the asset and needs assessment by: identifying the issues or problems that the Community School Model will be designed to change, setting goals, and creating an Action Plan.



SWOT Option 1:

Each team member should complete the following prior to the first meeting.

From your perspective, what are the strengths and weaknesses of our current school in terms of meeting the needs of the students and their families? What opportunities do you see? What threats?

WITHIN THE SCHOOL				OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL			
STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS

SWOT Option 2:

If the team would rather do this as a brainstorming session, then positives and the negatives can be listed together:

POSITIVES	NEGATIVES
➡ STRENGTHS	➡ WEAKNESSES
➡ ASSETS	➡ LIMITATIONS
➡ RESOURCES	➡ RESTRICTIONS
➡ OPPORTUNITIES	➡ THREATS
➡ PROSPECTS	➡ CHALLENGES

SWOT Option 3:

In this instance, the team would use a SWOT matrix—which could be completed individually and then shared with the whole group or done as a whole group activity.

	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
	1. 2. 3. 4.	1. 2. 3. 4.
OPPORTUNITIES	OPPORTUNITY-STRENGTH	OPPORTUNITY-WEAKNESS
1. 2. 3. 4.	Use the strength to take advantage of opportunities. 1. 2.	Overcome weaknesses by taking advantage of opportunities. 1. 2.
THREATS		THREAT-WEAKNESS
1. 2. 3. 4.	Use strengths to avoid threats. 1. 2.	Minimize weaknesses and avoid threats. 1. 2.

ASSET AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

This handbook outlines an Asset and Needs Assessment tool each of the six Community Schools Model Pillars that covers a wide range of elements. Some suggested practices may be pertinent and some may not be given the grades taught, students served, or family and community requirements. The Team should use those elements that help in planning and implementation.

Collecting relevant information related to each pillar is critical. For example, to determine if the school has a strong and proven curriculum, documents must be collected and reviewed; to determine if this curriculum is engaging and culturally relevant, student input is essential.

The Team may wish to conduct surveys of students, staff and families to gather evidence prior to developing a plan, especially if only anecdotal evidence is available. The National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments, a U.S. Department of Education office, keeps a list with online links to surveys and assessments of school climate; available online at <https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/topic-research/school-climate-measurement/school-climate-survey-compendium>



SOME SURVEYS THAT ARE AVAILABLE AT NO COST/LOW COST INCLUDE:

- ASCD Needs Assessment and School Improvement Tool available online at <http://www.ascd.org/news-media/Press-Room/News-Releases/ASCD-Releases-Free-Online-School-Improvement-Tool.aspx>. According to the ASCD Web site, this survey is “ideal for schools developing and refining strategic plans.” The 15-minute survey evaluates the school’s strengths and weaknesses in school climate and culture; curriculum and instruction; leadership; family and community engagement; professional development and staff capacity; assessment; and sustainability of a whole child approach to education.
- The Federation for Community Schools has a free *Community Needs Assessment* available online at <http://www.ilcommunityschools.org/images/files/docs/Community%20Needs%20Assessment%20-%20ALL.pdf>. This includes sample student assessments, teacher assessments, parent interest surveys, and community focus group design. The drawback is that all are paper-and-pencil surveys. Also, a School and Community Conditions Analysis form is provided.
- A student survey is the Tripod Project available online at <http://tripoded.com>. Student surveys for K through Grade 12 were created by Ron Ferguson a professor at Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government, which focuses on the “seven Cs”—care, confer, captivate, clarify, consolidate, challenge and classroom a management.
- West Virginia School Health Technical Assistance Center provides a number of school-based health center surveys and tools accessible online at https://livewell.marshall.edu/mutac/?page_id=269&page_id=269

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS: NEA RESOURCES

NEA Community Schools homepage: <http://www.nea.org/home/66319.htm>

Alvarez, B. (2015). Can community schools dampen the school takeover fever? *NEA Today*, December 18, 2015. Available online at <http://neatoday.org/2015/12/18/community-schools/>

Eskelsen, L. (2016). Snake oil (and vouchers) don't work. Community schools do! *Lily's Blackboard*, January 27, 2016. Available online at <http://lilysblackboard.org/2016/01/snake-oil-and-vouchers-doesnt-work-community-schools-do/>

Get ESSA Right (2017). National Education Association. Available online at <http://getessaright.org/>
Comprehensive website that explains the Every Student Succeeds Act, the opportunities for educators and students that it brings, and implementation resources and support.

Katz, B. (2015). MN educators advance community schools as game-changer in closing achievement gap. *Education Votes*, December 15, 2015. Available online at <http://educationvotes.nea.org/2015/12/15/mn-educators-advance-community-schools-as-game-changer-in-closing-achievement-gap/>

NEA Community School Strategy Webinars. These are recorded webinars, each about 1 hour that includes a presentation and discussion by those who attended. Available online at <http://www.nea.org/home/68381.htm>

- Community schools: A strategy for transforming struggling schools
- The community schools transformation process: Key players
- Inside a community school: working together towards a single vision
- Community schools: Best transformational practices
- Community schools: Funding and sustainability
- Scaling up community schools: Strategies across the country

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS: OTHER RESOURCES

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. (Undated). Whole child tenets. Available at to <http://www.ascd.org/whole-child.aspx>

The five whole child tenets align with the NEA Community Schools Model pillars: Each student enters school healthy and learns about and practices a healthy lifestyle; learns in an environment that is physically and emotionally safe for students and adults; is actively engaged in learning and is connected to the school and broader community; has access to personalized learning and is supported by qualified, caring adults; and is challenged academically and prepared for success in college or further study and for employment and participation in a global environment.

Children's Aid Society. (2008). Community schools: Opening doors of opportunity. YouTube video posted on July 8, 2008. Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZmXzASDyF4>

In this 11-minute video, the overall approach to community schools as implemented in the Washington Heights neighborhood in upper Manhattan is described.



Coalition for Community Schools at http://www.communityschools.org/aboutschools/what_is_a_community_school.aspx

This Web site hosted by the Institute for Educational Leadership provides useful information for educators, families and community members interested in beginning or supporting a community school. The site features an FAQ, national community school models and a community school directory. Provides excellent graphic depictions of four community schools in Oakland, Baltimore, New York and Lehigh Valley, PA.

Darling-Hammond, L., Bae, S., Cook-Harvey, C.M., Lam, L., Mercer, C., Podolksy, An., and Stosich, E.L. (2016). Pathways to new accountability through the Every Student Succeeds Act. Learning Policy Institute. Available online at https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/Pathways_New-Accountability_Through_Every_Student_Succeeds_Act_04202016.pdf

This policy brief examines the options available under the Every Student Succeeds Act. Community Schools and Wraparound Services are discussed beginning on page 39.

Dingerson, L. (2015). Investing in what works: Community-driven strategies for strong public schools in Georgia. Southern Education Foundation and Anneberg Institute. Available online at <http://annenberginstitute.org/sites/default/files/product/851/files/InvestingInWhatWorks.pdf>

This policy brief outlines eight community-based strategies, including collaborative and stable leadership, quality teaching, restorative behavioral practices, strong curriculum wraparound services, parent-community ties, and investment.

Ferrara, J. and Santiago, E. (2014). Achieving success in high-poverty schools. ASCD Community schools: Whole Child Education in Action, November 4, 2014. Available online at <http://inservice.ascd.org/community-schools-whole-child-education-in-action/>

This blog post concisely describes community schools, their mission and their value especially for students living in poverty.

Frankl, E. (2016). Community schools: Transforming struggling schools into thriving schools. The Center for Popular Democracy, Coalition for Community Schools and Southern Education Foundation. Available online at http://www.southerneducation.org/Publications/Community-Schools-Layout_021116.aspx

This report provides an in-depth explanation of community schools; examples of eight models from around the country; and recommendations for those considering adopting or adapting the model.

Great Schools Partnership. (Undated). The glossary of education reform. Available online at <http://edglossary.org>

Comprehensive and searchable glossary of educational terminology designed for non-educators. Great Schools Partnership is a consortium of Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont; the glossary is supported with funding from the Education Writers Association and the Nellie Mae Foundation.

Oakland Unified School District. (2014). Oakland community schools: We're college, career & community ready! YouTube video posted July 18, 2014. Available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r_2zFFQxr7M

In this 6-minute video, the Oakland Unified School District outlines how their community schools prepare youth for college, career, and community. Hear Oakland youth, teachers, principals, families, and community school managers share their views on how community schools prepare them to be College, Career, & Community Ready!

Santiago, E., /Ferrarra, J. and Quinn, J. (2012). *Whole child, whole school: Applying theory to practice in a community school*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Education.

This book examines the ways in which educating the whole child in community school addresses obstacles to learning faced by students living in poverty. A case study highlights the successful journey of one school that transformed itself into a community school. Strategies for using the resources of community partnerships as a framework for school renewal and improvement in student achievement are outlined. The authors share their first hand experiences building a community school from the ground up, as well as providing the national perspective on community schools.

Santiago, E., /Ferrarra, J. and Blank, M. (2008). A full-service school fulfills its promise. *Educational Leadership*, April 2008, 65 (7) 44-47. Available online at http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational_leadership/apr08/vol65/num07/A_Full-Service_School_Fulfills_Its_Promise.aspx

Article outlines the actions taken at Thomas Edison Elementary School in Port Chester, NY to become a full-service community school. This included a school-based health center, therapy and family casework, parent education and capacity building, and after-school enrichment.

Spokane Public Schools. (2015). Why I chose the community school. YouTube video posted on October 6, 2015. Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MVtHoUPdScg>

In this 7-minute YouTube video students share why they chose the community school and explain what sets it apart from the traditional high school. A link to more information is available at www.spokaneschools.org/tcs

University of Kansas. (Undated). The Community Tool Box, a Web resource <http://ctb.ku.edu/en/default.aspx>

A comprehensive community toolbox developed by Work Group for Community Health and Development at the University of Kansas. Tools has 46 chapters that fall into six broad categories: Understanding the Community Context; Collaborative Planning; Developing Leadership and Enhancing Participation; Community Action and Intervention; Evaluating Community Initiatives; and Promoting and Sustaining the Initiative.

West Virginia Community Schools. (2015). Building community and school partnerships for student success: A resource guide for West Virginia. Available online at <http://wvde.state.wv.us/healthy-schools/CommunitySchools/CommunitySchoolGuidanceDocumentMarch2015.pdf>

This state guide provides information about the levels of community school development from inquiring/exploring to sustaining/excelling; resources related to eight framework elements; and other recommended resources.

Williams, D.T., and Rural School and Community Trust. (2010). The rural solution: How community schools can reinvigorate rural education. The Center for American Progress. Available online at <https://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/issues/2010/09/pdf/ruralschools.pdf>

Twenty percent of US students attend rural schools. While all different, rural schools share a common challenge of providing quality education with inadequate financing, teacher shortages, and inaccessible or unaffordable services for students and their families. This report argues that full-service community schools hold great potential for overcoming these challenges.



Wolfe Street Academy. (2016). How a community school helps ELLs succeed. YouTube video, posted April 12, 2016. Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0OQ-mZA6hI0>

This 14-minute YouTube video developed by the Wolfe Street Academy, a public school in Baltimore with more than 76 percent English language learners, demonstrates how a community school is supporting its students and families through programs and services that include dental screenings, food giveaways, after-school activities, and more.



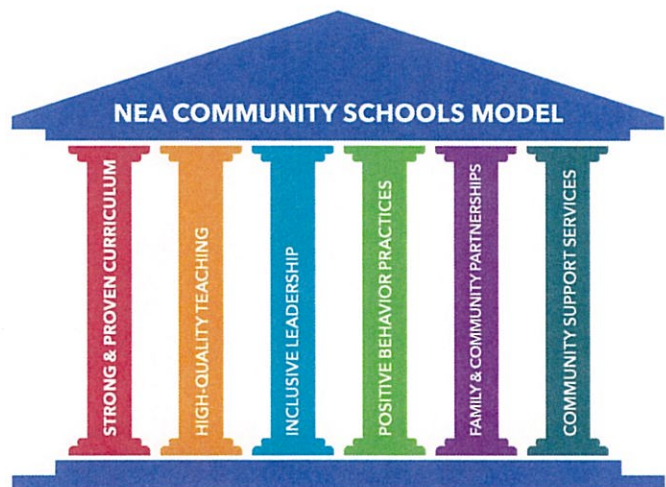
STRONG AND PROVEN CURRICULUM

A PILLAR OF THE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS MODEL



COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM: *Why we need to provide all students with a comprehensive curriculum that includes social studies, foreign languages, the arts, music, and more—rather than focusing narrowly on preparing students for standardized tests in reading and math.¹*

IN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS, educators provide a rich and varied academic program allowing students to acquire both foundational and advanced knowledge and skills in many content areas. Students learn with challenging, culturally relevant materials that address their learning needs and expand their experience. They also learn how to analyze and understand the unique experiences and perspectives of others. The curriculum embraces all content areas including the arts, second languages, and physical education. Rigorous courses such as Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate are offered. Learning and enrichment activities are provided before and after the regular school day; including sports, the arts, and homework assistance. The needs of parents and families are addressed through English-as-a-Second-Language classes, GED preparation, and job training programs.



SHARED VOCABULARY²

- ✓ **ACADEMIC LANGUAGE** – refers to the language used in classroom lessons, books, tests, and assignments; the language that students are expected to master in order to learn effectively in schools and academic programs. Academic language is the language of learning in general and specific to content areas. Examples include knowing the meaning and being able to use the following words: analyze, persuade, compare, contrast, summarize, demonstrate, describe, explain, interpret, and infer.

1 For more on NEA's position and resources on curriculum, go to <http://www.nea.org/home/12957.htm>

2 All Shared Vocabulary definitions are adapted from The Glossary of Education Reform, available online at <http://edglossary.org>

- ✓ **CONTENT KNOWLEDGE** - refers to the body of knowledge and information that teachers teach and that students are expected to learn in a given subject or content area, such as English language arts, mathematics, science, or social studies. Content knowledge generally refers to the facts, concepts, theories, and principles that are taught and learned in specific academic courses, rather than to related skills—such as reading, writing, or researching—that students also learn in school.
- ✓ **CURRICULUM** - refers to the lessons and academic content taught in a specific course or program. Depending on how broadly educators define or employ the term, curriculum typically refers to the knowledge and skills students are expected to learn, which includes the learning standards or learning objectives they are expected to meet; the units and lessons that teachers teach; the assignments and projects given to students; the books, materials, videos, presentations, and readings used in a course; and the tests, assessments, and other methods used to evaluate student learning. An individual teacher's curriculum, for example, would be the specific learning standards, lessons, assignments, and materials used to organize and teach a particular course.
- ✓ **LEARNING STANDARDS** - are concise, written descriptions of what students are expected to know and be able to do at a specific stage of their education. Learning standards describe educational objectives—i.e., what students should have learned by the end of a course, grade level, or grade span—but they do not describe any particular teaching practice, curriculum, or assessment method.
- ✓ **LEARNING OBJECTIVES** - are brief statements that describe what students will be expected to learn by the end of the school year, course, unit, lesson, project, or class period. In many cases, learning objectives are the interim academic goals that teachers establish for students who are working toward meeting more comprehensive learning standards.
- ✓ **LEARNING PROGRESSION** - refers to the purposeful sequencing of teaching and learning expectations across multiple developmental stages, ages, or grade levels. Learning progressions are typically categorized and organized by subject area, such as mathematics or science, and they map out a specific sequence of knowledge and skills that students are expected to learn as they progress through their education. The basic idea is to make sure that students are learning age-appropriate material (knowledge and skills that are neither too advanced nor too rudimentary), and that teachers are sequencing learning effectively and avoiding the inadvertent repetition of material that was taught in earlier grades. There are two main characteristics of learning progressions:
 - (1) The standards described at each level are intended to address the specific learning needs and abilities of students at a particular stage of their intellectual, emotional, social, and physical development, and
 - (2) The standards reflect clearly articulated sequences—i.e., the learning expectations for each grade level build upon previous expectations while preparing students for more challenging concepts and more sophisticated coursework at the next level.
- ✓ **21ST CENTURY SKILLS** - refers to a broad set of knowledge, skills, work habits, and character traits that are believed—by educators, college professors, employers, and others—to be critically important to success in today's world, particularly in collegiate programs and contemporary careers and workplaces. Generally speaking, 21st century skills can be applied in all academic subject areas, and in all educational, career, and civic settings throughout a student's life.

The following list provides a brief illustrative overview of the knowledge, skills, work habits, and character traits commonly associated with **21ST CENTURY SKILLS**:

- ➡ Critical thinking, problem solving, reasoning, analysis, interpretation, synthesizing information
- ➡ Research skills and practices, interrogative questioning
- ➡ Creativity, artistry, curiosity, imagination, innovation, personal expression
- ➡ Perseverance, self-direction, planning, self-discipline, adaptability, initiative
- ➡ Oral and written communication, public speaking and presenting, listening
- ➡ Leadership, teamwork, collaboration, cooperation, facility in using virtual workspaces
- ➡ Information and communication technology (ICT) literacy, media and internet literacy, data interpretation and analysis, computer programming
- ➡ Civic, ethical, and social-justice literacy
- ➡ Economic and financial literacy, entrepreneurialism
- ➡ Global awareness, multicultural literacy, humanitarianism
- ➡ Scientific literacy and reasoning, the scientific method
- ➡ Environmental and conservation literacy, ecosystems understanding
- ➡ Health and wellness literacy, including nutrition, diet, exercise, and public health and safety

The **COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PLANNING TEAM** should focus on a Strong and Proven Curriculum as they conduct the needs assessment using the four key elements of the planning and implementation process found on the following pages. Links to NEA and other resources related to strong and proven curriculum are provided at the end of this section.

STRONG & PROVEN CURRICULUM: ASSET & NEEDS ASSESSMENT

STEP 1. A SCHOOL-BASED ASSET AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT: is an inclusive process that families, students, community members, partners, teachers, administrators and other school staff use to define “what we have” and “what we need.” Asset assessment defines the strengths and capabilities available within the school, community and by potential partners. Needs assessment defines issues, concerns, and deficits to be addressed.

The **COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PLANNING TEAM** should review the Shared Vocabulary definitions and discuss how each applies at the school site. Team members then collect and examine evidence from a variety of sources and identify specific curriculum assets and needs, including obstacles or barriers. Each Key Element articulates one aspect of a strong and proven curriculum. The Team may choose to assign each question to two or three team members to better use available time. With regard to curriculum, however, it is essential that each pair or trio have one school-based educator with curriculum familiarity as a member.

View the NEA YouTube video, *Community Schools–Strong Curriculum and High-Quality Teaching*, prior to starting the needs assessment; video available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TeRI0nh5E2k>



These questions may guide the Team's efforts to connect students to learning standards and objectives. If they are answered well and addressed through the Community Schools plan, they have the capacity to improve student engagement and learning. The response to these questions should lead the Team to identify specific curriculum assets and needs.

- 1.** What evidence is there from daily work and classroom assessments that each student can independently demonstrate an understanding of the content, concepts, and skills associated with each learning standard or objective?
- 2.** What evidence is there that processes are in place to ensure that each student has the opportunity to learn the content, concepts, and skills associated with each learning standard or objective?
- 3.** What evidence is there that academic language related to the learning standards or objectives is incorporated into each student's learning experiences?
- 4.** What evidence is there that students' learning experiences in lesson and/or unit plans are guided by learning standards or objectives?
- 5.** What evidence is there that learning objectives for individual students are defined such that feedback from observation and assessments provide meaningful information academic achievement?
- 6.** What evidence is there that students are engaged in learning?
- 7.** What evidence is there that students are having meaningful, authentic, and culturally appropriate learning experiences?
- 8.** What evidence is there that students' academic performance is appropriate?

ASSESSMENT OF EXISTING CURRICULUM DOCUMENTS AND PRACTICES

Using the Shared Vocabulary definitions and the questions posed, complete the needs assessment below.

KEY ELEMENT	ASSETS	NEEDS	OBSTACLES	EVIDENCE
General and content area specific academic language				
Content area knowledge and skills				
Content area specific learning standards				
Content specific learning objectives				
Content area specific learning progression				
Content area specific curriculum				
Content area specific 21st century skills				
Content area specific engaging learning experiences				
Content area specific culturally appropriate learning experiences				

ASSESSMENT OF EXISTING CURRICULUM IN SPECIFIC CONTENT AREAS

The Team may engage educators in the process of providing evidence of the curriculum in each content area and grade level, including the assets and needs in each area.

CONTENT AREA	ASSESSMENT OF CURRICULUM DOCUMENTS	ASSESSMENT OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS	ASSETS	NEEDS
English Language Arts Curriculum Total Instructional Time per Week:	☐ Aligned to learning standards ☐ Instructional progression ☐ Available to all educators ☐ Available to families	☐ Sufficient ☐ Aligned to learning standards ☐ Culturally appropriate ☐ Engaging		
Mathematics Curriculum Total Instructional Time per Week:	☐ Aligned to learning standards ☐ Instructional progression ☐ Available to all educators ☐ Available to families	☐ Sufficient ☐ Aligned to learning standards ☐ Culturally appropriate ☐ Engaging		
Science & Technology Curriculum Total Instructional Time per Week:	☐ Aligned to learning standards ☐ Instructional progression ☐ Available to all educators ☐ Available to families	☐ Sufficient ☐ Aligned to learning standards ☐ Culturally appropriate ☐ Engaging		
Social Studies Curriculum Total Instructional Time per Week:	☐ Aligned to learning standards ☐ Instructional progression ☐ Available to all educators ☐ Available to families	☐ Sufficient ☐ Aligned to learning standards ☐ Culturally appropriate ☐ Engaging		

CONTENT AREA	ASSESSMENT OF CURRICULUM DOCUMENTS	ASSESSMENT OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS	TOTAL TIME PER INSTRUCTIONAL WEEK	OBSTACLES
The Arts Curriculum ☐ Art ☐ Music ☐ Dance ☐ Theatre ☐ Other Total Instructional Time per Week:	☐ Aligned to learning standards ☐ Instructional progression ☐ Available to all educators ☐ Available to families	☐ Sufficient ☐ Aligned to learning standards ☐ Culturally appropriate ☐ Engaging		
Foreign Languages Curriculum Total Instructional Time per Week:	☐ Aligned to learning standards ☐ Instructional progression ☐ Available to all educators ☐ Available to families	☐ Sufficient ☐ Aligned to learning standards ☐ Culturally appropriate ☐ Engaging		
Physical Education & Health Curriculum Total Instructional Time per Week:	☐ Aligned to learning standards ☐ Instructional progression ☐ Available to all educators ☐ Available to families	☐ Sufficient ☐ Aligned to learning standards ☐ Culturally appropriate ☐ Engaging		

COMMUNITY SCHOOL MODEL IMPLEMENTATION: STRATEGIC PLAN

STEP 2. A STRATEGIC PLAN: describes the school's vision, values and mission. The plan articulates how assets may be used to address needs with the goal of high academic, civic and personal outcomes for all students. The plan focuses on curriculum, high-quality teaching, wraparound services, positive behavioral practices, parent and community engagement and inclusive leadership.

THE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PLANNING TEAM should articulate the school's vision, values and mission with regard to the curriculum to be taught. This necessitates having a clear progression in each content area across all grades taught. The Team should be guided by the following questions:

1. **VISION:** As a school community, what academic goals do we want to achieve? (See example below)
2. **STRATEGIES:** What steps will we take over the next three years to realize this vision and attain these academic goals?
3. **PRIORITIES:** Given the steps we have described, how should we prioritize them so that we are progressing in an organized and sequential manner?
4. **ACTION PLAN:** Who will do what? By when? Involving whom? What resources are needed to accomplish this work?

AN EXAMPLE OF A SCHOOL VISION comes from the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Literary and Fine Arts School is a K-8 magnet school in Evanston/Skokie, Illinois.³

The mission of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Literary and Fine Arts School is to provide all students with a dynamic educational experience that focuses on the fine and performing arts and emphasizes literature and writing.

A FINE ARTS FOCUSED CURRICULUM...

- ➞ Unlocks the door to learning and allows students to view the world through the eyes of an artist
- ➞ Cultivates the skills of collaboration, communication, creativity and innovation, critical thinking, problem-solving, and leadership
- ➞ Presents students with opportunities to explore big ideas and essential questions
- ➞ Uses the Fine Arts as a tool for differentiated instruction and assessment for all students
- ➞ Inspires increased student academic achievement and engagement

A CURRICULUM THAT EMPHASIZES LITERATURE AND WRITING...

- ➞ Supports student access to literary works from diverse social, cultural, and historical contexts
- ➞ Extends writing and publishing opportunities beyond the classroom
- ➞ Encourages writing through literature
- ➞ Enriches the classroom experience with regular author experience opportunities

³ For more information, go to <http://www.district65.net/domain/430>



King Arts has created a dynamic curriculum by integrating the following four pillars into its instructional program: Arts-Integrated Learning; Enhanced Fine Arts Learning; Performance, Publication and Enhanced Literacy, and Inclusion. This arts emphasis is in addition to meeting the District 65 curricular standards.

COMMUNITY SCHOOL MODEL IMPLEMENTATION: ENGAGEMENT OF PARTNERS

STEP 3. PARTNERS: may include organizations, businesses and community-based entities that historically have not engaged with the school are recognized as assets and their expertise is critical to implementing the community school pillars.

THE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PLANNING TEAM should review the assets and needs identified and determine if there are areas or gaps in which community-based organizations could work in partnership with the school to enhance the academic and enrichment activities of the students.

With regard to **CURRICULUM**, the community partners may have experience, expertise and resources to enhance in-school learning and/or extend student learning outside of school. Some of this learning may take place outside of the normal school day or school year. The NEA Foundation⁴ suggests different models in which community-based partners may extend learning:

➔ **EXTENDED LEARNING TIME:** School models that extend the traditional school day or year to balance the core curriculum with enrichment opportunities. This may include after-school structured programs coordinated with the Community School Coordinator designed to provide children and youth with safe, supervised activities that promote learning across time, contexts and developmental stages.

FOR EXAMPLE, the Kuss Middle School in Fall River, MA public schools⁵ in collaboration with the Boys & Girls Club, the YMCA, and the SMILES program and funding from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts added 300 additional hours per student per year for enrichment activities, more social and emotional support, and community support services.

➔ **SCHOOL VACATION LEARNING PROGRAMS:** Structured programs and enrichment activities designed to supplement academic learning and promote enrichment opportunities during the non-school summer months and other school vacation breaks.

➔ **SCHOOL COMMUNITY NETWORKS:** Intentional connections between schools and community organizations for the purpose of promoting and supporting students' learning needs.

FOR EXAMPLE, the Pittsburgh public schools⁶ in collaboration with 27 community-based organizations developed the Summer Dreamers' Academy, a teacher-led design for summer learning. Math, reading and writing instruction in the morning is followed by afternoon enrichment activities led by community partners.

4 Adapted from NEA Foundation, Expanding Learning Opportunities to Close the Achievement Gaps: Lessons from Union-District Collaboration. (2012). Available online at <https://www.neafoundation.org/content/assets/2012/04/elo-final-2.pdf>

5 For more information about the Kuss ELT Program, go to <http://neatoday.org/2016/11/22/longer-school-days/>

6 For more information, go to <http://www.pps.k12.pa.us/summerdreamers>

COMMUNITY SCHOOL MODEL IMPLEMENTATION: COMMUNITY SCHOOL COORDINATOR

STEP 4. THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL COORDINATOR: facilitates the development and implementation of the strategic plan in collaboration with school and community members/partners; oversees the alignment of assets with needs; and manages the integration of before and after school programs and wraparound services with the academic program and schedule. The Coordinator may also engage in fund raising activities.

Most of the Coordinator's responsibilities relate to other Community School Pillars. However, with regard to **CURRICULUM**, the Community School Coordinator is the bridge between the school and community and facilitates the alignment of community-based and partner-provided learning experiences with the curriculum standards, objectives and progressions. The Coordinator uses familiarity with the curriculum or requests from individuals or teams of teachers to identify and arrange for learning activities, using community-based resources or partner-provided expertise, in which both students and family members may engage.

For example, fifth grade students have completed a unit of instruction on the history of their community. In order to extend the learning by engaging students in a real world experience, the Coordinator arranges for a guided tour of an historic property in the community with follow-up learning activities provided by either the historic property or teachers for students to complete.

NEA RESOURCES

NEA YouTube video: Community schools—strong curriculum and high-quality teaching available online at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TeRI0nh5E2k>

This 5-minute video explains two of the pillars: Strong and Proven Curriculum and High-Quality Teaching.

NEA Curriculum homepage: <http://www.nea.org/home/37004.htm?q=curriculum>

Backgrounder: Standards & curriculum. (2013). Available online at https://www.nea.org/assets/docs/Standards_and_Curriculum_FINAL.pdf

Two-page summary of key federal curriculum terminology.

Culture, abilities, resilience, effort: Strategies for closing the achievement gaps. Third edition, (2007). Available online at https://www.nea.org/assets/docs/mf_CAREbook0804.pdf

Comprehensive resource handbook defines specific learning needs with approaches, strategies and activities to address them in four critical areas: culture, language and economic differences; unrecognized and undeveloped abilities; resilience; and effort and motivation. Chapter 7: Developing a Systems Perspective for School Organization may provide useful planning guidance.

Diversity Toolkit. (2015). Available online at <http://www.nea.org/tools/diversity-toolkit.html>

This online toolkit provides an introduction to the multiple facets of diversity. It offers basic information, a short list of strategies and tools, and suggestions for how to find out more. Chapters focus on class and income; cultural competence for educators; English language learners; gender; race and ethnicity; sexual orientation and gender identity; and social justice.

NEA Foundation Report. (2012). Expanding learning opportunities to close the achievement gaps: Lessons from union-district collaboration. Available online at <https://www.neafoundation.org/content/assets/2012/04/elo-final-2.pdf>

Reviews what expanded learning opportunities are and how they can help close achievement gaps, identifies ways in which teachers and district can create and implement them. Three case studies are included.

Promoting educators' cultural competences to better serve culturally diverse students. (2008). Available online at http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/PB13_CulturalCompetence08.pdf

Four-page policy brief defines "cultural competence" and its importance to engaging and appropriate instruction and outreach to families.

Universal design for learning (UDL): Making learning accessible and engaging for all students. (2008). Available online at http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/PB23_UDL08.pdf

Long, C. (2013). Author of "Quiet" talks about how to engage introverts in the classroom.

NEA Today, March 21, 2013. Available online at <http://neatoday.org/2013/03/21/author-of-quiet-talks-about-how-to-engage-introverts-in-the-classroom/>

Interview with Susan Cain, author of "Quiet: The power of introverts in a world that can't stop talking," in which she describes strengths of introverts, how they are often marginalized, and how to engage them in the classroom.

Olsen, L. (2014). Meeting the unique needs of long term English language learners. Available online at https://www.nea.org/assets/docs/15420_LongTermEngLangLearner_final_web_3-24-14.pdf

English language learners are the nation's fastest-growing student population, yet they are disproportionately underserved and underachieving. This brief explains the reasons why some students are "long-term ELLs," the impact of narrow curriculum on language development, and identifies "what works."

OTHER RESOURCES

Gandara, P. (2015). The implications of deeper learning for adolescent immigrants and English language learners. Deeper Learning Research Series, Jobs for the Futures' Students at the Center. Available online at <http://www.jff.org/sites/default/files/publications/materials/The-Implications-of-DL-for-Adolescent%20Immigrants-and-ELLs-110415a.pdf>

A 15-page policy brief that identifies, synthesizes, and shares research findings on effective approaches to teaching and learning at the high school level.

Hunter, D. (2014). Engaging curriculum: A foundation for positive school culture. ASCD The Whole Child Blog, April 18, 2014. Available online at <http://www.wholechildeducation.org/blog/engaging-curriculum-a-foundation-for-positive-school-culture>

Blogger is a Seattle teacher explains how disengaged students were impacted by lessons inspired by their interest in the Zombie Apocalypse. This link includes a 2.5-minute video explaining what he did.

Nellie Mae Foundation Web site at <https://www.nmefoundation.org>

New England's largest public charity focused solely on education. The mission includes "growing a greater variety of higher quality educational opportunities that enable all learners—especially and essentially underserved learners—to obtain the skills, knowledge and supports necessary to become civically engaged, economically self-sufficient life-long learners." Web site provides resources on student-centered learning.

Nellie Mae Foundation. (2014). Putting students at the center: A reference guide. Available online at <https://www.nmefoundation.org/getmedia/7fe89c01-dc9c-496f-80ed-1a53f25d593f/NMEF-sclreframeweb2>

Provides a framework for student-centered learning based on four tenets: personalized learning, competency-based learning, student-owned learning, and anytime, anywhere learning all of which leads to deeper learning. Includes helpful graphics.

Southern Regional Education Bureau (2012). Preparing all teachers to use proven, effective instructional methods across the curriculum. (2012). High Schools That Work brief, April 2012. Available online at http://publications.sreb.org/2012/12v08w_bestpractices_instructionalmethods.pdf

A High Schools That Work brief that outlines the importance of incorporating reading, writing and listening strategies into all content area instruction while keeping students' interest in mind as a means of creating engaging and culturally relevant units of instruction. Includes strategies for all students and for English language learners.

Wolfe, E., Steinberg, A., and Hoffman, N. (Eds.) (2013). *Anytime, anywhere: Student-centered learning for schools and teachers*. Cambridge: Harvard Education Press. [Cloth: \$50; Paper: \$30]

This 232-page text synthesizes existing research and practices in the emerging field of student-centered learning, and includes profiles of schools that have embraced this approach.



THE SIX PILLARS OF COMMUNITY SCHOOLS TOOLKIT

NEA RESOURCE GUIDE FOR EDUCATORS, FAMILIES & COMMUNITIES

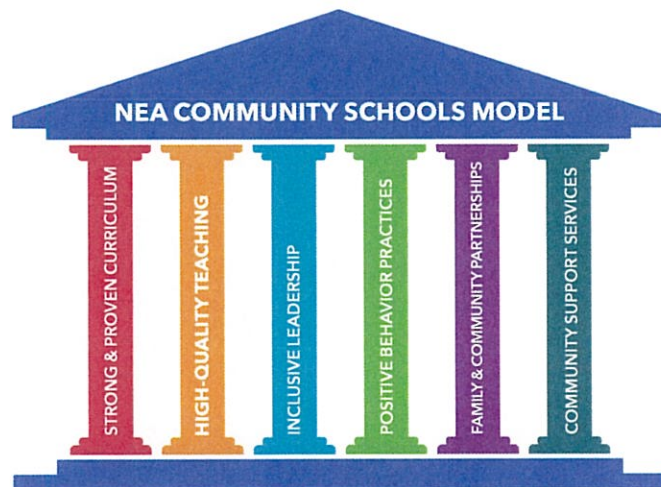
HIGH-QUALITY TEACHING

A PILLAR OF THE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS MODEL



GREAT TEACHERS: *with the right policy supports, are the ideal agents of meaningful and sustainable change in our most challenged schools. Accomplished and effective teachers help students learn at high levels. They also spread their expertise throughout the school on behalf of all students.*¹

IN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS, teachers are fully licensed, knowledgeable about their content, and skillful in their practice. Instructional time focuses on learning rather than testing. Individual student needs are identified and learning opportunities are designed to address them. Educators coordinate with community service partners so that all programs support student learning. Higher order thinking skills are at the core of instruction so that all students acquire problem solving, critical thinking, and reasoning skills. Educators work collaboratively to plan lessons, analyze student work, and adjust curriculum as required. Experienced educators work closely with novices as mentors, coaches, and “guides on the side,” sharing their knowledge and expertise. Together, educators identify the methods and approaches that work and change those that are not meeting student needs.



SHARED VOCABULARY²

➔ ACADEMIC SUPPORT STRATEGIES:

refers to a wide variety of instructional methods, educational services, or school resources provided to students in the effort to help them accelerate their learning progress, catch up with their peers, meet learning standards, or generally succeed in school. The following are some representative examples of common forms of academic support:

- 1 For more on NEA's vision for high-quality teachers in challenging schools, go to Children of poverty deserve great teachers: One union's commitment to changing the status quo. Washington: National Education Association and Center for Teacher Quality. Available online at http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/HE/children_of_poverty_09.pdf
- 2 All Shared Vocabulary definitions are adapted from The Glossary of Education Reform, available online at <http://edglossary.org>



HIGH-QUALITY
TEACHING

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- ✓ **AFTER-HOURS STRATEGIES:** Schools may provide after-school or before-school programs, usually within the school building, that provide students with tutoring or mentoring, or that help students prepare for class or acquire study skills, for example.
 - ✓ **CLASSROOM-BASED STRATEGIES:** Teachers continually monitor student performance and learning needs, and then adjust what they teach or how they teach to improve student learning.
 - ✓ **OUTSIDE-OF-SCHOOL STRATEGIES:** Community groups and volunteer-based learning programs, often working in partnership with local public schools, may provide a variety of programs, such as reading programs for young children that are connected to what students are learning in school.
 - ✓ **SCHOOL-BASED STRATEGIES:** Schools create academic-support opportunities during the school day, such as learning labs, to increase the instructional time that academically struggling students receive, while also varying the way that instruction is delivered. For example, if students in a course primarily learn in large or small groups that all work at the same pace, students in a learning lab or other support program might work one-on-one with a teacher and be given more time to practice skills or learn complex concepts.
 - ✓ **TECHNOLOGY-ASSISTED STRATEGIES:** Schools may use digital and online learning applications, such as visual simulations or game-based learning, to help students grasp difficult concepts. Teachers may also use course-management programs that allow them to archive course materials and communicate with students online. These options may be self-directed by students or overseen by teachers, or they may be provided during the school day or for students to work from home at their own pace.
 - ✓ **VACATION-BREAK STRATEGIES:** Strategies such as summer school or “summer bridge programs” may be created to help students catch up or prepare for the next grade. Similar support programs and learning opportunities may be provided during vacation breaks in the fall, winter, and spring.
- ➞ **CLASS SIZE:** refers to the number of students in a classroom. In recent decades, a variety of reform efforts have been focused on decreasing class sizes as a strategy for improving school and student performance. After research studies found that smaller class sizes could have positive effects on student learning and academic achievement, many initiatives—both at the level of state and federal policy, and in individual schools and districts—sought to lower the number of students in a classroom. The basic rationale is that if teachers have fewer students, they can devote more time and attention to each student, including more time diagnosing specific learning needs, critiquing work products, and giving students one-on-one instruction and academic support.
- ➞ **LEARNING EXPERIENCE:** refers to any interaction, course, program, or experience in which learning takes place, whether in traditional academic (schools, classrooms) or nontraditional settings (outside-of-school locations, outdoor environments), or whether it includes traditional educational interactions (students learning from teachers) or nontraditional interactions (students learning through games and interactive software applications). Because students may learn in a wide variety of settings and ways, this term is often a preferred alternative to “course.” Learning experience may also be used to underscore or reinforce the goal of an educational interaction—learning—rather than its location (school, classroom) or format (course, program), for example.

- ➞ **PERSONALIZED LEARNING:** [sometimes called “student-centered learning”] refers to a diverse variety of educational programs, learning experiences, instructional approaches, and academic support strategies that are intended to address the distinct learning needs, interests, aspirations, or cultural backgrounds of individual students. Personalized learning is generally seen as an alternative to so-called “one-size-fits-all” approaches to schooling in which teachers may, for example, provide all students in a given course with the same type of instruction, the same assignments, and the same assessments with little variation or modification from student to student. Personalized learning may also be called student-centered learning, since the general goal is to make individual learning needs the primary consideration in important educational and instructional decisions, rather than what might be preferred, more convenient, or logistically easier for teachers and schools.
- ➞ **PERSONALIZED LEARNING STRATEGIES:** These strategies are intended to increasing the level of choice and personal responsibility students have in the instructional process. Student voice includes the values, opinions, beliefs, perspectives, and cultural backgrounds of individual students and groups of students in a school. It is supported by instructional approaches and techniques that are based on student choices, interests, passions, and ambitions. As an alternative to more traditional forms of instruction in which teachers may make unilateral decisions with little or no input from students, introducing more student voice into the learning process is one way to personalize learning. The following representative examples will help illustrate the concept.
- ✓ **ADVISORIES:** are time in the school day for educators to meet with small groups of students and advise them on academic, social, and postsecondary-planning issues. Students may also be paired with advisors, adult mentors from community organizations or businesses, or peer mentors who meet regularly with students over the course of several months, a year, or multiple years to help them acclimate to a school, navigate educational options, or plan for higher education and careers after graduation.
 - ✓ **AUTHENTIC LEARNING:** refers to a wide variety of educational and instructional techniques focused on connecting what students are taught in school to real-world issues, problems, and applications. The basic idea is that students are more likely to be interested in what they are learning, more motivated to learn new concepts and skills, and better prepared to succeed in college, careers, and adulthood if what they are learning mirrors real-life contexts, equips them with practical and useful skills, and addresses topics that are relevant and applicable to their lives outside of school.
 - ✓ **BLENDED LEARNING:** refers to the practice of using both online and in-person learning experiences when teaching students. In a blended-learning course, for example, students might attend a class taught by a teacher in a traditional classroom setting, while also independently completing online components of the course outside the classroom. In this case, in-class time may be either replaced or supplemented by online learning experiences, and students would learn about the same topics online as they do in class—i.e., the online and in-person learning experiences would parallel and complement one another.
 - ✓ **COMMUNITY-BASED LEARNING:** refers to a wide variety of instructional methods and programs that educators use to connect what is being taught in schools to their surrounding communities, including local institutions, history, literature, cultural heritage, and natural environments. Community-based learning is also motivated by the belief that all communities have intrinsic educational assets and resources that educators can use to enhance learning experiences for students. Synonyms include community-based education, place-based learning, and place-based education, among other terms.

- ✓ **LEARNING PATHWAYS:** refers to a wider and more diverse selection of learning experiences. Common examples include career-related internships that allow students to satisfy school graduation requirements or meet state-required learning standards; dual-enrollment experiences that allow students to take courses at alternate institutions, such as colleges or universities, while also earning academic credit at their home school; or independent-study projects, which allow students to self-design learning experiences in collaboration with a teacher, mentor, or advisor.
- ✓ **MIXED-ABILITY GROUPING:** [or heterogeneous grouping] refers students of various perceived ability levels or past academic performance enrolled in the same course or program. Teachers employ a variety of personalized instructional and academic support strategies generally called differentiation, differentiated learning, or differentiated instruction.
- ✓ **PERSONAL LEARNING PLANS:** describe a student's academic, collegiate, and career goals, while mapping out the educational decisions they need to make to achieve them. Portfolios are a cumulative record of a student's academic work and accomplishments. Teachers, advisors, and educational specialists may use these learning plans and portfolios to guide how they teach and support specific students.
- ✓ **PROJECT-BASED LEARNING:** refers to any approach that utilizes multifaceted projects as a central organizing strategy for educating students. When engaged in project-based learning, students will typically be assigned a project or series of projects that require them to use diverse skills—such as researching, writing, interviewing, collaborating, or public speaking—to produce various work products, such as research papers, scientific studies, public-policy proposals, multimedia presentations, video documentaries, art installations, or musical and theatrical performances, for example. Unlike many tests, homework assignments, and other more traditional forms of academic coursework, the execution and completion of a project may take several weeks or months, or it may even unfold over the course of a semester or year.
- ✓ **RECONFIGURING:** the educational structure of a large school so that students are organized into smaller groups and paired with a consistent team of teachers who get to know the students and their learning needs well. While this strategy takes a wide variety of forms from school to school, a few of the most common approaches are small-learning communities, teaming, theme-based academies, or schools-within-schools.

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PLANNING TEAM should focus on High Quality Teaching as they conduct the needs assessment using the four key elements of the planning and implementation process found on the following pages. Links to NEA and other resources related to strong and proven curriculum are provided at the end of this section.

-QUALITY TEACHING IMPLEMENTATION: ASSET & NEEDS ASSESSMENT

STEP 1. A SCHOOL-BASED ASSET AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT: is an inclusive process in which families, students, community members, partners, teachers, administrators and other school staff who define “what we have” and “what we need.” Asset assessment articulates the strengths and capabilities available within the school, the community and from potential partners. Needs assessment defines specific issues, concerns, and deficits to be addressed.

The **COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PLANNING TEAM** should review the **SHARED VOCABULARY** definitions and discuss how each applies at the school site. Team members then collect and examine evidence from a variety of sources and identify specific curriculum assets and needs, including obstacles or barriers. Each Key Element articulates one aspect of a strong and proven curriculum. The Team may choose to assign each question to two or three team members to better use available time. With regard to curriculum, however, it is essential that each pair or trio have one school-based educator with curriculum familiarity as a member.

VIEW THE NEA YOUTUBE VIDEO, *Community Schools—Strong Curriculum and High-Quality Teaching*, prior to starting the asset and needs assessment; video available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TeRI0nh5E2k>

These questions may guide the Team’s efforts to connect students to learning standards and objectives. If they are answered well and addressed through the Community Schools plan, they have the capacity to improve student engagement and learning. The response to these questions should lead the Team to identify specific high-quality teaching assets and needs.

1. What evidence is there that each student has some form of **personalized learning plan**?
2. What evidence is that each student receives the needed **academic support**?
3. What evidence is there that **mixed-ability grouping** is incorporated into classroom practices?
4. What evidence is there that **class sizes** are appropriate for all students to achieve learning objectives?
5. What evidence is there that **authentic learning strategies** are incorporated into teachers’ instructional repertoires?
6. What evidence is there that students are able to engage in **community-based or out-of-school learning activities**?
7. What evidence is there that instructional practices focus on **deeper learning**?

ASSESSMENT OF EXISTING CURRICULUM DOCUMENTS AND PRACTICES

Using the Shared Vocabulary definitions and the questions posed, complete the needs assessment below.

KEY ELEMENT	ASSETS	NEEDS	OBSTACLES	EVIDENCE
Academic Support Strategies in general				
• After Hours Strategies				
• Classroom-based Strategies				
• School-based Strategies				
• Out-of-School Strategies				
• Technology Assisted Strategies				
• Vacation Break Strategies				



KEY ELEMENT	ASSETS	NEEDS	OBSTACLES	EVIDENCE
Class Size				
Personalized Learning Plan				
Personalized Learning Strategies				
Authentic Learning Strategies in general				
• Advisories				
• Blended Learning Strategies				
• Community-based Learning Strategies				
• Learning Pathways				
• Mixed Ability Grouping Strategies				
• Project-based Learning Strategies				

ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATORS KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS IN USING INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

The Team may engage educators in the process of providing evidence of their knowledge and skill in various instructional strategies and their need for professional learning in each area.

CONTENT AREA	LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL	NEED FOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING	ASSETS	NEEDS
Classroom-based Academic Support Strategies	☐ High - most use these strategies ☐ Moderate - some use these strategies ☐ Low - few or none use these strategies	☐ High - few need this PL ☐ Moderate - about half need this PL ☐ Low - almost all need this PL		
School-based Academic Support Strategies	☐ High - most use these strategies ☐ Moderate - some use these strategies ☐ Low - few or none use these strategies	☐ High - few need this PL ☐ Moderate - about half need this PL ☐ Low - almost all need this PL		
Personalized Learning Strategies	☐ High - most use these strategies ☐ Moderate - some use these strategies ☐ Low - few or none use these strategies	☐ High - few need this PL ☐ Moderate - about half need this PL ☐ Low - almost all need this PL		
Authentic Learning Strategies	☐ High - most use these strategies ☐ Moderate - some use these strategies ☐ Low - few or none use these strategies	☐ High - few need this PL ☐ Moderate - about half need this PL ☐ Low - almost all need this PL		

HIGH-QUALITY TEACHING IMPLEMENTATION: STRATEGIC PLAN

STEP 2. A STRATEGIC PLAN: describes the school's vision, values and mission. The plan articulates how assets may be used to address needs with the goal of high academic, civic and personal outcomes for all students. The plan focuses on curriculum, high-quality teaching, wraparound services, positive behavioral practices, parent and community engagement and inclusive leadership.

The **COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PLANNING TEAM** should articulate the school's vision, values and mission with regard to the high-quality teaching. This necessitates knowing which instructional strategies are the best fit for the students served by the school and the learning needs of educators within the school. The Team should be guided by the following questions:

1. **VISION:** As a school community, what instructional strategies do we know will best assist all of our students in achieving to the best of their abilities?
2. **STRATEGIES:** What steps will we take over the next three years to assist the school's educators in acquiring or enhancing the knowledge and skills of various instructional strategies?
3. **PRIORITIES:** Given the steps we have described, how should we prioritize them so that we are progressing in an organized and sequential manner?
4. **ACTION PLAN:** Who will do what? By when? Involving whom? What resources are needed to accomplish this work?

FOR EXAMPLE, the Ankeny (Iowa) Community School District describes the Characteristics of Effective Instruction which focuses on student-centered classrooms, teaching for understanding, formative assessments, a rigorous and relevant curriculum, and teaching for learner differences.³ By articulating their definition of high-quality instruction, this community school district is providing meaningful information to parents, students, community members, and partners.

One of the six Iowa Core Outcomes is: Educators implement effective instructional practices to ensure high levels of learning for each and every student. To remember the characteristics of effective instruction, use the acronym START.

STUDENT-CENTERED CLASSROOMS

- ➡ Educators support all students in making connections to construction new learning in order to make decisions and solve problems.
- ➡ The educator facilitates opportunities for students to be metacognitive.
- ➡ Educators and students are partners in learning.
- ➡ Educators facilitate time for students to learn collaboratively.
- ➡ Educators use meaningful and authentic assessment in a real world context.

TEACHING FOR UNDERSTANDING

- ➡ Instruction facilitates the construction of deep conceptual and procedural knowledge.
- ➡ Instruction facilitates the development of representations and conceptual models.
- ➡ Instruction inducts students into the discipline.
- ➡ Instruction facilitates the application of new learnings and understandings in new and novel situations (transfer).

3 For additional information, go to <http://www.ankenyschools.org/Page/9036>

ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING (FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT)

- Educator utilizes K-12 learning progressions along which students are expected to progress in a domain.
- Student learning goals are clear, focused on the intended learning, and communicated so all students understand the criteria for success.
- Instructional modifications for students are planned from carefully elicited evidence of student learning.
- Descriptive feedback identifies for students the specific knowledge and skills needed to reach learning goal(s).
- Self and peer assessment is planned and structured by educator and students in order to develop life-long learning skills.
- Educator facilitates the development of a collaborative classroom climate.

RIGOROUS AND RELEVANT CURRICULUM

- Higher order thinking (HOT) is performed by students during instruction.
- Deep understanding and mastery of critical disciplinary concepts and skills are demonstrated.
- Concepts and skills are applied to situations, issues, and problems in the world beyond school.

Rigor and relevance are characterized by content that is linked to a core disciplinary concept or skill and:

- Requires students to do authentic work, using methods that are specific to the discipline and applying what they know or what they are learning to solve complex problems
- Involves the use of prior knowledge, the development of in-depth understanding, and the ability to develop and express ideas and findings through elaborated communication.

TEACHING FOR LEARNER DIFFERENCES

- Instruction is focused on “big ideas”—the essential concepts and skills within the content.
- Instruction is designed and delivered to match students’ needs based on assessment data of students’ prior knowledge, readiness, individual interests and learning preferences.
- Educator provides flexibility within content, instruction, and product to allow for variances in students’ acquisition and demonstration of learning.
- Educator provides clear instruction about how to learn, making the various strategies and skills of the learning process conspicuous to all students.
- Instruction includes opportunities for students to practice and review their learning and receive feedback.
- Educator regularly monitors each student’s progress related to the acquisition of the essential concepts and skills and adjusts instruction to meet students’ learning needs.

HIGH-QUALITY TEACHING IMPLEMENTATION: ENGAGEMENT OF PARTNERS

STEP 3. SCHOOL PARTNERS: may include organizations, businesses and community-based entities that historically have not engaged with the school but are recognized as assets with expertise critical to implementing the community school pillars.

The **COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PLANNING TEAM** should review the assets and needs identified and determine if there are areas or gaps that need to be addressed both in school and with community-based organizations to enhance the academic and enrichment activities of the students.

With regard to **HIGH-QUALITY TEACHING**, community schools offer authentic learning opportunities for their students and teachers. The Coalition for Community Schools articulates six community-based learning models that may be adapted to the needs of a school.⁴

- **ACADEMICALLY BASED COMMUNITY SERVICE:** connects the academic mission of higher education institutions with public schools. Courses for both K-12 students and undergraduates are designed or redesigned to focus on community revitalization. Higher education and public school faculty collaborate to devise joint learning experiences; undergraduates enter schools as co-learners and role models for younger students, and each shares resources with the other.
- **CIVIC EDUCATION:** prepares competent and responsible citizens by advocating for civic and political engagement and providing learning experiences that connect students' academic learning with civic involvement based on constitutional principles and democratic concepts.
- **ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION:** capitalizes on students' native curiosity by using the school's surroundings and the community as a classroom within which students may construct their own learning. The focus is on the environment as a learning space, not a learning topic.
- **PLACE-BASED LEARNING:** uses the history, environment, culture, and economy of a particular place to provide a context for learning. Community needs and interests are drivers of learning; community members are resources and share their expertise through teaching and learning.
- **SERVICE LEARNING:** integrates community service and academic learning. Service learning addresses a community need identified by students. There are academic goals, and community partners provide resources and expertise to assist students in attaining them.
- **WORK-BASED LEARNING:** allows students to learn from adults in a work setting as role models, mentors or teachers. The primary goal is to learn about careers and making connections between academic learning and real world applications.

4 These suggestions are adapted from Community-based learning: Engaging students for success and citizenship. Available online at http://www.communityschools.org/assets/1/AssetManager/CBL_Book_1_27_06.pdf

HIGH-QUALITY TEACHING IMPLEMENTATION: COMMUNITY SCHOOL COORDINATOR

STEP 4. **IN GENERAL THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL COORDINATOR:** facilitates the development and implementation of the strategic plan in collaboration with school and community members/partners; oversees the alignment of assets with needs; and manages the integration of before and after school programs and wraparound services with the academic program and schedule. The Coordinator may also engage in fund raising activities.

Most of the Coordinator's responsibilities relate to other Community School Pillars. However, with regard to **HIGH-QUALITY TEACHING**, the Community School Coordinator is the bridge between the school and community and facilitates the alignment of community-based and partner-provided authentic learning experiences that are community-based. The Coordinator facilitates collaboration between teachers and higher education and community organization partners who are able and willing to extend student learning by bringing their resources and expertise into the instructional process.

FOR EXAMPLE, the Coordinator reaches out to a National Park located in the community and connects the rangers with the grade 7 and 8 teachers. The rangers are interested in creating an interactive display related to the flora and fauna and would like to engage the students in a service learning, environmental education, place-based learning project over the course of an academic year. The Coordinator arranges for meetings between the rangers and teachers and assists in finding additional resources and expertise as needed.

NEA RESOURCES

NEA YouTube video: Community schools – strong curriculum and high-quality teaching available online at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TeRI0nh5E2k>

This 5-minute video explains two of the pillars: Strong and Proven Curriculum and High-Quality Teaching.

NEA Instructional Practice homepage: <http://www.nea.org/home/37004.htm?q=instruction>

Identifying Achievement Gaps in Your School, District or Community Discussion Guide 1 . Available online at <http://www.nea.org/home/12464.htm>

This is the first in a series of short guides designed for use in leading discussions in schools and communities about achievement gaps. Includes a series of questions that will help identify the specific achievement gaps that exist locally, a first step in closing the gaps.

Identifying Factors that Contribute to Achievement Gaps Discussion Guide 2. Available online at <http://www.nea.org/home/17413.htm>

This second guide is designed to lead a discussion with educators and community members that will identify the specific factors contributing to local achievement gaps in schools, school districts, and communities. Gaps may exist between groups of students of different backgrounds (e.g., ethnic, racial, gender, disability, and income) on tests, on access to courses and special educational opportunities, and on other indicators such as high school and college completion and employment later in life.

Identifying Stakeholders' Responsibilities for Closing Achievement Gaps: District and School Based Strategies Discussion Guide 3. Available online at <http://www.nea.org/home/12467.htm>

This third guide focuses on a variety of strategies needed to address the many factors that contribute to the gaps, only some of which schools may influence directly. This guide focuses on district- and school-based strategies for closing achievement gaps.

Identifying Stakeholders' Responsibilities for Closing Achievement Gaps: Stakeholder Actions Discussion Guide 4. Available online at <http://www.nea.org/home/12469.htm>

Many factors contribute to achievement gaps. Some educators, schools and districts may address. Others fall to other stakeholders.

This final guide is designed for use to identify stakeholders who share responsibility for closing local achievement gaps. Each of these stakeholders should be involved in, and accountable for, implementing programs and strategies that will close achievement gaps. Several stakeholders and a summary of actions each might take to close achievement gaps are included.





THE SIX PILLARS OF COMMUNITY SCHOOLS TOOLKIT

NEA RESOURCE GUIDE FOR EDUCATORS, FAMILIES & COMMUNITIES

INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP

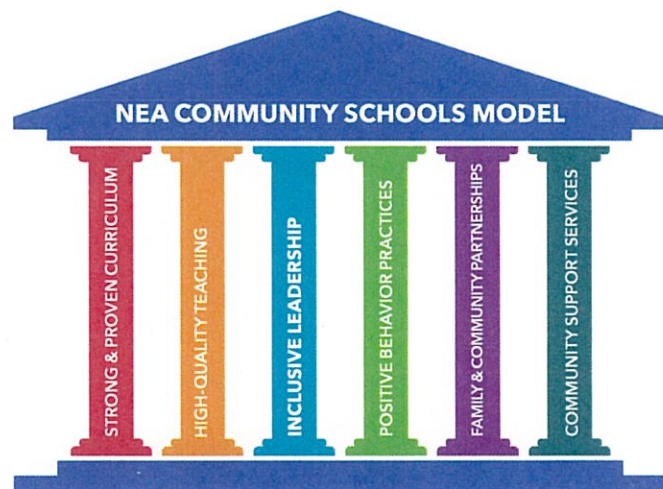
A PILLAR OF THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL MODEL

INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP: *is a collaborative relationship among highly effective teachers and administrators characterized by shared decision-making and accountability.*¹

IN **COMMUNITY SCHOOLS**, the leadership team consists of administrators, teachers and other school staff, along with the Community School Coordinator. All share the responsibility of school operations with the principal. This Leadership Team ensures that the community school strategy remains central in the decision-making process. The team plans development and implementation that includes thinking about sustainability that involves not just fund-raising but also organizing resources in new and more effective ways. A Community School Committee inclusive of families, community partners, school staff, youth, and other stakeholders from the school's various constituencies works in collaboration with the Leadership Team.

SHARED VOCABULARY²

- **CAPACITY:** refers to the perceived abilities, skills, and expertise of school leaders, teachers, faculties, and staffs—most commonly when describing the “capacity” of an individual or school to execute or accomplish something specific, such as leading a school-improvement effort or teaching more effectively. (Common variations include educator capacity, leadership capacity, school capacity, and teacher capacity). The phrase **“BULIDING CAPACITY”** refers to any effort being made to improve the abilities, skills, and expertise of educators. If the purpose is to reduce a school's reliance on outside contractors or services, for example, educators may say they want to “*build internal capacity.*”



1 For more on NEA's position and resources on school leadership, go to <http://www.nea.org/home/37004.htm?q=school%20leadership>

2 All Shared Vocabulary definitions are adapted from The Glossary of Education Reform, available online at <http://edglossary.org>

Listen to NEA's webinar, Community Schools: Funding & Sustainability at <http://www.nea.org/home/68381.htm>



In fact, some educational professionals, literature, and resources will call on school leaders to “build capacity” in a specified area without ever describing precisely what capacities should be improved or exactly how they might be improved.

- ➔ **SCHOOL COMMUNITY:** refers to the various individuals, groups, businesses, and institutions that are invested in the welfare and vitality of the school and its community. Broadly, the school community includes administrators, teachers and staff, students and their parents and families, and residents and organizations that have a stake in the school’s success, school-board members, city officials and elected representatives, businesses, organizations, cultural institutions, parent-teacher associations, “booster clubs,” charitable foundations, and volunteer school-improvement committees. Narrowly, the school community includes those working, teaching, and learning in a school: administrators, faculty, staff, and students. In this case, educators may also be actively working to improve the school culture, strengthen relationships between teachers and students, and foster feelings of inclusion, caring, and shared purpose.
- ➔ **SCHOOL CULTURE:** refers to the beliefs, perceptions, relationships, attitudes, and written and unwritten rules that shape and influence how a school functions, but the term also encompasses more concrete issues such as the physical and emotional safety of students, the orderliness of classrooms and public spaces, or the degree to which a school embraces and celebrates racial, ethnic, linguistic, or cultural diversity.

A positive school culture is conducive to professional satisfaction, morale, and effectiveness, as well as to student learning, fulfillment, and well-being. Some characteristics of positive school cultures include:

- ✓ Recognition of teacher and student successes.
 - ✓ Open, trusting, respectful relationships among school community members.
 - ✓ Collegial, collaborative, and productive staff relationships.
 - ✓ Physically, emotionally, and psychologically safe environment.
 - ✓ Positive, healthy behaviors are modeled by staff.
 - ✓ Restorative and positive behavioral practices allow students and educators opportunities to learn and grow.
 - ✓ High academic and behavioral expectations apply to all students.
 - ✓ Collaborative decision-making using input from staff, students and families.
 - ✓ Equity guides the distribution of educational resources and learning opportunities.
 - ✓ Academic support is available to all students.
- ➔ **SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAM:** refers to a group of administrators, teachers, and other staff who make governance decisions or who coordinate initiatives. While most teams are composed of school staff, team composition may also include students, families, and community representatives. While not all schools have a leadership team, in a community school this practice is common.
 - ➔ **SHARED LEADERSHIP:** refers to the practice of expanding the number of people involved in school-based decision-making. Shared leadership requires creating leadership roles or decision-making opportunities for teachers, staff members, students, families, and community members. A school leadership team is a form of shared leadership. Teacher teams organized by grade or content area who meet regularly and provide recommendations on instructional decisions or the design of the academic program are practicing shared leadership. Shared

leadership is also related to voice, as a practical way to include the opinions, viewpoints, feedback, insights, and wisdom of students, teachers, families, and community members in leadership decisions.

- ➡ **STAKEHOLDER:** refers to those who have a personal, professional, or civic “stake” in the school and its students. This may include school staff, students, parents and families, educator associations, parent teacher organizations, community members, local businesses and organizations, cultural institutions, professional associations, and elected officials. In a word, stakeholders
- ➡ **TEACHER-LEADER:** refers to teachers who have taken on leadership roles and additional professional responsibilities. The teacher-leader concept is closely related to voice and shared leadership or the distribution of leadership roles and decision-making responsibilities beyond the administrative team in a district or school (sometimes called “distributed leadership”).
- ➡ **VOICE:** refers the values, opinions, beliefs, perspectives, and cultural backgrounds of the people in the school community – especially students, teachers, families, and local citizens—as well as the degree to which those values, opinions, beliefs, and perspectives are considered, included, listened to, and acted upon when important decisions are being made.

INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP IMPLEMENTATION: ASSET & NEEDS ASSESSMENT

STEP 1. A SCHOOL-BASED ASSET AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT: is an inclusive process in which families, students, community members, partners, teachers, administrators and other school staff who define “what we have” and “what we need.” Asset assessment articulates the strengths and capabilities available within the school, the community and by potential partners. Needs assessment defines specific issues, concerns, and deficits to be addressed.

The **COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PLANNING TEAM** should review the **SHARED VOCABULARY** definitions and discuss how each applies at the school site. Team members then collect and examine evidence from a variety of sources and identify specific leadership assets and needs, including obstacles or barriers. Each Key Element articulates one aspect of inclusive leadership. The Team may choose to assign each question to two or three team members to better use available time. About leadership, however, it is essential that each pair or trio have one school leader or teacher-leader as a member.

VIEW THE NEA YOUTUBE VIDEO, *Community Schools–Family & Community and Inclusive Leadership* at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LMIwQdZM2Bk>

These questions may guide the Team’s efforts to determine the current leadership model and practices leading to shared, inclusive models. If they are answered well and addressed through the Community Schools plan, they have the capacity to improve existing leadership practices. The response to these questions should lead the Team to identify specific leadership assets and needs.

1. Describe the existing **leadership model** at the school.
2. Who do you consider to be a member of the **school community** currently? Would this change with a Community School model?
3. What methods are currently in place for school leaders to hear the **voice** of different groups about issues or concerns from teachers? Other school staff? Students? Families? Community members?
4. Aside from members of the school community you’ve identified above, are there currently other **stakeholders** connected to the school?

5. What is the school's experience with having **teacher-leaders** either formally or informally?
6. If you were to describe the **school culture** in one word or phrase, what would it be? Why?

ASSESSMENT OF EXISTING LEADERSHIP PRACTICES

Using the Shared Vocabulary definitions and the questions posed, complete the needs assessment below.

KEY ELEMENT	ASSETS	NEEDS	OBSTACLES	EVIDENCE
Describe and assess the school's Shared Leadership Team				
Describe and assess the school's formal Teacher-Leaders ; informal Teacher-Leaders				
Describe and assess each Stakeholder as a potential asset				
Describe and assess each Voice that could contribute to a shared leadership team				
Describe and assess each School Community Member Group as a potential asset				
Describe and assess the school's Capacity to implement a CS model				
Describe and assess the Capacity Building Structures available to the school as they develop and implement a CS model				

ASSESSMENT OF EXISTING SCHOOL CULTURE

The Team may engage educators in the process of providing evidence of the school culture.

SCHOOL CULTURE CHARACTERISTIC	EMBEDDED INTO THE SCHOOL CULTURE	ASSETS	NEEDS
Recognition of teacher and student successes	☐ Consistently ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rarely		
Open, trusting, respectful relationships among school community members.	☐ Consistently ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rarely		
Collegial, collaborative, and productive staff relationships	☐ Consistently ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rarely		
Physically, emotionally, and psychologically safe environment.	☐ Consistently ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rarely		
Positive, healthy behaviors are modeled by staff.	☐ Consistently ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rarely		
Restorative and positive behavioral practices allow students and educators opportunities to learn and grow.	☐ Consistently ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rarely		
High academic and behavioral expectations apply to all students.	☐ Consistently ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rarely		
Collaborative decision-making using input from staff, students and parents.	☐ Consistently ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rarely		
Equity guides the distribution of educational resources and learning opportunities.	☐ Consistently ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rarely		
Academic support is available to all students	☐ Consistently ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rarely		

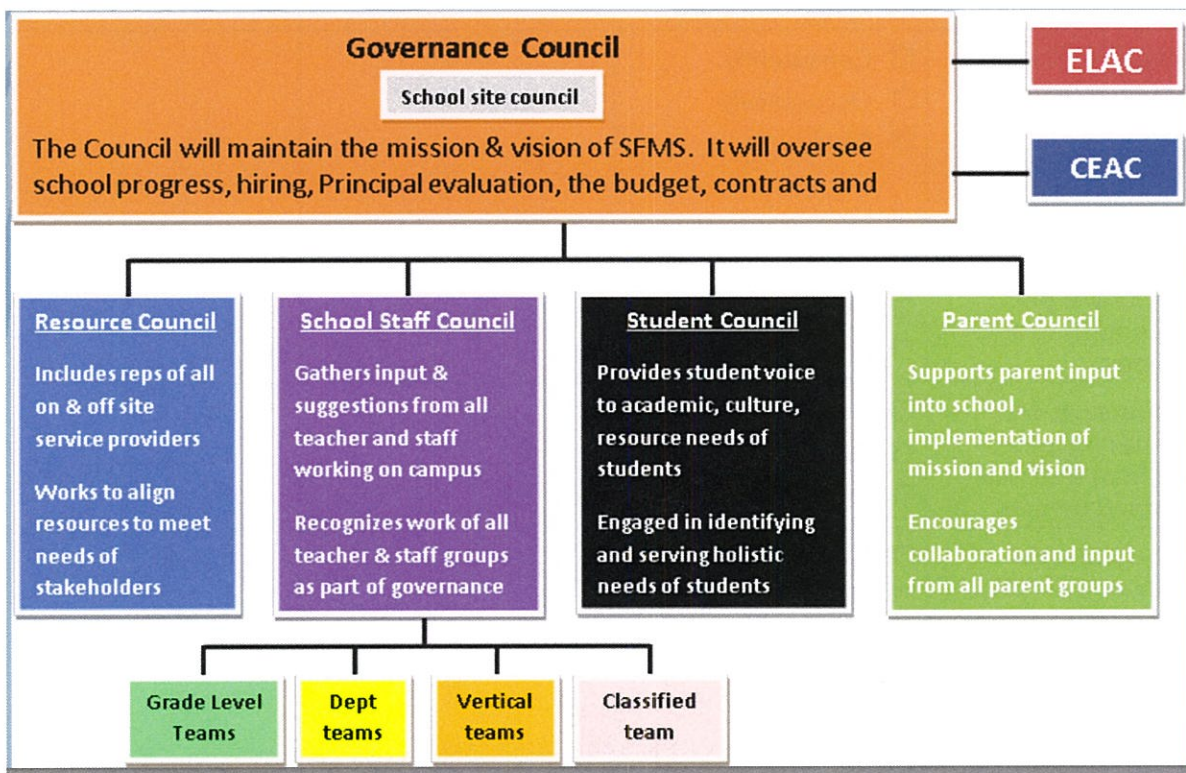
INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP IMPLEMENTATION: STRATEGIC PLAN

STEP 2. A STRATEGIC PLAN: describes the school's vision, values and mission. The plan articulates how assets may be used to address needs with the goal of high academic, civic and personal outcomes for all students. The plan focuses on curriculum, high-quality teaching, wraparound services, positive behavioral practices, parent and community engagement and inclusive leadership.

The **COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PLANNING TEAM** should articulate the school's vision, values and mission about inclusive leadership. This necessitates having a clear understanding of the existing school leadership model. The Team should be guided by the following questions:

1. **VISION:** As a school community, what inclusive leadership goals do we want to achieve? (see example below)
2. **STRATEGIES:** About leadership, what steps will we take over the next three years to realize this vision and attain these academic goals?
3. **PRIORITIES:** Given the steps we have described, how should we prioritize them so that we are progressing in an organized and sequential manner?
4. **ACTION PLAN:** Who will do what? By when? Involving whom? What resources are needed to accomplish this work?

FOR EXAMPLE, the San Fernando (Los Angeles United School District, CA) Middle school adopted an inclusive leadership model and reorganized the leadership functions to include teacher-leaders, student and parent voice, and school partnerships.³



3 Source: http://cscinnovation.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/CSCi_Mini For more information on this school, go to <http://www.greatschools.org/california/san-fernando/2367-San-Fernando-Middle-School/>

ANOTHER EXAMPLE, the Winter Hill (Somerville, MA) Community Innovation School established a Governing Board to help guide school operations. Unique in the district, Winter Hill operates with a higher level of autonomy than other schools. They developed and innovated their guiding school principles through the WHCIS Governing Board, made up of the principal and assistant principal, three teachers, three parents and three community members. The school posts all academic offerings, curriculum guides, the school improvement plan, meeting agendas and notes, breakfast-in-the-classroom program, dress code and other relevant information on their website: <http://www.somerville.k12.ma.us/node/137/community>

INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP IMPLEMENTATION: ENGAGEMENT OF PARTNERS

STEP 3. SCHOOL PARTNERS: may include organizations, businesses and community-based entities that historically have not engaged with the school are recognized as assets and their expertise is critical to implementing the community school pillars.

The **COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PLANNING TEAM** should review the assets and needs identified and determine if there are areas or gaps in which community-based organizations could work in partnership with the school to enhance or contribute to the leadership functions.

REGARDING INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP, the community partners may have experience, expertise and resources to enhance the decision-making structures with the school. The Coalition for Community Schools et. al. highlights the Webb Middle School in Austin, TX. Webb is part of a grant-based pilot working to develop a new supervisory model for the district. Teachers, administrators, families and students are part of a team; these teams under the direction of a community stakeholder team consisting of school partners are drafting a multi-year plan in which teachers will have more input into both academic and non-academic school activities and their own professional learning.⁴

INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP IMPLEMENTATION: COMMUNITY SCHOOL COORDINATOR

IN GENERAL, THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL COORDINATOR facilitates the development and implementation of the strategic plan in collaboration with school and community members/partners; oversees the alignment of assets with needs; and manages the integration of before and after school programs and wraparound services with the academic program and schedule. The Coordinator may also engage in fund raising activities.

Most of the Coordinator's responsibilities relate to other Community School Pillars. However, about **INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP**, the Community School Coordinator may serve on the Shared Leadership Team bringing ideas gathered from interactions with school partners related to leadership functions.

4 See Community Schools: Transforming Struggling Schools into Thriving Schools at http://www.southerneducation.org/Publications/Community-Schools-Layout_021116.aspx

Listen to NEA webinar, Scaling Up Community Schools: Strategies Across the Country at <http://www.nea.org/home/68381.htm>

For example, the Coordinator may work closely with the local YMCA and learns that their leadership team consists of many of the instructors of swimming, fitness and children's program who work in concert with the Y Director to create meaningful physical fitness programs that are responsive to community needs. The team changes programs and schedules based on an asset/need assessment done quarterly since they have learned that the time of year impacts what members want from the YMCA.

NEA RESOURCES

NEA YouTube video: Community Schools—Family & Community and Inclusive Leadership. Available online at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LMIwQdZM2Bk>

This 4-minute video explains two Community Schools pillars: Family & Community Engagement and Inclusive Leadership.

NEA Leadership homepage: <http://www.nea.org/home/37004.htm?q=school%20leadership>

NEA Policy Briefs:

Changing role of school leadership. (2008). Available online at http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/PB09_Leadership08.pdf

This 4-page defines standards of effective leadership practices and the inclusion of leadership functions as part of teachers' working conditions.

Planning for school restructuring: Keeping stakeholders in the process. (2013) Available online at <http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/Planning-for-School-Restructuring-06282013.pdf>

Provides rationale for inclusion of educators and families in the school redesign planning process and the importance of engaging all stakeholders.

Alvarez, B. (2016). Embedding leadership in the teaching profession. *NEA Today*, February 10, 2015. Available online at <http://neatoday.org/2016/02/10/teacher-leadership-summit/>

Article highlights discussion of teacher leadership efforts discussed at the 2015 International Summit on the Teaching Profession.

Alvarez, B. (2015). Teacher-led schools: They're here and more are on the way. *NEA Today*, February 12, 2015. Available online at <http://neatoday.org/2015/02/12/teacher-led-schools-theyre-way/>

Article describes the Math and Science Leadership Academy, a teacher-led school, in Denver.

Eskelsen Garcia, L. (2016). In our most dynamic schools, everyone plays a part. *Lily's Blackboard*, June 2, 2016. Available online at <http://lilysblackboard.org/2016/06/dynamic-schools-everyone-plays-part/>

In this blog post, NEA President Lily Eskelsen Garcia articulates the value of shared leadership so that every educator has a role to play in creating a safe, nurturing and encouraging school culture.

OTHER RESOURCES

Center for Teaching Quality, (Undated). Five steps to starting your teacher-powered school. Available online at <https://www.teacherpowered.org/resources/publications/5-steps-starting-your-teacher-powered-school>

Online resource that provides guidance, discussion questions, and activities leading to a teacher-led school.

Landeau, R., VanDorn, D., and Freeley, M.E. (2009). Sharing hats. *Educational Leadership*, 67(2) 57-60. Available online at <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/oct09/vol67/num02/Sharing-Hats.aspx>

Articles describes the many hats that principals must wear and how building a teacher leadership cadre at NYC's Ryan Middle School resulted in success, though not entirely problem-free. This article needs an ASCD membership.



Louis, K.S., Leithwood, K., Wahlstrom, K.L. and Anderson, S.E. (2010). Investigating the links to improved student learning: Final report of research findings. The Wallace Foundation, Learning from Leadership Project. The print version of the report is available online at <http://www.wallace-foundation.org/knowledge-center/Documents/Investigating-the-Links-to-Improved-Student-Learning.pdf> The electronic version of the report may be found at http://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/pages/1_3-patterns-of-distributed-leadership-learning-from-leadership.aspx

300-page report broken into chapters. Part 1: sections 1-4 may be useful to planning teams. Topics covered include shared leadership principles and practices.

National School Climate Center web site. Available online at <http://www.schoolclimate.org/programs/csci.php>

The NCSS school climate survey, an empirically validated tool, provides an in-depth profile of a school's strengths and needs. This web site includes resources and tools related to school climate and culture. Surveys have a cost: available for families, school personnel, elementary school students, middle/high school students.

National Technical Assistance Center for Community Schools. (2009). Building, assessing, sustaining, and improving community schools: Shared leadership. Stanford University John W. Gardner Center for Youth and Their Communities. Available online at <http://johnwgardnertestsites.pbworks.com/w/browse/#view=ViewFolder¶m=Printable%20Versions%20of%20Toolkit%20Content>

Interactive Web site that provides explanation and examples of the toolkit topic; fact sheets; tools and resources; and training design and suggested readings. Individual chapters are available at the following links.

Academic Support at <http://johnwgardnertestsites.pbworks.com/w/browse/#view=ViewFolder¶m=Session%202%3A%20Academic%20Supports>

Assessing Results at <http://johnwgardnertestsites.pbworks.com/w/browse/#view=ViewFolder¶m=Session%206%3A%20Assessing%20Results>

Collaboration at <http://johnwgardnertestsites.pbworks.com/w/browse/#view=ViewFolder¶m=Session%201%3A%20Collaboration>

Lessons Learned at <http://johnwgardnertestsites.pbworks.com/w/browse/#view=ViewFolder¶m=Session%208%3A%20Lessons%20Learned%20from%20Implementation>

Shared Leadership at <http://johnwgardnertestsites.pbworks.com/w/page/13471136/Shared%20Leadership>

Sustainability at <http://johnwgardnertestsites.pbworks.com/w/browse/#view=ViewFolder¶m=Session%207%3A%20Sustainability>

Youth Development Toolkit at <http://johnwgardnertestsites.pbworks.com/w/browse/#view=ViewFolder¶m=Session%205%3A%20Youth%20Development>

Natsiopolou, E. and Giouroukakis, V. (2010). When teachers run the school. *Educational Leadership*, 67(7), April 2010. Available online at <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/apr10/vol67/num07/When-Teachers-Run-the-School.aspx>

This article describes a Greek high school in which all the administrative roles were taken over by teachers which allowed the principal to focus on school governance. The school was characterized as democratic with full participation.

Oakland Unified School District. (2015). Community schools: Understanding implementation efforts to support students, teachers and families. Stanford University: John W. Gardner Center for Youth and Communities. Available online at https://gardnercenter.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/Oakland%20Unified%20School%20District%20Community%20Schools_Implementation%20Report.pdf

This report describes findings from a study the full-service community school model being implemented in the Oakland, CA schools. Implementation strategies are described as well as short-term, intermediate and long-term outcomes.

Parrett, W. and Budge, K. (2009). Tough questions for tough times. *Educational Leadership*, 67(2) 22-27. Available online at <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/oct09/vol67/num02/Tough-Questions-for-Tough-Times.aspx> Community schools: Understanding implementation efforts to support students, teachers and families. Stanford University

In determining what the best answers are in creating safe learning environments, asking the right questions is essential. This article, while focusing on student achievement in high-poverty schools, offers questions about leadership, learning, and learning environment. These were used by a Yakima, WA school to change their student learning outcomes.



POSITIVE BEHAVIOR PRACTICES

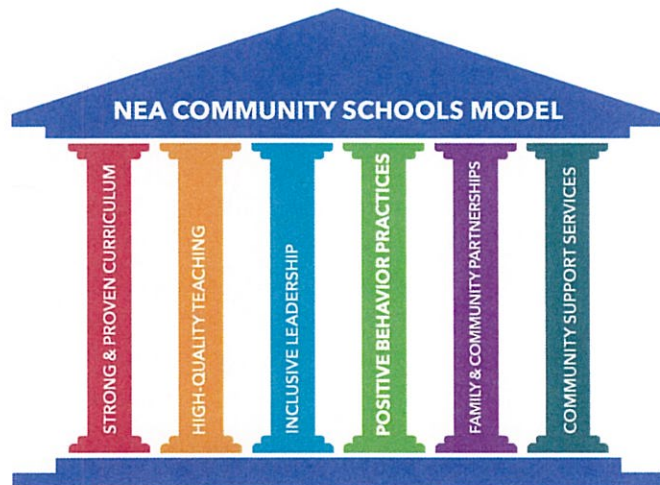
A PILLAR OF THE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS MODEL

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR: *The most effective tool teachers have to handle problem behavior is to prevent it from occurring in the first place. Positive Behavior Practices help teachers improve classroom management and preventive school discipline to maximize student success. Positive Behavior Practices are critical to providing all young people with the best learning environment.¹*

IN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS, educators emphasize positive relationships and interactions, and model these through their own behavior. Negative behaviors and truancy are acknowledged and addressed in ways that hold students accountable while showing them they are still valued members of the school community. Restorative discipline practices such as peer mediation, community service and post-conflict resolution help students learn from their mistakes and foster positive, healthy school climates where respect and compassion are core principles. Zero-tolerance practices leading to suspension and expulsion are avoided.

SHARED VOCABULARY²

- ➔ **ATTENDANCE:** is a baseline factor in determining student success. Successful schools begin by engaging students and making sure they come to school regularly.
- ➔ **CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT:** refers to the wide variety of skills and techniques that educators use to keep students organized, orderly, focused, attentive, on task, and academically productive during a class. The more traditional interpretation of classroom management may focus largely on “compliance”—making sure students obey school rules. [Glossary of Education Reform]



¹ For more on NEA's support of PBIS, go to http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/PB41A-Positive_Behavioral_Interventions-Final.pdf

² All Shared Vocabulary definitions are adapted from various sources which are indicated in [brackets] and listed in Resources at the end of this chapter.

- **POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS & SUPPORTS:** practices are based on assumptions and beliefs that all children can exhibit appropriate behavior. An educator's responsibility is to identify the environmental conditions that enable appropriate behavior. The research-based PBIS practices include: intervening early; using a multi-tiered model of intervention and support; using research-based interventions; monitoring student progress; and using data make decisions. [PBIS]
- **PBIS COMPONENTS:** includes seven major components: a) an agreed upon and common approach to discipline, b) a positive statement of purpose, c) a small number of positively stated expectations for all students and staff, d) procedures for teaching these expectations to students, e) a continuum of procedures for encouraging displays and maintenance of these expectations, f) a continuum of procedures for discouraging displays of rule-violating behavior, and g) procedures for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the discipline system on a regular and frequent basis. These major components work for most communities:
 - ✓ Identify the expected behaviors,
 - ✓ Teach, model and practice what those behaviors look like, sound like, and feel like,
 - ✓ Specifically praise appropriate behavior with private or public acknowledgement, and
 - ✓ Measure outcome data to determine successes and barriers to reaching the desired goals. [PBIS]
- **PEER MEDIATION PROGRAM:** refers to a problem solving process conducted by students with students. It is a process by which two or more students involved in a dispute meet in a private, safe and confidential setting to work out problems with the assistance of a trained student mediator. [The Resolution Center]
- **RESTORATIVE JUSTICE:** refers to the discipline approach that focuses on repairing harm through inclusive processes that engage all stakeholders. Implemented well, restorative justice shifts the focus of discipline from punishment to learning and from the individual to the community. Restorative justice attempts to reduce bullying and other behaviors leading to conflict and improve attendance. Restorative justice requires that the "victim" and "victimizer" meet with a mediator to address the problem and seek solutions. [Creative Education]
- **RESTORATIVE PRACTICES:** build social capital and achieve social discipline through participatory learning and decision-making. Restorative Justice is a restorative practice that directly addresses wrongdoing. [Conflict Solutions Center]
- **SCHOOL-TO-PRISON PIPELINE:** refers to school disciplinary practices in which students are funneled out of public schools and into the juvenile and criminal justice systems. Many of these students have learning disabilities or histories of poverty, abuse, or neglect, and would benefit from additional educational and counseling services. Instead, they are isolated, punished, and pushed out. [ACLU]
- **ZERO TOLERANCE:** refers to school or district-wide policies that mandate predetermined, typically harsh consequences or punishments (such as suspension and expulsion) for a wide degree of rule violation. Most frequently, zero tolerance policies address drug, weapons, violence, smoking and school disruption in efforts to protect all students' safety and maintain a school environment that is conducive to learning. However, research indicates that, as implemented, zero tolerance policies are ineffective in the long run and are related to a number of negative consequences, including increased rates of school drop out and discriminatory application of school discipline practices. [National Association of School Psychologists] According to the ACLU, "zero-tolerance" policies often criminalize minor infractions of school rules. Students of color are especially vulnerable to push-out trends and the discriminatory application of discipline.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR PRACTICES IMPLEMENTATION: ASSET & NEEDS ASSESSMENT

STEP 1. A SCHOOL-BASED ASSET AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT: is an inclusive process in which parents, students, community members, partners, teachers, administrators and school staff who define “what we have” and “what we need.” Asset assessment articulates the strengths and capabilities available within the school, the community and by potential partners. Needs assessment defines specific issues, concerns, and deficits to be addressed.

The **COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PLANNING TEAM** should review the **SHARED VOCABULARY** definitions and discuss how each applies at the school site. Team members then collect and examine evidence from a variety of sources and identify specific behavior management practices assets and needs, including obstacles or barriers. Each Key Element articulates one aspect of a positive or negative behavior management practices. The Team may choose to assign each question to two or three team members to better use available time. Regarding positive behavior practices, however, it is essential that each working group have one representative who has first-hand knowledge of student behavior management at the school.

VIEW THE NEA YOUTUBE VIDEO, Community Schools–Community Support and Positive Discipline. Available online at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8HN_zW4SwYY

These questions may guide the Team’s efforts to determine the types of behavioral practices that are used in the school. If they are answered well and addressed through the Community Schools plan, they have the capacity to improve student engagement and learning. The response to these questions should lead the Team to identify specific assets and needs related to positive behavior practices.

1. Do we have a **schoolwide leadership** or **behavior support team**? If so, who are the members? What does the team do?
2. Do we have a **schoolwide behavior philosophy** or **set of expectations**? If so, is it written down? Do educators, students and parents have access to this?
3. To what extent does the **school staff support** and **abide by the behavior philosophy** or set of expectations?
4. What are the **key negative behaviors** that impact student engagement and learning?
5. How do we **teach** students positive behavior practices?
6. How do we use **restorative practices** with some students?
7. How do we provide **professional development**, especially to early career educators, about positive behavior practices?

ASSESSMENT OF EXISTING SCHOOL CLIMATE AND DISCIPLINARY PRACTICES³

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 1: CLIMATE AND PREVENTION

Schools that foster positive school climates can help to engage all students in learning by preventing problem behaviors and intervening effectively to support struggling and at-risk students.

To what extent do we now...	Assets	Needs	Obstacles	Evidence
Engage in deliberate efforts to create positive school climate.				
Prioritize the use of evidence-based prevention strategies, such as tiered supports, to promote positive student behavior.				
Promote social and emotional learning to complement academic skills and encourage positive behavior.				
Provide regular training and supports to all school personnel – including teachers, principals, support staff, and school-based law enforcement officers – on how to engage students and support positive behavior.				
Collaborate with local mental health, child welfare, law enforcement, and juvenile justice agencies and other stakeholders to align resources, prevention strategies, and intervention services.				
Ensure that any school-based law enforcement officers' roles focus on improving school safety and reducing inappropriate referrals to law enforcement.				

3 Adapted from USED (2014). Guiding principle: A resource for improving school climate and discipline at <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/school-discipline/guiding-principles.pdf>

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 2: CLEAR, APPROPRIATE, AND CONSISTENT EXPECTATIONS AND CONSEQUENCES⁴

Schools that have discipline policies or codes of conduct with clear, appropriate, and consistently applied expectations and consequences will help students improve behavior, increase engagement, and boost achievement.

To what extent do we now...	Assets	Needs	Obstacles	Evidence
Set high expectations for behavior and adopt an instructional approach to discipline.				
Involve families, students, and school personnel, and communicate regularly and clearly.				
Ensure that clear, developmentally appropriate, and proportional consequences apply for misbehavior.				
Create policies that include appropriate procedures for students with disabilities and due process for all students.				
Remove students from the classroom only as a last resort, ensure that alternative settings provide academic instruction, and return students to class as soon as possible.				

4 Adapted from USED (2014). Guiding principle: A resource for improving school climate and discipline at <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/school-discipline/guiding-principles.pdf>

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 3: EQUITY AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT⁵

Schools that build staff capacity and continuously evaluate the school's discipline policies and practices are more likely to ensure fairness and equity, and promote achievement for all students.

To what extent do we now...	Assets	Needs	Obstacles	Evidence
Train all school staff to apply school discipline policies and practices in a fair and equitable manner.				
Use proactive, data-driven, and continuous efforts, including gathering feedback from families, students, teachers, and school personnel to prevent, identify, reduce, and eliminate discriminatory discipline and unintended consequences.				

5 Adapted from USED (2014). Guiding principle: A resource for improving school climate and discipline at <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/school-discipline/guiding-principles.pdf>

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR PRACTICES IMPLEMENTATION: STRATEGIC PLAN

STEP 2. A **STRATEGIC PLAN**: describes the school's vision, values and mission. The plan articulates how assets may be used to address needs with the goal of high academic, civic and personal outcomes for all students. The plan focuses on curriculum, high-quality teaching, wraparound services, positive behavioral practices, parent and community engagement and inclusive leadership.

The **COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PLANNING TEAM** should articulate the school's vision, values and mission regarding **POSITIVE BEHAVIOR PRACTICES**. This necessitates having a clear understanding of the current school practices for managing student behavior. The Team should be guided by the following questions:

1. **VISION**: As a school community, what academic goals do we want to achieve? (See example below)
2. **STRATEGIES**: Regarding **Positive Behavior Practices**, what steps will we take over the next three years to realize this vision and attain these academic goals?
3. **PRIORITIES**: Given the steps we have described; how should we prioritize them so that we are progressing in an organized and sequential manner?
4. **ACTION PLAN**: Who will do what? By when? Involving whom? What resources are needed to accomplish this work?

AN EXAMPLE OF A VISION THAT INCLUDES POSITIVE BEHAVIOR PRACTICE can be found at the Fletcher (Aurora, CO) Community School⁶ that implemented a PBIS program. According to their web site:

- ➡ **FLETCHER COMMUNITY SCHOOL IS USING THE POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS PROGRAM**: to encourage students to demonstrate positive behaviors and to reward them for good choices. PBIS is a research-based approach of positive behavior. When PBIS is paired with rigorous classroom instruction, it opens the doors for student success and achievement.
- ➡ **SOAR TICKETS**: When a student demonstrates a SOAR behavior they may be awarded a SOAR ticket. A drawing for a small prize will take place in each class at the end of every week. These SOAR behaviors are:
 - ✓ **SAFE**
 - ✓ **OUTSTANDING ATTITUDE**
 - ✓ **ALWAYS RESPECTFUL**
 - ✓ **RESPONSIBLE**
- ➡ **GOLDEN FALCON**: Each Quarter, teachers select a student to be a Golden Falcon, a student who has displayed all four SOAR behaviors. The students' families are invited to celebrate this accomplishment at an assembly.

ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF A VISION THAT INCLUDES POSITIVE BEHAVIOR PRACTICE can be found at the Ridley (PA) Safe Schools and Community Initiatives⁷ that includes Peer Mediation Program, Elementary Student Assistance program, Secondary School Assistance Program, Girls Circle Program, and Bullying Prevention Program. On the web site, each program has links to key school policies, personnel, contact information and other relevant information for educators, students, parents and community members.

⁶ For more information, go to <http://fletcher.aurorak12.org/pbis/>

⁷ For more information, go to <http://www.ridleysd.k12.pa.us/Page/98>

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR PRACTICES IMPLEMENTATION: ENGAGEMENT OF PARTNERS

STEP 3. **PARTNERS:** may include organizations, businesses and community-based entities that historically have not engaged with the school are recognized as assets and their expertise is critical to implementing the community school pillars.

The **COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PLANNING TEAM** should review the assets and needs identified and determine how to improve or enhance positive behavior practices with the school for the betterment of the academic and enrichment activities of the students.

REGARDING POSITIVE BEHAVIOR PRACTICES, community organizations, institutions, and businesses may have resources to enhance school-based positive and restorative behavior practices. However, all partners should be aware of the school's behavioral expectations and make clear that they apply to all programs and activities regardless of the setting or time.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR PRACTICES IMPLEMENTATION: COMMUNITY SCHOOL COORDINATOR

STEP 4. **IN GENERAL:** the Community School Coordinator facilitates the development and implementation of the strategic plan in collaboration with school and community members/partners; oversees the alignment of assets with needs; and manages the integration of before and after school programs and wraparound services with the academic program and schedule. The Coordinator may also engage in fund raising activities.

Most of the Coordinator's responsibilities relate to other Community School Pillars. However, **REGARDING POSITIVE BEHAVIOR PRACTICES,** the Community School Coordinator should make sure that school partners who are providing before and after school and out-of-school programs are aware of the behavioral norms students are expected to follow and positive behavior practices.

NEA RESOURCES

NEA YouTube video: Community Schools – Community Support and Positive Discipline. Available online at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8HN_zW4SwYY

This 4-minute video explains two Community Schools pillars: Community Support Services and Positive Discipline Practices.

NEA Student Behavior Homepage at <http://www.nea.org/home/37004.htm?q=student%20behavior>
Positive behavioral interventions and supports: A multi-tiered framework that works for every student. NEA Policy Brief. Available online at http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/PB41A-Positive_Behavioral_Interventions-Final.pdf

NEA Policy Statement on discipline and the school-to-prison pipeline available online at <http://ra.nea.org/delegate-resources/policy-statement-on-discipline/>
Approved at the 2016 Representative Assembly, this policy statement defines disciplinary terms and outlines five guiding principles.

Kohl, S. (Undated). Modeling positive behavior in the classroom. Available online at <http://www.nea.org/tools/52062.htm>

Zauber, K. (2003). *Management tips for new teachers*. Available online at <http://www.nea.org/tools/management-tips-for-new-teachers.html>

Walker, T. (2015). How engaging students resistance works better than punishment. NEA Today, March 3, 2015. Available online at <http://neatoday.org/2015/03/03/engaging-student-resistance-works-better-punishment/>

Eric Toshalis, author of Make me! Understanding and engaging student resistance in school, believes that schools need to remodel how educators respond to student oppositional behavior - to view it more as an opportunity, not something to punish. He outlines his research and methods in this NEA Today interview.

OTHER RESOURCES

Attendance Works: Advancing Student Success by Reducing Chronic Absence available online at <http://www.attendanceworks.org/tools/>

Web site devoted to improving student attendance. Provides tools, examples from around the country at elementary, middle and high school levels. Outlines school site strategies: recognize good and improved attendance; engage students and parents; monitor attendance data and practice; provide personalized early outreach; and develop programmatic response to barriers.

Boccanfuso, C., and Kuhfeld, M. (2011). Multiple responses, promising results: Evidence-based non-punitive alternatives to zero tolerance. Child Trends Research-to-Results Brief, March 2011. Available online at <http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/alternatives-to-zero-tolerance.pdf>

This 12-page brief explains what "zero tolerance" means and implementation effects in schools. It then explains alternatives that encompass positive behavioral methods with an explanation of each. An extensive reference section is included.



Creative Education. (2014). Restorative justice in schools: An overview. Available online at <http://www.creativeeducation.co.uk/blog/restorative-justice-in-schools/>

Provides one-page overview of restorative justice programs in schools. Links to other programs and sites are included.

Conflict Solutions Center. (2014). Restorative practices in schools. Available online at http://www.cscsb.org/restorative_justice/restorative_practice_schools.html

Provides one-page overview of restorative justice programs in schools. Offers guidance documents in Spanish language versions.

Kappa Delta Pi. (Undated). Culturally responsive classroom management & intercultural communication. Available online at https://www.kdp.org/chapters/programmingideas/pdf/pdoutofthebox/Culturally_Responsive_Classroom_Mgmt.pdf

Two-page group activity process through which participants "develop positive attitudes about others by discussing cultural perspectives and development of classroom management practices that are culturally and linguistically responsive."

Losen, D. (2011). Discipline policies, successful schools, and racial justice. The Civil Rights Project at UCLA. National Education Policy Center. Available online at <http://nepc.colorado.edu/files/NEPC-SchoolDiscipline.pdf>

A report from the Civil Rights Project at UCLA which focuses on the impact of disparate treatment of racial minorities and students with disabilities when zero tolerance and other punitive behavioral practice are implemented in schools. Makes recommendations for positive behavioral practices.

National Association of School Psychologists. (2001). Zero tolerance and alternative strategies: A fact sheet for educators and policy makers. Available online at http://www.naspcenter.org/factsheets/zt_fs.html

Fact sheet defines zero tolerance, its prevalence in school policies and practices, problems associated with broad application, impact on students with disabilities, and alternatives to zero tolerance policies, policing in schools programs, and the negative impact especially on black students all resulting in negative rather than positive behavioral practices. Interesting graphic depictions of data.

Nelson, L, and Lind, D. (2015). The school to prison pipeline, explained. Justice Policy Institute, posted February 24, 2015. Available online at <http://www.justicepolicy.org/news/8775>

While juvenile crime rates have dropped over the past 15 years, school discipline policies have become more punitive in some districts. This paper provides a history of zero tolerance policies

PBS News Hour (2014). Colorado high school replaces punishment with "talking circles." Posted on YouTube on February 20, 2014.

This 7-minute video is about Hinkley High School in Aurora, CO, where students, parents and administration are meeting face-to-face to resolve student conflict with conversation. The number of physical altercations has taken a nosedive as this new type of disciplinary action, called "restorative justice," replaces suspension.

Schott Foundation. (2014). Restorative practices: Fostering healthy relationships & promoting positive discipline in schools, a guide for educators. Available online at <http://schottfoundation.org/sites/default/files/restorative-practices-guide.pdf>

A restorative practice toolkit developed by NEA, AFT, Advancement Project, and the National Opportunity to Learn Campaign. Defines and describes practice, compares restorative programs to zero-tolerance programs, and provides guidance on creating and implementing these restorative practices.

United States Department of Education. (2014). Guiding principles: A resource guide for improving school climate and discipline. Web site at <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/school-discipline/guiding-principles.pdf>

Guide focus on three key principles: 1) Climate and prevention: schools that foster positive school climates can help to engage all students in learning by preventing problem behaviors and intervening effectively to support struggling and at-risk students. 2) Expectations and Consequences: Schools that have discipline policies or codes of conduct with clear, appropriate, and consistently applied expectations and consequences will help students improve behavior, increase engagement, and boost achievement. 3) Equity and Continuous Improvement: Schools that build staff capacity and continuously evaluate the school's discipline policies and practices are more likely to ensure fairness and equity

United States Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. (Undated). Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports. Web site at <https://www.pbis.org>

Comprehensive web site addressing behavioral interventions and supports to assist schools and district in defining, developing, implementing and evaluating a multi-tiered behavioral practices program that emphasizes social, emotional, and academic outcomes for students with disabilities. However, these practices are applicable to all students.

YouTube (2013). Restorative resources – restorative justice in schools. Posted on April 19, 2013. Available online at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9pYuA3o6WuU>

An 11-minute video that outlines restorative justice and practices in schools with examples from Santa Rosa, California and Oregon schools. Sponsored by the Conflict Solutions Center.

~~94x~~ 94x



THE SIX PILLARS OF COMMUNITY SCHOOLS TOOLKIT

NEA RESOURCE GUIDE FOR EDUCATORS, FAMILIES & COMMUNITIES

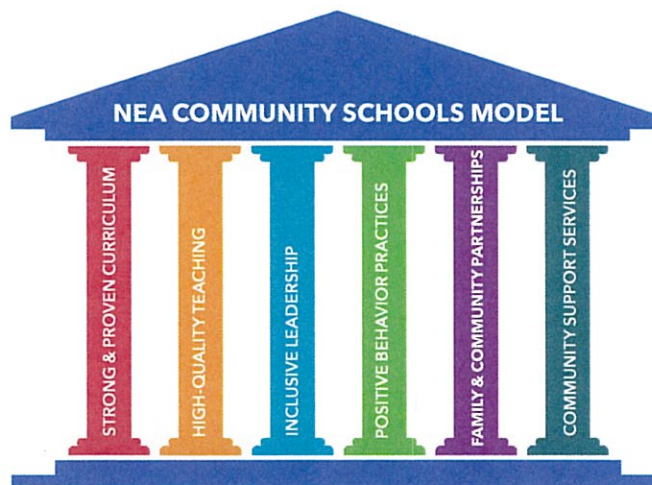
FAMILY & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

A PILLAR OF THE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS MODEL

COMMUNITY SCHOOL: A center of the community that brings together academics, health and social services, youth and community development and community engagement under one roof, leading to improved learning, stronger families, and healthier communities¹

IN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS, parents, caregivers and community members are partners in creating dynamic, flexible community schools. Their engagement is not related to a specific project or program, but is on-going and extends beyond volunteerism to roles in decision-making, governance and advocacy. Their voices are critical to articulating and achieving the school's overall mission and goals. When families and educators work together, students are more engaged learners who earn higher grades and enroll in more challenging classes; student attendance and grade and school completion rates improve.

When preparing to address this pillar, the Community School Planning Team should become familiar with the federal family engagement requirement. Read NEA's *Quick Brief on Family Engagement in Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)* available at <http://ra.nea.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/FCE-in-ESSA-in-Brief.pdf>. This document describes changes to Elementary and Secondary Education Act by the 2015 reauthorization as ESSA. Parent "involvement" is now parent "engagement." The brief answers questions about how to inform, involve and engage parents and families.



USE OF FUNDS²

The ESSA requires that districts reserve at least one percent of their Title I funding for parent and family engagement activities. Schools with the highest needs are to be given priority when these funds are distributed. Parents and family members must have input into decisions about funding use. At least one of the following must be included in a district family engagement plan:

- 1 For more on NEA's position and resources on Community Schools, go to <http://www.nea.org/home/66319.htm>
- 2 This section is adapted from NEA Quick Brief on Family Engagement at <http://ra.nea.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/FCE-in-ESSA-in-Brief.pdf>





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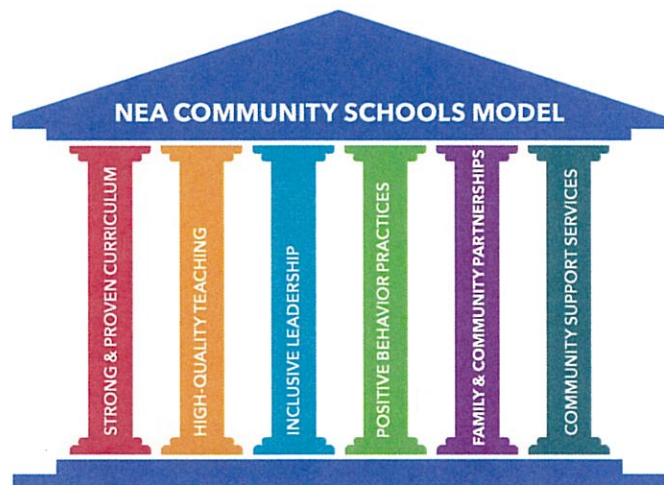
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- **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:** for school and non-profit partner organization personnel regarding parent and family engagement strategies, which may be provided jointly to teachers, principals, and other school leaders, specialized instructional support personnel, paraprofessionals, early childhood educators, and parents and family members.
- **HOME-BASED PROGRAMS:** that reach parents and family members at home, in the community, and at school.
- **DISSEMINATING INFORMATION:** about best practices focused on parent and family engagement, especially best practices for increasing the engagement of economically disadvantaged parents and family members.
- **COLLABORATING WITH COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS:** through sub-grants to schools so they can collaborate with community-based or other organizations or employers with a record of success in improving and increasing parent and family engagement.
- **OTHER ACTIVITIES AND STRATEGIES:** that the school or district determines are appropriate and consistent with its family engagement policy or plan.

NEA RECOMMENDS TEN KEY STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE FAMILY AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS.³

1. **AGREE ON CORE VALUES:** Take the time at the beginning of the planning process to think deeply and reflect about what family members and community partners believe, and why they think adopting a Community Schools Model will benefit students.
2. **LISTEN TO THE COMMUNITY:** Identify priorities through a collaborative process that creates community consensus around what needs to happen and in what sequence.
3. **USE DATA TO SET PRIORITIES AND FOCUS STRATEGIES:** Look closely at current achievement trends as part of the asset and needs assessment to address identified gaps in students' knowledge and skills.
4. **PROVIDE RELEVANT, ON-SITE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:** Base professional development on data, educator-defined learning needs, student learning needs, and conversations among stakeholders, in a way that builds both educator to educator and educator to parent collaborations.
5. **BUILD COLLABORATIONS WITH COMMUNITY PARTNERS:** Engage strategic partners such as colleges, social service agencies, community groups, faith-based organizations, local leaders, public officials, and businesses. Develop community ownership of the community school model.
6. **USE TARGETED OUTREACH TO FOCUS ON HIGH- NEEDS COMMUNITIES, SCHOOLS, AND STUDENTS:** Identify groups that need special attention, learn about their concerns and needs, and respond in culturally appropriate ways.
7. **BUILD ONE-TO-ONE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN FAMILIES AND EDUCATORS THAT ARE LINKED TO LEARNING:** Take time to have conversations and reach agreement on how best to collaborate to improve student engagement and learning.
8. **SET, COMMUNICATE, AND SUPPORT HIGH EXPECTATIONS:** Make it clear that success is the norm by creating pathways to career and college, especially for students at risk and those at the margins, and provide students and families with the supports they need to succeed.
9. **ADDRESS CULTURAL DIFFERENCES:** Provide support for teachers and education support professionals to bridge barriers of culture, class, and language.

3 Adapted from NEA Family-School-Community Partnership 2.0 report, available online at <http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/Family-School-Community-Partnerships-2.0.pdf>

- 10. CONNECT STUDENTS TO THE COMMUNITY:** Make learning hands-on and relevant to students' lives while also showing that students and schools serve the community.

SHARED VOCABULARY⁴

- **CAPACITY-BUILDING:** refers to the effort of a school to strengthen its staff's ability to achieve goals; that is to plan, make policy, and do the work needed to meet goals. Schools receiving Title I funds are expected to build their capacity for parent engagement, that is, to strengthen parent and staff resources to more meaningfully inform, engage and involve parents in supporting children's learning (NEA).
- **COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATION (CBO):** refers to public or private nonprofit group, including religious organizations, representative of a community or a significant segment of a community and is engaged in meeting human, educational, environmental, or public safety needs (NEA).
- **COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTER (CLC):** refers to an entity that helps students meet academic achievement standards in core subjects. A center may provide students with opportunities for academic enrichment activities and a broad array of other activities (such as drug and violence prevention, counseling, art, music, recreation, technology, and character education programs). Such centers operate during non-school hours or periods when school is not in session, such as before and after school or during summer recess. Programs offered by a center reinforce and complement the regular academic school programs of students served. A center may also offer students' families opportunities for literacy and related educational development (NEA).
- **DIVERSE FAMILIES:** refer to families of all races, ethnicities, family structures, religions, and socioeconomic status, as well as families with varying physical and mental abilities and families without permanent homes (MDE).
- **HOME-SCHOOL SUPPORT FOR LEARNING:** refers to the ways families and educators can partner together to reinforce and enhance what children are learning. Multiple ways of learning and use of universal design for learning (environments, activities and products accessible to all) are included in the strategies used by families and educators. (MDE)
- **PARENT ADVISORY BOARD:** refers to a group of parents, ideally trained to represent other parents, organized by Title I schools to give the parent perspective, comments, and ideas for school parent engagement programs. They also may work with community-based organizations and businesses to develop parent involvement activities (NEA).
- **PARENT GROUP:** refers to an organization which represents families and parents of students who attend the school, such as Parent Teacher Association or Parent Teacher Organizations, Title I Parent Advisory Council, Special Education Parent Advisory Council, English Language Learners Parent Advisory Council, etc. (MDE)
- **STAKEHOLDERS:** refer to groups of people interested in education, including but not limited to students, families, educators, school administrators, elected officials, community leaders, faith-based organizations, health care providers, businesses, and other community service providers. (MDE)

4 All Shared vocabulary definitions are adapted from NEA's Parent and community engagement brief (NEA) at http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/PB11_ParentInvolvement08.pdf, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education (MDE) at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/boe/sac/parent/FSCPfundamentals.pdf>

The **COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PLANNING TEAM** should focus on Family and Community Partnerships as they conduct the needs assessment using the four key elements of the planning and implementation process found on the following pages. Links to NEA and other resources related to family and community partnerships are provided at the end of this section.

FAMILY & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS IMPLEMENTATION: ASSET & NEEDS ASSESSMENT

STEP 1. A SCHOOL-BASED ASSET AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT: is an inclusive process in which parents, students, community members, partners, teachers, administrators and school staff who define “what we have” and “what we need.” Asset assessment articulates the strengths and capabilities available within the school, the community and by potential partners. Needs assessment defines specific issues, concerns, and deficits to be addressed.

The **COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PLANNING TEAM** should review the **SHARED VOCABULARY** definitions and discuss how each applies at the school site. Team members then collect and examine evidence from a variety of sources and identify specific family and community partnership assets and needs, including obstacles or barriers. Each Key Element articulates one aspect of a family and community partnership. The Team may choose to assign each question to two or three team members to better use available time. Regarding family and community partnerships, however, it is essential that each working group have one parent and community representative as members.

VIEW THE NEA YOUTUBE VIDEO, *Community Schools – Family & Community and Inclusive Leadership* at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LMLwQdZM2Bk>

These questions may guide the Team’s efforts to connect students to family and community partnership. If they are answered well and addressed through the Community Schools plan, they have the capacity to improve student engagement and learning. The response to these questions should lead the Team to identify specific curriculum assets and needs.

1. What **community-based organizations**, institutions, and businesses relationships do we currently have? Describe each **briefly**.
2. What type of **community-based organizations** currently provided before/after school programs for students and families?
3. What **parent groups** do we currently have? If so, describe each **briefly**.
4. Do we currently have a **parent advisory board**? Describe the role **briefly**.
5. Describe the **capacity** of administrators, teachers, education support personnel to inform, involve and engage family and community members?
6. What type of **professional development** might be appropriate to **build capacity** of school staff in family and community engagement strategies?
7. What type of **professional development** might be appropriate to **build capacity** of parent groups from diverse families to learn how to contribute to family and community engagement programs?

The following school self-assessment is adapted from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s Family and Community Partnership Fundamentals. The Community School Planning Team, or a smaller work group, may use this to determine where the school rates itself on key components.

FAMILY-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP ASSESSMENT⁵

We create and ensure a welcoming culture and environment for all families, children and youth, school staff, and community members. Stakeholders are valued and connected to each other in support of high academic expectations, achievement, and healthy development.⁶

LEVEL OF IMPLEMENTATION:

- **NOT HERE YET**
- **INITIATING:** Basic level of development and implementation
- **PROGRESSING:** Functioning level of development and implementation
- **MASTERING:** Highly functioning level of development and implementation embedded throughout school

Our School...	Initiating	Progressing	Mastering	Rating
Uses multiple communication paths	School staff informs students and families of upcoming events using a variety of media and communication pathways in the languages used by families and the community.	School staff collaborates with all families, school council, parent groups, and family engagement staff/team to develop connections with families through multiple two-way communication tools in multiple languages.	Families, students, communities, and school staff communicate in interactive ways, both formally and informally, in language that families and students can understand.	☐ Mastering ☐ Progressing ☐ Initiating ☐ Not here yet
Surveys families, students and community members to identify issues and concerns	School conducts a family and student school climate survey that is translated into multiple languages and is implemented in multiple ways.	Survey data are collected annually and results are compared from year to year to assess progress. Results inform the development of family and student engagement programs and activities.	Survey results are reflected in the School Improvement Plan and are used to guide the development of the student engagement plan, family engagement programs, and other school activities.	☐ Mastering ☐ Progressing ☐ Initiating ☐ Not here yet

5 Adapted from Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Family and Community Fundamentals at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/boe/sac/parent/FSCPfundamentals.pdf>

6 Listen to the NEA webinar: Community Schools: Best Transformational Practices, at <http://www.nea.org/home/68381.htm>

Our School...	Initiating	Progressing	Mastering	Rating
Facilitates connections among families and students and community	School and school council/parent groups provide opportunities for parents to get to know each other.	School and school council/parent groups jointly develop programs honoring the diversity that families bring and encourage cross-cultural understanding.	School and school council/parent groups take intentional steps to help parents build relationships and achieve greater cross-cultural understanding with those beyond their own neighborhood and culture.	☐ Mastering ☐ Progressing ☐ Initiating ☐ Not here yet
Helps families support learning at home and at school	School helps families support their children's learning at home and provides resources for children to complete homework and other learning assignments.	School, parent groups, and community collaborate to offer opportunities through various media and multiple venues for families (i.e., parent workshops, home visits, web-based resources, etc.) to learn how they can support their children's learning at home, at school and in the community.	School, parent groups and community collaborate to develop and implement ongoing, systemic strategies based on academic performance data and needs identified by families, to assist families in supporting their children's learning both at home and in school.	☐ Mastering ☐ Progressing ☐ Initiating ☐ Not here yet
Promotes out-of-school-time learning	School leaders inform families and students, in a language they understand, of home, school, and community learning opportunities that are available outside school hours.	School, parent groups, and community organizations contribute to out-of-school learning opportunities.	School actively collaborates with diverse community organizations, local businesses, and families to develop and provide out-of-school learning opportunities.	☐ Mastering ☐ Progressing ☐ Initiating ☐ Not here yet

Our School...	Initiating	Progressing	Mastering	Rating
Develops effective parent engagement groups that represent all families	Existing parent groups or organizations identify the status of parent engagement and identify under-represented, under-served, isolated and/or disconnected students or families.	Under-represented, under-served, isolated and/or disconnected families are encouraged and trained to become active participants in school activities and events.	Under-represented, under-served, isolated and/or disconnected students and families are active participants in school activities and events.	☐ Mastering ☐ Progressing ☐ Initiating ☐ Not here yet
Develops parent leadership	School leaders utilize knowledge and skills of parents and parent leaders.	School leaders provide leadership opportunities and train parents to become effective leaders.	Members of under-represented and under-served families are actively solicited, trained and supported to become effective parent leaders.	☐ Mastering ☐ Progressing ☐ Initiating ☐ Not here yet
Ensures that all stakeholders have a voice in all decisions that affect children	School leaders establish and maintain an active, representative school council to share in decision making about school curricular, budget, engagement and policy issues.	School council conducts a needs assessment with families, school staff, students and community group representatives and uses results to inform about school curricular, budget, engagement and policy decisions.	School council continues to use and monitor the needs assessments conducted with families, school staff, students, and community representatives to inform its decision-making.	☐ Mastering ☐ Progressing ☐ Initiating ☐ Not here yet
Links community resources	School staff, parent groups and/or school council collect and make available information for families about community resources.	School staff partner with families to identify appropriate community resources. School staff share information with families.	School staff and school volunteers use the school's family resource center as a place to inform families about services, make referrals to programs, and help with follow-up.	☐ Mastering ☐ Progressing ☐ Initiating ☐ Not here yet

Our School...	Initiating	Progressing	Mastering	Rating
Partners with community groups to strengthen families and support student success	Parent groups and/or school council are aware of local community agencies and post notices of events and services in the school.	School staff, parent groups and/or school council reach out to community organizations and/or businesses to explore services and/or donations for children and families.	Community and business representatives work with school and parent leaders to assess the school community's needs. Partnerships and programs are developed to support student success and align with school priorities.	☐ Mastering ☐ Progressing ☐ Initiating ☐ Not here yet
Turns the school into a hub of community life	School and district make buildings open and available for use by outside groups in the evenings and weekends.	School facilities are open year-round for broad community use. Families and the surrounding community members participate in the programming offered by outside agencies.	School offers resources and activities for whole community, drawing on community agencies, organizations, and other educational institutions. Extended hours are used by outside groups to provide services and educational activities for families and the community.	☐ Mastering ☐ Progressing ☐ Initiating ☐ Not here yet

FAMILY & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS IMPLEMENTATION: STRATEGIC PLAN

STEP 2. A STRATEGIC PLAN: describes the school's vision, values and mission. The plan articulates how assets may be used to address needs with the goal of high academic, civic and personal outcomes for all students. The plan focuses on curriculum, high-quality teaching, wraparound services, positive behavioral practices, parent and community engagement and inclusive leadership.

The **COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PLANNING TEAM** should articulate the school's vision, values and mission regarding family and community partnerships. This necessitates having a clear understanding of the current school status and potential family engagement strategies and potential community partnerships. The Team should be guided by the following questions:

- 11. VISION:** As a school community, what academic goals do we want to achieve? (See example below)
- 12. STRATEGIES:** Regarding family and community partnerships, what steps will we take over the next three years to realize this vision and attain these academic goals?
- 13. PRIORITIES:** Given the steps we have described; how should we prioritize them so that we are progressing in an organized and sequential manner?
- 14. ACTION PLAN:** Who will do what? By when? Involving whom? What resources are needed to accomplish this work?

AN EXAMPLE OF A DISTRICT VISION THAT INCLUDES FAMILY AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP for all Pre-K to Grade 8 schools comes from the Holyoke (MA) Full Service Community School.⁷

HOLYOKE STUDENT ENROLLMENT & FAMILY EMPOWERMENT CENTER

Our Center is the main entry point for families to Holyoke Public Schools and a key gateway for information about HPS programs and initiatives.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT SCHOOL-BASED TEAMS

Each school is served by a Family Access & Engagement Coordinator (FAEC) and a School Family Promoter (SFP) who work as a team to support families build and strengthen their relationship with our schools, access information and resources, and develop their leadership and voice. Feel welcome to contact our staff [names and contact information are provided.]

FAMILY EMPOWERMENT: PARENT POWER ACADEMY

We believe that Holyoke Public Schools and Holyoke families are partners in our children's success. We also believe in the value of lifelong learning for all members of our school community, which is why we support parents to acquire new tools and skills that will strengthen their families. The Parent Power Academy will deliver educational and informational workshops for families at the schools and in neighborhood settings. These workshops will become vehicles for parents to make connections with other families as well as with community organizations and service providers. Workshops for families will be offered year-round on the following topics.

⁷ For more information, go to <https://www.hps.holyoke.ma.us/about-us/departments/family-community-engagement/>

- ✓ Parents as first teachers (includes partnering with teachers, early literacy practices, and supporting your child at home)
- ✓ Family health and nutrition
- ✓ Financial education and career advancement
- ✓ Social and emotional learning
- ✓ School leadership and voice

FAMILY EMPOWERMENT: PARENT LEADERSHIP AND VOICE

HPS encourages and embraces the active participation and contributions of parents to improve and support our schools. There are multiple vehicles for parents to exercise their leadership and voice across our district:

- ➔ **SCHOOL SITE COUNCILS:** are organized by the principals at each school as an advisory group pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws. The councils assist principals with identifying student needs, establishing educational goals for the school, developing improvement plans, and reviewing the school budget. School site councils include teachers elected by their peers, parents selected by a recognized parent organization or elected by school families, as well as students at the high school level. The meetings are open and its minutes are available to the entire school community.

Contact your school principal to get information on your school council's meeting calendar. Don't hesitate to contact our department if interested in learning more about school site councils or acquiring skills to effectively participate in your school's council.

- ➔ **PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATIONS (PTOs):** at each of our schools are independent, critical vehicles for parents to exercise leadership and voice in support of their children's education. Participation in the PTO should be open to all parents and guardians of children in a school. PTOs in Holyoke have historically supported schools through:

- ✓ Representing and advocating the parents' perspective before school officials
- ✓ Fundraising to cover specific school needs
- ✓ Providing rich extracurricular and enrichment activities for students
- ✓ Engaging and sharing information with families to strengthen school connections
- ✓ Supporting the celebration of school spirit and pride
- ✓ Coordinating parent volunteers
- ✓ Recognizing teachers and staff

School PTO's are encouraged to work with school leaders and the Family Engagement teams at the schools to identify key needs in the turnaround plan or in the schools where they can focus part of their efforts during each year.

- ➔ **PARENT LEADER GROUPS OR PARENT VOLUNTEER TEAMS:** Parent leaders in some schools have formed volunteer teams or groups of parents to support the school or grades or classrooms. Contact the Family Engagement team in your school to learn how you can join or contribute as a parent volunteer.
- ➔ **FAMILY ENGAGEMENT IN THE HOLYOKE EARLY LITERACY INITIATIVE (HELI):** We want more families to join the Holyoke Early Literacy Initiative (HELI) and increase the frequency of what they do at home to support their child's literacy. We invite and support parents to do "One Thing a Day" to help boost your child's literacy skills.

Please contact our department or Family Engagement staff at your school to learn how to join a HELI Parent Group in your school and to get tips and tools for literacy activities you can start doing with your child at home.

- ➡ **CITYWIDE PARENT LEADER GROUP:** A citywide Parent Leader Group meets with the Receiver/Superintendent the first Mondays of each month to provide input and receive updates on the district's turnaround process. Information obtained at these meetings is shared with parents at their schools. Contact our department to learn who represents the schools at these meetings.
- ➡ **PARENT CONCERNS AND FEEDBACK:** HPS welcomes parents' feedback, questions, and recognition for our staff by contacting our school leaders or the Family & Community Engagement Department. We appreciate your thoughts and partnership as we continue implementing our turnaround plan and realizing our vision of "a pathway for every student."

We encourage families to establish regular communication with school leaders and explore all possibilities to contribute to student success at the school level. We recognize sometimes families feel dissatisfied after having worked with teachers and school leaders to resolve a situation related to their child, which leads them to want to raise their concerns to the school district office. If there are issues that remain unresolved at the school level, you may file a written complaint form with the Chief of Family & Community Engagement at the Student Enrollment & Family Empowerment Center or with the Student Services Coordinator at the Department of Pupil Services.

Please note that most of these complaints are referred to the schools to be addressed, while some are referred to specific department leaders or the Superintendent for investigation or review. Although the process may take time, Holyoke Public Schools is committed to responding to parent concerns and complaints in a timely manner to strengthen the school-family partnership and keep students engaged in school.

If you have concerns about issues related to school-based operations, please contact the school principal or the Student Enrollment & Family Empowerment Center at 413-534-2055.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- ➡ **HOLYOKE EDUCATION DIALOGUES:** are opportunities for groups of families to engage in conversations with the Receiver/Superintendent and other HPS leaders about what our students are learning, how they are learning and how we know they are learning. Groups of 6 to 12 families may sign up to host an evening conversation with HPS leaders. Please contact our department for more information and for available dates.
- ➡ **HOLYOKE EARLY LITERACY INITIATIVE (HELI):** is a citywide effort founded in 2013 that brings schools, families and community partners together to dramatically improve the reading proficiency of our youngest children. Everyone is being asked to do something and we all have something to do to reach our GOAL: rapid and sustained improvement in reading proficiency by the 3rd grade. As a coalition, we have deployed multiple strategies that are proving successful, from engaging families with children from 0-8 years old in early literacy practices, to strengthening the program designs of literacy programs across the city, and developing city-wide collaborative workgroups.

We want more families to join HELI and increase the frequency of what they do at home to support their child's literacy. We invite and support parents to do "One Thing a Day" to help boost your child's literacy skills.



Please contact our department or Family Engagement staff at your school to learn how to join a HELI Parent Group in your school or to get tips and tools for literacy activities you can start doing with your child at home. You may also join HELI's Family Engagement Workgroup by attending our monthly meetings the first Tuesdays of every month at the Picknelly Center (206 Maple Street), Room 400.

- ➡ **COMMUNITY OUTREACH:** We welcome opportunities to engage with community partners and participate in community events or neighborhood meetings across the city where we can meet and talk to families. During the summer of 2016 our department organized 11 neighborhoods walks and informational tables at multiple community events. Please contact our department if you would like HPS to join your event or make a presentation on a topic.

HPS also welcomes partnership opportunities in support of student learning and our families. Please contact us to learn about our strategic priorities and current initiatives and how we may work together.

FAMILY & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS IMPLEMENTATION: ENGAGEMENT OF PARTNERS

STEP 3. PARTNERS: may include organizations, businesses and community-based entities that historically have not engaged with the school are recognized as assets and their expertise is critical to implementing the community school pillars.

The **COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PLANNING TEAM** should review the assets and needs identified and determine how to improve or enhance existing family and community partnership with the school for the betterment of the academic and enrichment activities of the students.

REGARDING FAMILY AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS, community organizations, institutions, and businesses may have experience, expertise and resources to enhance in-school learning and/or out-of-school learning and engaging families through home-school partnerships. Some of this learning may take place outside of the normal school day or school year.

15. KNOX COUNTY (KY) COMMUNITY SCHOOLS INITIATIVE:⁸ use public schools as "hubs for organizing community resources to improve neighborhood health and safety and student academic success." A six-minute video outlines the programs and services.

16. MADISON (WI) METROPOLITAN SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMUNITY SCHOOL FRAMEWORK:⁹ outlines the components of a district community schools model, including a list of community-based organizations on page 8. Madison defines "lead partners" as having a "formal, mutually beneficial relationship" with the school and has "the capacity and long-term commitment to support the Community School by collaborating with other organizations to provide services and/or programs." Lead Partner attributes should include, but not be limited to:

- ✓ Commitment to the Madison community school vision that every school is a thriving school that prepares every student for college, career and community.
- ✓ A clear vision and goals that align with the district and individual school goals.
- ✓ A history of effective community collaboration and engagement.

⁸ For more information, go to <http://www.greatschoolspartnership.com/community-schools/>

⁹ For more information, go to <https://face.madison.k12.wi.us/files/face/The-Madison-Community-School-Framework.pdf>

- ✓ Experience and expertise in providing high-quality identified services and programs.
 - ✓ Established, measurable outcomes and the demonstration of positive impact with programs and services that meet or exceed established standards.
 - ✓ A commitment to collaborate in bringing financial and in-kind resources to the Community School.
 - ✓ Demonstrated financial stability and sustainability, including a history in successful grant writing.
- ➡ **REDWOOD CITY (CA) COMMUNITY SCHOOLS:**¹⁰ “partners with families, government agencies, and non-profit and funding agencies to bring services and expertise to school sites. This allows schools to offer a range of learning opportunities designed to complement students’ work in the classroom. A comprehensive array of services such as academic support, enrichment activities, physical healthcare, violence prevention, mental healthcare, mentoring, immigration support, adult education, parenting classes, support during school transitions, crisis intervention, and safety net services such as food, housing, transportation, and clothing are offered at community schools.” The site lists and hyperlinks to the following active partners:
- ✓ Beresford Montessori
 - ✓ Boys & Girls Club of the Peninsula
 - ✓ Fair Oaks Community Center
 - ✓ Redwood City Parks and Recreation
 - ✓ Family Connections
 - ✓ First 5 San Mateo County Bank
 - ✓ Institute for Human and Social Development
 - ✓ John W. Gardner Center for Youth and Their Communities
 - ✓ Fair Oaks Health Center
 - ✓ Silicon Valley Community Foundation
 - ✓ Sequoia Children’s Center
 - ✓ Sequoia YMCA
 - ✓ Sobrato Early Academic Learning
 - ✓ StarVista

10 For more information, go to <http://www.rwc2020.org/community-schools-overview/>

FAMILY & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS IMPLEMENTATION: COMMUNITY SCHOOL COORDINATOR

STEP 4. IN GENERAL, THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL COORDINATOR: facilitates the development and implementation of the strategic plan in collaboration with school and community members/partners; oversees the alignment of assets with needs; and manages the integration of before and after school programs and wraparound services with the academic program and schedule. The Coordinator may also engage in fund raising activities.

Most of the Coordinator's responsibilities relate to other Community School Pillars. However, **REGARDING FAMILY AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**, the Community School Coordinator is the bridge between the school, families and the community and facilitates the alignment of community-based and partner-provided learning experiences. This is the area where the Coordinator's work is primarily focused.

The Marvine (PA) Elementary School articulates the role of the community school coordinator.¹¹

1. Implement and oversee data-driven interventions related to key priority areas, in partnership with key school representatives:
 - ✓ Increase daily student attendance and reduce chronic absenteeism
 - ✓ Increase positive student behavior (mentors for struggling students, connection to behavioral health services/family case management services, leadership opportunities, etc.)
 - ✓ Increase reading and math proficiency (elementary school level) in students performing below grade level proficiency through community school resources and assets
 - ✓ Successfully transition students and families across changing school levels (elementary school - middle school - high school)
 - ✓ Effectively utilize positive youth development resources to improve student attendance, behavior and/or academic performance (before, during and after school programs)
 - ✓ Engaging and empowering parents and caregivers to be effective teachers at home (scheduling parent education programs, running family engagement events, reducing attendance barriers, second cup of coffee, mom's club, providing 1:1 parent sessions, etc.)
2. Collect and review critical data pertaining to students (academic, attendance, behavior), families and programs. Analyze data to develop new strategies and plans for continuously improving existing interventions
3. Generate reports on the outcomes of the community school model to various stakeholders, including the United Way of the Greater Lehigh Valley, St. Luke's Hospital, the Bethlehem School District, and other potential sponsors of the community school work at the site.
4. Provide weekly, and as needed, supervision for all additional individuals secured to support the community school efforts (After School Coordinators, MSW interns, AmeriCorps VISTAs, etc.)
5. Effectively delegate tasks to additional community school staff (After School Coordinators, MSW interns, AmeriCorps VISTAs, etc.); monitor progress on completion of assigned tasks.
6. Recruit, train and coordinate all volunteers at school site (tutors, mentors, corporate/college)
7. Solicit, coordinate and distribute critical donated items (food, clothing, school supplies, hygiene)

¹¹ For more information, go to <https://careers.unitedway.org/job/community-school-coordinator-marvine-elementary-school>

items, books)

8. Identify and build relationships with key providers whose services are needed to best support students and families
9. Responsible for monitoring budgetary matters related to school based grants received, after school program funds, community school building budgets, event costs, etc.
10. Actively participate in Core Team meetings to share relevant data, highlight concerns, develop solutions
11. Lead an effective Leadership Team/Community Partners Team; which includes effective meeting facilitation, clear and consistent communication with team members, new team member recruitment
12. Provide regular communication with all school staff, students and families regarding community school events and activities, highlights and results, and needs
13. Responsible for understanding all policies and procedures of the school site and district
14. Responsible for participating in identified school team meetings as it relates to community engagement, student attendance, transitions, at-risk students
15. Responsible for positive relationship-building with school staff, students, parents, St. Luke's Hospital staff, United Way staff, and other community partners
16. Participates in training and technical assistance activities with the United Way of the Greater Lehigh Valley
17. Demonstrates an understanding of cultural and social barriers to the exchange data/ information within the community.
18. Takes an active role in Quality Improvement projects relating to the community school model.

NEA RESOURCES

NEA YouTube video: Community Schools – Family & Community and Inclusive Leadership. Available online at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LMIwQdZM2Bk>

This 4-minute video explains two Community Schools pillars: Family & Community Engagement and Inclusive Leadership.

NEA Family Engagement homepage: <http://www.nea.org/home/37004.htm?q=family%20engagement>

All in! How educators can advocate for English language learners (2015). Available online at https://www.nea.org/assets/docs/18285_ELL_AdvocacyGuide2015_low-res_updated_6-23.pdf

Section “Partnering with Families and Communities” on pages 23-26 provides useful examples that may be incorporated into a plan. Reference section is helpful.

Families and Communities. (2015). Available online at <https://www.nea.org/assets/docs/ESSA%20One%20Pager%20-%20Family%20and%20Communities.pdf>

Summarizes the key provisions of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) related to family and community engagement.

Family-School-Community Partnerships 2.0: Collaborative strategies to advance student learning. (2011). Available online at <http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/Family-School-Community-Partnerships-2.0.pdf>

NEA report reviews the research on school and family collaboration presenting 10 strategies; profiles 16 partnership programs that fall into three categories: family-community programs; parent engagement programs; and wraparound and community service programs.

Graham, E. (Undated). 10 ideas for engaging parents: Educators share their best ideas for communicating and partnering with parents. Available online at <http://www.nea.org/tools/56945.htm>

Brief article outlines such strategies as focus on the positive, share school experiences, find common ground, visit parents directly, and entice parents into the school.

Henderson, A.T. (2016). Quick brief on family engagement in Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015. Available online at <http://ra.nea.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/FCE-in-ESSA-in-Brief.pdf>

Describes changes to ESEA by ESSA which changes “parent involvement” to “parent engagement.” Brief addresses questions about how to inform and engage families.

Long, C. (2012). How effective family engagement makes a difference. NEA Today, January 18, 2012. Available online at <http://neatoday.org/2012/01/18/how-effective-family-engagement-makes-a-difference/>

Describes the family engagement program at Salt Lake City’s Glendale Middle School which has a high Muslim student population.

NEA Policy Statement on discipline and the school-to-prison pipeline available online at <http://ra.nea.org/delegate-resources/policy-statement-on-discipline/>

Approved at the 2016 Representative Assembly, this policy statement defines disciplinary terms and outlines five guiding principles. The fifth principle is Student and Family engagement.

Parent and community engagement: Achieving great public schools. (2012). An NEA Policy Brief. Available online at http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/PB11_ParentInvolvement08.pdf

Comprehensive report that includes NEA policy briefs, background information on family-friendly employment practices, parent-school communications, whole child needs, and school personnel learning to connect with families and communities. Resources and recommendations are included in each section.

School-family engagement: Staff preparation and support are vital. (2011). An NEA Policy Brief. Available online at <http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/PB35schoolfamilycommunity2011.pdf>

This policy brief summarizes the research, benefits and barriers to family and community involvement with the schools.

Ten things everyone must know about family engagement in Title I, ESSA. (2015). An NEA Policy Brief. Available online at <http://ra.nea.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/NEA-ESSA-Ten-Things-Everyone-Must-Know-about-Family-Engagement-in-Title-I.pdf>

Quick synopsis of the family engagement provisions required by ESEA/ESSA.

OTHER RESOURCES

Berg, A.C., Melaville, A., and Blank, M.J. (2006). *Community & family engagement: Principals share what works*. Coalition of Community Schools. Available online at <http://www.communityschools.org/assets/1/AssetManager/CommunityAndFamilyEngagement.pdf>

Report focus on six keys to community engagement for community schools: know where you're going; share leadership; reach out; don't ignore the elephant in the room; tell your school's story; and stay the course. Also discusses engaging families, staff, partners and the public.

ExpandedED Schools. (2012). Ten ways to Build School-Community Partnerships. YouTube, posted on December 4, 2012. Available online at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lc_8Qjl2GPU

In this 5.5-minute video, the Baltimore partners of the Collaborative for Building After-School Systems describe ten innovative and effective ways for schools and community organizations to build strong partnerships that support high-quality expanded learning.

Drain, J., and Hasan, M. (2014). Summer enrichment or just hanging out? What parents should know about extended learning opportunities. National Association for Gifted Children. Available online at http://www.nagc.org/sites/default/files/Parent%20CK/Summer_Enrichment_or_Just_Hanging_Out_2014.pdf

According to the authors, summer learning based in family and community activities increases students' school achievement. Students who participate in summer learning activities—whether camp-based, community-based, or family-based—score higher on their fall achievement tests than students who are left to their own devices during their free time.

Henderson, A.T., Mapp, K.L., Johnson, V.R. and Davies, D. (Eds.). (2007). *Beyond the bake sale: The essential guide to family/school partnerships*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company. \$15 for paperback and \$14 for Kindle.

Countless studies demonstrate that students with parents actively involved in their education at home and school are more likely to earn higher grades and test scores, enroll in higher-level programs, graduate from high school, and go on to post-secondary education. This book provides tips from principals and teachers, checklists, and a resource section.

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Family, School and Community Partnership Fundamentals (2015). Available online at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/boe/sac/parent/FSCPfundamentals.pdf>

School self-assessment rubric focusing on six engagement fundamentals: Welcoming stakeholders; communicating effectively; supporting student success, advocating for each student; sharing power and responsibility; and partnership with the community.

National Association for Family, School, and Community Engagement (NAFSCE). Available online at <http://nafsce.org>

NAFSCE's offers webinars, conferences, communities of practice and special offerings related to capacity building activities; initiatives and conversations focused on advancing policy; and various networking opportunities and other platforms for the field to share effective practices. The NEA and the NPTA are partners in this work.

National Partnership for Family and Community Engagement. (2017).

Available online at <http://www.hfrp.org/family-involvement/projects/national-family-school-and-community-engagement-working-group-completed-project>

Hosted by the Harvard Family Research Project, according to their web site, NFSCE is "a leadership collaborative whose purpose is to inform the development and implementation of federal policy related to family, school, and community engagement in education. It is dedicated to mobilizing partnerships among families, schools, and communities to promote kindergarten readiness, improve schools, and increase student achievement."

United States Department of Education Family and Community Engagement Home page at <https://www.ed.gov/parent-and-family-engagement>

Provides links to resources for parents, communities, educators related to engagement.



THE SIX Pillars OF COMMUNITY SCHOOLS TOOLKIT

NEA RESOURCE GUIDE FOR EDUCATORS, FAMILIES & COMMUNITIES

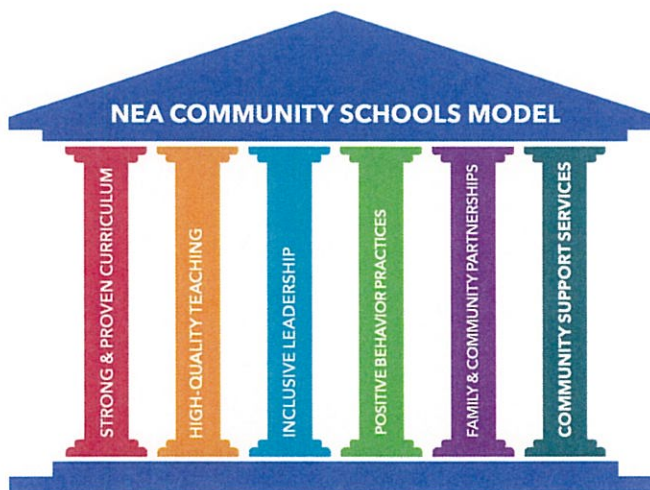
COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES

A Pillar OF THE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS MODEL

COMMUNITY SCHOOL: A center of the community that brings together academics, health and social services, youth and community development and community engagement under one roof, leading to improved learning, stronger families, and healthier communities.¹

IN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS, educators recognize that students often come to school with challenges that impact their ability to learn, explore, and develop in the classroom. Because learning does not happen in isolation, community schools provide meals, health care, mental-health counseling, and other services before, during, and after school. These wraparound services are integrated into the fabric of the school that follows the Whole Child tenets.² Connections to the community are critically important so that resources available to the community to support families can be made available either in the school or nearby.

According to the Annenberg Institute,³ wraparound services that support students and their families are a critical component for improving high-poverty schools. These services address issues resulting in hunger, illness and exhaustion by bringing nutrition programs, health services and other supports into the school. Programs assisting families in English language acquisition and job training are also provided.



1 For more on NEA's position and resources on Community Schools, go to <http://www.nea.org/home/66319.htm>

2 For more information on The Whole Child Tenets developed by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, go to <http://www.ascd.org/whole-child.aspx>

3 For more information, go to Investing in What Works available online at <http://www.annenberginstitute.org/sites/default/files/product/851/files/InvestingInWhatWorks.pdf>

WHOLE SCHOOL, WHOLE COMMUNITY, WHOLE CHILD⁴

The Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child Model, developed and released by the US Centers for Disease Control and ASCD, is the next generation of coordinated school health. This model can be used to ensure that students and the school environment are healthy, safe, and supported.

Health and student services are key components of the Community Schools model. Counseling, psychological, social services, and health services are often located within the school or in nearby community service centers. A school's food services play a distinct role in addressing student hunger and nutrition needs, which often pose challenges for low-income students and their families. Many students needing these services are identified by the school's administrators and teachers, but often by education support professionals, including bus drivers, secretaries, cafeteria workers, and custodians. Education Support Professionals (ESPs) are frequently the most immediate and direct conduit into the school community, for the majority not only work, but also live nearby. Additionally, ESPs frequently serve more than one school site and may act as a liaison between schools, as well as between school staff and community agencies.

SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CENTERS⁵

In 2014, the United States Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) established a School-based Health Center (SBHC) Task Force that reviewed research studies and report on outcomes.

Low-income, racial and ethnic minority students commonly experience health issues, are less likely to have a usual health care provider, and miss more days of school because of illness than do their more economically and socially advantaged peers. They are also more likely to come to school hungry. In addition, they often have problems with vision, oral health, and hearing. SBHCs may address some of these obstacles, which can be critical to students' education and long-term health.

The DDHS study reported on major findings including: SBHCs led to improved educational outcomes including school performance, grade promotion, and high school completion. SBHCs also led to improved health outcomes including the delivery of vaccinations and other recommended preventive services, and decreases in asthma morbidity, and emergency department and hospital admission rates.

SBHCs provide primary health services to students in grades K-12 and may be offered within the school or in school-linked centers. SBHCs are often established in schools that serve predominantly low-income communities. SBHCs may have the following characteristics:

- ➡ A single clinician providing primary care services or a multi-disciplinary team providing comprehensive services
- ➡ Mental health care, social services, dentistry, and health education
- ➡ Ability to extend services to school staff, student family members, and others within the surrounding community.

4 Adapted from NEA Education Support Professionals: Meeting the Needs of the Whole Child, available online at https://www.nea.org/assets/docs/150306-ESP_DIGIBOOK.pdf

5 Adapted from US Department of Health and Human Services Community Guide to School-based Health Centers available online at <https://www.thecommunityguide.org/sites/default/files/assets/OnePager-SBHC.pdf>

ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Adult learners include a wide range of individuals with different motivations for continuing or restarting their schooling. Community schools may be a hub for adult learning: Adult Basic Education (ABE) and Graduate Equivalency Diploma (GED) programs for students who have dropped out of school before completion; English as a Second-Language classes; citizenship classes for immigrant families; literacy and numeracy programs for those with minimal skills; course completion for community college or job training program eligibility; opportunities to learn or expand knowledge and use of various technological tools; and personal enrichment.

The school becomes a community center by engaging the community's adults, including students' family members, in education programs that address their learning needs.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES IMPLEMENTATION: ASSET & NEEDS ASSESSMENT

STEP 1. A SCHOOL-BASED ASSET AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT: is an inclusive process in which parents, students, community members, partners, teachers, administrators and school staff who define "what we have" and "what we need." Asset assessment articulates the strengths and capabilities available within the school, the community and by potential partners. Needs assessment defines specific issues, concerns, and deficits to be addressed.

The COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PLANNING TEAM should review the SHARED VOCABULARY definitions and discuss how each applies at the school site. Team members then collect and examine evidence from a variety of sources and identify specific behavior management practices assets and needs, including obstacles or barriers. Each Key Element articulates one aspect of a positive or negative behavior management practices. The Team may choose to assign each question to two or three team members to better use available time. Regarding positive behavior practices, however, it is essential that each working group have one representative who has first-hand knowledge of student behavior management at the school.

VIEW THE NEA YOUTUBE VIDEO, Community Schools–Community Support Services and Positive Discipline. Available online at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8HN_zW4SwYY

These questions may guide the Team's efforts to determine the types of community support services are used in the school. If they are answered well and addressed through the Community Schools plan, they have the capacity to improve student engagement and learning. The response to these questions should lead the Team to identify specific assets and needs related to positive behavior practices.

1. What community health services do we currently offer within the school or in partnership with outside agencies or organizations? Describe each briefly.
2. What community counseling services do we currently offer within the school or in partnership with outside agencies or organizations? Describe each briefly
3. What community job training and/or counseling services do we currently offer within the school or in partnership with outside agencies or organizations? Describe each briefly.
4. What adult education do we currently offer within the school or in partnership with outside agencies or organizations? Describe each briefly.
5. What family recreational programs do we currently offer within the school or in partnership with outside agencies or organizations? Describe each briefly.

ASSESSMENT OF COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES⁶

HEALTH AND NUTRITION SERVICES

To what extent does the school provide...	Assets	Needs	Obstacles	Evidence
Students and/or family members with access to nutrition services, including breakfast and lunch programs?				
Students and/or family members with access to primary health care services, either on-site or through a community partner?				
Students and/or family members with access to dental services, either on-site or through a community partner?				
Students and/or family members with access to vision services, either on-site or through a community partner?				
Students and/or family members with access to hearing services, either on-site or through a community partner?				
Students and/or family members with access to mental health services, either on-site or through a community partner?				
Students and/or family members with access to counseling services, either on-site or through a community partner?				

⁶ Adapted from USED Full-Service Community School grant programs, go to <https://ed.gov/programs/communitieschools/index.html>

ASSESSMENT OF COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES⁷

EDUCATION AND CAREER SERVICES

To what extent does the school provide...	Assets	Needs	Obstacles	Evidence
Students' family members with access to job training programs?				
Students' family members with access to career counseling services?				
Students' family members with access to family financial stability services?				
Students' family members with access to adult education, including GED or Adult Basic Education programs?				
Students' family members with access to instruction in English as a second language?				
Students' family members with access to recreational programs offered at the school?				

⁷ Adapted from USED Full-Service Community School grant programs, go to <https://ed.gov/programs/communityschools/index.html>

COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES IMPLEMENTATION: STRATEGIC PLAN

STEP 2. A STRATEGIC PLAN: describes the school's vision, values and mission. The plan articulates how assets may be used to address needs with the goal of high academic, civic and personal outcomes for all students. The plan focuses on curriculum, high-quality teaching, wraparound services, positive behavioral practices, parent and community engagement and inclusive leadership.

The **COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PLANNING TEAM** should articulate the school's vision, values and mission regarding **COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES**. This necessitates having a clear understanding of the current school practices for managing student behavior. The Team should be guided by the following questions:

1. **VISION:** As a school community, what academic goals do we want to achieve? (See example below)
2. **STRATEGIES:** Regarding **COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES**, what steps will we take over the next three years to realize this vision and attain these academic goals?
3. **PRIORITIES:** Given the steps we have described; how should we prioritize them so that we are progressing in an organized and sequential manner?
4. **ACTION PLAN:** Who will do what? By when? Involving whom? What resources are needed to accomplish this work?

AN EXAMPLE OF A VISION THAT INCLUDES COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES,⁸ West Virginia Community Schools advocate school-based health services and offers the following guidance:

- Assess and determine community sponsorship for health and social support services. In some communities, more than one medical, mental health or dental provider may be willing to collaborate. In other communities, it may be difficult to find any providers. It is best to keep community sponsorship local, when possible. Sponsorship may be provided by a variety of organizations. The planning committee may need to explore various options, and weigh the pros and cons of each. Alignment of health services must match the school's goals and values and need to be reviewed regularly to have a successful relationship. Regular review of needs and values is imperative to ensure positive outcomes for students and the appropriate community lead/sponsoring agency.
- Negotiate services to meet student needs. When working with a sponsor, discussion should include: hours of operation based on medical needs and school size; services to families and community members during or after school hours; roles and responsibilities and agreement of sponsor to strive toward meeting best practices standards.
- **AN EXAMPLE OF A VISION THAT INCLUDES COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES:** West Virginia Community Schools advocates school-based health services and offers the following guidance:

8 Adapted from the West Virginia School Health Technical Assistance Center, available online at <https://livewell.marshall.edu/mutac/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/OpenSBHC2ndEd.pdf>

AN EXAMPLE OF IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES,⁹ the Roy Clarke (Tulsa, OK) Elementary School used their federal nutrition funding to offer a Breakfast in a Bag program and after-school snack program. The school engaged several outside partners to provide health and wellness services to students and their families. These included:

- ➔ University of Oklahoma Bedlam Clinics creating an in-school clinic that serves all students and their families. This is not an income-based service.
- ➔ Family and Children's Services provided two in-school therapists.
- ➔ Tulsa City-County Health Department for health education.
- ➔ YMCA for after-school programs stressing health, fitness, nutrition, teamwork and academics.
- ➔ Northeastern State University undergraduates provide tutoring, musicians who provide music lessons.

AN EXAMPLE OF IMPLEMENTATION OF FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES,¹⁰ the Rhode Island Partnership for Community Schools provides guidance and examples of programs implemented in districts across the state. The term "community opportunity zone" (COZ) is used to indicate that these programs are partnerships with outside the school entities. Examples include:¹¹

- ➔ Woonsocket COZ operates a weekly food pantry; a clothing and household item distribution center; and the Center for Finance Success providing families with financial literacy education, free income tax return preparation, and workforce training opportunities in healthcare, culinary arts, and bookkeeping/accounting. Woonsocket also partners with the Ocean State Big Brothers, Big Sisters Program that connects 60 Bryant University undergraduates who mentor students weekly throughout the academic year.
- ➔ Pawtucket COZ is a Rhode Island Department of Education approved high-performing adult education program offering adult English-as-a-Second-Language (ESOL) and GED classes. The Adult Education Program runs a 20-hour per week daytime program and an evening program that meets three times per week. The program provides adult literacy services for 250 adults per year. Childcare, case management, and career exploration are included.
- ➔ Westerly COZ offers an array of family services, including adult education provided by teachers and volunteers from Families Learning Together, Literacy Volunteers of Washington County and Education Exchange. Childcare and transportation options are available for eligible participants.

9 Jenkins, J. (Undated). The power of community: A movement is afoot in Tulsa elementary school that is making a big impact on students and families. Available online at <http://www.tulsapeople.com/core/pagetools.php?pageid=14799&url=/Tulsa-People/August-2011/The-power-of-community/&mode=print>

10 Adapted from the Rhode Island Partnership for Community Schools, available online at <http://www.ride.ri.gov/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/Students-and-Families-Great-Schools/RI-Public-Schools/BEP-program-descriptions.pdf>

11 Listen to the NEA webinars: The Community Schools Transformation Process: Key Players, AND Inside a Community School: Working Together Towards a Single Vision at <http://www.nea.org/home/68381.htm>

COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES IMPLEMENTATION: ENGAGEMENT OF PARTNERS

STEP 3. PARTNERS: may include organizations, businesses and community-based entities that historically have not engaged with the school are recognized as assets and their expertise is critical to implementing the community school pillars.

The **COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PLANNING TEAM** should review the assets and needs identified and determine how to improve or enhance positive behavior practices with the school for the betterment of the academic and enrichment activities of the students.

REGARDING COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES, health and welfare organizations and institutions and local businesses play a critical role in providing students and their families with needed support and resources. These may include:

- ➡ School-based Health Centers that may operate either inside the school or near or in combination—that are operated through agreements with hospitals, clinics or other public health agencies. Primary care, dental care, mental health and psychological counseling services, immunizations, hearing and vision testing and other health related issues are addressed through these centers.
- ➡ Recreational and Wellness Organizations such as the YMCA/YWCA or the Boys & Girls Clubs which offer an array of recreational programs for both students and their families.
- ➡ Businesses may offer employees opportunities to engage with students through mentoring and tutoring programs and to act as school volunteers at various school functions. Summer job programs and job training programs provide out-of-school opportunities for students and/or their family members.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES IMPLEMENTATION: COMMUNITY SCHOOL COORDINATOR

STEP 4. IN GENERAL, THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL COORDINATOR: facilitates the development and implementation of the strategic plan in collaboration with school and community members/partners; oversees the alignment of assets with needs; and manages the integration of before and after school programs and wraparound services with the academic program and schedule. The Coordinator may also engage in fund raising activities.

Most of the Coordinator's responsibilities relate to other Community School Pillars. However, **REGARDING COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES,** the Community School Coordinator should make sure that school partners who are providing before and after school and out-of-school programs are aware of the behavioral norms students are expected to follow and are familiar with positive behavior practices.

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS COORDINATOR JOB RESPONSIBILITIES¹²

This job description incorporates information from a variety of existing CS Coordinator job descriptions. It is meant to be a comprehensive resource for the Community Schools Planning Committee and the district Human Resources Director as they craft their own job description, depending on their specific needs. Many of the existing job descriptions use the Child First model which is cited as the first source in the footnote below.

The North Sanpete (UT) school district states that the CS Coordinator provides general supervision and specific coordination of the Community Education program under the direction of the school principal or school leadership team. The coordinator will program a wide variety of community classes and activities based on community requests, identified needs and class evaluations. The coordinator will become involved in developing other components of the community education concept as possible, such as public involvement, facility coordination, integration with K-12 program and resource utilization.

According to Child First, which funds the Community Schools Coordinator positions for the Baltimore City Schools, the CS Coordinator is a full-time, salaried individual whose work week tends to encompass some evenings and weekends. The CS Coordinator is required to

- ✓ Attend monthly professional development
- ✓ Complete quarterly reports about specific school-wide outcomes from data related to attendance, climate and parent and community engagement.

The CS Coordinator works collaboratively with the school leadership team to co-design, develop and supervise all community school programming including:

- ✓ Family and student support services
- ✓ Health services
- ✓ Enrichment activities including those that occur during the school day, after school and summer
- ✓ Family and community engagement activities

The CS Coordinator strengthens and maintains the bridge between the school and community. They facilitate and provide leadership for the collaborative process and the development of a continuum of services for children, families and community members within a school neighborhood.

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

- ➡ Implement a menu of needs-driven, high-quality programs and services in keeping with the community school model, including but not limited to early childhood programs, expanded learning and enrichment opportunities, health services, parent/family engagement, adult education, direct material assistance and interventions targeted to chronically absent students.
- ➡ Ensure the alignment and integration of all programming with both the principal's vision and the curriculum.

¹² The job description, responsibilities and duties of the CS Coordinator are adapted from job descriptions from Baltimore City Child First available at http://tfabaltimore.weebly.com/uploads/1/4/9/5/14952282/cfa_community_school_coordinator_liberty.job_announcement_06-17-13.pdf; National Center for Community Schools' Community School Coordinator Sample Job Description, at <http://www.nccs.org/sites/default/files/resource/SampleJobDescription.pdf>; North Sanpete (UT) school district at <https://www.nsanpete.org/index.php/districtpolicies/districtpoliciespersonnel/32-community-school-coordinator.html>; and Northfield (MN) public schools at <http://northfieldschools.org/files/Community-School-Coordinator.pdf>; Chicago public schools Community Schools Initiative Coordinator at <https://www.milwaukeejobs.com/j/t-community-schools-initiative-coordinator-e-chicago-public-schools-l-chicago-il-jobs-j21902470.html>

- Advise the principal on how to integrate partners and community members into school governance structures (i.e., School Leadership, School Safety, Child Study and Attendance teams).
- Coordinate needs and resource assessment activities on an ongoing basis, employing a variety of strategies and including a broad cross-section of stakeholders.
- Hire, train and supervise staff as required by the Lead Partner.
- Convene and staff the site-based Community School Leadership Team, a coordinating body that is co-led by the principal and Community School Coordinator and may comprise administrators, teachers, support services staff, partners, parents and others to identify needs, set priorities and coordinate the strategy.
- Support the research/evaluation of the community school by supervising and coordinating the collection of data, timely submission of reports and responses to other requests for information made by the initiative's leadership.
- Participate in capacity-building activities, including initiative-wide and site-based trainings, network meetings and study visits, and—with the principal—ensure the participation of other site-based staff as needed or required.
- Represent the initiative in various public forums as needed and participate in advocacy activities to promote the initiative.
- Execute other tasks as indicated by the CS leadership team and/or lead partners.

SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES

PARTNERSHIP AND RELATIONSHIP DEVELOPMENT

- Leads a comprehensive, participatory needs/assets assessment of the school and community in partnership with the school leadership team and community stakeholders.
- Develops and coordinates new partnerships guided by needs assessment and School Action Plan.
- Helps to raise funds and in-kind donations to support programming

STUDENT AND FAMILY SUPPORT

- Serves as a member of the school student support team and attendance team to identify students at risk of chronic absence and disciplinary action, collaborating with the school, families, and community to provide necessary supports
- Refers students and families to community agencies and organizations when appropriate.

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Organizes, trains, and develops parent leaders to connect to the school, academic achievement and school decision-making.
- Recruits, trains and helps to manage volunteers in support of Community School efforts.
- Coordinates with school and before/after school program staff to engage neighborhood associations, residents and community leaders in these efforts.

COMMUNICATION

- Organizes and staffs regular meetings of appropriate leadership and school or community-based teams. These teams are comprised of administrators, school council members, students, community representatives and extended service partners. They identify, coordinate,

and broker relationships for service delivery at the school.

- ➔ Implements an approved action plan by establishing and coordinating partnerships, co-locating resources within the school, developing the necessary work plans, agreements, MOUs, and schedules, and connecting families and community residents to those resources.

PROGRAM BUDGETING AND GRANT MANAGEMENT

- ➔ Prepares annual programmatic budget.
- ➔ Manages grants and funding streams.
- ➔ Monitors disbursements from grant funding.
- ➔ Assists and makes recommendations concerning fiscal needs and requirements for community school programming, activities and initiatives.
- ➔ Assists with grant proposal writing for non-district funding.

PROGRAM REPORTING

- ➔ Aids in the evaluation of individual Community School programs by collecting data on new partners and the use of their services as well as general school climate indicators, i.e. school attendance, school safety and academic achievement.
- ➔ Reports outcomes in a timely manner to school leadership team and funding partners as required.
- ➔ Represents the initiative publicly, as requested, reporting on program successes and outcomes.
- ➔ Tracks required data for community school funders and partners.

SPECIFIC DUTIES

- ➔ Assist the school leadership team in developing the home/school partnership, and serve as a catalyst for public involvement in the schools.
- ➔ Communicates, collaborates and solves problems with administrators, district personnel, parents, community members and the Community School Advisory Council regarding student, staff and/or program issues. Tracks required data for community school funders and partners.
- ➔ Organizes and supervises community education programs and activities which may include Adult Basic Education and Adult high school completion; enrichment programs for youth; general, self-enrichment, self-improvement classes for adults; integration of the community school programs with the regular day and evening programs; coordinates existing community resources to enhance community service offerings.
- ➔ Develops after school and evening programming, including non-school day programming. Collaborates with a variety of community organizations to deliver programming. Identifies and interviews prospective instructors, both paid and volunteer. Facilitates instructor compensation for CS programs. Facilitates the registration process for all CS programs.
- ➔ Evaluates program effectiveness and participant satisfaction. Provides program and participant data to the school leadership team, partners, and other stakeholders. Conducts an annual program evaluation and submits quarterly activity reports.
- ➔ Markets and promotes Community School activities and opportunities with the school community. Publicize class offerings and other community school programs using all available media.
- ➔ Coordinate with local agencies and organizations to avoid duplication in program delivery.
- ➔ Ensures use of best practices in community school programming for children, youth and adults.

- ➔ Assists and makes recommendations concerning fiscal needs and requirements for Community School programming, activities and initiatives.

QUALIFICATIONS

- ➔ Bachelors degree; masters preferred
- ➔ Five years of relevant experience working with youth, families, or community agencies partnering with schools
- ➔ Knowledge of afterschool curriculum implementation and appropriate techniques and practices for afterschool programming
- ➔ Fundamentals of supervision and supervisory techniques
- ➔ Understanding of community school philosophy
- ➔ Experience developing and maintaining strong working relationships working among a diverse group of actors
- ➔ Experience dealing with difficult situations
- ➔ Experience managing multiple projects and ability to oversee a cadre of staff, partners, and volunteers
- ➔ Strong analytical skills with demonstrated grant management experience.
- ➔ Familiarity with non-profit organizations and school-community partnerships.
- ➔ Exceptional written, verbal and financial communication skills.
- ➔ Strong ability to organize and prioritize information quickly and strategically.
- ➔ Successful experience writing and obtaining grants.
- ➔ High degree of fluency in the full MS Office Professional Suite

NEA RESOURCES

NEA YouTube video: Community Schools – Community Support and Positive Discipline. Available online at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8HN_zW4SwYY

This 4-minute video explains two Community Schools pillars: Community Support Services and Positive Discipline Practices.

NEA Community Schools homepage: <http://www.nea.org/home/66319.htm>

Backgrounder: Meeting the Needs of the Whole Child (Undated). Available online at <http://education-votes.nea.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/04/WholeChildBackgrounder.pdf>

Articulates NEA support for the ASCD Campaign for the Whole Child, which advocates addressing the all students' physical, social and emotional health and well-being as a means of providing equity in educational opportunity.

Backgrounder: Students from Poverty. (2016). Available online at http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/Backgrounder_Students%20from%20poverty_online.pdf

The achievement gap based on income has surpassed the achievement gap based on race/ethnicity. This 9-page backgrounder identifies in-school and out-of-school strategies to assist students from poverty gaining access to resources more readily available to their higher-income peers.

NEA Education Support Professionals: Meeting the Needs of the Whole Child, available online at https://www.nea.org/assets/docs/150306-ESP_DIGIBOOK.pdf

NEA resource focus on the work of Education Support Professionals and how they contribute to health, safe, engaged, supported and challenged learning environments.

Family-School-Community Partnerships 2.0: Collaborative strategies to advance student learning. (2011). Available online at <http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/Family-School-Community-Partnerships-2.0.pdf>

NEA report reviews the research on school and family collaboration presenting 10 strategies; profiles 16 partnership programs that fall into three categories: family-community programs; parent engagement programs; and wraparound and community service programs.

NEA Policy Brief: Planning for school restructuring: Keeping stakeholders in the process. (2013). NEA Policy Brief. Available online at <https://www.nea.org/assets/docs/Planning-for-School-Restructuring-06282013.pdf>

Provides rationale for inclusion of educators and parents in the school redesign planning process and the importance of engaging all stakeholders.

NEA Policy Brief: Wraparound services. (2013). NEA Policy Brief. Available online at <http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/Wraparound-Services-05142013.pdf>

Provides information related to full-service community schools addressing outside classroom services provided at the school site.

Long, C. (2016). Community schools bridging the gap between school and home. NEA Today, August 9, 2016. Available online at <http://neatoday.org/2016/08/09/community-school-bridging-the-gap/>

Article examples the impact of poverty on learning and how community support services, including health and dental services and out-of-school learning opportunities, can help mitigate the impact of poverty on student learning.

Nealis, L. (2015). School mental health professionals: Strengthening community connections, boosting student outcomes. Education Votes, May 15, 2015. Available online at <http://educationvotes.nea.org/2015/05/13/school-mental-health-professionals-strengthening-community-connections-boosting-student-outcomes/>

Article stresses that more than simply the absence of mental illness, mental health also means possessing the skills needed to cope with life's many challenges. As such, it directly impacts children's learning and development. Struggling with a mental health problem, such as depression, or feeling overwhelmed by academic, social, or family pressures severely limits children's ability to learn and grow. Students, families, and communities thrive when schools meet the needs of the whole child—fostering social-emotional skills and identifying and preventing mental health problems early.

OTHER RESOURCES

West Virginia Community Schools. (Undated). Community school-based health services in West Virginia: A quick reference guide for schools implementing health and social supports of a community school. Available online at <https://wvde.state.wv.us/healthyschools/section1/documents/SBHSHealthandSocialSupportsQuickReferenceGuide5-21-15.pdf>

This document is intended as a quick guide for schools interested in partnering with their community providers to develop health and social supports which may include school-based health services for primary health care, dental and mental health services, such as doctor, dentist and behavioral health facilities.

New Mexico Office of School and Adolescent Health. (2015). New Mexico school-based health centers: A status report 2015. Available online at <https://nmhealth.org/publication/view/report/2000/>

Reports on the impact of school-based health centers on identified student needs. Useful report for convincing health partners that such a collaboration bears positive results.

GUIDES FOR SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CENTER DEVELOPMENT

Each of the links below is to comprehensive planning guide for schools interested in creating a school-based health center: covers community planning, health center structure, health center funding, day-to-day operations, evaluation and data collection, youth involvement, marketing, and advocacy and coalition building.

California School-based Health Alliance. (2017). Our Toolkits, available online at <http://www.school-healthcenters.org/about-us/toolkits-and-services/toolkits/> U

Colorado Association for School-based Health Care. (2010). Opening a school-based health center in Colorado: a how-to manual. Available online at <http://www.casbhc.org/Publications/Technical%20Assistance/Opening%20A%20School-Based%20Health%20Center.pdf>

West Virginia School Health Technical Assistance Center. (2014). Opening a school-based health center: A how-to guide for West Virginia. Available online at <https://livewell.marshall.edu/mutac/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/OpenSBHC2ndEd.pdf>

United States Department of Health and Human Services. (2015). Health equity: School-based health centers. Available online at <https://www.thecommunityguide.org/findings/promoting-health-equity-through-education-programs-and-policies-school-based-health-centers>



COMMUNITY SCHOOLS: EDUCATOR FACT SHEET

COMMUNITY SCHOOL: A center of the community that brings together academics, health and social services, youth and community development and community engagement under one roof, leading to improved learning, stronger families, and healthier communities.

Educators know that partnerships with families, communities, and other stakeholders are community members and organizations collaborate to strengthen schools, students benefit.

Designing and implementing a **COMMUNITY SCHOOLS MODEL** provides educators and their local associations with opportunities to engage families through family-centered programs and to build relationships with community members, organizations and institutions.

From an Educator's perspective, **COMMUNITY SCHOOLS** often address shortcomings of more traditional schools by

- ☒ Garnering additional resources through funding and partnerships to reduce demands on school staff.
- ☒ Providing learning opportunities to develop students academic social, emotional, physical and civic competence.
- ☒ Offering programs focused on the whole family's physical, mental and emotional health.
- ☒ Building social capital through networks and relationships that create opportunities for students.

Educators benefit through a focus on the whole child when they build relationships with parents, families, and community organizations and institutions. This **COMMUNITY OF INTEREST** will work with educators on issues related to school quality and allow the educators to

- ☒ Organize support for student-centered budgeting and teaching and learning conditions.
- ☒ Engage educators through opportunities to get involved in their Association's outreach and advocacy.
- ☒ Build stronger relationships within the membership leading to engaged, empowered educators.

A **COMMUNITY SCHOOL** is one way to dismantle institutional racism and remove obstacles that stand in the way of some students. In many cases, minority students are tracked into classes leaving them unprepared for college and careers. In too many schools, punitive discipline practices remove disproportionate numbers of minorities and students with disabilities from learning experiences. School funding and



resource allocation still favor students from wealthy neighborhoods. "Failing" schools are threatened with takeover, shutdown, or replacement by charter schools.

INSTEAD, many "failing" schools have transformed themselves by implementing the **COMMUNITY SCHOOLS MODEL**, which uses some federal school turnaround elements, but in a collaborative and collegial process resulting in high-performing schools even in high-poverty neighborhoods. In **COMMUNITY SCHOOLS**, as in all schools, teachers teach and students learn - but with a focus on the whole child: before and after school programs beyond the traditional extracurricular and athletic programs; learning opportunities for family and community members; and health and wellness support. Partnerships with community organizations and businesses broaden the educational and experiential scope of learning making the school a hub of community activity.

The **NEA COMMUNITY SCHOOL MODEL** includes six pillars of practice. Like most public education models, they are adaptable to the needs of an individual school's students, staff, families and community. They are: A Strong & Proven Curriculum; High-Quality Teaching; Inclusive Leadership; Positive Behavior Practices; Family & Community Partnerships; and Community Support Services.

So what is the role of the **EDUCATION ASSOCIATION** in this work? We know how to organize people, and can serve as the first mover in getting a community to survey its needs and commit to moving forward with the community school strategy. We can lead community conversations; serve on planning teams; raise public awareness about student needs and how community schools can meet them; and we can make sure our members understand their roles at the site level.

For more information, access our Community Schools Toolkit at www.nea.org/communityschools

Watch our introductory webinar at https://neaorg.adobeconnect.com/_a932539447/p41qy7y4peb/?launcher=false&fcsContent=true&pbMode=normal



COMMUNITY SCHOOLS: FAMILY FACT SHEET

COMMUNITY SCHOOL: A center of the community that brings together academics, health and social services, youth and community development and community engagement under one roof, leading to improved learning, stronger families, and healthier communities.

FAMILIES know that their children thrive in schools where educators and parents work together to focus on student learning. But not all students come to school ready to learn due to hunger, untreated medical conditions, trauma, and a lack of opportunity for exploration and enrichment. For many families, creating the conditions that support learning requires assistance from the broader community.

Designing and implementing a **COMMUNITY SCHOOLS MODEL** provides families with opportunities to work with teachers, administrators and community organizations and institutions to develop and implement student-centered and family-centered programs.

From the parental perspective, **COMMUNITY SCHOOLS** often address shortcomings of more traditional schools by

- ☒ Garnering additional resources through funding and partnerships to reduce demands on school staff.
- ☒ Providing learning opportunities to develop students' academic social, emotional, physical and civic competence.
- ☒ Offering programs focused on the whole family's physical, mental and emotional health.
- ☒ Building social capital through networks and relationships that create opportunities for students.

Families benefit through a focus on the whole child when they build relationships with educators, the Association, and community organizations and institutions. This **COMMUNITY OF INTEREST** will work with families on issues related to the academic, social, emotional, physical development of their children by

- ☒ Instituting a strong and proven curriculum in a safe learning environment where positive student behavior is the norm.
- ☒ Providing learning opportunities within the community through afterschool, vacation and summer programs.
- ☒ Addressing students' health needs through in-school or near-school clinics offering physical, dental and optical treatment.



A **COMMUNITY SCHOOL** is one way to dismantle institutional racism and remove obstacles that stand in the way of some students. In many cases, minority students are tracked into classes leaving them unprepared for college and careers. In too many schools, punitive discipline practices remove too many minority and students with disabilities from learning experiences. School funding and resource allocation still favor students from wealthy neighborhoods. “Failing” schools are threatened with takeover, shutdown, or replacement by charter schools.

INSTEAD, many “failing” schools have transformed themselves by implementing the **COMMUNITY SCHOOLS MODEL**, which uses some federal school turnaround elements, but in a collaborative and collegial process resulting in high-performing schools even in high-poverty neighborhoods. In **COMMUNITY SCHOOLS**, as in all schools, teachers teach and students learn – but with a focus on the whole child. Opportunities include before and after school programs beyond the traditional extracurricular and athletic programs; learning opportunities for family and community members; and health and wellness support. Partnerships with community organizations and businesses broaden the educational and experiential scope of learning making the school a hub of community activity.

The **NEA COMMUNITY SCHOOL MODEL** includes six pillars of practice. Like most public education models, they are adaptable to the needs of an individual school’s students, staff, families and community. The are: A Strong & Proven Curriculum; High-Quality Teaching; Inclusive Leadership; Positive Behavior Practices; Family & Community Partnerships; and Community Support Services.

So what is the **PARENT’S ROLE** in this work? Parents are their children’s best advocates; they know and understand their academic, social, emotional, and physical needs. Parents can engage with their school’s educators and commit to moving forward with a community school strategy. They should be full participants in community conversations and on planning teams. As members of the community, they can raise awareness about student needs and explain how community schools can meet them.

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Watch our introductory webinar at https://neaorg.adobeconnect.com/_a932539447/p41qy7y4peb/?launcher=false&fcsContent=true&pbMode=normal



THE SIX PILLARS OF COMMUNITY SCHOOLS TOOLKIT

NEA RESOURCE GUIDE FOR EDUCATORS, FAMILIES & COMMUNITIES

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS: COMMUNITY FACT SHEET

COMMUNITY SCHOOL: A center of the community that brings together academics, health and social services, youth and community development and community engagement under one roof, leading to improved learning, stronger families, and healthier communities.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS, organizations and institutions know that they benefit from great schools. However, while many community members may have knowledge, skills and talent from which the school would benefit, too often connections with schools do not exist; as a result, students, educators, and families miss opportunities to enhance student learning.

Designing and implementing a **COMMUNITY SCHOOLS MODEL** provides community members with opportunities to work with educators and families to develop and implement student-centered and family-centered programs.

From the perspective of community organizations, institutions and members, **COMMUNITY SCHOOLS** often address shortcomings of more traditional schools by

- ☒ Extending learning through partnership programs with social, cultural and health organizations.
- ☒ Enhancing student learning opportunities through out-of-school experiences.
- ☒ Providing family learning programs before and after school hours, on weekends, and during school vacations and summer.
- ☒ Supplementing educator instruction by sharing knowledge, skill and talent in specific content areas.

Community organizations and institutions benefit through a focus on the whole child when they build relationships with educators, the Association, and parents, families and students. This **COMMUNITY OF INTEREST** will work with community organizations and institutions on issues related to the academic, social, emotional, physical development of their children by

- ☒ Instituting adult learning programs, recreational programs, and social programs at the school site.
- ☒ Providing wraparound services that meet the physical, emotional, and mental health needs of students and their families.
- ☒ Creating lifelong connections to community-based organizations and institutions reliant on such engagement.



A **COMMUNITY SCHOOL** is one way to dismantle institutional racism and remove obstacles that stand in the way of some students. In many cases, minority students are tracked into classes leaving them unprepared for college and careers. In too many schools, punitive discipline practices remove too many minority and students with disabilities from learning experiences. School funding and resource allocation still favor students from wealthy neighborhoods. "Failing" schools are threatened with takeover, shutdown, or replacement by charter schools.

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The **NEA COMMUNITY SCHOOL MODEL** includes six pillars of practice. Like most public education models, they are adaptable to the needs of an individual school's students, staff, families and community. The are: A Strong & Proven Curriculum; High-Quality Teaching; Inclusive Leadership; Positive Behavior Practices; Family & Community Partnerships; and Community Support Services.

So what is the **COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION'S ROLE** in this work? Members of community-based groups bring knowledge, skill, experience and talent that benefit a community school strategy. They must be full participants in community conversations and on planning teams. As members of the community, they can raise awareness about student needs and explain how community schools can meet them.

For more information, access our Community Schools Toolkit at www.nea.org/communityschools

Watch our introductory webinar at https://neaorg.adobeconnect.com/_a932539447/p41qy7y4peb/?launcher=false&fcsContent=true&pbMode=normal

National Education Association

The National Education Association (NEA), the nation's largest professional employee organization, is committed to advancing the cause of public education. NEA's 3 million members work at every level of education—from pre-school to university graduate programs. NEA has affiliate organizations in every state and in more than 14,000 communities across the United States.

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COMMUNITY SCHOOLS:

Transforming Struggling Schools into **Thriving Schools**



ABOUT THE AUTHORS



The Center for Popular Democracy works to create equity, opportunity and a dynamic democracy in partnership with high-impact base-building organizations, organizing alliances, and progressive unions. CPD strengthens our collective capacity to envision and win an innovative pro-worker, pro-immigrant, racial and economic justice agenda.



The **Coalition for Community Schools**, housed at the Institute for Educational Leadership, is an alliance of national, state and local organizations as well as national, state and local Community School networks, and is dedicated to the mission to unite school, community and family for young people's success.



The **Southern Education Foundation's** mission is to advance equity and excellence in education for all students in the South, particularly low income students and students of color. SEF uses collaboration, advocacy, and research to improve outcomes from early childhood to adulthood.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This report was prepared by the Center for Popular Democracy. It was written by Evie Frankl and edited by and with research assistance from Katherine Dunn, Mary Kingston Roche, Kyle Serrette, Marbre Stahly-Butts and Connie Razza. The report uses a framework adapted from the Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools (AROS).

Community Schools: Transforming Struggling Schools into Thriving Schools

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Preface

For at least a decade, the dominant idea about how to improve outcomes for children and youth has focused on control and compliance; holding adults accountable for raising test scores. This approach has proved least effective for our most vulnerable students. In our search for silver bullets, reformers and policymakers alike have overlooked strategies that have long shown promise and for which there is mounting evidence of success. Community Schools is one of these strategies.

Community Schools combine challenging and culturally relevant learning opportunities with the academic and social supports each and every child needs to reach their potential. These schools, at their core, are about investing in children, through quality teaching, challenging and engaging curricula, wrap around supports, positive school climate, strong ties to family and community and a clear focus on results.

It's clear the tide is turning, as interest in this vision of schooling is now evident in the nation's major education policy, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). We note in particular the inclusion of factors in accountability systems that extend beyond test scores, as well as provisions for the use of resources to strengthen school-community partnerships—including needs assessments, teacher development on family/community engagement, and support for personalized learning—reflective of the Community Schools strategy.

This report profiles Community Schools across the country, all which demonstrate consistent improvement in a wide range of indicators of student success. The best of these schools leave nothing to chance. They are as committed to challenging academics as they are to health, wellness and social and emotional learning. They are sustained by the broad support they enjoy from their communities. And they represent the ultimate purpose of our schools: to prepare young people to pursue their aspirations and participate fully in our economy and democracy.

This report intends to shed light on how Community Schools come alive in practice, and the improvements in academic and social outcomes that emerge when these schools are given a chance to work. There are over 90 communities across the country with significant efforts underway.

In low income communities and communities of color, we have not always valued the power of citizen input and the capacities within communities to coalesce around their children. This needs to change. When communities are excluded from our improvement strategies they are not likely to be sustained and children lose. School climate suffers, chronic absenteeism persists, discipline problems push students out of school and learning outcomes suffer.

We hope you will take to heart the lessons from community schools across the country that we profile in this report. If we are to create truly transformative learning opportunities for children and youth, especially the least advantaged, we need to examine closely the strategies this report highlights. We owe our young much more than a basic education. We owe them a genuine opportunity to determine for themselves how they will work and live in this great country.

Kyle Serrette, Center for Popular Democracy
Marty Blank, Coalition for Community Schools
Kent McGuire, Southern Education Foundation

Executive Summary

Community Schools implement evidence-based strategy to bring together the resources of school, family, and community in order to make schools stronger and help young people thrive. With a century-long history in the United States,¹ Community Schools now serve over 5 million students in approximately 5,000 schools across the country.² While Community Schools might take different approaches, these schools generally employ whole-child, research-based strategies and elevate innovative and holistic practices in order to achieve results that go beyond test scores.³ In fact, when Community Schools are able to employ the multiple strategies outlined in this report, their results can be *sustainably transformational*: increasing school attendance, decreasing suspensions and expulsions, creating healthy and safe communities, and improving academic outcomes.

This report outlines six essential strategies for Community Schools and the key mechanisms used to implement these strategies. Next, it profiles Community Schools across the country where these model strategies are being used to achieve transformational results. A close look at these model Community Schools and districts shows that across racial, economic, and geographic diversities in this country, Community Schools work. As the new federal education legislation gives states greater power to implement Community Schools, we recommend learning from the strategies and mechanisms we provide in this report—both from research and from practice—to achieve transformational and sustainable Community Schools across the country.



These are the six research-based Community School strategies that allow for greater student-centered learning, community investment and engagement, and school environments squarely focused on teaching and learning:^a

- 1. Curricula that are engaging, culturally relevant, and challenging.** Schools offer a robust selection of classes and after-school programs in the arts, languages, and ethnic studies, as well as Advanced Placement (AP) and honors courses. Also offered are services for English Language Learners and special education students, GED preparation programs, and job training. Pedagogy is student-centered.
- 2. An emphasis on high-quality teaching, not on high-stakes testing.** Assessments are used to help teachers meet the needs of students. Educators have a real voice in professional development. Professional development is high-quality and ongoing, and includes strengthening understanding of, and professional alignment with, the Community School strategy.
- 3. Wrap-around supports and opportunities** such as health care, eye care, and social and emotional services that support academics. These services are available before, during, and after school, and are provided year-round to the full community. Community partners are accountable and culturally competent. The supports are aligned to the classroom using thorough and continuous data collection, analysis, and reflection. Space for these services is allocated within the building or within walking distance.
- 4. Positive discipline practices, such as restorative justice** and social and emotional learning supports, are stressed so that students can grow and contribute to the school community and beyond. School safety and positive school climate are achieved through these mechanisms. Suspensions and harsh punishments are eliminated or greatly reduced.

^a Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools—a national grouping of community organizing groups, teacher unions and policy organizations representing over 7 million members—evolved the six strategies of successful Community Schools to clarify a set of aspirational goals for all Community Schools

- 5. **Authentic parent and community engagement** is promoted so the full community actively participates in planning and decision-making. This process recognizes the link between the success of the school and the development of the community as a whole.
- 6. **Inclusive school leadership** who are committed to making the Community School strategy integral to the school's mandate and functioning. They ensure that the Community School Coordinator is a part of the leadership team and that a Community School Committee (Committee)—which includes parents, community partners, school staff, youth, and other stakeholders that are representatives of the school's various constituencies—has a voice in the planning and implementation of the strategy.

The six strategies we recommend are aligned with decades of academic research on successful schools. Research has found that deeper learning can be achieved through authentic curricula and assessments, wrap-around services that address student social and emotional needs, and supportive, skill-building environments for educators.⁴ Community schools have been found to impact not just test scores, but also attendance and family engagement and a multitude of other indicators.⁵



The mechanisms by which Community Schools can achieve transformational, positive change:

Transformational Community Schools achieve success by implementing the above strategies through the following mechanisms:

- 1. An asset and needs **assessment** of and by both school and community;
- 2. A strategic **plan** that defines how educators and community partners will use all available assets to meet specific student needs and get better results;
- 3. The engagement of **partners** who bring assets and expertise to help implement the building blocks of Community Schools
- 4. A Community School **Coordinator** whose job is to facilitate the development and implementation of the strategic plan in collaboration with school and community members/partners, and to ensure alignment of solutions to needs.



Community Schools require sustainable funding and resources. This can be realized through a combination of resource provisions leveraged through partnerships; investment at the federal, state, and local government levels; and foundation and government grants. For example, a site coordinator may leverage health and dental care, early childhood programs, before and after school learning programs, and/or restorative justice programs using free school space like an empty classroom, cafeteria, or gym after school hours. Any investment in Community Schools pays off, literally, ten-fold. The findings of Children's Aid Society are that the Social Return on Investment—meaning the broader return to families and the community—can be as high as 14:1.⁶

Funding sources for Community Schools vary from site to site, city to city, state to state. Funding for planning and Community School coordination can come from states (such as Kentucky and Minnesota), counties (such as Schools Uniting Neighborhoods in Multnomah County, Oregon); the United Way, community foundations, and local school districts. Cities, for example New York City and Baltimore, are increasingly finding funding within their city education budgets for Community Schools.



Community Schools that have used these strategies and mechanisms have seen transformational positive change, including improved academic success, decreased discipline incidents, increased attendance, and increased enrollment. In the profiles found in this report, you can read about how Social Justice Humanitas Academy in Los Angeles sends 99 percent of its students to college, or how Wolfe St. Academy in Baltimore had zero suspensions last year. Schools in Austin, Orlando, Cincinnati, Portland, Kentucky, and more are thriving through these model strategies, and we tell their stories in this report.

Recommendations

The model Community School strategies outlined in this report can and should be used in every public school across the United States to achieve transformational results. The new federal education legislation, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), sends much of the decision-making power to create mechanisms for student success to the state level. This report recommends that:

- 1. Embrace Community Schools as a transformational education solution:** state and local policy makers, using the opportunity created by this new law and in collaboration with their education constituencies including parents, school staff, students and community members, tap the power of community to grow the number of effective Community Schools in every state and municipality in the country.
- 2. Codify Community Schools in policy:** community organizing and education advocacy groups, unions, and Community School practitioners join lawmakers to use the policy templates included in this report to pass legislation that will enable a dramatic increase in the number of Community Schools.
- 3. Implement Community Schools by using this report's strategies and mechanisms:** all parties above use the model strategies and mechanisms cited in this report to ensure that Community Schools are achieving the educational and social results that are possible when these strategies and mechanisms are implemented with fidelity.

Introduction

This report takes a close look at Community Schools in every region of the country that use a specific set of mechanisms to implement with integrity a specific set of evidence-based strategies. These model Community School examples—working through, and supported by, every level of government from individual schools to feeder patterns to districts, cities, counties and one state—show that across the racial, economic, and geographic diversities of the country's populations, the Community School strategy has the potential to transform every school in the country into a sustainable, high-performing, engaging, life changing place to be for children, families and communities.

There are over 98,000 public schools located in 14,000 school districts in the United States. Many of these schools, all over the country, provide a great education to their students, but opportunity gaps remain within and across many more schools, as they do in the broader society. These opportunity gaps are a result of disinvestment in public education, particularly in low-income communities and communities of color, where schools are often under-resourced and not set up to succeed. Students in these schools are not given full *opportunities* compared to well-resourced schools and families in upper-income neighborhoods.⁷

Undoing the racial and socio-economic injustices built into our public education system is a tall order, but there are thousands of schools located in high-poverty communities that have proven that, when the playing field of opportunities is sufficiently leveled, schools can in fact be *transformational*. These schools and communities have intentionally and imaginatively implemented a strategy that has allowed them to transform their schools from low-performing to high-performing, from unsafe to safe, from isolated to engaged, from dismal to joyful.

In one of the most high-poverty areas of Los Angeles, there is a high school where 99 percent of graduates go to college;⁸ the city of Cincinnati was able to shrink its racial and socioeconomic achievement gap from 14.5 percent to 4.5 percent;⁹ in Texas, two schools located in Austin's most high-poverty neighborhood went from the brink of closure to becoming two of the highest performing schools in their city;¹⁰ a school in Baltimore went from being ranked 77th in the city to 2nd;¹¹ and in Kentucky, the state went

Background on a Sustainable Community Schools Movement

The Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools (AROS) is a national alliance with over 7 million members including parent, labor, youth, and community organizations. AROS' work focuses on fighting for educational justice and equitable access to school resources and opportunities by advocating and organizing for *Sustainable Community Schools* in cities and states across the country.

The six research-based strategies cited in this document are closely linked to AROS's definition of Sustainable Community Schools and are an evolution of the concept of Sustainable School Transformation, advocated first by CEPS—the Coalition for Excellent Public Schools in 2010[1]. CEPS had come together to promote Sustainable Community Schools as a fifth option for “school transformation” under the “No Child Left Behind” Act (School Improvement Grant (SIG) funding). The Administration's four options for transformation, which included school closure, conversion to a charter school, and the wholesale firing of a school's full staff and administration, were viewed by CEPS as punitive and/or destabilizing of schools and communities.

Sustainable Community Schools, have also been championed by the Journey for Justice Alliance, led by CEPS's former leader Jitu Brown, (previously of the Kenwood Oakland Community Organization, or KOCO.) Mr. Brown and KOCO have recently been on the nation's radar as leaders of the Dyett High School Hunger Strike—34 days of parents and community members fasting to keep open and transform an historic Chicago high school. *The Schools Chicago's Students Deserve*, the report produced in 2012 by a coalition of academics, community and labor organizations, including the Chicago Teachers Union, began using this term to establish the key elements for public school success. The report made clear that these elements were not absent because of a lack of community caring or will but due to government underinvestment in education, particularly in neighborhoods of poverty and color.

from being consistently ranked one of the worst in education in the nation to outperforming half of all states and reducing their socioeconomic achievement gap to the smallest in the nation.¹² Schools in Los Angeles, Austin, Baltimore, Kentucky, and many across the United States have achieved these exciting results by adopting a transformational Community School strategy.

In this report, we review specific research-based Community School strategies and mechanisms as employed across six schools, a city, a district, a county, and an entire state resulting in transformational outcomes. In addition to wrap-around services, they bring a particular emphasis on high-quality teaching, deep learning, restorative justice, and authentic family engagement to Community Schools. In this report, we contrast the results of these schools before and after implementing the highlighted strategies. These transformational Community Schools are also supported and invested in to such a level that they can adhere to these rigorous and comprehensive strategies, allowing them to achieve their positive results. The main finding of this report is that these strategies and mechanisms, when implemented with integrity and with sustainable investment have proven to be successful.

The United States is a large country, especially when viewed through the lens of education. There are many examples of great education offered to many student constituencies by many great educators. In this report we look at both urban and rural turnaround schools and those that began using Community School strategies; almost all, but not all, are traditional public school. As Jitu Brown of Journey for Justice Alliance says, “Great education is not rocket science. We know what works. We just have to make sure all schools have the resources it requires.”¹³ The goal of this report is to help increase the knowledge-base of proven sustainable solutions and policy anchors—found in both practice and research—and to codify these strategies and the investment they require so that more young people may benefit from them and join the growing family of schools that lead to amazing life changing outcomes.

What are Community Schools?

Community schools bring together the resources of school, family and community to help young people thrive and make families and communities stronger.



This report finds that the Community Schools that have achieved the most dramatic results usually do so by utilizing a six-part strategic approach. These model Community Schools utilize:

1. **Curricula that are engaging, culturally relevant, and challenging.** Schools offer a robust selection of classes and after-school programs in the arts, languages, and ethnic studies, as well as AP and honors courses. Also offered are services for English Language Learner and special education students, GED preparation programs, and job training. Pedagogy is student-centered.
2. **Emphasis on high-quality teaching, not on high-stakes testing.** Assessments are used to help teachers meet the needs of students. Educators have a real voice in professional development. Professional development is high quality and ongoing, and includes strengthening understanding of, and professional alignment with, the Community School model.
3. **Wrap-around supports** such as health care, eye care, and social and emotional services that support academics. These services are available before, during and after school, and are provided year-round to the full community. Providers are accountable and culturally competent. The supports are aligned to the classroom using thorough and continuous data collection, analysis, and reflection. Space for these services is allocated within the building or within walking distance.

4. **Positive discipline practices, such as restorative justice** and social and emotional learning supports, are stressed so that students can grow and contribute to the school community and beyond. School safety and positive school climate are achieved through these mechanisms. Suspensions and harsh punishments are eliminated or greatly reduced.
5. **Authentic parent and community engagement** is promoted so the full community actively participates in planning and decision-making. This process recognizes the link between the success of the school and the development of the community as a whole.
6. **Inclusive school leadership** who are committed to making the Community School strategy integral to the school's mandate and functioning. They ensure that the Community School Coordinator is a part of the leadership team and that a Community School Committee (Committee)—which includes parents, community partners, school staff, youth, and other stakeholders that are representatives of the school's various constituencies—has a voice in the planning and implementation of the strategy.



Transformational Community Schools achieve success by implementing the above strategies through the following mechanisms:

1. An asset and needs **assessment** of and by both school and community; participants in the assessment process include parents, students, community members, and partners and school staff.
2. A strategic **plan** that defines how educators and community partners will use all available assets to meet specific student needs and get better results, specifically through a focus on curriculum, high-quality teaching, wraparound supports, positive discipline practices, parent and community engagement and inclusive leadership as the building blocks through which to accomplish the above.
3. The engagement of **partners** who bring assets and expertise to help implement the building blocks of Community Schools
4. A Community School **Coordinator** whose job is to facilitate the development and implementation of the strategic plan in collaboration with school and community members/partners, and to ensure alignment of solutions to needs.

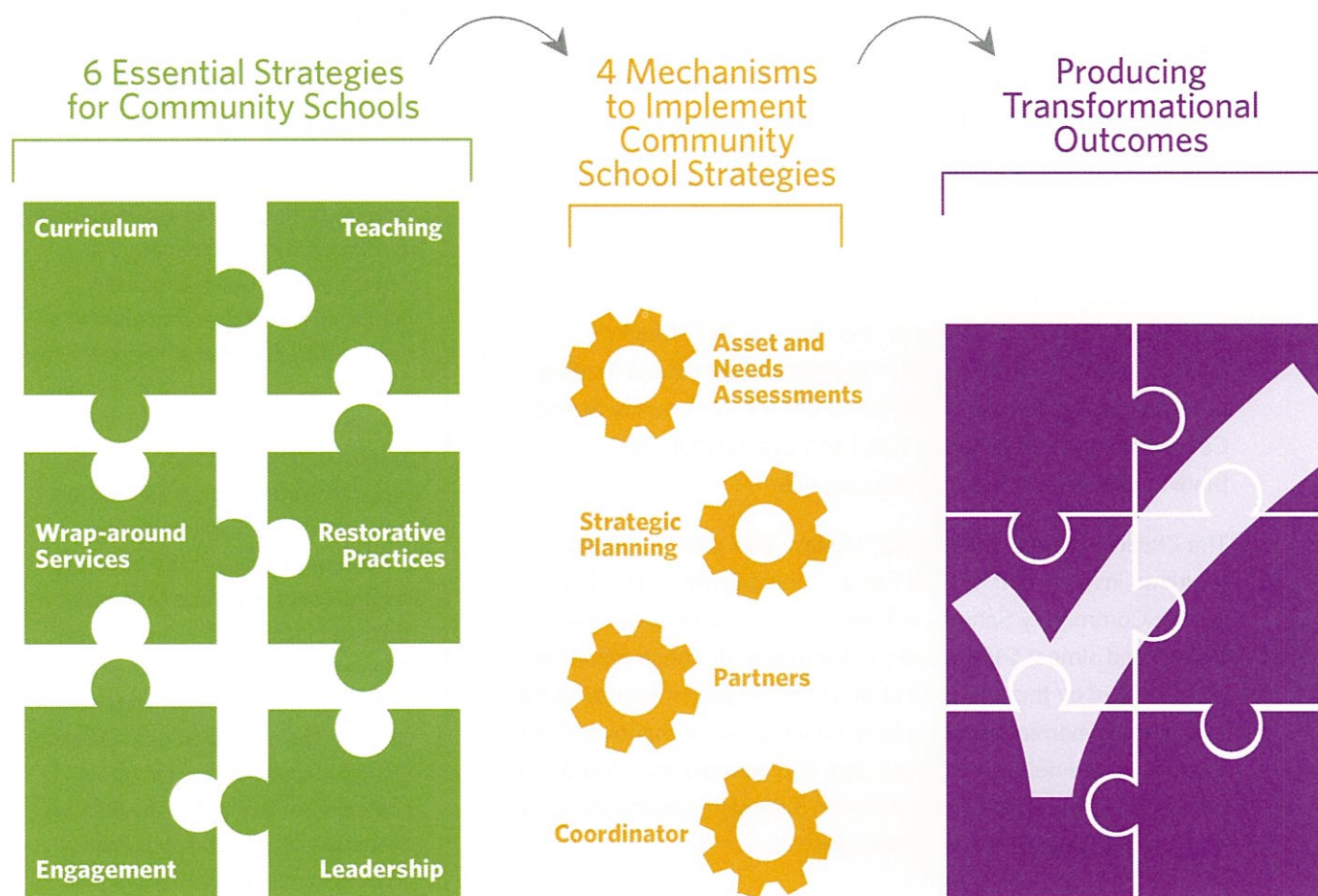
Over 5,000 schools in the United States reflect the characteristics of Community Schools, which is greater than the number of charter schools in the United States when measured by enrollment and number of locations. While any school can adopt the Community School strategy, most are traditional public schools. The transformational academic and non-academic results of the Community School strategy are clear, dramatic, and sustainable.

Community Schools Have a Long History

Community Schools are not a new concept. John Rogers, Community Schools historian at UCLA, tells us that they have existed at least since the turn of the last century in many forms, but always to address inequities at both school and community levels. Jane Addams' Hull House is an early example:

There were kindergarten classes in the morning, club meetings for older children in the afternoon, and for adults in the evening more clubs or courses in what became virtually a night school. The first facility added to Hull House was an art gallery, the second a public kitchen; then came a coffee house, a gymnasium, a swimming pool, a cooperative boarding club for girls, a book bindery, an art studio, a music school, a drama group, a circulating library, an employment bureau, and a labor museum.¹⁴

Strategies and Mechanisms for Equity and Success



Sustainable Funding:

Community schools require sustainable funding and make innovative and efficient use of community resources. Funding sources for Community Schools vary from site to site, city to city, state to state. Funding for planning and Community School coordination can come from states (such as Kentucky and Minnesota), counties (such as Schools Uniting Neighborhoods in Multnomah County, Oregon); the United Way, community foundations, and local school districts. Cities, for example New York City and Baltimore, are increasingly finding funding within their city education budgets for Community Schools.

New York has repurposed existing funding streams—including money previously dedicated to attendance improvement or suspension reduction—to Community Schools. Specific programs are financed through inter-agency partnerships at the city (Austin, Texas), county (Multnomah County, Oregon) or state levels (Kentucky). Health care services are often, where state law allows (New Jersey, California), billed to Medicaid or other state or federal programs.

Underutilized school space can be a key in-kind funding stream. In Cincinnati, Ohio, and Brooklyn Center, Minnesota, schools provide space in which afterschool or health care providers can operate and bill third parties; this relieves them of overhead costs and allows them to provide services at little or no cost. In the case of Oyler School in Cincinnati, the school rents space to a daycare provider, providing income that can be used for other services. Additionally, the day care provides internships

for students, teachers and students bring their babies to the day care—everybody wins. Legislation or appropriations designated for school construction or modernization is a great opportunity to include provisions that new schools have dedicated community space, as was recently done in Baltimore.

Policy can also explicitly outline that any new schools function as Community Schools, as does Cincinnati's Board of Education Policy;¹⁵ or that every school with a specified percentage of students below the poverty indicator receive funding for a Community School Coordinator and more, as in Kentucky's Education Reform Act (KERA).¹⁶ Weighted state school funding formulas can be used as funding sources for Community School Coordinators as in California. Title I and 21st Century federal grant funding can also be used for this purpose.

The Children's Aid Society (CAS) of New York cites a "social return on investment" (SROI) formula that calculates an SROI in their Community Schools in New York City ranging between \$10.30 and almost \$15 to every dollar invested. These results are corroborated by those of a 2012 economic-impact study by EMSI, a leading economic-modeling firm, which showed that every dollar invested in the network of more than 100 schools operated by the nonprofit organization Communities in Schools generated \$11.60 of economic benefit for the community.¹⁷

When schools become Community Schools, they become more than just schools; they become centers of community life. Together, educators and community partners collaboratively address issues traditionally independently addressed by agencies like health and human services, parks and recreation departments, and housing agencies. Community Schools do this in partnership with local non-profit organizations, businesses, faith-based entities and/or institutions of higher education.

Innovative Community Schools Revenue Streams

In addition to the appropriation and smart use of existing resources, Community School advocates are increasingly looking to new revenue streams to fund this smart investment in children. Schott Foundation's Opportunity to Learn Campaign published *Investing in the Future*¹⁸ to help public education advocates locate revenue sources that might help pay forward our next generation. Some examples of revenue more smartly invested in our children's education may include: millionaires' taxes, progressive income taxes, business tax avoidance, business tax breaks and estate taxes. For example, new Government Accounting Standards Board regulations¹⁹ require states and cities to disclose the amount of school district funding lost to real estate tax abatements. This opens the door for these tax dollars to be reclaimed by school districts if the abatement is determined to not be serving as the job creation mechanism it claims to be. Additionally, banks' hefty revenue can be redirected from such budget-gouging financing mechanisms as debt swaps,²⁰ which charge school districts higher interest rates than the banks themselves are paying to the federal government on loans and bonds.

The Moment is Now: Community Schools and the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

The signing into law of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) to replace the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, or No Child Left Behind, makes this is an opportune moment to embrace Community Schools as a policy framework. While there are, and will continue to be, many challenges associated with the re-distribution of authority to states and local school districts, the law provides an opening to nurture strong school-community partnerships that are at the heart of Community Schools

ESSA presents a significant opportunity to develop transformative, sustainable Community Schools across the country. It empowers state and district leaders to rethink strategies to enable all students to succeed, and to engage their communities as vital partners in that effort. At the outset, the way this new law frames our education system is much more positive than under No Child Left Behind: instead of labeling schools as “failing,” we will now identify them for “Comprehensive Support and Improvement”; instead of the pressure to narrow the curriculum for testing, we are now encouraged to focus on student “enrichment” and “school conditions for learning.” This framing is certainly amenable to the Community School strategy, which focuses on assets over deficits and support over labeling.

This new law projects a vision which recognizes that educators must work in partnership with their communities to help all young people thrive. This is paired with a shift toward a whole-child approach that is evident in several measures including through:

- a) an additional non-academic indicator which states must include in their accountability systems, such as student engagement or school climate and safety;
- b) the reporting of chronic absence, school climate, suspensions and expulsions, and other measures on state and district report cards;
- c) comprehensive needs assessments required for certain funding;
- and d) consultation with parents and community partners in the planning and implementation of various funds. Added together, these provisions support and reinforce the Community School approach to coordinate resources between schools and

Specific Community Schools funding provisions within ESSA include:

Title I

- *Funding amount:* \$15 billion per year
- *Allocation mechanism:* All states receive the funds by formula based on need as measured by free and reduced-lunch eligibility
- *Allowable uses:* Community School Coordinator, coordination of school and community resources

Title IV

- **21st Century Community Learning Centers**
 - *Funding Amount:* \$1 billion per year
 - *Allocation Mechanism:* All states receive the funds based on a formula; competitive grant process for districts to receive funding
 - *How to Get it:* Districts need to apply to state education agencies
 - *Allowable Uses:* Afterschool programming, Community School Coordinator, and various other uses
- **Student Support and Academic Enrichment**
 - *Funding Amount:* \$1.6 billion per year; goes to all 14,000 school districts
 - *Allowable Uses:* Dollars can go to Community School Coordinators and various other uses
- **Full Service Community Schools** (under Title IV's Community Support for School Success)
 - *Funding Amount:* 10 grants per year (past experience has these grants at \$500,000.)
 - *How to Get it:* FSCS is administered via a competitive grant process. School districts and schools and Community School Coordinators apply to federal government

communities. As states prepare for this law to take effect the 2017-2018 school year, this is an opportune time for state legislators to embrace Community Schools as a transformative strategy for student success, and to encourage their state superintendents to include the strategy in their new accountability systems.

Research Base for Six Key Community School Strategies

Federal law has for decades subscribed to a perspective that all school transformation approaches be research-based. ESSA is no exception.

The six strategies outlined here for successful Community Schools are based in decades of educational research by some of the strongest researchers and research institutions in the country.

These six strategies align almost precisely with the five “essential supports for school improvement” identified by the **University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research (CCSR)** in the mid-1990’s and re-confirmed in multiple subsequent CCSR studies.²¹ They cite: 1) inclusive strategic school leadership, 2) parent engagement, 3) professional capacity, 4) student-centered and safe learning climate, and 5) ambitious learning environment. Studying hundreds of Chicago schools over a six-year period, the CCSR found schools with these five supports are at least ten times more likely than schools weak in most of the supports to show substantial gains in both reading and mathematics. Schools with these supports were also very unlikely to stagnate. In contrast, schools demonstrating weakness in any of these supports were four to five times more likely to stagnate.

In other words, the **CCSR** found that school success aligns with a school community’s “social capital.” For example, schools in more affluent communities—in which parents and the surrounding community and can afford and feel entitled to participate in the decision-making support for and life of the school, where teachers are valued, paid decently and treated to substantial and relevant professional development, where curriculum reflects the lives of students and challenges and engages them, where businesses fund ball fields and sports teams, in which the facilities reflect pride in its students and stake in the school’s success—are, in fact, more successful.²² Unsurprisingly, they found that within the status quo, these conditions existed almost exclusively in communities of affluence. However, if conditions of social capital were created in communities of poverty, measures of academic success, school climate, and community cohesion all shifted dramatically.

Other reports over the past several decades had similar findings. In the 2010 **Communities for Excellent Public Schools (CEPS)** report, *A Proposal for Sustainable School Transformation*,²³ CEPS called for a comprehensive assessment of each school’s individual strengths and challenges, as well as identifiable impediments to student success. This assessment would then guide the development of a transformation plan that addressed the school’s specific circumstances making sure to include: 1) a strong focus on school culture, 2) dynamic curriculum, 3) adequate staffing, 4) wrap-around supports for our students, and 5) collaboration to ensure local ownership and accountability.

The 2015 *Equal Opportunity for Deeper Learning*,²⁴ by **Linda Darling-Hammond, Diane Friedlaender, and Pedro Noguera**, found that equity in teaching and learning are achieved when schools provide:

As states prepare for this law to take effect the 2017-2018 school year, this is an opportune time for state legislators to embrace Community Schools as a transformative strategy for student success, and to encourage their state superintendents to include the strategy in their new accountability systems.

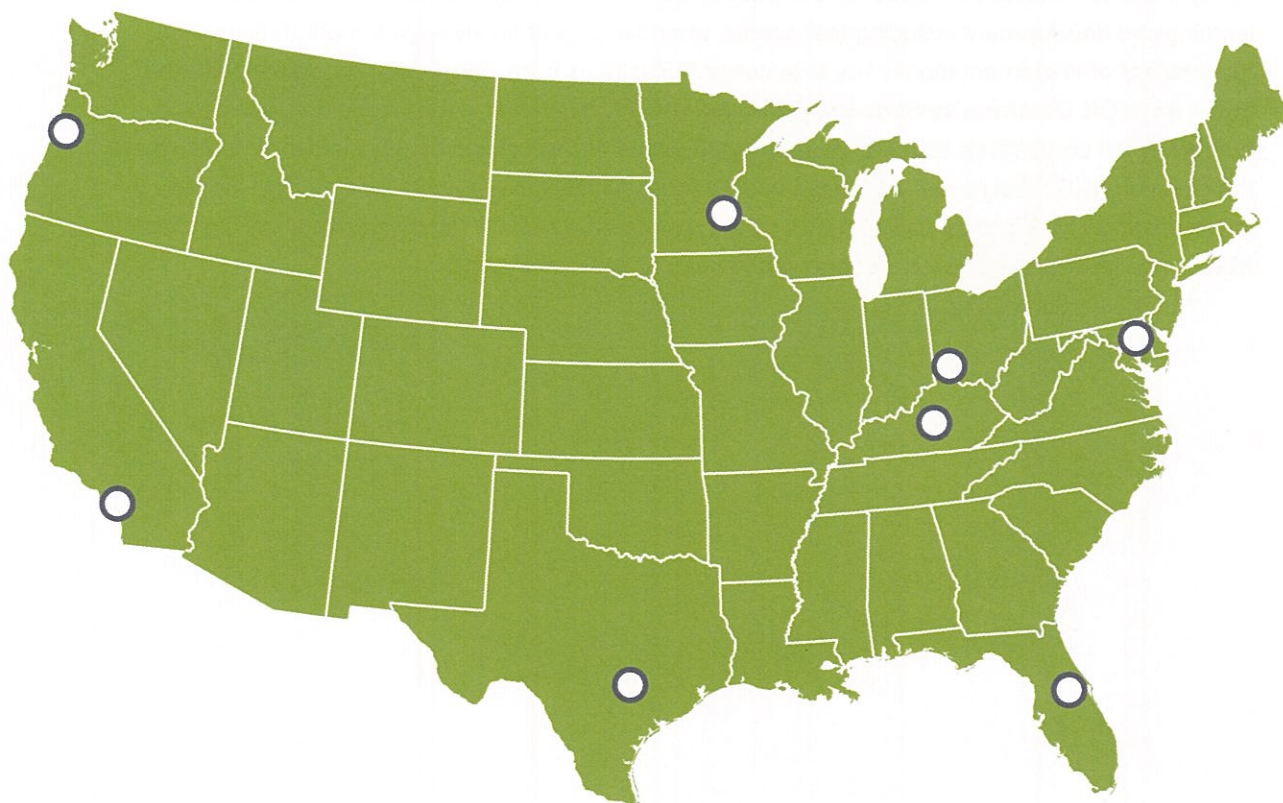
1. Authentic instruction and assessment in the form of project-based learning, performance-based assessment, collaborative learning, and connections to the world beyond school.
2. Personalized supports for learning in the form of advisory systems, differentiated instruction, and support for social services and social-emotional learning along with skills.
3. Supports for educator learning through opportunities for reflection, collaboration, and leadership, as well as professional development.²⁵

The report recommends dramatic policy change for provision of these elements.²⁶

A 2014 **Child Trends** report, *Integrated Student Supports: a Summary of the Evidence Base for Policy Makers*,²⁷ shows the impact of Community Schools on multiple dimensions of student learning and development including test scores, attendance, and family engagement. It finds that the integrity of implementation is key to success.²⁸ Finally, in Tulsa, Oklahoma, an evaluation of the **Tulsa Area OK Community Schools Initiative** (TACSI), found that TACSI students significantly outperformed comparison students in math by 32 points and in reading by 19 points in schools where the Community School model was implemented most successfully. Low-income students in high implementing TACSI schools performed on par with non-free/reduced lunch students and significantly higher than free/reduced lunch students in the comparison schools.²⁹

Model Community School Profiles

Below we profile six individual schools, one school district, one city, one county and one state that are currently implementing many of the six strategies of successful Community Schools. Their stories describe what these schools and districts were grappling with prior to becoming Community Schools, how they began to use a transformational strategy, what elements were implemented in what specific ways, and the amazing results that accrued.



Austin, Texas—Webb Middle School

Austin, Texas—Reagan High School

Orlando, Florida—Evans High School

Baltimore, Maryland—Wolfe Street Academy

Baltimore, Maryland—The Historic Samuel Coleridge Taylor Elementary School

Los Angeles, California—Social Justice Humanitas Academy (section below by permission from the Coalition for Community Schools 2015 Awards for Excellence Profiles)

Minneapolis, MN—Brooklyn Center Full-Service Community Schools District

Cincinnati, OH Public Schools' Community Learning Centers—District-Wide Model

City of Portland and Multnomah County, Oregon—Schools Uniting Neighborhoods (SUN) Community Schools

Kentucky's State-wide Family Resource and Youth Service Centers (FRYSKY's)

Webb Middle School AUSTIN, TEXAS

In 2007, the superintendent of Austin Public Schools informed students, parents, teachers, and community members that the Walter P. Webb Middle School would close. Their students would be sent to two other middle schools in the Austin Independent School District, both of which were struggling academically.³⁰ Webb was the lowest performing middle school in Austin.³¹

At the time, the community was only minimally involved in the school, enrollment was slipping year after year, the graduation rate was just 48 percent, and the school lacked a strategic plan to turn itself around. Although residents were not satisfied with the state of Webb, they resisted the closure and convinced the superintendent to give them one month to develop a turnaround plan. The ultimate plan, developed by a school and community stakeholders group, called for Webb Middle School to implement the Community School strategy. The superintendent and the school board accepted the plan.³² Over the course of the next two years, hundreds of community members, teachers, students, and other stakeholders developed an expansive vision for Webb; they also determined the assets and needs of the school, and developed a strategic plan to fill those needs.

Today, after 5 years of utilizing the Community School strategy, Webb is the highest performing Title I Middle School in Austin, now better serving the same students in the Webb community.³³

Webb's Students & Families:

Many parents at Webb are construction workers, day laborers, and housecleaners, and not many have an education that extends beyond high school. Some of Webb's parents attended elementary school, but had to drop out to work in the fields in Mexico. Because many parents hold low-wage service industry jobs with little stability, the school has an extremely high mobility rate: 25 percent of students who begin the school year at Webb leave before the year end. While Webb's daily attendance rate has improved dramatically since becoming a Community School (average attendance is around 95 percent), Community School staff have to work hard to make that happen.³⁴

Needs Assessment Findings & Solutions



What the school/community stakeholders' team learned during their initial needs assessment was that there were not enough programs and services in place to adequately service their current student population. And while the school had multiple partnerships, they were poorly coordinated. Margaret Bachicha, academic dean of student support services, recalls, "there was one child [at Webb] who had three mentors and one child who had none."³⁵ Webb needed more services, and a better system to coordinate them.³⁶



Today at Webb, the Community School Coordinator ensures all programs are well coordinated, aligned with student and community needs, and sufficient to meet those needs. These partnerships enable students to access a range of programs and services, including afterschool programs run by the Boys and Girls Club, a college mentoring program offered by Breakthrough Austin; free immunizations and physicals, thanks to a mobile clinic that visits the school; and various other programs that were put in place to address the needs identified in their needs assessment.



Filling the Need Gaps

Raul Sanchez, principal of Webb Middle School: "Whether it be mentoring, wrap-around services for families, direct counseling, someone is stepping in to fill that gap," he says. Such partnerships "allow teachers to focus on what they do best. And that is to teach, to develop and plan lessons that matter."³⁷



Partnerships also extend to supporting students' families. The school works with nonprofit organizations that help parents with legal, employment, health, and housing issues. To coordinate these services, a family resource center is located next to the school and is run by Austin Voices for Education and Youth (AVEY).³⁸



Physical & Mental Health: Webb's needs assessment found that most Webb families did not have medical insurance so could not access care. Students were coming to school with toothaches, unable to see the blackboard, and with emotional trauma as a result of difficult home situations. Children at Webb have parents and family members who are victims of violence, being deported and are incarcerated.



At the mobile clinic located at the school, students can receive free physicals. One interesting and beneficial outcome that Webb experienced by adding the mobile clinic was much greater participation on the school's athletic teams. Before the mobile clinic, few students participated in afterschool sports at Webb because the district required that students receive a physical prior to participating in sports, which most students could not afford. The district only offered free physicals once a year and not on school grounds, making it difficult for families to access the service. Now participation rates on Webb's athletic teams have soared, and their teams are winning.⁴⁰



Because of Webb's health partnerships, physical conditions are diagnosed and treated. Partners provide trauma-trained mental health counselors to the school. The counselors also provide training to the entire school on Social Emotional Learning (SEL). SEL has provided teachers and others at Webb with the skills necessary to identify symptoms of distress, such as certain forms of acting out. This allows teachers to connect students with counselors proactively.



Academic supports: Webb has over 100 tutors and mentors, and nearly 90 percent of the school's 705 students receive at least one type of service through more than 30 community partners. Austin Partners in Education (APIE) is a key academic partner at Webb. They coordinate professionals—researchers, engineers, and retired teachers, among others—who volunteer to help sixth- through eighth-graders in their math or reading classes. Before Webb became a Community School, the volunteers would come up with their own lessons. Upon learning that was the case, the Community School Coordinator aligned the work of APIE volunteers to the lesson plans of the classroom teachers.⁴¹



Engaging curriculum: In addition to reading, writing, and arithmetic, the needs assessment found that families wanted music and art back in the curriculum. In response, Webb created a band, orchestra, and dance troupe. All have become world-class ensembles with members rising to state level competitions—an accomplishment not seen at Webb for decades.

Annual Needs Assessment

Allan Weeks, Executive Director, AVEY

At the beginning of the school year, the family resource center asks that families fill out a survey to gauge the school's current needs. The family resource center keeps those surveys on file and then pulls them when families seek out the center's help. Approximately 75 percent of families return the surveys each year. On a given day, anywhere from one to eight parents will walk into the center asking for help with domestic violence, housing, or legal issues, among others. At Webb, parents don't just fill out surveys; their surveys are listened to, creating an atmosphere of trust that is apparent as soon as you walk in the door. As a matter of fact, at Webb, everyone is listened to.³⁹



Shared Leadership: Webb is part of a grant-based pilot working to develop a new supervisory model for the district.⁴² Under this model, teachers, administration, parents, and students are part of a team. Teachers have more input into both the academic and non-academic life of the school and into their own professional development. At a recent community meeting coordinated by the school/community stakeholders' team, teachers, parents, and students reflected together in facilitated groups on a draft plan for the next five years.⁴³



Transformational Parent Engagement: Because English is not the native language of most Webb parents, the school now has English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes for parents three days a week for 2 ½ hours a day. They also have a bilingual education organizer provided by AVEY, whose job is to go out into the community and further increase family and community engagement and leadership development through home visits and other mechanisms.

Future of Webb



Using the Community School strategy, Webb is continually searching for needs, and developing programs to meet those needs. The school is working to update its vision. Recently the school's stakeholder leadership group created a new five-year plan for the school that includes building on the school's diversity by creating a World's Culture Academy. Families and educators at Webb believe their rich diversity of cultures and languages are assets. They want their curriculum to reflect that diversity so that children experience their learning as culturally relevant.⁴⁴



Funding sources (Austin-specific: includes both Webb MS and Reagan HS):

The Austin Public School district has made a strong commitment to funding the Family Resource Centers at both Webb Middle School and Reagan High School, with the City of Austin, Travis County and Austin Voices also contributing. The local children's hospital commits \$200,000 per year to support pregnant and parenting teens and their children with a mobile health unit that comes to the high school. Here at Webb, Community School Coordinators are repurposed assistant principal positions paid by the district. Parent liaisons are supported through district and city funding. They get much of their funding by piecing together existing programs and finding additional money for coordination and filling gaps. Volunteers also play a huge role, from mentoring and tutoring, to providing food for dinners and celebrations. The schools work very closely with local public libraries, police, parks and recreation departments, and the health and human services department through monthly planning to coordinate programming.

Webb school receives more than \$350,000 each year from the United Way for Greater Austin to implement wraparound services for students and families.⁴⁵ For students who can't afford eye exams or glasses, the family resource center provides them with a waiver for a free exam and a free pair of glasses, thanks to a grant from the Boys and Girls Club.⁴⁶ The city of Austin enables the center to give families up to \$1,000 each year to prevent electric bills from going unpaid.⁴⁷ Austin's school superintendent understands that a low-performing school is much more expensive to run than a school that is academically strong. State monitoring is expensive, both in personnel and time. The money saved by not being in crisis provides funds to dedicate to growing Community Schools.



In a nutshell, below you can view Webb's transformational outcomes and the mechanisms and strategies they used to achieve them.

Webb Middle School—Austin, TX (5 years as a community school)		
Transformation	2010	2015
Enrollment	485	750
Attendance	91 percent	96 percent
Student mobility	35 percent	25 percent
Graduation rate	48 percent	78 percent
Academic performance	Lowest performing middle school in Austin on verge of closure	Highest performing Title 1 middle school of 14 campuses
Community engagement	Active community not engaged with the school	Community-based needs assessment and plan developed by parents, teachers, and community; Monthly community partner luncheons
Capacity to engage community	Little	Community School Coordinator whose job it is to match community assets with needs ⁴⁸
Support coordination	None	Full-time Community School Coordinator providing partner coordination; Twice-weekly meeting to coordinate student support referrals
Discipline referrals	ISS and Alternative Learning Center referrals high	Student-led Youth Court (in partnership with UT-Austin Law School) and restorative justice efforts on campus have reduced referrals
Services for ELLs	Space for 125 ELLs in English Language Development Academy (ELDA) program on campus; Others placed in regular classes once ELDA is full	All ELLs are offered space in expanded ELDA program
Family support services/ Adult Ed	Occasional ESL or computer class; No support services for families	Full-time Family Resource Center with bilingual social worker offering adult and parenting classes; 300 families served per year and 70 case-managed with housing, employment, health and other services
Mental and behavioral health services	Very limited services provided by district	Strong on-campus partnerships provide mental health services through United Way grant
Volunteers	>30 mentors and tutors	100+ volunteers providing mentoring and tutoring weekly
Sports & extracurricular programs	Struggling arts and sports	Award-winning band, orchestra and dance; Strong sports program, supported by volunteers who provide sports physicals

Reagan High School AUSTIN, TEXAS

Reagan High School is located in northeast Austin. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, Reagan's student body became increasingly poor as middle-class families left the area. In 2003, a student was stabbed to death by her former boyfriend in a hallway of the school. The incident made headlines and scared away neighborhood families. Students left Reagan in droves. Enrollment at Reagan High School dropped from over 2000 students in its heyday to a new low of 600 students, and the graduation rate hovered just below 50 percent. In 2008, the district threatened to close Reagan. In reaction, a committee of parents, teachers, and students brought together by Austin Voices for Education and Youth (AVEY), formulated a plan to turn Reagan into a Community School. The district accepted their plan.⁴⁹

Today, five years after adopting the Community School strategy, Reagan is graduating 85 percent of their students, enrollment has more than doubled, and a new Early College High School program has allowed many of Reagan's students to earn two years of college credits (their Associate's Degree) from a nearby community college during their time as Reagan students.⁵⁰

Reagan's Students & Families:

Reagan's student population is much like Webb's (see above): close to 80 percent Latino, and about 18 percent African American. Eighty percent are identified by the state's indicator of poverty and 30 percent are English Language Learners. In 2010, before becoming a Community School, 25 percent of female students were pregnant or parenting, among whom barely any graduated; Reagan now has a 100 percent graduation rate among pregnant and parenting teens.

Needs & Solutions:



In order to determine a new vision for Reagan, school stakeholders asked three key questions: 1) What do you like about your school? 2) What does your school need in order to be the school you want it to be? 3) What resources would make that happen? Before Reagan became a Community School, the curriculum was not challenging. The graduation rate was below 50 percent and most students couldn't afford to attend college even if they graduated.



Engaging and Challenging Curriculum: The community-engaged needs assessment model used at Reagan encouraged members to "think big" about their dreams for their school. Their young people needed affordable access to higher education. They noted that Austin Community College had a campus right across the highway. Following discussions with community college leadership, Reagan leaders and members of the community decided to adopt the Early College High School curriculum. This curriculum allows any Reagan student who can pass the community college placement test to take courses at the community college for free. If a student passes the placement tests before the beginning of their junior year, all their courses after that can apply as dual credit, meaning they

**Allen Weeks,
Executive Director,
Austin Voices for
Children and Youth
(AVEY)**

"Recently I was in a classroom taught by a community college professor. There, mixed in the classroom were several special needs kids, maybe with an aide, working on the same subject matter, perhaps with differentiated texts or materials. But they are part of those classes... It's awesome to see."



receive both high school and college credits simultaneously. This allows students at Reagan to graduate with both a high school diploma and an Associate's Degree. This option is available to all students. Academic support to achieve this is available to all including students with Individualized Education Plans (IEP's). In 2014, a dozen students received Associate Degrees and another 150 took college classes.⁵¹ This solution allows for a cost-free higher education for the Reagan community.

In 2014, a dozen students received Associate Degrees and another 150 took college classes. This solution allows for a cost-free higher education for the Reagan community.



Coordination: In the case of Reagan, their vice principal serves as their Community School Coordinator. The Coordinator works with both academic and non-academic leadership teams to ensure alignment between students' needs and the services and programs provided. Once a student has outgrown a particular support, it is removed. Students get the supports they need, whether academic (tutoring or mentoring) or non-academic (help with attendance, social-emotional issues, language issues, or enrichment through a reinvigorated arts and music program and many other activities during and after school).⁵²



Restorative Justice Practices: Reagan's needs assessment revealed that the school needed to change its approach to discipline. Before instituting major changes to their discipline policy, students were suspended frequently. Chronic attendance issues landed students and families in courts that then imposed fines families could not afford. Rather than solving problems, this led to high drop-out rates. Today, a full-time bilingual social worker works to diagnose chronic attendance problems, connecting students and/or their families with appropriate supports. In addition, if these problems persist, new strategies have been agreed upon with local civil courts that allow for service referrals rather than fines. A student-led youth court has been developed in partnership with the University of Texas-Austin Law School. The youth court and a restorative justice program have together reduced discipline issues dramatically.⁵³



Wrap-around supports: Long before Reagan became a Community School, it housed a daycare for the babies of student mothers so they could continue their education. Today, that daycare still exists and about 20 babies are enrolled. But because Reagan is now a Community School, more supports are provided for moms through the on-site daycare program. For example, when school social workers noticed student moms were missing school in order to take their babies to doctors' appointments, the social workers applied for and won a grant for a mobile clinic to visit the campus once a week. Student moms can now make appointments for their babies to receive checkups without having to leave school and miss classes. Reagan also enables parents to eat lunch with their babies in the daycare and attend parenting classes. As a result of this supportive alignment of services, students in Reagan's Pregnant and Parenting Teen Program now have a remarkable 100 percent graduation rate.⁵⁴



Funding sources:

The Austin Public Schools has made a strong commitment to funding Family Resource Centers at both schools, with the City of Austin, Travis County, and Austin Voices also contributing. Their local United Way provides a \$300,000 grant per year to support mental health needs. The local children's hospital commits \$200,000 per year to support pregnant and parenting teens and their children with a mobile health unit that comes to the high school. Community School Coordinators are repurposed assistant principal positions paid by the district. Parent liaisons are supported through district and city funding. Much of their funding is through piecing together already existing programs and finding dollars for coordination and filling gaps. Volunteers also play a huge role, from mentoring and tutoring



to providing food for dinners and celebrations. The schools work very closely with their local public libraries, police, parks and recreation department, and health and human services department through monthly planning to coordinate programming.



In a nutshell, below you can view Reagan's transformational outcomes and the mechanisms and strategies they used to achieve them.

Reagan Early College High School—Austin, TX (5 years as a Community School)		
Indicator	2010	2015
Enrollment	600	1250
Attendance	88 percent	95 percent
Student mobility	41 percent	30 percent
Graduation rate	48 percent	85 percent
Pregnant and parenting students graduation rate	25 percent of girls pregnant and parenting, with low graduation rate	100 percent graduation rate in 2015 for Pregnant and Parenting Teen program members; On-site medical services and child care for parents and children
Students earning dual college credit	0	150+
Seniors earning Associate's degree in HS	0	12
Community engagement	Community not engaged with the school; school on verge of closure	Community-based plan developed over two years by 150 people, with continuing dinners, festivals and school-community partnership events; HopeFest Resource Fair attracts 4,000+ annually
Support coordination	None	Full-time Student and Family Support Coordinator providing partner coordination.
Family support services/ Adult Ed	Occasional ESL or computer class	Full-time Family Resource Center with bilingual social worker; Adult and parenting classes
Volunteers and mentors	>10	100+ annually
Discipline referrals	High number referred to courts; In-School Suspension ineffective	Low number referred for attendance; Personal Responsibility Center provides tutors and student support services
Sports and extracurriculars	Struggling band program; Poor participation in sports	Award-winning band program; Football team featured on Sports Illustrated; New baseball field provided by Houston Astros

Evans High School ORLANDO, FLORIDA

Evans High School is located in the Pine Hills community of Orlando, Florida, a community that gets a lot of attention for its crime and poverty. Just five years ago, Evans received a “D” rating from the state of Florida. Their student population was in severe decline, their graduation rate was only a little above half, and the school hardly had any services or programs to help the struggling population that the school served.⁵⁵



Now, five years later, Evans High School is thriving Community School. It is part of a four-way partnership program, through which the school, The University of Central Florida (UCF), the Children’s Home Society and True Health, a community health care provider, have developed a strategic plan to meet the school’s needs. In only three years as a Community School,⁵⁶ Evans has dramatically increased their enrollment from 1,975 to 2,495, while at the same time halving their disciplinary incidents, more than doubling their industry certifications, tripling their International Baccalaureate diplomas, and raising their graduation rate by 15 percent.⁵⁷

Evans’ Students & Families:

Eighty-five percent of Evans’ students qualify for free or reduced price meals. Twenty percent are English Language Learners. In 2011-12, 73 percent and 66 percent were “below proficient” in reading and math respectively. During that same year there were 768 Abuse Hotline calls in Evans’ zip code.⁵⁸ Pine Hills is familiar with trauma. Many families have experienced domestic violence and abuse. Hunger is not unfamiliar. Lack of stability is the norm. Mobility is common. Homelessness is a serious factor.⁵⁹

Needs & Solutions:



Needs Assessment: Listening to and understanding the needs of the students and the community has been key to Evans’ success. The school performs an annual needs assessment to ensure that services and programs do not grow outdated.⁶⁰ The school’s strategic plan called for the creation of many stakeholder councils and teams to ensure a constant flow of feedback and response. A Community School leadership team was created. It meets monthly to make sure that the school’s strategic plan is on track and programs and services are coordinated. Administrators sit on the team to make sure there is alignment between the services and in school academic programs.⁶¹ A student leadership council meets monthly and keeps leadership updated on the needs and assets of the students and how to target and direct services. A parent advisory council meets monthly where the needs of the parents are shared.

Jarvis Wheeler,
Evans’ Community
School site
coordinator:

**“We meet
everybody where
they are.”**



Engaging and Challenging Curriculum: In 2009-10 Evans’ academic achievement was declining dramatically. The school had a 64 percent graduation rate and a “D” rating from the state of Florida. To change that, a decision was made for Evans to open their International Baccalaureate (IB) program to all students and then to make sure that students had the support they needed to succeed. In just three years they had quadrupled the students graduating with an IB diploma.⁶²



In addition to the IB program, Evans also provides Industry Certification program offerings including Multimedia Technology, Engineering, Culinary Arts, Early Childhood Care, Digital Video Production, and Technical Theatre, with internships that provide students with valuable experience and

opportunities for job placement after graduation and college acceptance in that course of study. The Industry Certification program is a dual enrollment program. It offers students credit toward an industry certification in over 50 fields of study, a test for certification and preparation to enter a career while simultaneously earning their high school diploma. Almost 600 students achieved this at Evans in 2015, more than doubling the number since becoming a Community School.⁶³

Evans has a robust afterschool program that is aligned with the regular school day. Regular day teachers stay after school twice a week to tutor 800 students, or a third of Evans' population. Evans' curriculum also includes afterschool enrichment programming which a third of students access twice weekly. Enrichment programs include college prep, career exploration, anger management, yoga, health, drama, arts and more.



Positive Discipline and School Climate: Disciplinary incidents had been high at Evans before the implementation of the Community School. Evans has been able to cut such incidents in half even though the population of the school has grown significantly. Anger management and yoga are taught as part of the after-school program. Students say that if they are feeling stressed out before they have a test, they will want to come to yoga and calm down so they can focus. Students feel more respected and successful and when they don't, they have coping strategies and resources they can call on when they feel stressed or aggravated.



Educator Supports: Evans has a core partnership with the UCF education department, which supports high-quality teaching. The department provides pedagogical professional development with doctoral students as well as UCF speech pathologists embedded into classrooms.



Health Supports: As a result of Pine Hills' poverty, many of Evans' students have gone without health care of any kind. Students come to school with many health needs unmet. With the help of their health and social service partners, Evans has been able to implement full service physical and mental health services located in their Wellness Cottage, a separate building on campus that is connected to the school.



Coordination: Senior Administrator, Jennifer Eubanks, is the core link between the academic and non-academic services at the school. "True Health," she says, "is on our campus in the wellness cottage. They are open to the community as well as our students. Students have slotted times, so the clinic can't fill up with community visits. They have dental services as well as medical. The nurse sits with students at lunchtime so they can make appointments, turn in consent forms, and confer if needed."⁶⁴ This eliminates the need for students or their parents to take time off from school or work to deal with dental, physical, or mental health services. This equals more instructional time-on-task and the school's improved reputation as a caring partner with the family and community.



Another partner, Children's Home Society, provides Evans with two mental health professionals with offices in the school building. Much of this medical and mental health support is paid for through **Medicaid**. The school provides assistance to students and families to fill out applications.⁶⁵



Services providers at Evans are intentionally culturally competent. A third of Evans student population is Haitian-Creole speaking. To adequately serve these students and their families, Evans employs a Haitian-Creole speaking access worker, parent coordinator and mental health professional.⁶⁶

Parent and community engagement on school grounds is normalized through their participation in medical and mental health services, as well as educational opportunities, workshops and PTSA meetings which are significantly better attended than before Evans was seen as such a trusted community partner.⁶⁷



Evans is now a popular school. Their enrollment has increased by 500 students since 2012.⁶⁸



Funding sources

Evans Community School, located within Evans High School, has received nearly \$1 million in state and federal monies for an on-site wellness cottage that will provide health and dental care to Evans students.

The most recent funding was allocated during the 2013 Florida Legislative Session, as state leaders voted to direct \$400,000 of the education budget toward the wellness cottage's operating expenses.

The state funding comes on the heels of a \$500,000 grant awarded to Evans Community School by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Health Resources and Service Administration (HRSA).⁶⁹ The HRSA monies will enable Evans Community School to purchase and install a 2,520 square-foot portable building as well as durable medical and dental equipment.



In a nutshell, below you can view Evan's transformational outcomes and the mechanisms and strategies they used to achieve them.⁷⁰

Evans High School—Orange County, FL (3 years a Community School)		
Transformation	2012	2015
Enrollment	1975	2485
Graduation rate	64 percent	78 percent
Rating	D	B/C
International Baccalaureates	47	198
Industry Certifications	223	595
SESIR Discipline Incidents	1240	690
Community Engagement Coordination	No capacity for structured, coordinated process to build community engagement	Greatly increased coordinated community engagement addressing and aligned to the needs of the school
Afterschool involvement	Little afterschool activity other than clubs and sports	Over 700 students enrolled in tutoring and enrichment alone; Tutoring on Saturdays; Others continue enrollment in clubs and sports
Parent engagement	Very low numbers of parents involved with school; Few workshops offered for parents; Low PTSA numbers (total of 5 parents attended PTSA meetings)	Increasing number of parents involved with school; Ongoing workshops and parent opportunities available; over 40 members attend PTSA meetings regularly
Food insecurities addressed	No food pantry or snack cabinets to address food insecurities; Lunch offered to students	Food pantry and snack cabinets; Breakfast, lunch and supper offered to students daily
Student Job program	None	175 Juniors/Seniors learn employability skills and are offered paid internships that return \$200k to community each summer
Wellness services	Basic medical services through school clinic (RN); One full-time mental health counselor offered to students	Basic medical services through school clinic (RN); Wellness cottage provides additional primary care (ARNP/MD); Dental; Two full-time mental health counselors offered to students, staff, and community

Wolfe Street Academy BALTIMORE, MARYLAND⁷¹

Nine years ago, when Wolfe St. Academy became a Community School, 90 percent of its students were living in poverty, 60 percent of students spoke a language other than English in the home, and not even half of their students remaining at the school for more than three years (46.6 percent student mobility). Wolfe Street Academy was ranked 77th in the district in academic measures, and only half its children reached reading proficiency in 5th grade. It had no library and only sporadic parent or community engagement.

In 2014, after eight years as a Community School, Wolfe Street ranks an astonishing 2nd in the city academically, its mobility rate has gone down to 8.8 percent, 95 percent of 5th grade students are at proficiency in reading, and its average daily attendance rate is 95 percent. They have a library with a book club and a volunteer retired librarian. An incredible 40 parents attend a “Morning Meeting” every morning before school while the students are eating breakfast, where the school and community share news, both good and bad. And importantly, this transformation has taken place while the school serves *more* students living in poverty and more students speaking a language other than English in the home than in 2005.

Wolfe St. Students & Families

In 2015, 96 percent of Wolfe Street’s students qualify for free or reduced price meals. 79 percent are Latino, speaking Spanish in the home; 66 percent are English Language Learners. Of the remaining students 11 percent are Caucasian, 8 percent African American, and 2 percent Asian. Wolfe Street has the largest percentage of Latino students anywhere in Baltimore. The community as a whole suffers from food scarcity and scarcity of medical services. Recently a new immigrant population has started moving into the neighborhood from an indigenous area of Mexico, where the Mixtec language is spoken. The school has begun to identify tri-lingual parents so that those families who speak only Mixtec can find their place within the community.



Needs & Solutions

Wolfe Street staff pay attention to the needs of students and their families. Every morning at Morning Meeting parents, teachers, and students see each other before the academic and behavioral demands of the classroom are made. Each party is able to see the strength of the entire community and know that they are not alone in their desire for the best education for the children.



The deep trust that is central to transformational relationships, developed through activities like the Morning Meeting, provides the school staff and leadership with a deep and dynamic understanding of the needs and strengths of the community. The school leadership uses this information to “engage” the school community where they are. As in Brooklyn Center, the first step to successfully engage children in learning is to be sure that they are physically and emotionally available to learn.



Physical Health: Many Wolfe Street students come to school hungry and can’t be sure of a meal at the end of the day. For this reason, Wolfe Street feeds students three meals a day at school. They provide annual dental screening and referrals to pediatric dentists. These services matter. In the course of a first-ever dental screening, one child previously thought to have a speech impediment was discovered to suffer from a tongue that had never fully separated from the lower palate in his mouth. He had great difficulty speaking as a result. After a quick and easy outpatient surgery, the child began to talk normally and his chances for a successful future were changed forever.





Mental Health: Similarly, many children at Wolfe Street are either victims of trauma themselves, have witnessed trauma or are the children of trauma victims. Wolfe Street's lead agency, the organization that is charged with primary leveraging of partnerships into the school, is the University of Maryland's School of Social Work. The site coordinator, the person at that organization with primary responsibility for creating systems and partnerships to address needs of the community, is a licensed social worker and supervises multiple social work interns who provide case management and referrals. Through this lead agency relationship the school has recently begun to view student behavior through a "trauma informed" lens. Thus when a student is having a difficult time in class, rather than solely imposing punitive discipline, staff employ supportive practices that allow for more effective interventions with students.



Literacy: Gaither says, "if a school community needs ELL, Special Ed, GED services or Extended educational opportunities, based on its needs, then the Community School needs to work to provide it, assess it, adjust it, and to do all of this, basically, forever. It needs to be stressed that this is not a medicine that you take to fix an illness. This is an exercise regimen that you do every day so that you get healthy and stay healthy." The school community is severely impacted by adult illiteracy, both in English and Spanish, so part of the school's "exercise regimen" explicitly addresses literacy. It is an identified need with which the school community must engage for success. As in so many urban settings, rich and robust Out of School Time experiences are essential for students. 84 percent of Wolfe Street's students stay at school until 5:40PM. They receive homework help, academic instruction and educational enrichment. Between the Day School and After School programs the school provides a rich curriculum, including music, art, science, physical education and extension clubs.



Curriculum: Teachers need support to succeed. The school gets curricular support from another partner, the Baltimore Curriculum Project. BCP provides professional development in Direct Instruction, a research effective curriculum developed at the University of Oregon. BCP also supports the school with teacher recruitment and retention. The Baltimore Curriculum Project connects Wolfe Street Academy to a larger network of relationships that make sure Wolfe's educational offerings are among the best practices throughout the country.



The Baltimore Curriculum Project and Wolfe Street Academy recognize that every member of the community, from principal through the teachers, to the parents and students, all need regular development, reflection and discussion of how to become better every day. BCP and Wolfe Street actualize this realization by providing full time professional coaching to teachers and administrators. These are educational thought partners who gather and consider data and in concert with school staff to help direct school-wide and individual student instructional strategies. But, as we saw at Reagan and Webb, this vulnerable work is done within an atmosphere of trusting relationships in which blame has no role. The work is to figure out "the new best" solution and employ it as a team. This type of trust opens the door to creativity and energy to come up with new exciting ideas for teaching and learning. Uncertainty does not impede success. This ability to trust and to try new solutions over and over again is what the administration of Wolfe Street is looking for when they hire teachers. And that is a reason they succeed.



School Climate: The bottom line at Wolfe Street is respect. As a matter of fact the school has one overarching expectation: "All Wolfe Street Academy community members will be respectful and responsible at all times." This encompasses the attitude toward and among students, parents, community, and staff, and it reduces the need for punitive discipline. Instead it embraces a mutual responsibility for each other's success in all things.



Funding



Baltimore has put together a quilt of funding sources to accomplish the funding of 52 Community Schools in the city. The responsibility for funding has fallen in Baltimore to year-to-year allocations from the Mayor's office. These allocations are on the increase recently, but are never assured from year to year or from administration to administration. Philanthropic resources have also been leveraged to support the work of Community Schools. In its most basic form a full time community site coordinator costs approximately \$90,000 per year. This includes salary and benefits and a small materials support budget for use in the work. This number has been funded in the past several years by a \$70,000 contribution from the Mayor's office and a \$20,000 contribution from the general funds controlled by the school principal.



In a nutshell, below you can view Wolfe St.'s transformational outcomes and the mechanisms and strategies they used to achieve them.

Baltimore, MD—Wolfe Street Academy (8 years as a Community School)		
Indicator	2010	2015
Average daily attendance	94 percent	97 percent (2014)
Chronic absence	10 percent	1.5 percent (2014)
Student mobility	46.6 percent	8.8 percent (2014)
Academic ranking=	77th in city (MSA)	2nd in city (2014, MSA)
5th grade reading proficiency	50 percent	95 percent (2014)
Suspensions	8 (2012)	0 (2014)
Coordination of community engagement	none	Full time site coordinator specifically tasked with identifying community assets and needs; Partnerships established to address needs are developed and nurtured to meet the needs of the community
Community engagement	Regular school staff provide yearly opportunities for family and neighborhood engagement, such as back-to-school night, academic nights, and parent conferences; Morning Meeting with students, teachers, and around 40 parents; Translation of key documents into Spanish; Telephonic interpretation of conversations	A greater number of staff members hired that speak Spanish and are able to provide face-to-face interpretation of conversation; Regular school staff provide yearly opportunities for family and neighborhood engagement, such as back-to-school night, academic nights, and parent conferences; Morning Meeting with students, teachers, and around 40 parents; All communications with parents are presented bilingually; Telephonic interpretation of conversations
Capacity to engage community	Regular school staff engaged with the community in the course of their individual role as an educator	Regular school staff engaged with the community in the course of their individual role as an educator

Baltimore, MD—Wolfe Street Academy (continued...)		
Indicator	2010	2015
Afterschool programming	50 percent of K-5 students attending until 5:40PM; Clubs and activities; Part-time director at hourly rate	84 percent of K-5 students until 5:40PM: Academic tutoring 3 days a week; Homework help Private tutoring for identified students by Johns Hopkins volunteers; Robotics, chess, gardening, sports, music, writing Field Trip experiences; Full-time director with salary and benefits
Library access	No dedicated library space and out-of-date collection	Fully stocked and welcoming Reading Room; Book clubs and lending program; Library development guided by volunteer retired librarian
Hunger and poverty	Breakfast and lunch provided at school; Case-by-case support for families when identified as in-need	Breakfast, lunch and dinner provided at school, reducing hunger and saving families money; Maryland Food Bank Emergency Food Pantry Site; Quarterly fresh food distribution; Support in maintaining families in Federal Food Stamp programs.
Social work services	Part-time school district social worker for students identified by the Special Education Department; Full-time mental health clinician to support non-special education students in need	Part-time school district social worker for students identified by the Special Education Department; Full-time mental health clinician to support non-special education students in need; Community School Site Coordinator trained as a social worker and on the faculty of the University of MD School of Social Work; Multiple social work interns from University of Maryland School of Social Work provide case management, referrals and program development
Physical health	Yearly screening of incoming students through the school district and city health department including vision, hearing, and dental	Yearly screening of incoming students through the school district and city health department including vision, hearing, and dental; Through partnership with University of Maryland School of Dentistry, all students receive annual dental screenings with follow up referrals to pediatric dentists

The Historic Samuel Coleridge Taylor Elementary School

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND⁷¹

The Historic Samuel Coleridge Taylor Elementary School (HSCT) sits in one of the hardest hit neighborhoods in the city of Baltimore. Just down the street is where Freddie Gray was killed and where the community rose up in protest at that killing. In McCulloh Homes (public housing), where most of HSCT's students live, just getting to school is an accomplishment, made difficult by nightly gunshots heard through apartment windows and rats scampering across the floor all night.

HSCT is part of Promise Heights, a place-based neighborhood strategy conceived by the University of Maryland-Baltimore School of Social Work. All five public schools in the neighborhood (three elementary, one middle, and one high school) use the Community School strategy to implement a two-generation pipeline of supports for families. The Community School strategy here is based in a trauma-informed social emotional learning model and a community "pull in, push out" strategy to build trust and community cohesion.

The Historic Samuel Coleridge Taylor Elementary School Students & Families

Promise Heights is a neighborhood-based initiative with the goal of addressing neighborhood, as well as individual school needs. According to 2010 U.S. Census data, the Upton/Druid Heights neighborhood is home to approximately 10,342 residents, 28 percent of whom are children. There is little racial and economic diversity in the community. 93 percent of the population is African American and 53 percent of households have an income less than \$14,999. Nearly three of five children (58 percent) live in poverty, as compared to 28 percent in Baltimore City and 10 percent in Maryland overall. As in the case of many poverty-stricken communities, rates of educational attainment for Upton/Druid Heights residents are low, with 49 percent of the residents 25 years of age and older having obtained less than a high school diploma or equivalency. Nearly six out of ten adults were either unemployed or not in the work force during the last census.⁷²

Health and crime indicators reveal Upton/Druid Heights is one of the sickest and most dangerous neighborhoods in the city, where life expectancy is nearly 10 years shorter than the citywide average and the lowest life expectancy of all neighborhoods citywide. Deaths from diabetes are more than twice that of the rest of the city, while those from heart disease are 1.7 times higher. At the same time, the murder rate is 1.8 times higher than the whole of Baltimore, which already has the fifth highest homicide rate among major US cities. Of 22 health outcomes tracked by the Baltimore City Health Department, Upton/Druid Heights ranks in the least healthy third of the city's 55 neighborhoods for all but three outcomes.⁷³

Needs & Solutions⁷⁴

Social and Emotional Support: To meet the needs of the community, Promise Heights staff use a Vanderbilt University-developed social-emotional learning and support framework called Social Emotional Foundations in Early Learning (SEFEL). They use a specifically trauma-informed variant of the model, to ensure that the work does not trigger children whose backgrounds or current situations include elements of trauma. Community School Coordinators at each school—licensed social workers—train teachers and Community School partners in this methodology of working with





children and families. At HSCT, for example, this means that dental students who come in to do screenings, tutors, and after-school practitioners are all SEFEL-trained.



Teachers can access much needed social-emotional as well as conflict resolution supports. Ultimately, social workers assist teachers with their relationships among themselves and with administration in the same way that social workers nurture and navigate their relationships with parents and care-givers.



Parent-Community Engagement: The Community School strategy at HSCT aims to connect to students and families either through service provision or program participation. A family may come to a Literacy Learning Party with their kindergartener and then, once there, connect to staff and share some information about struggles with health care or barriers to attendance. Conversely, a family may come to the school because a neighbor shared that staff can assist with an electric bill, and that positive experience leads to the parent's willingness to come back for parent-teacher conferences or make improvements in their child's attendance. The goal is to have families see the school in a positive light, as a warm, caring, and helpful place. They call it "pull in and push out." They pull the community in to support the school-based work and push out into the community by using the school as a way to connect, support, and uplift the broader community.



Health: HSCT families often struggle to access health care in a regular and timely manner because of issues with transportation, resources, and systemic barriers. Since Promise Heights is part of the University of Maryland professional campus, school staff members have access to a wide array of health partners, such as the Schools of Dentistry, Medicine, and Nursing. Graduate students have community hours to complete, which means the Community School Coordinator at HSCT is able to facilitate school-based health service. The Breathmobile provides mobile asthma care, including monthly check-ups and inhaler refills. Student nurses offer weekly health education and a lunch group for students. Doctors and nurses volunteer their time to provide on-site immunizations to students so that they meet state guidelines and can remain in school. Dental services are provided by dental students from the University of Maryland School of Dentistry. They do assessments, evaluations, fluoride treatments, and parent education. The Community School Coordinator monitors all these services and makes sure that needs are being filled.



Attendance: Volunteers operate a "walking school bus" that gathers children in McCulloh Homes and walks them to school twice a week. Simply getting kids to school in McCulloh Homes is a challenge. Attendance is the most impressive before-after change at HSCT. Chronic absence has fallen from 25 percent to 10 percent.



Academics: All of the social-emotional work with students, parents, and community lays the groundwork for learning to happen. But this doesn't address all of students' academic needs. HSCT also works to improve students' academic performance by aligning what goes on after school with the school day. The after-school curriculum matches the curriculum of the regular school day. In the case of HSCT, that curriculum is Success for All, developed by Johns Hopkins University, a community partner. They also work hard to utilize HSCT teachers to teach in the after-school for optimal continuity, understanding of the curriculum and relationship with students. This way they base after-school learning on the needs that teachers see throughout the day. If a student is having trouble with fractions in math class, then fractions are reinforced after school. The afterschool teacher communicates consistently with the day-time teacher to maintain this alignment.





Funding sources

The Community School strategy in Baltimore is funded, in part, through a partnership with the Family League of Baltimore and Baltimore City Public Schools. Each lead agency receives a grant from Family League and a small contribution from the specific public school. However, that only covers the salary of the Community School Coordinator. Therefore, depending on salary levels and program needs, each lead agency is responsible for raising additional funds. Promise Heights brings a set of core competencies that enhance and complement those of the school. In their role as resource developer, they bring knowledge and experienced grant-writers to facilitate the acquisition of public and private funding streams for which schools or other partners may not have the capacity or eligibility to apply. One of the main premises of this initiative is that sustainable, population-wide change can be achieved when a broad group of stakeholders works together directing resources towards creating a system to address a common goal. Resources are raised from federal, state, local, foundations, and private funders.



In a nutshell, below you can view Historic Samuel Coleridge Taylor's transformational outcomes and the mechanisms and strategies they used to achieve them.

Baltimore, MD—Historic Samuel Coleridge Taylor Elementary School (4 years Community School)		
Transformations	2011	2015
Chronic absence	25 percent	10.7 percent
MD School readiness scores	71 percent	79.4 percent
Infant mortality		11.8 percent drop community-wide
Community engaged needs assessment	Unknown	Site leadership team that works with school administration to assess needs of school and what programs and practices can meet those needs
Capacity to engage community	Unknown	Site coordinator whose job it is to match community assets with needs
Service pipeline	Unknown	B'more for Healthy Babies; Parent University; Community Schools; Family Stability
Early childhood	None	Judy Center, with social-emotional training component
Social-emotional teacher training	None	Trauma-informed behavior management training for City agencies, community organizations, and Baltimore City Public Schools staff
Mental health support in wake of Freddie Gray		Social workers available through UMD School of Social Work
Parent university initiative	None	7 cohorts
Staff and partner home visits	Unknown	100 this year

Baltimore, MD—Historic Samuel Coleridge Taylor Elementary School (continued...)

Transformations	2011	2015
Health access	Unknown	Asthma, nutrition, obesity clinics, vaccinations, dental services and education
ExpandedED afterschool learning	N/A	120 slots
Playground	None	KaBOOM! (4000 sq. ft.)
Library	None	\$1 million investment

Social Justice Humanitas Academy LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

(section below by permission from the Coalition for Community Schools 2015 Awards for Excellence Profiles⁷⁵)



Social Justice Humanitas Academy began as a Community School in partnership with the Los Angeles Education Partnership (LAEP) in 2011. It was created as part of an LAUSD facilities plan through which 4 new schools were built. Social Justice Humanitas Academy in Los Angeles (SJHA) has a different story than most other schools described here, because it began as a Community School and as a “teacher-led” school. Teachers, in partnership with LAEP, created the design for the school and the curriculum, which is fully social justice focused. This focus, along with a deep understanding of the importance of student-centered pedagogy, has created remarkable levels of engagement on the parts of students.

In just the past year, Social Justice has raised its graduation rate from 83 to 93.9 percent and its suspension rate remains at only .2 percent of students in the last two years. This is thanks to its model practices around restorative justice, interdisciplinary teaching, relevant curriculum, and relationship building. Students are supported by Individualized Pupil Education Plans (IPEP) that determine how teachers and partners involved in the Community School can best help struggling students and reflect the close relationships between students and teachers. By graduation day, 99 percent of the Class of 2014 had enrolled in college.⁷⁶

Social Justice Humanitas Academy's Students & Families

SJHA is in a neighborhood of San Fernando in which 90 percent of its students qualify for free or reduced lunch, 95 percent are Latino, 11 percent are English Language Learners, and 54 percent English proficient.⁷⁷

At Humanitas Social Justice Academy, most students know more folks who have gone to prison than have gone to college. Many students don't have access to books at home, and may have caretakers who are unable to read to them regularly. They face food scarcity, they come to school without lunches or backpacks, they are all too familiar with violence and fear. They come from homes where desperation is not uncommon. The impact of lack of documentation, racism, and poverty plague students and their families.⁷⁸

Needs & Solutions

Use of Data for Coordination of Supports: At SJHA, Jennie Carey, the Community School Coordinator, is a graduate of Harvard Education School and self-described data geek. It is part of her job to support personalization by helping to create Individualized Pupil Education Plans (IPEP) similar to IEPs for every student. The concept was developed about four years ago and pulls together detailed information on students' needs as well as their strengths. The profile includes common indicators, such as test scores, but also covers information such as whether parents attend conferences and where students compare on the Search Institute's list of 40 Developmental Assets for Adolescents.

Every five weeks, when teachers review student data, the IPEPs are used to determine how teachers and partners involved in the Community School can best help struggling students who face the most obstacles. The IPEP

“I am the California teacher of the year, the LAUSD teacher of the year, the L.A. County teacher of the year, and I am National Board certified. Based on these accolades I am one of the most effective teachers my students can have,” Navarro says. “Yet I still have students who fail. I still have students who have needs I can't meet. We can't do it alone. My students need all the resources their community can offer. Good teaching alone cannot mitigate the effects of poverty.”





process is also a reflection of the close relationships between students and teachers that are part of the Humanitas model. This is another example of the Community School principle that it is not enough to have lots of partnerships; partnerships are only as effective as their thoughtfully targeted coordination and impact. The school's governing council helps to ensure that the work of community partners is aligned with, and in support of, the school's core curriculum.

Says Jennie Carey, site coordinator: "Our students constantly talk about Humanitas as a family, and that feeling is almost tangible as you walk through the hallways, classrooms, and offices."



Educator Supports: The intensive nature of the work at SJHA puts a lot of pressure on teachers. Because of Los Angeles Education Partnership's emphasis on teacher leadership, Carey, the Community School Coordinator says the partners play an important role in helping the faculty be more effective. "We have to support our teachers as much as our students," she says. "When they are doing their very best, and [a student] is still failing, something else is going on. We know we have to have these partners."



The school's "adoption" process, in which teachers take added responsibility for following up with a few students to continually encourage them to keep working toward their goals, is further evidence of the bonds formed between students and teachers. Daily advisory classes provide another structure through which students can receive support from teachers and peers. It's "these relationships with teachers that help students achieve self-actualization," says Carey, who was previously a coordinator at Sylmar High School and involved in writing the plan for the SJHA. Teachers put "the IPEP into the hands of students," and ask them what is going on in their lives and what they need to succeed.



Student One-on-One Supports: "Adoption" has been a strategy for supporting students since the school began and involves not only teachers, but also community partners and AmeriCorps members working on campus. Through those relationships, student attendance and performance has increased. Over the past three years, the attendance rate has climbed from 62 percent to 80 percent, and the graduation rate has increased from 83 percent to 92 percent, compared to the Los Angeles Unified School District average of 67 percent.



Curriculum: Humanitas is an instructional model in which teachers collaborate to provide rigorous, interdisciplinary instruction that engages students in relevant, real-world learning. Embedded into the school's curriculum is a focus on social justice, which has been strengthened through the school's partnership with Facing History and Ourselves (FHO). FHO is an international education and professional development organization that engages students in understanding the Holocaust, discussing other social justice issues and understanding how history is connected to the moral choices people face every day. With a predominantly Latino population, a lot of lessons focus on exploring identity and culture, and the entire school reads "Enrique's Journey," the Pulitzer Prize-winning story of a Honduran boy searching for his mother in the U.S. SJHA is considered one of Facing History's model schools because it takes a whole-school approach, weaving the core themes throughout the school's curriculum, climate, and mission. Samantha Siegeler, who teaches 10th grade English with a history focus, says it's "a blessing to have the opportunity to develop interdisciplinary curriculum with social justice-minded folks who bring a critical lens to our curriculum."



College Preparedness: High expectations include the need to intentionally create a college-going culture where there may not otherwise be one. While Community Schools often work with partners to build students' "college knowledge," as it's often called, those efforts are often still separate from what is happening in the classroom. But not at Humanitas. Topics such as completing college applications and understanding the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) are being integrated into the curriculum to help all students take steps in the right direction.





School Climate: SJHA sets high expectations for students and creates a positive school climate.

Case in point: in an Ethnic Studies class, students start each class with multilingual group recitation of a poem reaffirming their respect for one another and themselves. The English version goes: “You are my other Me, if I do harm to You, I do harm to Myself, if I Love and Respect You, I Love and Respect Myself.” As a result, there is far less need for disciplinary strategies than in many other schools.



Their discipline strategy is leadership-development. A strong partner, Youth Speak Collective, gives students opportunities to improve their communities and develop leadership skills. Eight Youth Speak interns, four of whom are SJHA students, help facilitate after-school programs such as digital arts and the “Womyn’s Circle,” which gives girls a safe place to express themselves and talk about women in society. Interns receive stipends and students can earn service-learning hours for participating in Youth Speak programs. Additionally, a restorative justice process is teaching students how to take responsibility for poor decisions and is having an impact on behavior trends at the school. For the past two school years, only two students have been suspended.



The EduCare Foundation, a youth development organization, also is an effective SJHA partner. At the beginning of every school year, instead of jumping immediately into assignments and quizzes, students at the school participate in EduCare’s ACE (Achievement and Commitment to Excellence) workshops. The experience focuses on self-reflection and bonding between teachers and students and starts the school year off “on a positive note,” Carey says. “They’re all going through something and it’s very real and they learn they’re not alone.”



Through the 9th Grade Leadership Academy—an out-of-classroom experience required for graduation—students also focus on building character and positive relationships. Additional support and wraparound services are available to both students and families as part of the Los Angeles Promise Neighborhood grant provided by the U.S. Department of Education to the Youth Policy Institute (YPI), an anti-poverty and community empowerment organization. Parents can receive financial literacy programs, referrals to housing and health care services and legal support.



Funding

SJHA uses a combination of public, private and school funds. The coordinator is funded by philanthropic dollars. Other federal and philanthropic funds support the services overall, and the school funds any additional needs it has to the extent that it can.⁷⁹



In a nutshell, below you can view SJHA’s transformational outcomes and the mechanisms and strategies they used to achieve them.⁸⁰

Los Angeles, CA—Social Justice Humanitas Academy (founded as a Community School 4 years ago)	
Transformation	At end of first four year of operation in 2015
Attendance	From 62 percent to 80 percent
Graduation rates	From 83 percent (in 2013) to 94 percent (compared to LAUDS average of 67 percent)
College enrollment rates	Now 99 percent
HS exit exam first time pass rate	From 68 percent to 78 percent

Los Angeles, CA—Social Justice Humanitas Academy (continued...)	
Transformation	At end of first four year of operation in 2015
Individual graduation plan	Now 96 percent
Students passing college pre-requisite classes	Now 75 percent
Suspension rates	Down to 0.2 percent
Feeling of safety	Ninety-three percent of students and 95 percent parents feel safe
Community engaged needs assessment and strategic plan	Site leadership team that assesses needs of school and what programs and practices can meet those needs
Capacity to engage community	Community School Coordinator whose job it is to match community assets with needs
Social justice frame for curriculum	Facing History in Ourselves
Restorative justice	Restorative justice, YouthSpeak, Womyn's Circle, Youth Policy Institute, and EduCare
Parent/community support strategies	Financial literacy, housing assistance, health care referrals, and legal support

Brooklyn Center Full-Service Community Schools District MINNEAPOLIS, MN

In the early 2000's, Brooklyn Center Schools were starting to see increases in their enrollment of populations with high needs, especially immigrants and refugees. The school did not have the resources to respond to the needs that were evident daily. Attendance rates were dropping, the achievement gap was stagnant, and the community itself showed signs of distress such as poverty, lack of employment opportunities and crime. The school district had faced statutory operating debt for years with its inability to pass a levy due to lack of community support, as residents feared increased taxation. As a Brooklyn Center resident himself, former superintendent Keith Lester was aware of the needs of the students, families and the community. He decided to dedicate himself to increased social responsibility collaboration efforts thereby gaining support of vital partnerships. With key relationships built, he then conducted a needs assessment in all three schools in the district.



Lester was the visionary force behind the Brooklyn Center Community School initiative. He understood the critical role space plays in the Community Schools model. At a community meeting when the district was in its planning phase, he told the assembled potential partners: "I'll give you two classrooms if you bring me a clinic." A medical practice partner happened to have a warehouse full of surplus materials from their clinics and they volunteered to renovate the classrooms using leftover tile, furniture, etc. When they were finished, they had a real clinic with medical and mental health spaces, a lab station, and a lobby. Lester also had the prescience to make sure these elements were enshrined in policy. A Community School policy was passed by the Brooklyn Center Board of Education in 2009.⁸²



Brooklyn Center's Students & Families

Brooklyn Center has 2200 students in their district. The demographics are 83 percent free or reduced price meals, 60 percent African American, 20 percent Latino, the other 20 percent being white and Asian. Many students are immigrants and refugees from Latin America and Africa. Brooklyn Center has a substantial homeless student population. Brooklyn Center School District includes three schools: a high school, an elementary school, and an area learning center.

Needs & Solutions

Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan: In Brooklyn Center School District, "the implementation of the Community Schools model required intensive planning that included a democratic process; allowing non-school stakeholders the autonomy to plan and execute its infrastructure. Stakeholders continue to be a part of planning and meet regularly with district administration for continued input and evaluation."⁸³



Health & Social Services: Brooklyn Center school district has 6 health partners on site at schools. One of their partner health practices donates two days a week of doctors' services. Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1:30 to 5:00PM, the practice brings a full staff to do everything from physicals to immunizations, to lab work, to birth control to prescriptions. If a child has a broken leg, the practice will transport the child to their larger clinic about a mile away, where leg will be set free of charge. Prescriptions are free, and if they don't carry the prescription at the school-based site (for example narcotics), the patient can access them for free at the main clinic. An optometrist volunteers his time on Fridays. None of these providers bill insurance providers or Medicaid because, regardless of good intentions, within the delicate nature of the situations of many students and their families these low levels of bureaucracy are perceived as barriers to service.





One Brooklyn Center school houses an onsite community clinic that serves not only its students, but all NW Minneapolis community members, ages 0–19. Medical, dental and mental health services are provided both free and at low cost. The clinic also offers free social support services, such as housing and immigration rights counseling. Large populations of new refugees or immigrants are served by the clinic.



Parent Engagement: Brooklyn Center schools find that immigrant parents in particular often want to pay the school back for these services—or kindnesses, as they are often perceived. Some parents do this by volunteering their time at the schools. In this way, a sense of family is created. Because of this mutually supportive environment, many parents, at this point, are becoming advocates, rather than mere service recipients or just coming to school for parent teacher conferences. Through Community School partners, parents are being trained to be leaders. Because of the democratic nature of Brooklyn Center’s approach and the coordination provided by a Community School Coordinator, they can work with parents and flexibly respond to new ideas from the community. They are able to act on them without going through unnecessary bureaucratic structures. For example, in the community there was nowhere for adults to participate in enrichment or wellness activities, so partners worked with the coordinator to figure out how, when, and where would be most effective to deliver yoga and nutrition programs that focused on obesity prevention and diabetes awareness.



Partnerships: Brooklyn Center currently works with over 100 partners, 50 of which are co-located in a school, all coordinated through the Community School Coordinator’s team. All of these critical health and social services and programs meet a need beyond the health and wellbeing of the students. In Brooklyn Center schools, teachers can teach. Supporting and protecting teachers are primary goals of their Community Schools. The Community School framework allows teachers to have the time to engage in effective instruction because they are not doubling as social workers or providing other social/emotional care functions. If a child comes to school sleepless or with shoes two sizes too big, an appropriate referral can be quickly made. The student is not put out of class for punitive reasons, but to get her or him the help she/he needs. On the third time a particular student was disruptive, the teacher walked the student down to the clinic and discovered that the young person had been mistakenly prescribed the wrong medication for attention deficit disorder and was thus unable to concentrate. The medication was corrected and the student was able to learn.



Discipline & School Climate: Minnesota has implemented a statewide initiative on alternatives to suspension. Brooklyn Center has a dedicated truancy program and an “alternative to suspensions” coordinator. Suspension rates have gone down and truancy has gone down. Positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) are supported by a 21st Century Learning Center grant. Young people having difficulty participating in the classroom join leadership development groups and leave with skills that teach them options for responding to emotional triggers. They have a number of youth-led, youth-driven activities and over 50 enrichment programs, many of which were suggested and/or developed by young people.



A school clinic served a kindergartner who was undocumented. The child had been having chronic headaches. After arranging for him to be seen by a dentist, it was discovered that almost all of his teeth were rotten and the infection was spreading to his head. His mother was afraid that even if he was treated at no cost, she might get a bill and their immigration status would be discovered. Through partnerships, Brooklyn Center requested that the family not receive a bill. All this boy’s teeth were extracted for free.



Funding sources

Currently, all three feeder pattern schools in the district are “full service Community Schools” and receive in-kind support from onsite partnerships. Today, Brooklyn Center Community Schools is still the only full service Community Schools district in the state of Minnesota.

A federal 21st Century Learning Center grant allowed them to serve over 2700 people (in a community where the schools serve only 2200), providing resources beyond the school for free and paying for 80 percent of their enrichment activities.



Two Family Resource Rooms are furnished through partner donations and an onsite community clinic where the United Way and Park Nicollet Foundation support the costs for medical, dental, vision, mental health, and social support services. The model is sustained through partnerships and has been a coordinated effort of one full-time staff person, funded and supported through the district's general budget.



In 2015, Minnesota passed a law approving funding for a small number of Community Schools. Brooklyn Center will apply to have a site coordinator for each school rather than their current district coordinator being stretched over three schools.



In a nutshell, below you can view Brooklyn Center's transformational outcomes and the mechanisms and strategies they used to achieve them.

Minneapolis, MN—Brooklyn Center Full Service Community Schools District (5 years as a Community School)		
Transformation	2009	2014
Secondary school enrollment	723	964
Secondary school college enrollment	61 percent	78 percent
Secondary school student absences from one class period or more	9,000	6,500
Student mobility	35 percent	26 percent
Secondary school graduation rate	74 percent	87 percent
District-wide behavioral references	5,113	2,495
Community engaged needs assessment and strategic plan	none	Former superintendent brought community stakeholders to table to assess needs and assets
Coordination of community partners	none	Community school site coordinator for all three schools; New funding will allow for one per school
Afterschool involvement	Low student involvement in afterschool programs	80 percent of middle and highschoolers involved in at least one afterschool activity
Health resource center	None	Serves over 2000 students
Youth recreation center	None—not enough space to offer enrichment and physical activities	Recreation center opened in 2013, a shared partnership through the city to offer a number of activities to engage youth
Health clinic	Gap in services; Disparities in asthma treatment, vision and mental health needs	The Health Resource Center opened in 2011, providing medical, dental, vision and mental health services free or at minimal cost; Since 2011, over 7,500 have received services onsite
Early childhood	No program for teen parents; Teen parents began to drop out because of lack of services	Baby Steps Child Development Center opened in 2013, providing onsite services and supports for teen parents; In 2013, 13 teen parents re-enrolled at Brooklyn Center Schools Dist., accessing services that supported graduation and parenting
Family Resource Rooms	None	Two onsite Family Resource Rooms opened in 2011, providing onsite assistance with clothing, food, energy assistance, employment services, etc.

Cincinnati Public Schools' Community Learning Centers—District-Wide Model CINCINNATI, OH

Before Community Learning Centers were embedded in Board of Education policy in Cincinnati; before 43 out of 55 schools within Cincinnati Public School (CPS) had site coordinators, CPS schools had a bad reputation. The city had sprung a leak among its middle class who were flooding to the suburbs. CPS had gone from an enrollment of 90,000 students in the 1970's to what was projected to be 28,000 in 2010. Academic results were poor, as was family engagement. Cincinnati's facilities, in particular, were judged to be some of the worst in the country. In 1999, the schools attempted to pass a levy to fund school renovations, which failed. Only 19 percent of voters have school age children and only about half of those children were being sent to public schools. It was clear that there was a need to convince the broader population that good schools were in their interest.

Enter Darlene Kamine, currently Executive Director of the Community Schools Learning Centers, and a number of other Cincinnati leaders, with the idea that good schools were not only good for the children and families served by those schools but that good schools anchored healthy, thriving communities. These leaders first toured the country looking for school models that accomplished this and took bits and pieces from the versions that they saw. Then they created a plan to go neighborhood to neighborhood asking folks not only what kind of school they wanted, but what kind of community they wanted to live in. If you were to get a new school building, what kinds of programs and partnerships would get you to your goals? When the levy went back up in 2001, it passed with the commitment that the money raised would go into construction of new school buildings as Community Learning Centers, and a mission to create great communities around them. This meant involving current teachers, students, and families, as well as unlikely allies like the parochial school pastor who wanted parishioners to move back to the neighborhood and the business folks who needed consumers.



By 2006, the first nine schools hired site coordinators and brought partners into the schools based on the needs assessments that had been so carefully crafted with the communities. The next step was to take the community buy-in and turn it into a community governance process. The Local School Decision Making Committees (LSDMCs), which had been in official existence since the 1970's, were repurposed to govern. These entities were defined within the by-laws of the Community Learning Centers.

Also important to know about Cincinnati's model is that no program has an impact on the public school system budget. All services are leveraged and fully sustainable within themselves. Federal government Title One funds do, however, currently fund a portion of the Community Learning Center site coordinators.

This work is already turning around the previously declining enrollment. Over the past five years it has climbed and stabilized around 34,000; reversing the trend that was predicted. They have not only reversed the decline but are bringing large numbers of families back into the public school system. Their most recent levy passed 70 percent to 30 percent, numbers that are a clear indication of renewed confidence in the city's schools and unheard of previously in the region.

Cincinnati Students & Families

CPS had gone from an enrollment of 90,000 students in the '70s to 28,000 in 1999. By that time about half of Cincinnati's parents were sending their children to private or parochial schools. Only 10 percent of voters had school age children who were attached to Cincinnati's public schools. It was clear that there was a need to convince the broader population that good schools were in their interest.

Needs & Solutions



The key need for Cincinnati's Community Learning Centers (CLC) was to create a true, deep and rich community engagement process. They had been unable to pass a much-needed levy because the larger community of the city had "disengaged" from the school system. The large majority did not have students in the schools. To reengage them, the CLC staff had to think big. They had to think beyond the confines of the school building.



They began in each neighborhood asking the same two questions: "What kind of school would you want for your child?" and "What kind of neighborhood do you want to live in?" While the goal was, without question, that young people should be academically successful, the focus was not exclusively on academics. Annie Bogenschutz, Director of Training and Development at the Community Learning Center Institute, told us that this needed to be a comprehensive approach: "We want to know what your vision is for your community learning center as the hub of you community, not just inside the school walls. Because you can have the greatest school academically, but if [...] families don't have sustainable and affordable housing, they can't live there... We have to engage and change the community as well." This is Community Schools as a community revitalization mechanism. As a matter of fact, more recently, as a result of increased student homelessness or unstable housing, the CLCs are working toward incorporating solving the housing issue within the context of a Community Schools vision.



Community engagement, neighborhood by neighborhood and site by site, from the very beginning led to Local School Decision-Making Councils (LSDMC) which constitutes the schools' current governance.



Because Cincinnati's goal was to do this work at a district level, rather than school by school, it became necessary to embed the concept in policy to protect it for future generations. "To have a school board policy that states: 'All of our schools are Community Learning Centers; all of our schools will have Local School Decision Making Councils (LSDMCs) as the governing body', is to bullet-proof the work. We're now up to 43 schools [out of 55]. This has lasted through four superintendents. Then we go out in the community asking, 'What kind of community do you want to live in?' It keeps us from being liars. It allows us to be able to honor our promises," says Bogenschutz.

"If they suddenly got a new superintendent who said: 'We're done with Community Schools', the communities would revolt... it's so embedded in the neighborhoods and in the families and that wouldn't have happened if we didn't do those processes in the beginning and continued on.



At Oyler School, when the community was asked this question, they said they wanted a high school. For many years, the insularity of the community had prevented families from wanting their young people to go out of the neighborhood for high school and students had stopped attending school in 9th grade. Oyler School was rebuilt to include a high school and dedicated space for world-class health and mental health services and a day care center. Their high school graduation rate has skyrocketed.



Health: Cincinnati's communities have a need for medical and social services. The CLC's work to fill this need. Cincinnati's Community Learning Centers schools have more school-based health centers than in the rest of the state combined. They are now at 24 health centers which all include primary health, and some include dental and vision. Every single CLC school has a co-located mental health partner.



When it comes to health centers, the scope depends on the needs and desires of the community. For example, Roberts Academy decided from day one that they wanted their health center open



extended hours and to the full community. Then they determined the number of visits they needed to be sustainable through Medicaid reimbursement or private insurance? Other schools may start out making the clinic available to the students in year one, the families in year two, and then to the full community. It depends on their vision. Clinics don't necessarily close down in the summer if that's what the school decides. "That way," says Bogenshutz, "they can get more billable hours and stay sustainable. Federally Qualified Health Centers' reimbursement rates are higher. The rates vary from state to state. But, for example, at Oyler, we know that we need 19 billable visits per day for dental to stay sustainable. But, remember, the clinic is not paying rent as they might otherwise, so that helps with sustainability, as well."



Community engagement and Extracurricular Activities: Many schools have adult and teen programming, both for the families of the students as well as for the full community. For example, after after-school, at 6:00PM, many schools open to the community for book clubs or women's groups, Zumba, yoga classes, or walking clubs. They have custodians in the building by contract until 10pm. The school district contributes lights and custodial, but the rest of staffing is provided by the partners who see the free space as an in-kind contribution.



Academics: While health and wellness services help "remove barriers to learning" for students and provide needed support for the health and well-being of the community, CLC's also include specific academic mechanisms to help students succeed in their college and/or career goals.



Cincinnati Public Schools has recently adopted a new curriculum, so CLC's make sure that all programming is aligned. They also align wrap-around supports with AP and honors classes in all high schools to help kids succeed. Elementary school supports prepare all students to be able to attend "test-in" high schools; they want students to have that choice even if they decide not to utilize it. My Tomorrow, a new high school initiative, aspires to the goal of every student graduating with a 3.0 GPA, 22 ACT score, and a plan for college or career; partner afterschool, tutoring and mentoring supports are aligned to make this happen.



Partners are also accountable for enrichment activities they provide; they have to fit into the goals and the needs assessment of the school. "It's not random," says Bogenshutz. For example, in a school where students need to work on geometry, they may combine tennis and geometry so that in addition to learning the game they are measuring the court and learning about right angles.



School Climate & Discipline: School culture and disciplinary approaches are positive and consistent. The Community Learning Center approach strives for alignment. If they find disciplinary problems in 5th grade, they bring partners together and say, "What's going on here? How can we address this as a team? What can each of us bring to the table?"



Partners help create a culture that enhances, as opposed to interferes with, learning, conditions which reduce contributors to discipline problems. If a kid has a "freak-out," instead of sending him to the principal's office or suspending him, they send him to talk with a mental health provider who will work with him to get to the root of the problem. They offer yoga, mindfulness training, and mentors in the building who can take a time out with students rather than send them home as they may have done in the past.

"We need to know each year how each partner is aligned with the goals and needs of the school and to make sure they are doing what they said they would do. It's reevaluated annually so if a need is met or if the partner is not aligned and accountable, maybe the next year we don't need them. This is a strategic piece; it's not just about volume and numbers of partners."



When a visitor once asked Bogenschutz, “How did you get them all to drink the kool-aid?,” she knew they meant that the environment of the school was positive; people appeared to want to be there. They have created an atmosphere in which no one feels that they are doing it alone. In many schools, teachers have no one else to turn to when they are having issues with students. “Here, difficult emotions don’t escalate to where they used to because students have the services that they need.”



Funding sources

- All partners are sustainable on their own. They have either figured out a sustainable billing model, or they have their own outside funding which in many cases already existed but as been realigned or re-allocated. Some partners receive grants or private funds (from a wide variety of sources) to do special programming.
- Community Learning Center Site Coordinator funding is blended funding that ranges from private dollars to United Ways to family foundations to Title One



In a nutshell, view below Cincinnati Community Learning Center's transformational results since beginning the planning process and community engagement in 1999/2000 and implementation of Resource Coordinators in 2006 to the present.⁸⁵

Cincinnati School District, OH—Community Learning Centers		
Transformation	2006	2015
Number of Community Schools	0 out of 55	43 out of 55
Achievement gap	14.5 percent	4.5 percent
Graduation rate	51 percent	82 percent
Performance index score	72.1	87.3
Academic emergency	14 schools	3 schools
Excellent, effective, or continuous improvement	NA	82 percent
Effective rating	NA	In 2010, became the highest rated urban district in state of Ohio

Schools Uniting Neighborhoods (SUN) Community Schools

CITY OF PORTLAND & MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON⁸⁶

In the late 1990s, Multnomah County community members and leaders recognized a need for a new approach. The environment posed multiple challenges including shrinking budgets, a significant racial achievement gap, growing poverty, a severe shortage of affordable housing, and an increase in the number of children being left unsupervised during out-of-school hours. Demographic changes were dramatically increasing the cultural and linguistic diversity in the region, requiring schools and social service organizations to develop new skills in order to educate and support these populations effectively.

The effect of family poverty on school success was also clear, as barriers such as homelessness, mobility, hunger, illness, and trauma made it impossible for many students to come to school ready to learn. It became clear that one couldn't talk about alleviating or eliminating poverty without talking about education.

With leadership from elected officials in the City of Portland and Multnomah County, the decision was made to partner together to support schools. The initial goal was two-fold: (1) to support education and school success and (2) to improve the way resources for students and their families were delivered by developing a school-based service delivery vehicle. After researching various potential options nationally, they chose the full-service Community School strategy.



Schools Uniting Neighborhoods (SUN) Community Schools have a unique breadth of approach. They encompass an entire county, Multnomah County in Oregon, and serve the six main school districts. They have spread into 85 schools in those districts and they engage all county and city agencies that focus on all of its children and families. So, in the planning and governance of SUN Community Schools, at the table are agencies tasked with human services, health, housing, equity, and employment, as well as education. Partner organizations which are indigenous to cultural and geographic communities are also members of the leadership and governance teams.



Multnomah County's Students & Families

Annually, the 85 SUN Community Schools serve a student population of over 54,000 with a wide array of services and supports. Each year over 24,000 of those children and youth are served in extended-day activities. In alignment with SUN's commitment to equity and its target populations, the majority of those children and families are living in poverty and are from communities of color or immigrant/refugee communities. In 2013–14, for instance, 72 percent of youth were of color or from a culturally-specific community compared to the six districts' composite average of 48 percent. 76 percent of the students qualified for free or reduced price meals, compared to the districts' average of 56 percent.

Needs & Solutions



Wrap-around services: Multnomah County in which Portland resides is the victim, like so many communities cited in this document, of gentrification. This process pushes poorer families out of the center of the city into neighborhoods which then are overwhelmed by need. Through SUN Community Schools, the Community School is there to remove the "barriers to learning" that come as a result of the baggage students bring with them to school.



Coordination: Coordinators work to connect schools and families to the providers that will help them deal with issues of poverty and safety. They have also raised the bar for holding themselves accountable for providing "culturally specific" services. They want to make sure that interventions are



equitable in order to be successful. For this reason, they try to make sure students and families see people who speak their language and look like them and that any assistance is offered in culturally appropriate ways, especially to their most vulnerable populations. They are also committed to investing in those communities and in the organizations developed by those communities to meet the needs of their populations. The broader SUN Service System, to which Community Schools belong, allocates 2/3 of funding to culturally specific services. This includes their choice for lead agencies working with individual schools.



Restorative Justice Practices: Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and restorative justice practices are two ways in which SUN schools implement culturally responsive solutions at many of their schools sites. The six districts they work with are actively looking at the issue of disproportionality in discipline both through rules and regulations as well as support for teachers, through professional development and other mechanisms of support. Portland Public Schools has a significant effort underway to implement restorative practices and support services in schools with the greatest disproportionality in suspension and expulsion rates for students of color. SUN makes sure that all partners have the skills they need in knowing positive discipline approaches. Site coordinators are included as staff in training on PBIS, restorative justice and other school-wide approaches. Other community partners, such as youth advocates are trained, as well, and provide bridges between the young person and the disciplinary system.



Parent Engagement: Parent engagement is a need that must be met to ensure school success, as research has shown time and again. Since its early years, SUN has utilized Joyce Epstein's "overlapping spheres of influence"[1] approach to engage parents in a variety of ways. This approach views parents not just as recipients of services or attendees at events but as partners in their mission of educating their children, making decisions, developing policy, and more.

Currently, in an effort to redefine parent partnership as even more "real," they are reshaping their "advisory" teams for Community Schools from broader community influenced teams into parent-only leadership teams. This laser focus allows them to raise their capacity for developing parent leadership and decision-making outside the context of a broader group of community stakeholders who might come with potentially conflicting needs, skills and interests.



To make this refocus successful district-wide requires support from district leadership. SUN initiative staff engages in significant cross-school building with site coordinators and principals in partnership with SUN district liaisons. They conducted an annual spring training session on family engagement using a modified version of the PTA assessment tool, assessing where they are on a variety of key indicators around parent engagement such as equity and diversity. Hall tells us, "We found, because of the breadth of work people are doing in our schools, that most folks haven't had capacity to go deep. One principal shared 'I'm embarrassed that we're not even on this one scale yet. We've been so focused on curriculum that we haven't gotten to thinking about this deeply.' It was a good opportunity to get them thinking about including this in their annual plan, as we are currently requiring."



In an attempt to make sure parents are heard and valued, one school invited parents in just to talk and get to know each other. Out of this came input on the families' experiences at the school and eventually an ongoing group of Latino parents who wanted to keep meeting and take on projects and weigh in on school decisions. The principal eventually hosted a summer leadership training for these parents at her house. Parents began to impact the life of the school by welcoming other Latino parents, many of whom were recent immigrants, and teaching them to advocate for their children.



Strong curriculum: Students in any school with high poverty rates need academic support for achievement within a high-quality strong core instructional environment. In cases where English and



math remediation or ESOL is needed during the school day, SUN schools use afterschool time to provide AP and honor classes, as well as electives, for young people who may not have room in their schedules for these types of classes as well as to further infuse cultural relevance into the curriculum. All sites are required to offer a robust array of complementary extended-day programs and support services that align with the school day curriculum and approaches including educational support, skill development, recreation and enrichment for students and family members. SUN Community Schools track race/ethnicity and gender of students and monitor participation and outcomes data as part of their equity practices. These disaggregated data are also analyzed and monitored at the initiative level.



Academic support and leadership development: One example is Franklin SUN Community School which offers a wide array of extended learning opportunities including a tutoring center, focused ELD tutoring, pathways to manufacturing, MESA and culturally specific youth leadership activities such as Black Student Union. Franklin recognized that students of color were not enrolling or being successful in Advanced Placement and other advanced course work, so they built in peer mentors to encourage students of color to enroll and successfully complete these advanced classes. They call the effort Advanced Scholars and attribute to it Franklin's becoming the first school in Portland Public Schools to have student success not be predictable by race. The Pathways to Manufacturing program provides skilled job training and professional connections, including internships with some of Portland's largest manufacturers such as Vigor Industrial and Daimler-Chrysler.



Funding sources

SUN Schools are funded through Multnomah County, the City of Portland, Portland Children's Levy and grants from Centennial, David Douglas, Gresham Barlow, Parkrose, Portland Public and Reynolds School Districts as well as 21st Century Community Learning Center grants.



In a nutshell, view below SUN School's transformational results after 16 years as a Community School district with 85 schools and over 24,000 students participating:

SUN Community Schools—Portland, OR/Multnomah County (Community Schools since 1999)		
Transformation	2010-11	2013-14
Chronic absence rate*	17 percent	9.2 percent (46 percent reduction since 2010-11 across the initiative)
Reading scores*	N/A—measured on annual versus longitudinal basis	75 percent increased state benchmark scores State benchmark score gains were equal to or higher than expected in the majority of grades
High school credits*	N/A	6.8 credits per student (as opposed to 6 needed to graduate on time)
Graduation rate (4 year cohort)	Parkrose High School(2010-11): 65 percent Jefferson High School (2010-11): 55 percent	High school sites have increased overall graduation rates by 9–15 percentage points over the last 3 years. A few examples include Parkrose and Jefferson High Schools: Parkrose High School (2013–14): 78 percent Jefferson High School(2013–14): 66 percent
Improvement in interim academic behaviors (homework completion, classroom participation, behavior, etc.)	N/A	For those students who needed

Kentucky's Statewide Family Resource and Youth Service Centers (FRYSCs)

Kentucky's program is one of a kind, as it encompasses the entire state and has been functioning for 25 years.

Students & Families & FRYSCs (pronounced "friskies")

Prior to the implementation of this landmark educational solution, Kentucky—especially rural Kentucky—had a long history of economic decline, partly a result of the demise of the coal industry which had left its education system in dire financial straits. Kentucky had the most illiterate adult population in the country in the 1980s, with Appalachia at 48.4 percent. It was 43rd in the country in per-pupil education spending, 47th in per capita state and local spending, 49th in post-high school college enrollment, and dead last in rates of adults having a high school diploma."⁸⁷

In 1989, vast disparities existed across Kentucky, with local funding for schools ranging from as low as \$80 per pupil, to as high as \$3,716 per pupil across the state.⁸⁸ At that time, the State Department of Education was faced with a legal challenge. In *Rose v the Council for Better Education*, the State Supreme Court declared the "entire system of common schools" unconstitutional on the basis of inequity and inadequacy, and called on the General Assembly to establish an "efficient system of common schools."

It's now been 25 years since the Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA) was passed. The 1990 law paved the way for a statewide effort not only to equalize funding across Kentucky's highly diverse districts, but also to ensure that students have access to the full range of resources they need to succeed. The legislature viewed KERA, not just as an overhaul of the state's school funding formula, but also as a means to address educational outcomes. KERA offers additional state dollars based on student needs.⁸⁹ The law allows school districts to access other state monies to support Family Resource and Youth Services Centers, or FRYSCs.

The FRYSCs have been a key component of the new funding law's success. The state-funded Division of Family Resource and Youth Services Centers initiates contracts with school districts for FRYSC services and provides training and support for FRYSC coordinators and their staff. The initiative offers varied and unique programs to student and family populations based on local needs

With FRYSC funds local school districts now employ approximately 1,200 people in 98 percent of all eligible schools in Kentucky. There are more than 625,000 students enrolled in schools served by FRYSCs—roughly 93 percent of all public school students in the state. Once established, centers serve all students in the school and their families, regardless of their socio-economic status, through various school-wide services, group programs, and individual interventions.⁹⁰

Since KERA began, Kentucky has seen consistent increases in its education funding (local, state, and federal). According to the Bluegrass Institute, between the 1989–90 school year and 2012–13, education spending, in inflation-adjusted dollars, grew by 188 percent.⁹¹

Needs & Solutions

FRYSCs work to meet the needs of a state school-aged population in communities devastated by generational poverty.



Each FRYSC center, before receiving funding, is required to conduct a needs assessment and describe how they will meet the needs of their community within the following categories:

Family Resource Centers serve families of children under school age and in elementary school and coordinate:

- preschool child care;
- afterschool child day care;
- families in training;
- family literacy services; and
- health services and referrals.

Youth Services Centers serve students in middle and high school and coordinate:

- referrals to health and social services;
- career exploration and development;
- summer and part-time job development (high school only);
- substance-abuse education and counseling; and
- family crisis and mental health counseling.⁹²



Like in Multnomah County's SUN Schools, FRYSCs use an interagency model of solving the problems of generational poverty. Schools are natural community hubs. Children come every day and parents of young children, more often than not, drop them off at school and/or pick them up. This makes schools ideal locations for interagency service provision. Conversely, services can bring families and communities into the school to create broad and deep support for the children's education as well as other aspects of the school as a community. FRYSCs utilize these intersections for the benefit of the full community. FRYSCs have changed the way Kentucky does business—the assumption is that the schools will work with health, housing, transportation, employment agencies and vice versa.



Health care: Currently, full service health centers operate in almost every school in the state of Kentucky, providing immunizations, well-child checks, and many other day to day services. They also operate health fairs for almost every community that provide critical services which the mostly uninsured population cannot otherwise access. The fairs are not just one-offs. Providers collect baseline data and then check against that data at the end of the year in order to challenge themselves for the next year. All schools provide mental health services. At many schools in the state of Kentucky, dental vans provide screening, sealant, and other services. Doug Jones, regional FRYSC program manager, said that he was determined to provide dental care for students and families because he was "tired of having Jay Leno make fun of Kentuckians for having bad teeth." Coordinators work through local charity groups such as the Lions Club to provide glasses for children who need them. A system of "tele-medicine" allows on-site providers to be connected electronically with health professionals in teaching hospitals to help with issues that can't be adequately diagnosed or dealt with on-site, such as serious mental health issues or medication-related questions.





Substance abuse is a huge problem in Kentucky and is probably their greatest area of need. Heroin, methamphetamines, prescription drug use, and “designer” drug use are growing problems in the state. FRYSCs work hard on prevention and education. They utilize every tactic, from motivational speakers to guard dogs doing locker sweeps. On-site mental health providers provide needed drug addiction counseling and make referrals for drug treatment, whether hospitalization or rehab. Centers provide lock-in parties for graduation and proms to prevent these events becoming opportunities to abuse drugs and alcohol.



Often, coordinators find, grandparents or great grandparents are raising children because the parents are either incarcerated or have died from overdoses. In these cases FRYSCs merge their family crisis and mental health components with substance abuse treatment and prevention. Lines between components are fluid—the interagency model at work. While most services are determined based on the needs of each school site, some are organized statewide. For example, all schools do red ribbon week on substance abuse and prevention; all schools do blue ribbon week for child abuse. These “elevating” strategies result in lowering the stigma attached to these issues and allow for more reporting of individual cases.



Family engagement: Because family crisis and child abuse are common and illiteracy among adults is high, the FRYSCs make a point of engaging families early. Parent engagement drives the programming from the very beginning. Parents, teachers, students and in some instances, community, work together on the needs assessment that determines which programs will be brought into the school. Each year the results are evaluated and determinations made for the following year.



FRYSCs have changed the relationship of families to schools in the state. In the early years of the program, when coordinators would travel out into the community and introduce themselves, parents would say: “Wow, nobody’s ever been here from the schools before.” Now FRYSCs envelop families very early into their Born Learning program before their children enter school. Home visits and families-in-training programs around early childhood are key to developing students who are ready to learn.



In Kentucky, principals used to think that coordinators would never be able to get parents to come to the school in the evenings. The FRYSCs used a research-based curriculum on homework help. Jones told us, “We wound up with standing room only crowds in these small rural towns. Of course, we fed them. Home visits are key. One parent wouldn’t come into the school because he had been a behavior problem with the same principal when he was a kid. Also he felt that he hadn’t done very well in life, had bad grammar, looked a little disheveled. But I did a home visit and he decided to come and he became good friends with a physician’s wife who baked him the first birthday cake he had ever had (in his life). After that we couldn’t keep him away. He came to everything.” Given high illiteracy levels, parents’ need for continuing education is high; FRYSCs provide adult education in GED, ELL, as well as job preparation and training across the state.



Restorative Justice: FRYSCs play a major role in creating positive school climate, through their training in PBIS and other restorative practices such as yoga or meditation. They also create opportunities to use innovative strategies like karate to help students modulate their anger while learning strong self-discipline at the same time.



COORDINATION: FRYSCs touch everything that happens in the school, so they have a part in the success of everything that happens in the schools, including academics. Coordinators sit on school leadership teams—for which professional development is provided statewide—to ensure alignment for provision of medical and social-emotional needs to academic needs.



Academic supports: After-school programs, such as ACT preparation and tutoring programs, align with academics to enhance student success with the regular school curriculum. These programs utilize AmeriCorps volunteers. The programs help the students as well as the young people in AmeriCorps, who are often former students from these same school systems. KY Senator Reggie Thomas says that the FRYSCs are responsible for turning around Bryan Station High School in Fayette County by doubling the number of home visits in the school community, doubling the amount of transportation provided for afterschool programs, and doubling contacts with FRYSC coordinators or partners before, during, and after school.



There have been enormous changes in Kentucky's national standing since 1990. *Education Week's* Quality Counts 2016 annual report ranked Kentucky's schools 27th on a range of key education indicators, up from 48th in 1990. Harvard ranks them the eighth most improved school system over two decades. Their high school graduation rate is 9th highest nationally and their drop-out rate is 13th lowest nationally. The 2015 "Building a Grad Nation" report called Kentucky "a beacon to all other states" for its ability to all but eliminate the opportunity gap between low income students and all other students to graduate on time. There is only a 1.4 percent difference—the lowest in the nation by far.⁹³

Kentucky is "a beacon to all other states" for its ability to all but eliminate the opportunity gap between low income students and all other students to graduate on time.



FRYSCs Into the Today: But poverty remains in Kentucky, and it is not a secret. Schools partner with cooperative extension and other community agencies to create "reality stores" where students are assigned an income and they have to shop at different "stores" to meet their daily need based on the income they have. Career exploration and job mentoring and training for both students and families are key components of all centers. But "community revitalization" at the state level is a heavy lift, and the sad irony is that students who are successful academically often leave the state because there are so few employment opportunities.



The Great Recession has forced the State to cut education funding by more than 11 percent. Poorer counties with a smaller tax base are disproportionately disadvantaged by the loss of state support. But in Kentucky, the legislature is working to rectify this shortfall. In 2014, the General Assembly increased the state's main school funding formula by \$189 million over the next two years. The money was allocated to support technology, textbooks, staff pay increases and teacher training. Even these increases won't bring Kentucky school funding back to pre-recession levels. But the state has shown commitment to the success of the FRYSCs,⁹⁴ and to continuing to work towards a statewide structure that advantages all students and schools. Kentucky is truly a beacon to the rest of the country in this statewide commitment to overcoming barriers constructed by poverty.



Funding sources

The FRYSC program is funded entirely through legislative appropriation from the Kentucky General Assembly. The funds go through the Department of Education to the Cabinet for Health and Family Services, where the Division of FRYSC resides. The Cabinet then contracts with local school districts to provide FRYSC services.

In a nutshell, view below Kentucky Family Resource and Youth Service Centers' transformational results after 25 years as a Community School system:⁹⁵

State of Kentucky—25 years of Family Resource and Youth Service Centers		
Transformations	Before	After
Education Week's annual Quality Counts report of key education indicators	1998: 48th	2016: 27th
Harvard student improvement data		8th over 2 decades
High school graduation		9th highest nationally
High school dropouts		13th lowest nationally
2015 "Building a Grad Nation" report		Called Kentucky "a beacon to all other states" for its ability to all but eliminate the opportunity gap between low-income students and all other students to graduate on time. There is only a 1.4 percent difference, the lowest in the nation by far
Freshmen who graduate		23rd highest nationally

Conclusion & Recommendations:

Community schools implement evidence-based strategy to bring together the resources of school, family, and community to make schools stronger and help young people thrive. When Community Schools are able to employ the multiple strategies outlined in this report, their results can be *sustainably transformational*: increasing school attendance, decreasing suspensions and expulsions, creating healthy and safe communities, and improving academic outcomes.

This report has outlined six essential strategies for Community Schools and the key mechanisms used to implement these strategies, and has also highlighted Community Schools across the country where these model strategies are being used to achieve transformational results. A close look at transformational Community Schools and districts shows that across racial, economic, and geographic diversities in this country, Community Schools work. As the new federal education legislation gives states greater power to implement Community Schools, policymakers and advocates should use the strategies and mechanisms we outlined in this report to achieve transformational Community Schools across the country.

(a) Educational strategy recommendations: The **model Community School strategies** outlined in this report can and should be used in every public school across the United States to achieve sustainable transformational results. Those strategies are:

1. **Curricula that are engaging, culturally relevant, and challenging.** Schools offer a robust selection of classes and after-school programs in the arts, languages, and ethnic studies, as well as Advanced Placement (AP) and honors courses. Also offered are services for English Language Learner and special education populations, GED preparation programs, and job training. Pedagogy is student-centered.
2. **An emphasis on high-quality teaching, not on high-stakes testing.** Assessments are used to help teachers meet the needs of students. Educators have a real voice in professional development. Professional development is high quality and ongoing, and includes strengthening understanding of, and professional alignment with, the Transformational Community School strategy.
3. **Wrap-around supports and opportunities** such as health care, eye care, and social and emotional services that support academics. They are available before, during, and after school, and are provided year-round to the full community. Community partners are accountable and culturally competent. The supports are aligned to the classroom using thorough and continuous data collection, analysis, and reflection. Space is allocated within the building or within walking distance for services.
4. **Positive discipline practices, such as restorative justice** and social and emotional learning supports, are stressed so that students grow and contribute to the school community and beyond. School safety and positive school climate are achieved through these mechanisms. Suspensions and harsh punishments are eliminated or greatly reduced.
5. **Authentic parent and community engagement** is promoted so the full community actively participates in planning and decision-making. This process recognizes the link between the success of the school and the development of the community as a whole.
6. **Inclusive school leadership** who are committed to making the Transformational Community School strategy integral to the school's mandate and functioning. They ensure that the

Community School Coordinator is a part of the leadership team and that a Community School Committee (Committee)—which includes parents, community partners, school staff, youth, and other stakeholders that are representatives of the school’s various constituencies—has a voice in the planning and implementation of the strategy.

I. Implementation recommendations: Community schools achieve success by implementing the above strategies through the following mechanisms:

1. An asset and needs **assessment** of and by both school and community
2. A strategic **plan** that defines how educators and community partners will use all available assets to meet specific needs and get better results
3. The engagement of **partners** who bring assets and expertise to help implement the building blocks of Community School
4. A Community School Coordinator whose job is to facilitate the development and implementation of the strategic plan in collaboration with school and community members/partners, and ensure alignment of solutions to needs.

II. Policy recommendations: The new federal education legislation, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), sends much of the decision-making power to create innovative models for student success to the states and districts. This report recommends that:

1. State and local policy makers, using the opportunity created by this new law and in collaboration with their education constituencies including parents, school staff, students and community members, tap the power of community to grow the number of effective Community Schools in every state and municipality in the country.
2. Community organizing and education advocacy groups, unions, and Community School practitioners join lawmakers to pass legislation that will enable a dramatic increase in the number of Community Schools.
3. The above parties use the information, data, and policy templates included in this report to help accomplish these goals.

This report provides the resources necessary for local and state policy makers, community, parent, teacher and youth organizations, and current practitioners to vastly expand and improve Community Schools in their city or state.

Below are descriptions of four Community School policy templates.

- State legislative template using a grants-based funding mechanism (summary and full template)
- State legislative template using a funding formula-based funding (summary and full template)
- Local Board of Education policy template (full template)
- Local City Council policy template (full template)

The summaries and full templates can be found in Appendices A through F.

The Center for Popular Democracy, Coalition for Community Schools, and the Southern Education Foundation stand ready to connect you with other policy makers, practitioners, theoreticians, advocates, and organizers to help you along your way. The Coalition for Community Schools convenes a state network of local Community School initiative leaders across the country looking to work with policymakers like you to introduce supportive Community Schools legislation.

Contact Kyle Serrette at kserrette@populardemocracy.org for help with connecting to others in the field who are working to introduce and/or implement Community Schools policy.

Contact Mary Kingston Roche at rochem@iel.org to find out if there are any Community School leaders, practitioners or technical assistance providers in your state to help you.

Contact Katherine Dunn at kdunn@southerneducation.org for information about how this work is proceeding and resources specifically within Southern states.

Afterword

THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL STRATEGY WORKS!

It is good for children, families and communities.

It improves education performance.

It is cost effective.

It is good politics.

It is the right thing to do.

We KNOW the Community Schools Strategy works in just about any community in which it is implemented with fidelity. This report offers strong examples of that. But we need more than local examples. We need state policy to reach many more children, and we need more school and community leaders to embrace the approach.

Individual schools from California south to Texas to Florida north to Minnesota and east to Maryland have embraced the Community School Strategy... and it works. Whole-school systems in Oakland and Cincinnati are committed to Community Schools as a principal strategy to overcome the debilitating impact of poverty. Multnomah County in Oregon has adopted a countywide approach with all six of its school systems joining in the battle against allowing poverty to continue its claim of children and families.

And then there is Kentucky... in a class by itself, but a class into which all 49 other states are invited. In one state, twenty-five years ago, elected officials, educators and the wider citizenry, prodded by the courts, made the decision to change everything. The Community School Strategy (Family Resource and Youth Service Centers) remains a centerpiece and bedrock feature of the Kentucky school system statewide.

The 1990 Kentucky Education Reform Act provided for every school with more than 20% of its students eligible for free and reduced priced meals (Kentucky's definition of concentrated poverty) to be a Community School. They've funded that commitment ever since. Today 93% of all the students in the state (98% of all the eligible schools) attend a school that embodies the Community School Strategy. And the RESULTS? Kentucky children moved from almost dead last in the nation (48th) to 27th. In only one generation. That's huge.

If Kentucky can do it, every state can do it. The Community School Strategy is not an experiment. Phasing them in statewide over five or six years makes sense providing the time to develop the human capital to staff them competently and the partnerships to nurture them and to build the resource base to sustain them. Piloting them, as if we don't know that they work, makes no sense.

The evidence is compelling to make the Community School Strategy the pivotal element of the next phase of an American democracy that is of the people, for the people and by the people. The Community School Strategy is a solution.

David W. Hornbeck

Former MD State Superintendent of Schools, 1976-1988

Chief Design Architect of KY Family Resource and Youth Service Centers, 1990

Former Philadelphia Superintendent of Schools, 1994-2000

December 2015

APPENDIX A: State Grants Based Policy Summary

Summary of the Community Schools Action for Children Act (CSACA)

CSACA objectives:

1. Ensure high-quality educational opportunities and improved educational outcomes for all students through investment in sustainable community schools.
2. Use the authority of state legislative bodies to support and fund the planning, development, implementation and evaluation of sustainable community schools.
3. Elevate sustainable community schools with engaging and culturally relevant curriculum, wrap around health, social and emotional services, positive discipline practices such as restorative justice, and transformational parent and community engagement, as a comprehensive solution to problems facing public schools, especially in poor communities.
4. Document and evaluate lessons learned from community schools programs to develop a set of best practices to be shared locally, state-wide and nationally.
5. Elevate community schools as an important component of a viable long-term public safety strategy, which reduces and prevents crime through the provision of community resources and better academic outcomes.

Key CSACA provisions: Establishment of state-based grants process to fund planning, implementation, improvement and evaluation of community schools.

- **Grants:** The State Education Agency will provide technical assistance and make renewable five year grants available to schools that express interest and are eligible by virtue of: low performance (lowest 15%) of schools, either Title One or not; graduation rate lower than 60%; determination by State Education Agency that a school is in poverty and would benefit from the community schools strategy. Before grantees can begin using the grants for implementation each school must submit a Community Schools Plan detailing the steps the grantee and partners will take to integrate and monitor community schools programming. Schools may use first year of grant for planning purposes.
- **Eligibility:** Proposals may be submitted on behalf of a school, a local education agency, or a consortium, in which at least one party is a community partner. A request-for-proposal process must be used in awarding grants, and proposals shall be evaluated and scored by the State Education Agency.
- **School Leadership Team:** The school/s must establish a School Leadership team of between 12-15 people compromised of the principal, community partners, parents, teachers, and/or classified employees, at least two community members and two students (if a high school). The School Leadership Team and/or the lead partner agency is responsible for

conducting a baseline analysis of the school and community. Each School Leadership Team, in collaboration with the lead partner agency, shall also have ongoing responsibility for monitoring the development and implementation of community school programming at each school site and shall issue recommendations to school leadership and the Local Education Agency on an annual basis. These reports shall also be made available to the public at the school site and on school and district websites.

- **Resource Coordinator or Program Director:** Each grantee must hire a Community Schools Coordinator to coordinate services at each covered school site and, if proposing to serve multiple covered school sites, must also hire a Program Director to coordinate activities across covered school sites. Community Schools Coordinators and Program Directors will work collaboratively with school leadership and School Leadership Teams to provide services and programs that meet school and community needs.
- **Types of community school programming:** Each applicant must demonstrate how they will move to positive discipline practices, more engaging and relevant curriculum, and transformative parent engagement. Additionally, each applicant will propose to provide a minimum of two of the following types of community school programming at each covered school site during the grant period:
 - Early childhood education.
 - Academic support and enrichment activities.
 - Summer or after-school enrichment and learning experiences.
 - Programs under the Head Start Act, including Early Head Start programs
 - Home visitation services by teachers and other professionals
 - Teacher home visiting.
 - Programs that promote parental involvement and family literacy.
 - Mentoring and other youth development programs, including peer mentoring and conflict mediation.
 - Parent leadership development activities.
 - Parenting education activities.
 - Child care services.
 - Community service and service-learning opportunities.
 - Developmentally appropriate physical education.
 - Programs that provide assistance to students who have been truant, suspended, or expelled.
 - Job training, internship opportunities, and career counseling services.
 - Nutrition services.
 - Primary health and dental care.
 - Mental health counseling services.
 - Adult education, including instruction in English as a second language.
 - Juvenile crime prevention and rehabilitation programs.
 - Specialized instructional support services.
 - Homeless prevention services.
 - Other programming designed to meet school and community needs.

- **Documenting and Developing Best Practices:** On an annual basis each grantee will submit a report describing efforts to integrate community school programming at each covered school site and the impact of such programming on participating children and adults. The reports will include reflections on the process and will document retention rates, academic achievement, local fiscal savings and increased access to services. These reports will be evaluated and the data provided will be aggregated by the State Education Agency. Each year the State Education Agency shall write and publish a report on the impact of community schools statewide. All data featured in the report shall be made available in machine-readable formats and shared with the public. The report should include relevant data and an analysis of cost-savings in areas such as public health, public safety, and public education resulting from investment in community schools.

APPENDIX B: Grants Based Policy Template

A BILL OR AN ACT

An Act to address the needs of students, families and other residents of under-resourced communities through the establishment of sustainable community schools featuring high impact opportunities, collaborations and services. This Act aims to:

- 1. Ensure high-quality educational opportunities and improved educational outcomes for all students through investment in sustainable community schools.*
- 2. Use the authority of state legislative bodies to support and fund the planning, development, implementation and evaluation of sustainable community schools.*
- 3. Elevate sustainable community schools as a comprehensive solution to problems facing public schools, especially in poor communities.*
- 4. Document and evaluate lessons learned from community schools programs to develop a set of best practices to be shared locally, state-wide and nationally.*
- 5. Elevate community schools as an important component of a viable long-term public safety strategy, which reduces and prevents crime through the provision of community resources and better academic outcomes.*

*Be it enacted by the legislature of State [X] that Title [YY] is amended
to include a new Article [123] which reads as follows*

Section 101. Legislative Declarations and Findings

- a)** Too many students in the State—particularly students of color and poor students—attend schools that are persistently low-performing. In order to ensure high-quality educational opportunities and improved educational outcomes for all students, the State must invest in approaches that are supported by research and consistent with best practices in the field.
- b)** This bill builds on more than 20 years of work designing and implementing full service community schools in high poverty neighborhoods. The Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools (AROS) “Sustainable Community Schools” model is supported by research⁹⁶ and consistent with best practices in the field. The AROS Sustainable Community Schools model includes the following elements:
 - Curriculum that is engaging, culturally relevant and challenging. A robust selection of classes and after-school programs in the arts, languages, ethnic studies, AP and honors courses as well as services for example to support English Language Learners and special education students, GED prep and job training.
 - An emphasis on high quality teaching, not on high stakes testing. Assessments are used to help teachers meet the needs of students. Educators have a real voice in professional development.

- Wrap-around supports such as health care, eye care and social and emotional services that support academics. They are available before, during and after school and are provided year-round to the full community. Providers are accountable and culturally competent.
 - Positive discipline practices such as restorative justice and social and emotional learning supports are stressed so students grow and contribute to the school community and beyond. Suspensions and harsh punishments are eliminated or greatly reduced.
 - Authentic parent and community engagement is promoted so the full community actively participates in planning and decision-making. This process recognizes the link between the success of the school and the development of the community as a whole.
- c) Poverty dramatically impacts the education and well-being of children. Studies demonstrate that the results of poverty impact at least the following areas negatively: physical health outcomes; cognitive outcomes; school achievement outcomes; emotional or behavioral outcomes; youth employment; and food security. The school's core mission, to educate a jurisdiction's children, is profoundly dependent on ameliorating the symptoms of poverty as much as possible. Community Schools are an effective strategy to combat some of the consequences of poverty and provide all children with an opportunity to thrive.
- d) Quality and equitable education is a long term public safety strategy. Measures to reduce school dropout, increase access to health and mental health services, and improve employment prospects are proven alternatives to expensive, and often inhumane attempts, to reduce crime via criminalization and incarceration. Studies show that a ten percent increase in the graduation rate leads to a 9.4% reduction in the crime rate. This effect may also be multiplied, as an increase in graduation rate will also lead to an increase in real wages and lower unemployment rates. Moreover, a one-year increase in education level reduces the crime rate by 1.7 percent. A new report from the Alliance for Excellent Education finds that the nation could save as much as \$18.5 billion in annual crime costs if the high school male graduation rate increased by only 5 percentage points.
- e) The Legislature can drive dramatic improvements in public education, public safety and student health and achievement by creating opportunities for local education agencies, schools and community partners to collaborate in the planning and operation of sustainable community schools and by creating pathways for parents, teachers, other school staff and members of the broader community to engage meaningfully in these processes.

Section 102. Definitions

- a) "Applicant" means a school, a local education agency, or a consortium, meaning a group, consisting of one or more schools or a local education agency, and community partners and/or community organizations which can include government agencies that are not LEAs, that propose to work with one another to plan and/or implement community school programming pursuant to Section 104. The "applicant" will serve as the fiscal agent for the consortium.
- b) "Classified staff" means non-supervisory employees of a school, excluding teachers.
- c) "Covered school site" means any school site at which an applicant has proposed or has been funded to provide community school programming under Section 103 or Section 104.
- d) "Community partner" means a community stakeholder including (but not limited to): parents and parent organizations, students and student organizations, early learning programs, the

business community, civil rights organizations, civic engagement organizations, advocacy groups, local civic and community-based organizations, local governmental agencies, the local school employee organizations, and institutions of higher education.

- e) "Community organization" means a non-profit organization that has been in existence for three years or more and has a verifiable track record of working with the community surrounding the covered school site on education and other issues.
- f) "Community school programming" means services, activities and opportunities described under Section 103(g).
- g) "Consortium" means a group, consisting of one or more schools or a local education agency, and community partners and/or community organizations which can include government agencies that are not LEAs, that propose to work with one another to plan and/or implement community school programming pursuant to Section 104.
- h) "Grantee" means an applicant that has been granted a Sustainable Community School Operational Grant under Section 104.
- i) "High-quality childcare or early childhood education programming" means educational programming for preschool-aged children that is grounded in research and consistent with best practices in the field.
- j) "Lead Partner Agency" is the organization that joins the school to manage and lead the work of developing and sustaining the community school.
- k) "Trained health care professional" means a health care practitioner with formal education and clinical training who is credentialed through certification, registration and/or licensure to deliver high quality patient care services for the identification, prevention, and treatment of diseases, disabilities and disorders.
- l) "Relevant experts" means individuals, institutions or organizations with experience in the design, implementation or evaluation of programs related to the topics described in Section 104(b)(1) or Section 104(b)(2).

Section 103. Sustainable Community School Grants Program

- a) The State Education Agency shall make grants available to plan, implement and improve sustainable community schools. A request-for-proposal process must be used in awarding grants, and proposals shall be evaluated and scored on the basis of criteria consistent with this Section. Proposals may be submitted by applicants provided that each covered school site referenced in the proposal is:
 - 1) A Title I school in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring that is among the lowest-achieving fifteen percent of Title I schools in the State; or
 - 2) A secondary school that is eligible for, but does not receive, Title I funds that is among the lowest-achieving fifteen percent of secondary schools in the State; or
 - 3) A high school that has had a graduation rate as defined in 34 CFR 200.19(b) that is less than 60 percent over three years; or
 - 4) Any school the State Education Agency determines is a school in poverty that would benefit from the community school programming.

- b)** The State Education Agency shall establish and enforce a policy prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, national origin, religion, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, housing status or immigration status in the development and administration of community school programming.
- c)** Technical assistance, including but not limited to grant writing and support for the design of non-discriminatory community school programming, must be made available to applicants. Such technical assistance may be provided by the State Education Agency directly or by an organization with demonstrated experience with community schools planning in partnership with community organizations or civic engagement organizations funded by the State Education Agency through a request for proposal process to provide such technical assistance.
- d)** Sustainable Community School Planning Grants may be awarded, pursuant to Section 104, to applicants who have demonstrated an initial need to implement a sustainable community schools program but are in need of additional planning to establish or expand existing programming. Schools unready to implement programming immediately shall use their grant funds for up to one year of planning. At the end of this period the school must submit a Community School Plan, pursuant to Section 104(b)(4)f.
 - 1)** Applicants that have demonstrated readiness to begin operation of a sustainable community school program and submitted a Community School Plan, pursuant to Section 104(b)(4)f, need not use the first year of the grant for planning and will be awarded the Sustainable Community School Operational Grants, pursuant to Section 104. Sustainable Community School Operational Grants shall be no more than X dollars and shall supplement, not supplant, existing services and funds.
- f)** Upon award of a Sustainable Community School Operational Grant, each grantee must establish a Community School Planning and Oversight Team responsible for developing school-specific programming goals, assessing program needs and overseeing the process of implementing expanded programming at each covered site. The Community School Planning and Oversight Team shall meet the following requirements:
 - 1)** The Community School Planning and Oversight Team shall be comprised 12-15 people with no less than 1/3 parents, 1/3 teachers or other education staff and shall include the following stakeholders:
 - a. Principal**
 - 1.** The school principal shall be a voting member of the School Leadership Team. The school principal shall not be the chair of the School Leadership Team.
 - b. Community Partners (including representatives from the lead partner agency).**
 - c. Parents/Residents**
 - 1.** If the school has a relevant civic association or parent-teacher organization, or civic engagement organization (such as Parent Teacher Association chapter), the lead partner agency or Principal should work with those organizations to hold elections to select representatives.
 - d. Teachers**
 - 1.** If an employee organization of teachers has a collective bargaining agreement with the school district, the employee organization shall administer a democratic selection process to choose the teachers on the team, provided that at least one member

of the School Leadership Team be a teacher selected directly by the employee organization. If the employee organization does not have collective bargaining authority representatives will be chosen by a democratic selection process lead by the Lead Agency or Principal.

- b)** Upon selection, the School Leadership Team shall immediately appoint two representatives from the community who are not parents, teachers, classified staff or students to serve as voting members on the School Leadership Team.
- c)** Following the selection of the community representatives, the School Leadership Team shall select a chair to guide the School Leadership Team's work.
- 2)** The School Leadership Team for a high school shall have between 12-15 members and shall meet the requirements of Section 103(e)(1)(a)-(d) except the School Leadership Team shall also include two students elected by students of the school who shall serve as voting members.
- 3)** The School Leadership Team at each grantee's covered school site or sites shall be responsible for overseeing the baseline analyses described in Section 104(b). Each such School Leadership Team shall also have ongoing responsibility for monitoring the development and implementation of sustainable community school operations and programing at each school site and shall issue recommendations to school leadership, the Local Education Agency and community partners on a regular basis and summarized in an annual report. These reports shall also be made available to the public at the school site and on school and district websites.
- g)** Upon award of a Sustainable Community School Operational Grant, each successful applicant shall hire a Resource Coordinator to coordinate services at each covered school site. If proposing to serve three or more sites, the successful applicant shall also hire a Program Director to coordinate activities across covered school sites. Resource Coordinators and Program Directors shall work collaboratively with school leadership and School Leadership Teams to provide the services and programs that meet school and community needs and priorities.
- h)** Each applicant school must demonstrate how they plan to implement:
 - 1.** Positive discipline practices such as restorative justice;
 - 2.** Curricula that is engaging, culturally and socially relevant, and academically rigorous; ,
 - 3.** Wrap-around supports such as physical and mental health services, social services and academic enrichment programs;
 - 4.** An emphasis on high quality teaching, not on high stakes testing; and
 - 5.** Parent and community engagement plans so the full community actively participates in decision-making processes.

In addition, each applicant shall propose to provide a minimum of two of the following types of community school programming at each covered school site during the grant period:

- a.** Early Childhood:
 - 6.** Early childhood education;
 - 7.** Programs under the Head Start Act, including Early Head Start programs;
 - 8.** Child care services;

b. Academic:

1. Academic support and enrichment activities, including expanded learning time;
2. Summer or after-school enrichment and learning experiences;
3. Job training, internship and apprenticeship opportunities, such as building trades apprenticeship and/or industry certification programs; and career counseling services;
4. Programs that provide assistance to students who have been truant, suspended, or expelled;
5. GED programs for youth and community members
6. Specialized instructional support services;
7. College classes; early college high school model

c. Parental Involvement:

1. Programs that promote parental involvement and family literacy, including the Reading First and Early Reading First programs authorized under part B of title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6361 et seq.);
2. Parent leadership development activities;
3. Parenting education activities;

d. Mental and Physical Health:

1. Mentoring and other youth development programs, including peer mentoring and conflict mediation;
2. Youth leadership development opportunities;
3. Juvenile crime prevention and rehabilitation programs;
4. Home visitation services by teachers and other professionals;
5. Developmentally appropriate physical education;
6. Nutrition services;
7. Primary health and dental care;
8. Mental health counseling services;

e. Community Involvement:

1. Service and service-learning opportunities;
2. Adult education, including instruction in English as a second language;
3. Homeless prevention services; affordable housing and mortgage revision services;
4. Community development/organizing training/opportunities; and/or

f. Other programming designed to meet school and community needs and community development opportunities identified through the School Leadership Team analysis described in 103(e)(3).

- i) In addition, each application must include plans for the following:
 - 1) Maintenance of attendance records in all programming components;
 - 2) Maintenance of measurable data showing annual participation and the impact of programming on the participating children and adults;
 - 3) Documentation of meaningful and sustained collaboration between the school and community stakeholders, including local governmental units, civic engagement organizations, businesses, social service providers, cultural organizations, institutions of higher education and health institutions; and
 - 4) Ensuring compliance with the non-discrimination policy described in 103(b).

Section 104. Sustainable Community School Operational Grants

- a) The State Education Agency shall make Sustainable Community Schools Operational Grants of up to X available to implement a sustainable community school's strategy. A request-for-proposal process must be used in awarding grants. Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of criteria consistent with this Section and other factors adopted by the State Education Agency. Grants shall be for a term of five years and shall be renewable at the discretion of the State Education Agency. Grantees can begin implementation immediately or use up to a year of the grant for planning purposes. Before grantees use the grant funding for implementation they must submit a Community School Plan, pursuant to Section 104(b)(4)f.
- b) The application for a grant under this Section must include the following:
 - 1) A baseline analysis of needs at the school site, spearheaded by the lead partner agency and/or School Leadership Team in collaboration with relevant experts as appropriate, which shall include the following elements:
 - a. Identification of challenges facing the school;
 - b. Analysis of the student body; including:
 - 1. Number and percentage of students with disabilities and needs of these students;
 - 2. Number and percentage of students who are English Language Learners and the needs of these students; and
 - 3. Number and percentage of students receiving free or reduced priced lunch and the needs of these students.
 - c. Analysis of enrollment and retention rates for students with disabilities, English Language Learners and students receiving free or reduced priced lunch;
 - d. Analysis of suspension and expulsion data, including the justification for such disciplinary actions and the degree to which particular populations, including but not limited to students of color, students with disabilities, students who are English Language Learners, and students receiving free or reduced price lunch are represented among students subject to such actions;
 - e. Analysis of school achievement data disaggregated by major demographic categories, including but not limited to race/ethnicity, English Language Learner status, disability status, and free or reduce priced lunch receipt;

- f.** Analysis of current parent engagement strategies and their success;
- g.** Evaluation of the need for and availability of wraparound services including; but not limited to:
 - 1.** Mechanisms for meeting students' social, emotional and physical health needs, which may include coordination of existing services as well as the development of new services based on student needs;
 - 2.** Strategies to create safe and secure school environments and improve school climate and discipline, such as implementing a system of positive behavioral supports, and taking additional steps to eliminate bullying.
- h.** Analyze the breadth and depth of community and school support for the school curriculum and the breadth and depth of support for changes to the school curriculum.
- 2)** A baseline analysis of community assets and a strategic plan for utilizing and aligning identified assets. This analysis should include, but not be limited to, a documentation of individuals in the community, faith based organizations, community and neighborhood associations, colleges, hospitals, libraries, businesses and social service agencies who may be able to provide support and resources.
- 3)** A baseline analysis of needs in the community surrounding the school, spearheaded by the lead partner agency and/or the School Leadership Team, in collaboration with relevant experts as appropriate, including but not limited to:
 - 1.** The need for high-quality, full-day childcare and early childhood education programs;
 - 2.** The need for physical and mental health care services for children and adults; and
 - 3.** The need for job training and other adult education programming.
 - 4.** The need for before- and afterschool programs and summer learning opportunities.
- 4)** A Sustainable Community School Plan detailing the steps the grantee and partners will take to integrate the five elements (referenced in 103(g)) to become a sustainable community school at the school site, including plans for ensuring the following:
 - a.** Timely establishment and consistent operation of the School Leadership Team;
 - b.** Maintenance of attendance records in all programming components;
 - c.** Maintenance of measurable data showing annual participation and the impact of programming on the participating children and adults;
 - d.** Documentation of meaningful and sustained collaboration between the school and community stakeholders, including local governmental units, civic engagement organizations, businesses, and social service providers;
 - e.** Professional development, the goal of which is to ensure the integration of instructional and other school staff into the sustainable community school model and of the community school resources into the academic planning for student success.
 - f.** Establishment and maintenance of partnerships with institutions, such as universities, hospitals, museums, corporations, not-for-profit community organizations or other community partners, to further the development and implementation of community school programming;

- g.** Ensuring compliance with the non-discrimination policy described in 103(b);
 - h.** Plan for School Leadership team development.
- c)** Grants under this Section shall be available to support the following activities:
- 1)** Up to a year of grant funds may be used to create a comprehensive community school implementation plan;
 - 2)** Where the grantee has received funding to provide community school programming at multiple covered school sites, selection and compensation of a Program Director to oversee and coordinate programing across multiple covered school sites;
 - 3)** Selection and compensation of a Resource Coordinator at each covered school site;
 - 4)** Ongoing convening and consultation of institutional partners;
 - 5)** General coordination of programs within and between covered school sites;
 - 6)** Professional development for school staff that engages them as full partners in the community school
 - 7)** Ongoing monitoring of the impact of community school on participating children and adults;
 - 8)** Development of alternative funding strategies to guarantee the long-term sustainability of the community school;
 - 9)** Ongoing operation of the School Leadership Team; and
 - 10)** Other activities, both operational and programmatic, which assist in implementation of the plan required under Section 104(d) and.
- d)** At the conclusion of each grant term, each Sustainable Community Schools Operational Grant grantee, spearheaded by the lead partner agency and supported by the School Leadership Team, shall submit to the State Education Agency and make available at the school site and online, a report describing efforts to integrate community school programming at each covered school site and the impact of the transition to a sustainable community school on participating children and adults. This report shall include, but shall not be limited to, discussion of the following:
- 1)** An assessment of the effectiveness of the grantee in implementing the Community School Plan;
 - 2)** Problems encountered in the design and execution of the Community School Plan, including identification of any federal, state, or local statute or regulation impeding program implementation;
 - 3)** The operation of the School Leadership Team and its contribution to successful execution of the Community School Plan;
 - 4)** Recommendations for improving delivery of community school programming to students;
 - 5)** The number and percentage of students receiving community school programming who had not previously been served;
 - 6)** The number and percentage of non-student community members receiving community school programming who had not previously been served;

- 7)** Any improvement in retention among students who receive community school programming;
 - 8)** Any improvement in academic achievement among students who receive community school programming;
 - 9)** Any changes in student's readiness to enter school, active involvement in learning and in their community, health (physical, social and emotional) and student's relationship with the school and community environment;
 - 10)** An accounting of anticipated budget savings, if any, resulting from the implementation of the program;
 - 11)** Any improvements to the frequency or depth of families' involvement with their children's education;
 - 12)** Assessment of community stakeholder satisfaction;
 - 13)** Assessment of institutional partner satisfaction;
 - 14)** The ability, or anticipated ability, of the grantee and partners to continue to provide services in the absence of future funding under this Chapter;
 - 15)** Increases in access to services for students and their families; and
 - 16)** The degree of increased collaboration among participating agencies and private partners.
- e)** Before grantees begin using their operational grant funding the grantee shall provide the State Education Agency with a Sustainable Community School Plan. For schools that opt to use their first year of grant funding to plan community school programming and implementation, the Sustainable Community School Plan shall be submitted at the end of the first year. The Sustainable Community School Plan shall detail the steps the grantee and partners will take to integrate community school programming at the school site and include plans for:
- 1)** Establishing programming that meets the needs indicated by the baseline analyses required under subsections 104(b)(1) and 104(b)(2) above;
 - 2)** Timely establishment and consistent operation of the School Leadership Team;
 - 3)** Maintenance of attendance records in all programming components;
 - 4)** Maintenance of measurable data showing annual participation and the impact of programming on the participating children and adults;
 - 5)** Documentation of meaningful and sustained collaboration between the school and community partners, including local governmental units, civic engagement organizations, businesses, and social service providers;
 - 6)** Establishment and maintenance of partnerships with institutions, such as universities, hospitals, museums, corporations or not-for-profit community organizations, or other community partners, to further the development and implementation of community school programming;
 - 7)** Establishment and enforcement of a non-discrimination policy ensuring that the community school does not condition participation upon race, ethnic origin, religion, sex, or disability;

- 8) Annual evaluation and public reporting on the impact of programming on the participating children and adults; and
- 9) Ensuring the continuation of the sustainable community school after the grant period ends.

Section 105. Program Evaluation

- a) Reports submitted by grantees pursuant to Section 104(d) shall be evaluated by the State Education Agency with respect to criteria developed by the State Education Agency. These criteria shall, include, but not be limited to the following:
 - 1) The effectiveness of the school, Local Education Agency or consortium in implementing the Sustainable Community School Plan including the degree to which the grantee navigated difficulties encountered in the design and operation of the Sustainable Community School Plan, including identification of any federal, state, or local statute or regulation impeding program implementation;
 - 2) The extent to which the recommendations of the School Leadership Committee are reflected in the Sustainable Community School Plan and the degree to which the School Leadership Committee has been engaged in discussion and decision-making;
 - 3) The extent to which the project has yielded lessons about ways to improve delivery of community school programming to students;
 - 4) The degree to which there has been an increase in the number or percentage of students and non-students receiving community school programming;
 - 5) The degree to which there has been an improvement in retention of students and improvement in academic achievement among students receiving community school programming;
 - 6) Local budget savings, if any, resulting from the implementation of the program;
 - 7) The degree of community stakeholder and institutional partner engagement;
 - 8) Increases in access to services for students and their families; and
 - 9) The degree of increased collaboration among participating agencies and private partners.
- b) No later than August 30th of the year following the first full year of operation of the Sustainable Community School Grants Program and each year thereafter, the State Education Agency shall report to the Governor and the Legislature on the impact of the Sustainable Community Schools strategy. This report shall be made publicly available at covered school sites and on the State Education Agency website. All data featured in the report shall be made available in machine-readable formats.
- c) This report shall draw upon the following data sources to provide analysis of the Sustainable Community Schools Program's success in addressing the issues set forth in Section 101, the impact of funded initiatives and recommendations for enhancing the Program's effectiveness:
 - 1) Aggregate data from reports required under Section 105(a)
 - 2) Aggregate data from grantee reports required under Section 104(e)

- 3)** Interviews and other consultation with students, parents, community members, Program Directors and Resource Coordinators; and
- 4)** Consultation with School Leadership Teams.
- d)** This report shall include analysis and recommendations related to the potential to replicate the best practices of grantees in non-grantee public school.
- e)** This report shall include a calculation or estimate of cost-savings, including budget savings at the state, local and federal levels in areas such as public health, public safety and public education resulting from investment in community school programming.

APPENDIX C: State Funding Formula Based Policy Summary

Summary of the Community Schools Action for Children Act (CSACA) Funding Formula Version

CSACA objectives:

1. Ensure high-quality educational opportunities and improved educational outcomes for all students through investment in sustainable community schools.
2. Ensure that State education funding incorporates provisions to adequately fund the planning, development, implementation and evaluation of sustainable community schools throughout the State.
3. Elevate sustainable community schools as a comprehensive solution to problems facing public schools, especially in poor communities.
4. Elevate community schools as an important component of a viable long-term public safety strategy, which reduces and prevents crime through the provision of community resources and better academic outcomes.
5. Document and evaluate lessons learned from community schools programs to develop a set of best practices to be shared locally, state-wide and nationally.
6. Improve outcomes for schools serving communities with a significant number of low income students.

Key CSACA provisions: This bill will require that the State Education Agency provide adequate funding to ensure that all schools in which 40% or more of its students are eligible for free or reduced lunch are transformed into sustainable community schools.

- **Funding:** Sustainable Community School Funds will be provided to all schools in the State in which 40% or more of its students are eligible for free and reduced lunch. The State Education Agency shall provide adequate funding to all eligible schools to ensure that they have adequate funding to support: a Community School Site Coordinator; an Out of School Time Program that will support at least one fourth of the students in the schools; a Leadership Council and Management Support Entity; and funds to support a yearlong planning process.
- **School Leadership Team:** The school/s must establish a School Leadership team of between 12-15 people comprised of the principal, community partners, parents, teachers, and/or classified employees, at least two community members and two students (if a high school). The School Leadership Team and/or the lead partner agency is responsible for conducting a baseline analysis of the school and community. Each School Leadership Team, in collaboration with the lead partner agency, shall also have ongoing responsibility for monitoring

the development and implementation of community school programming at each school site and shall issue recommendations to school leadership and the Local Education Agency on an annual basis. These reports shall also be made available to the public at the school site and on school and district websites.

- **Resource Coordinator or Program Director:** Each grantee must hire a Resource Coordinator to coordinate services at each covered school site and, if proposing to serve multiple covered school sites, must also hire a Program Director to coordinate activities across covered school sites. Resource Coordinators and Program Directors will work collaboratively with school leadership and School Leadership Teams to provide services and programs that meet school and community needs.
- **Types of community school programming:** Each applicant must demonstrate how they will move to positive discipline practices, more engaging and relevant curriculum, and transformative parent engagement. Additionally, each applicant will propose to provide a minimum of two of the following types of community school programming at each covered school site during the grant period:
 - Early childhood education.
 - Academic support and enrichment activities.
 - Summer or after-school enrichment and learning experiences.
 - Programs under the Head Start Act, including Early Head Start programs
 - Home visitation services by teachers and other professionals
 - Teacher home visiting.
 - Programs that promote parental involvement and family literacy.
 - Mentoring and other youth development programs, including peer mentoring and conflict mediation.
 - Parent leadership development activities.
 - Parenting education activities.
 - Child care services.
 - Community service and service-learning opportunities.
 - Developmentally appropriate physical education.
 - Programs that provide assistance to students who have been truant, suspended, or expelled.
 - Job training, internship opportunities, and career counseling services.
 - Nutrition services.
 - Primary health and dental care.
 - Mental health counseling services.
 - Adult education, including instruction in English as a second language.
 - Juvenile crime prevention and rehabilitation programs.
 - Specialized instructional support services.
 - Homeless prevention services.
 - Other programming designed to meet school and community needs.
- **Documenting and Developing Best Practices:** Each district receiving funding will submit a report after five years of operation describing efforts to integrate community school programming at each covered school site and the impact of such programming on participating

children and adults. The reports will include reflections on the process and will document retention rates, academic achievement, local fiscal savings and increased access to services. These reports will be evaluated and the data provided will be aggregated by the State Education Agency and shall be published.

APPENDIX D: State Funding Formula Based Policy Template

A BILL OR AN ACT

An Act to address the needs of students, families and other residents of under-resourced communities through the establishment of sustainable community schools featuring high impact opportunities, collaborations and services. This Act aims to:

1. *Ensure high-quality educational opportunities and improved educational outcomes for all students through investment in sustainable community schools.*
2. *Ensure that State education funding incorporates provisions to adequately fund the planning, development, implementation and evaluation of sustainable community schools throughout the State.*
3. *Elevate sustainable community schools as a comprehensive solution to problems facing public schools, especially in poor communities.*
4. *Elevate community schools as an important component of a viable long-term public safety strategy, which reduces and prevents crime through the provision of community resources and better academic outcomes.*
5. *Document and evaluate lessons learned from community schools programs to develop a set of best practices to be shared locally, state-wide and nationally.*
6. *Improve outcomes for schools serving communities with a significant number of low income students.*

Be it enacted by the legislature of State [X] that Title [YY] is amended to include a new Article [123] which reads as follows

Section 101. Legislative Declarations and Findings

- a) Too many students in the State—particularly students of color and poor students—attend schools that are persistently low-performing. In order to ensure high-quality educational opportunities and improved educational outcomes for all students, the State must invest in approaches that are supported by research and consistent with best practices in the field.
- b) This bill builds on more than 20 years of work designing and implementing full service community schools in high poverty neighborhoods. The Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools

(AROS) "Sustainable Community Schools" model is supported by research and consistent with best practices in the field. The AROS Sustainable Community Schools model includes the following elements:

- Curriculum that is engaging, culturally relevant and challenging. A robust selection of classes and after-school programs in the arts, languages, ethnic studies, AP and honors courses as well as services for example to support English Language Learners and special education students, GED prep and job training.
 - An emphasis on high quality teaching, not on high stakes testing. Assessments are used to help teachers meet the needs of students. Educators have a real voice in professional development.
 - Wrap-around supports such as health care, eye care and social and emotional services that support academics. They are available before, during and after school and are provided year-round to the full community. Providers are accountable and culturally competent.
 - Positive discipline practices such as restorative justice and social and emotional learning supports are stressed so students grow and contribute to the school community and beyond. Suspensions and harsh punishments are eliminated or greatly reduced.
 - Transformational parent and community engagement is promoted so the full community actively participates in planning and decision-making. This process recognizes the link between the success of the school and the development of the community as a whole.
- c) Poverty dramatically impacts the education and well-being of children. Studies demonstrate that the results of poverty impact at least the following areas negatively: physical health outcomes; cognitive outcomes; school achievement outcomes; emotional or behavioral outcomes; youth employment; and food security. The school's core mission, to educate a jurisdiction's children, is profoundly dependent on ameliorating the symptoms of poverty as much as possible. Community Schools are an effective strategy to combat some of the consequences of poverty and provide all children with an opportunity to thrive.
- d) Quality and equitable education is a long term public safety strategy. Measures to reduce school dropout, increase access to health and mental health services, and improve employment prospects are proven alternatives to expensive, and often inhumane attempts, to reduce crime via criminalization and incarceration. Studies show that a ten percent increase in the graduation rate leads to a 9.4% reduction in the crime rate. This effect may also be multiplied, as an increase in graduation rate will also lead to an increase in real wages and lower unemployment rates. Moreover, a one-year increase in education level reduces the crime rate by 1.7 percent. A new report from the Alliance for Excellent Education finds that the nation could save as much as \$18.5 billion in annual crime costs if the high school male graduation rate increased by only 5 percentage points.
- e) The Legislature can drive dramatic improvements in public education, student health, student achievement and community safety by creating opportunities for local education agencies, schools and community partners to collaborate in the planning and operation of sustainable community schools and by creating pathways for parents, teachers, other school staff and members of the broader community to engage meaningfully in these processes.
- f) In order to ensure that these benefits impact all students throughout the State, the Legislature must update the state formula for funding public education to incorporate provisions that ensure adequate funding for the transformation of all eligible public schools into community schools.

Section 102. Definitions

- a) "Classified staff" means non-supervisory employees of a school, excluding teachers.
- b) "Covered school site" means any school site at which an eligible school has been funded to provide community school programming under Section 103 or Section 104.
- c) "Community partner" means a community stakeholder including (but not limited to): parents and parent organizations, students and student organizations, early learning programs, the business community, civil rights organizations, civic engagement organizations, advocacy groups, local civic and community-based organizations, local governmental agencies, the local school employee organizations, and institutions of higher education.
- d) "Community organization" means a non-profit organization that has been in existence for three years or more and has a verifiable track record of working with the community surrounding the covered school site on education and other issues.
- e) "Community school programming" means services, activities and opportunities described under Section 103(g).
- f) "Consortium" means a group, consisting of one or more schools or a local education agency, and community partners and/or community organizations which can include government agencies that are not LEAs, that propose to work with one another to plan and/or implement community school programming pursuant to Section 104.
- g) "High-quality childcare or early childhood education programming" means educational programming for preschool-aged children that is grounded in research and consistent with best practices in the field.
- h) "Lead Partner Agency" is the organization that joins the school to manage and lead the work of developing and sustaining the community school.
- i) "Trained health care professional" means a health care practitioner with formal education and clinical training who is credentialed through certification, registration and/or licensure to deliver high quality patient care services for the identification, prevention, and treatment of diseases, disabilities and disorders.
- j) "Relevant experts" means individuals, institutions or organizations with experience in the design, implementation or evaluation of programs related to the topics described in this legislation.

Section 103. Sustainable Community School Program Funding

- a) The State Education Agency shall provide adequate funding, defined in Section 104(b) and 104(d), to ensure that over the course of no more than X years all schools in which 40% or more of its students are eligible for free or reduced lunch are transformed into sustainable community schools.
- b) The State Education Agency shall establish and enforce a policy prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, national origin, religion, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, housing status or immigration status in the development and administration of community school programming.

- c) Sustainable Community School Funds will be provided within the next X years, pursuant to Section 104, to all schools in the State in which 40% or more of its students are eligible for free and reduced lunch. Each new projected Community School shall engage in a planning year the year before its projected implementation year and submit a Community School Plan, pursuant to Section 104(g), to the State Education Agency and to the Community-wide leadership Council.
- d) Eligible schools that have demonstrated readiness to begin operation and submitted a Community School Plan, pursuant to Section 104(g), will receive adequate funding, as defined in Section 104(d). Sustainable Community School Operational Funds shall supplement, not supplant, existing services and funds.
- e) Upon receiving Sustainable Community School Operational Funds, each eligible school must establish a Community School Planning and Oversight Team responsible for developing school-specific programming goals, assessing program needs and overseeing the process of implementing expanded programming at each covered site. The Community School Planning and Oversight Team shall meet the following requirements:
 - 1) The Community School Planning and Oversight Team for a middle or elementary school shall have between 12-15 members. The School Leadership Team shall be comprised of no less than 1/3 parents, 1/3 teachers or other school staff and shall include the following stakeholders:
 - a. Principal
 - 1. The school principal shall be a voting member of the School Leadership Team. The school principal shall not be the chair of the School Leadership Team.
 - b. Community Partners (including representatives from the lead partner agency).
 - c. Parents/Residents
 - 1. If the school has a relevant civic association or parent-teacher organization, or civic engagement organization (such as Parent Teacher Association chapter), the lead partner agency or Principal should work with those organizations to hold elections to select representatives.
 - d. Teachers
 - 1. If an employee organization of teachers has a collective bargaining agreement with the school district, the employee organization shall administer a democratic selection process to choose the teachers on the team, provided that at least one member of the School Leadership Team be a teacher selected directly by the employee organization. If the employee organization does not have collective bargaining authority representatives will be chosen by a democratic selection process lead by the Lead Agency or Principal.
 - e. Upon selection, the School Leadership Team shall immediately appoint two representatives from the community who are not parents, teachers, classified staff or students to serve as voting members on the School Leadership Team.
 - f. Following the selection of the community representatives, the School Leadership Team shall select a chair to guide the School Leadership Team's work.

- 2) The School Leadership Team for a high school shall have between 12-15 members and shall meet the requirements of Section 103(e)(1)(a)-(d) except the School Leadership Team shall also include two students elected by students of the school who shall serve as voting members.
- 3) The School Leadership Team at each eligible covered school site or sites shall be responsible for overseeing the baseline analyses described in Section 104(g). Each such School Leadership Team shall also have ongoing responsibility for monitoring the development and implementation of sustainable community school operations and programming at each school site and shall issue recommendations to school leadership, the Local Education Agency and community partners on a regular basis and summarized in an annual report. These reports shall also be made available to the public at the school site and on school and district websites.
- f) Upon receiving Sustainable Community School Operational Funds, each eligible district shall hire a Resource Coordinator to coordinate services at each covered school site. If proposing to serve three or more sites, the eligible district shall also hire a Program Director to coordinate activities across covered school sites. Resource Coordinators and Program Directors shall work collaboratively with school leadership and School Leadership Teams to provide the services and programs that meet school and community needs and priorities.
- g) Each eligible school must demonstrate how they plan to implement:
 1. Positive discipline practices such as restorative justice;
 2. Curricula that is engaging, culturally and socially relevant, and academically rigorous; ,
 3. Wrap-around supports such as physical and mental health services, social services and academic enrichment programs;
 4. An emphasis on high quality teaching, not on high stakes testing; and
 5. Parent and community engagement plans so the full community actively participates in decision-making processes.
- h) In addition, each eligible school shall propose to provide a minimum of two of the following types of community school programming at each covered school site:
 - 1) Early Childhood:
 - a. Early childhood education;
 - b. Programs under the Head Start Act, including Early Head Start programs;
 - c. Child care services;
 - 2) Academic:
 - a. Academic support and enrichment activities, including expanded learning time;
 - b. Summer or after-school enrichment and learning experiences;
 - c. Job training, internship and apprenticeship opportunities, such as building trades apprenticeship and/or industry certification programs; and career counseling services;
 - d. Programs that provide assistance to students who have been truant, suspended, or expelled;
 - e. GED programs for youth and community members

- f. Specialized instructional support services;
- g. College classes; early college high school model
- 3) Parental Involvement:
 - a. Programs that promote parental involvement and family literacy, ;
 - b. Parent leadership development activities;
 - c. Parenting education activities;
- 4) Mental and Physical Health:
 - a. Mentoring and other youth development programs, including peer mentoring and conflict mediation;
 - b. Youth leadership development opportunities;
 - c. Juvenile crime prevention and rehabilitation programs;
 - d. Home visitation services by teachers and other professionals;
 - e. Developmentally appropriate physical education;
 - f. Nutrition services;
 - g. Primary health and dental care;
 - h. Mental health counseling services;
- 5) Community Involvement:
 - a. Service and service-learning opportunities;
 - b. Adult education, including instruction in English as a second language;
 - c. Homeless prevention services; affordable housing and mortgage revision services;
 - d. Community development/organizing training/opportunities; and/or
- 6) Other programming designed to meet school and community needs and community development opportunities identified through the School Leadership Team analysis described in 103(e)(3).

Section 104. Funding for Sustainable Community Schools

- a) The State Education Agency shall make Sustainable Community Schools Operational Funds of no less than X available to implement a state-wide sustainable community school's strategy at all schools in the state in which 40% or more of its students are eligible for free and reduced lunch.
- b) Each new projected Community School shall engage in a planning year the year before its projected implementation year and submit its Community Schools Plan to the Community-wide leadership Council no later than February 1. The Council shall inform the school of its approval or recommendations for improvement no later than May 1. Planning funds shall be appropriated in an amount sufficient to cover the enumerated projected costs for both planning and implementation.
- c) Before eligible schools receive funding for implementation they must submit a Community School Plan, pursuant to Section 104(g)

- d)** The State Education Agency shall provide adequate funding to all eligible schools within the next X years to ensure that all eligible schools have the funding required to be a sustainable community school. The funds shall be adequate to support:
- 1)** A Community School Site Coordinator;
 - a.** The State Agency shall provide the salary for the Community Site Coordinator. The salary will be based on the average pay for a Vice-Principal and will include funding for an average benefit package plus provision for supports such as office equipment, emergency funds and funds available to take advantage of special opportunities for services and supports for children and families. Five or ten percent of the amount that is included for every Community School is recommended.
 - 2)** An Out of School Time Program that will support at least one fourth of the students in the schools
 - a.** The State Agency should provide: elementary and middle schools with at least \$24/ per day per slot during the school year and \$32/day in the summer; and teen/high school programs at least \$32/day/slot during the school year and \$44/day/slot in the summer.
 - 3)** A Leadership Council and Management Support Entity:
 - a.** Each eligible school should receive \$20,000 per school, including costs for staffing, professional development and evaluation.
 - 4)** Planning funds shall be appropriated each year in an amount sufficient to cover the enumerated projected costs for both planning and implementation. Each new projected Community School shall engage in a planning year the year before its projected implementation year and submit its proposed plan of implementation to the Community-wide leadership Council no later than February 1. The Council shall inform the school of its approval or recommendations for improvement no later than May 1.
- e)** The state-local wealth-equalization share shall be calculated and be identical to that of the state's education adequacy/equity funding formula. Any current funds being spent on Community Schools shall count toward any required local share. All funds generated shall, in fact, be used for Community Schools.
- f)** Implementation should occur state-wide for all eligible schools within X years. The rate of implementation shall depend on:
- 1)** How many schools meet the 40% standard of concentrated poverty (or whatever standard a given state determines is appropriate);
 - 2)** An assessment of capacity to deliver each new cohort of Community Schools at a quality level (staffing, needs assessment, etc);
 - 3)** Available additional funding.
- g)** In order to receive Sustainable Community Schools Operational Funds eligible schools must complete a Community School Plan that includes:
- 1)** A baseline analysis of needs at the school site, spearheaded by the lead partner agency and/or School Leadership Team in collaboration with relevant experts as appropriate, which shall include the following elements:
 - a.** Identification of challenges facing the school;

- b.** Analysis of the student body; including:
 - 1.** Number and percentage of students with disabilities and needs of these students;
 - 2.** Number and percentage of students who are English Language Learners and the needs of these students; and
 - 3.** Number and percentage of students receiving free or reduced priced lunch and the needs of these students.
- c.** Analysis of enrollment and retention rates for students with disabilities, English Language Learners and students receiving free or reduced priced lunch;
- d.** Analysis of suspension and expulsion data, including the justification for such disciplinary actions and the degree to which particular populations, including but not limited to students of color, students with disabilities, students who are English Language Learners, and students receiving free or reduced price lunch are represented among students subject to such actions;
- e.** Analysis of school achievement data disaggregated by major demographic categories, including but not limited to race/ethnicity, English Language Learner status, disability status, and free or reduce priced lunch receipt;
- f.** Analysis of current parent engagement strategies and their success;
- g.** Evaluation of the need for and availability of wraparound services including; but not limited to:
 - 1.** Mechanisms for meeting students' social, emotional and physical health needs, which may include coordination of existing services as well as the development of new services based on student needs;
 - 2.** Strategies to create safe and secure school environments and improve school climate and discipline, such as implementing a system of positive behavioral supports, and taking additional steps to eliminate bullying.
- h.** Analyze the breadth and depth of community and school support for the school curriculum and the breadth and depth of support for changes to the school curriculum.
- 2)** A baseline analysis of community assets and a strategic plan for utilizing and aligning identified assets. This analysis should include, but not be limited to, a documentation of individuals in the community, faith based organizations, community and neighborhood associations, colleges, hospitals, libraries, businesses and social service agencies who may be able to provide support and resources.
- 3)** A baseline analysis of needs in the community surrounding the school, spearheaded by the lead partner agency and/or the School Leadership Team, in collaboration with relevant experts as appropriate, including but not limited to:
 - 1.** The need for high-quality, full-day childcare and early childhood education programs;
 - 2.** The need for physical and mental health care services for children and adults; and
 - 3.** The need for job training and other adult education programming.
 - 4.** The need for before- and afterschool programs and summer learning opportunities.

- 4)** The Community Schools Plan must also include a clear articulation of how each school will implement:
- a.** Positive discipline practices such as restorative justice;
 - b.** Curricula that is engaging, culturally and socially relevant, and academically rigorous; ,
 - c.** Wrap-around supports such as physical and mental health services, social services and academic enrichment programs;
 - d.** An emphasis on high quality teaching, not on high stakes testing; and
 - e.** Parent and community engagement plans so the full community actively participates in decision-making processes.
- 5)** The Community Schools Plan must also detail the steps that will be taken to ensure the following:
- a.** Timely establishment and consistent operation of the School Leadership Team;
 - b.** Maintenance of attendance records in all programming components;
 - c.** Maintenance of measurable data showing annual participation and the impact of programming on the participating children and adults;
 - d.** Documentation of meaningful and sustained collaboration between the school and community stakeholders, including local governmental units, civic engagement organizations, businesses, and social service providers;
 - e.** Professional development, the goal of which is to ensure the integration of instructional and other school staff into the sustainable community school model and of the community school resources into the academic planning for student success.
 - f.** Establishment and maintenance of partnerships with institutions, such as universities, hospitals, museums, corporations, not-for-profit community organizations or other community partners, to further the development and implementation of community school programming;
 - g.** Ensuring compliance with the non-discrimination policy described in 103(b);
 - h.** Plan for School Leadership team development.
- h)** Sustainable Community Schools Operational Funds shall be available to support the following activities:
- 1)** The development comprehensive community school implementation plan;
 - 2)** Where the districts have received funding to provide community school programming at multiple covered school sites, selection and compensation of a Program Director to oversee and coordinate programing across multiple covered school sites;
 - 3)** Selection and compensation of a Resource Coordinator at each covered school site;
 - 4)** Ongoing convening and consultation of institutional partners;
 - 5)** General coordination of programs within and between covered school sites;
 - 6)** Professional development for school staff that engages them as full partners in the community school

- 7)** Ongoing monitoring of the impact of community school on participating children and adults;
 - 8)** Development of alternative funding strategies to guarantee the long-term sustainability of the community school;
 - 9)** Ongoing operation of the School Leadership Team; and
 - 10)** Other activities, both operational and programmatic, which assist in implementation of the plan required under Section 104(d) and.
- i)** Annual report: At the conclusion of the first five years, each eligible school district receiving Sustainable Community Schools Operational Funds, spearheaded by the lead partner agency and supported by the School Leadership Team, shall submit to the State Education Agency and make available at the school site and online, a report describing efforts to integrate community school programming at each covered school site and the impact of the transition to a sustainable community school on participating children and adults. This report shall include, but shall not be limited to, discussion of the following:
- 1)** An assessment of the effectiveness of the eligible school in implementing the Community School Plan;
 - 2)** Problems encountered in the design and execution of the Community School Plan, including identification of any federal, state, or local statute or regulation impeding program implementation;
 - 3)** The operation of the School Leadership Team and its contribution to successful execution of the Community School Plan;
 - 4)** Recommendations for improving delivery of community school programming to students;
 - 5)** The number and percentage of students receiving community school programming who had not previously been served;
 - 6)** The number and percentage of non-student community members receiving community school programming who had not previously been served;
 - 7)** Any improvement in retention among students who receive community school programming;
 - 8)** Any improvement in academic achievement among students who receive community school programming;
 - 9)** Any changes in student's readiness to enter school, active involvement in learning and in their community, health (physical, social and emotional) and student's relationship with the school and community environment;
 - 10)** An accounting of anticipated budget savings, if any, resulting from the implementation of the program;
 - 11)** Any improvements to the frequency or depth of families' involvement with their children's education;
 - 12)** Assessment of community stakeholder satisfaction;
 - 13)** Assessment of institutional partner satisfaction;

- 14) The ability, or anticipated ability, of the eligible school and partners to continue to provide services in the absence of future funding under this Chapter;
- 15) Increases in access to services for students and their families; and
- 16) The degree of increased collaboration among participating agencies and private partners.

Section 105. Program Evaluation

- a) Reports submitted by eligible schools pursuant to Section 104(i) shall be evaluated by the State Education Agency with respect to criteria developed by the State Education Agency. These criteria shall, include, but not be limited to the following:
 - 1) The effectiveness of the school, Local Education Agency or consortium in implementing the Sustainable Community School Plan including the degree to which the grantee navigated difficulties encountered in the design and operation of the Sustainable Community School Plan, including identification of any federal, state, or local statute or regulation impeding program implementation;
 - 2) The extent to which the recommendations of the School Leadership Committee are reflected in the Sustainable Community School Plan and the degree to which the School Leadership Committee has been engaged in discussion and decision-making;
 - 3) The extent to which the project has yielded lessons about ways to improve delivery of community school programming to students;
 - 4) The degree to which there has been an increase in the number or percentage of students and non-students receiving community school programming;
 - 5) The degree to which there has been an improvement in retention of students and improvement in academic achievement among students receiving community school programming;
 - 6) Local budget savings, if any, resulting from the implementation of the program;
 - 7) The degree of community stakeholder and institutional partner engagement;
 - 8) Increases in access to services for students and their families; and
 - 9) The degree of increased collaboration among participating agencies and private partners.
- b) No later than August 30th of the year following the first full year of operation of the Sustainable Community School Funds Program and each year thereafter, the State Education Agency shall report to the Governor and the Legislature on the impact of the Sustainable Community Schools strategy. This report shall be made publicly available at covered school sites and on the State Education Agency website. All data featured in the report shall be made available in machine-readable formats.
- c) This report shall draw upon the following data sources to provide analysis of the Sustainable Community Schools Program's success in addressing the issues set forth in Section 101, the impact of funded initiatives and recommendations for enhancing the Program's effectiveness:
 - 1) Aggregate data from reports required under Section 105(a)
 - 2) Aggregate data from grantee reports required under Section 104(g)(1)(c),(d) and (e)

- 3)** Interviews and other consultation with students, parents, community members, Program Directors and Resource Coordinators; and
- 4)** Consultation with School Leadership Teams.
- d)** This report shall include analysis and recommendations related to the potential to replicate the best practices of eligible schools in non-grantee public school.
- e)** This report shall include a calculation or estimate of cost-savings, including budget savings at the state, local and federal levels in areas such as public health, public safety and public education resulting from investment in community school programming.

APPENDIX E: Board of Education Policy Template

Draft _____ School District Community Schools Policy

_____ School District Community Schools Policy

The _____ School District is committed to bringing the assets of _____'s communities, city agencies and non-profits to bear in the creation and support of Community Schools that build Partnerships to expand opportunities and lower barriers to learning that impede academic achievement of our children. When coupled with a high-quality core instructional program, Community Schools are a vehicle for school transformation that can help close the persistent and destructive opportunity gaps in our schools and reverse the growing inequality in our society.

The _____ definition of a Community School is:

- A place and a set of strategic partnerships among the school and other community resources that promote student achievement, positive conditions for learning and the well-being of families and communities;
- Maintains a core focus on children, while recognizing that children grow up in families and that families are integral parts of communities;
- Builds an integrated strategy that enhances academics and student well-being through enrichment, health and social supports, family engagement, and youth and community development;
- Is anchored by the work of a full-time Community School Coordinator and expanded hours; and
- Provides a base for parent and community advocacy on behalf of their children, school and community.

This integrated strategy will lead to student success, strong families and healthy communities.

Although the design of each Community School must be tailored to the specific needs and assets of its children, families and communities, every Community School must include the following:

- School leadership that is committed to the Community School model: to seeing it as a strategy, parallel to the school's instructional program, including the Community School Coordinator as integral to its Leadership Team;
- A School Family Council that includes parents, community partners, school staff and youth in substantively and regular advising the Principal and school leadership team about all school

matters that impact the well-being of the school's children, including but not limited to: the school's budget, non-academic, program components and the use of the school building beyond regular school hours;

- A full-time Community School Coordinator who partners with the Principal and serves, serves as an essential member of the school's Leadership Team and whose role it is to develop, coordinate, integrate and align programs and partnerships that serve students, families, and the community;
- A Lead Partner community-based organization and other partners that are deeply invested in improving student outcomes and integrated into decision-making, coordination and implementation of the Community School programs;
- A services, supports, and advocacy program informed by a comprehensive needs and assets assessment in the school and in the community. Outcomes, strategies, location of responsibility, and timelines re: accomplishments shall be reflected in a three-year, annually updated, rolling Strategic Action Plan.
- The services, supports and advocacy program shall include: a) an afterschool program for a significant number of the students, including those most in need such as those students whose history includes chronic absenteeism, and b) an evidence-based systematic school climate and safety program such as Restorative Practices and such others that respond to the identified needs of children, families, and the community;
- Ongoing professional development for school leadership, all staff, parents, and partners designed to improve the outcomes for the Community Schools Strategic Action Plan that include a positive and supportive school climate, effective partnerships, and transformative parent and community engagement;
- Dedicated space in the school for the Community School Coordinator, partners, and parents;
- Systems accessible to the Community School Coordinator to collect, analyze, and respond to real-time data on student and school indicators such as attendance, achievement, and program participation, as well as workflows for scheduling, programming, and other essential functions that support student success;
- Evaluation of the effectiveness of the Community School Strategy shall be part of the routine assessment of the school's effectiveness as a whole;
- Secure, sustainable funding to cover the cost of the Community School Coordinator, the afterschool program and the school climate and safety program in every school serving a student population that is at least 40% eligible for free and reduced price meals (or such other definition of concentrated poverty determined by the state) in making Community Schools an essential element of any revision to the state funding formula.

_____ will dedicate \$ _____ in 201____ to create _____ number of new Community Schools.

The Superintendent shall be responsible for preparing administrative guidelines necessary to implement this policy.

APPENDIX F: City Council Policy Template

RESOLUTION _____

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF _____

AUTHORIZING SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITY
SCHOOLS IN _____

WHEREAS the Every Student Succeeds Act supports nationally significant programs to improve the quality of elementary and secondary education at the state and local levels and help all children meet challenging academic content and academic achievement standards and

WHEREAS Community Schools is a school reform strategy aimed at closing the achievement gap to strengthen the abilities of our students families and community; Community Schools look to define attain and maintain the quality of life that contributes to healthy homes and a community in which all learn and are productive members

WHEREAS Community Schools encourage coordination of academic social and health services through partnerships among 1 public schools 2 local education agencies LEAs 3 city and county government 4 community-based and faith-based organizations and 5 other public and private entities and

WHEREAS Community Schools provide comprehensive academic social and health services for students, students' family members and community members that will result in improved educational outcomes for children and youth and

WHEREAS these services may include high quality early learning programs and service remedial education aligned with academic supports and enrichment activities providing students with a comprehensive academic program family engagement including parental involvement parent leadership family literacy and parent education programs mentoring and youth development programs community service and service learning opportunities programs that provide assistance to students who have been chronically absent truant suspended or expelled job training and career counseling services healthy eating active living primary health mental health and dental care activities that improve access to and use of social service programs and programs that promote family financial stability and adult education including instruction of adults in English as a second language and

WHEREAS there is an initiative to establish Community Schools in _____ places where school city and community stakeholders come together to provide diverse mutually aligned resources to assist the academic social civic and health needs and achievement for our students their families and the community and

WHEREAS _____ School, a Community School that has been developed with _____ serves as a model for development of this approach

WHEREAS the city of _____ works to develop strong partnerships with the _____ School District, _____ city/county services public and private entities and the community to implement a Community School approach and

WHEREAS the City Manager and Youth Service Program Manager will interface with the initiative to share information and update community stakeholders on the city efforts to build and develop a new Youth Futures Task Force YFTF to coordinate with various community agencies and systems to work together to address the school to prison pipeline as well as public safety in _____ by creating pathways for safe and healthy futures

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the _____ City Council authorizes the following:

1. Amend the _____ City Council Priority Work Plan to include a Community School Initiative in all _____ schools
2. Joining the National Coalition for Community School Initiative as a school reform strategy and authorizes support for Full Service Community School initiative for _____, _____, _____, _____ schools
3. Authorizes the Youth Services Ad Hoc Subcommittee members to coordinate with community stakeholders at periodic meetings to support the _____ Full Service Community School initiative

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the foregoing recitations are true and correct and are included herein by reference as findings

ADOPTED this _____ by the following vote to wit

APPENDIX G: Community Schools State Funding Opportunities and Examples

- 1) Discretionary grant funding:** This funding would occur as competitive grants that may or may not be authorized through accompanying legislation. While they are not strictly need-based, criteria could preference the highest-need schools according to free-and reduced-price lunch and other indicators (percent of ELL students, students who are homeless, students in foster care, etc.) Matching grants could also be required where local officials invest school (Title I, 21st Century Community Learning Center funding) or community dollars or redirected resources.

Current examples:

- Maine's Act to Create Community Schools (LD 956) passed in 2015 funds a pilot grant for five Community Schools as part of a five-year pilot project beginning in the 2016–2017 school year.
- Minnesota's SF 1206, passed in 2015, appropriates \$500,000 to fund a pilot grant for new Community Schools.
- New York State Community Schools Grant Initiative, 2013: \$15 million to 30 schools over 3 years. (Maximum award of \$500,000 per school for each of three years)
- D.C. Community Schools Incentive Initiative, 2013–2105: \$1.4 million to 7 grantees with 13 schools (roughly half public, half charter) each year, averaging \$166,000 per school.
- Federal Full Service Community School grants: \$500,000 per year over 5 years for at least two schools.

- 2) Repurposed/realigned categorical funding:** This funding occurs as a result of repurposed or realigned existing state categorical funds. This does not require new money or authorization to enact.

Current examples:

- New York City's Community Schools, 2014: \$52 million to 40 schools over 4 years, averaging out to \$325,000 per school per year. Repurposed from state grant for attendance improvement and dropout prevention. Managed in partnership with the United Way of New York City who will select the community partners for each school.

- 3) Infrastructure funding:** This would be dedicated funding from the state department of education to pay for the core programming costs for a Community School. These include: a full-time Community School Coordinator for each school and a site leadership team, funding to build capacity for prioritized services (health, mental health, afterschool, etc.) according to the unique needs of each school, and funding for training, technical assistance, and evaluation.

A sample budget totaling \$250,000 per school would break down as such:

- Coordinator salary: \$80,000
- Support for Core services: \$120,000
- Capacity building: training, technical assistance, data and evaluation: \$50,000

Current examples: None

- 4) Revision of state funding formula:** A change in funding formula is a heavy policy lift, but can provide a means for more equitable funding to give more funding per pupil for those students who need more services or assistance (students who qualify for free/reduced price lunch, ELL students, students in foster care, etc.) This revision can also explicitly direct funding for Community Schools, or offer an opportunity to pursue the Community School strategy indirectly with these additional funds that many schools would receive.

Current examples:

- California's Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), 2013: The LCFF is the largest change to California's school finance model in almost 40 years with a planned eight-year transition period, beginning in 2013–4. The new formula for school districts and charter schools (LEAs) is composed of uniform base grants by grade span (K–3, 4–6, 7–8, 9–12) and includes additional funding for targeted students. This funding formula emphasizes more funding for low-income schools, and makes Community Schools an allowable use of funds. Therefore, any incentive language to adopt the Community School strategy is important.

For school districts and charter schools, the LCFF creates base, supplemental, and concentration grants in place of most previously existing K–12 funding streams. For county offices of education (COEs), the LCFF creates separate funding streams for oversight activities and instructional programs.

- D.C.'s Fair Student Funding and School-Based Budgeting Act of 2013: This legislation adds resources for low-income students by changing the supplemental weights in the Uniform Per Student Funding Formula, which determines the base amount of local money allocated for each DCPS and public charter school student. This means students who meet certain criteria would get more than the basic level of funding. (Examples of students who currently receive additional funding on top of the basic funding level include English language learners and students with special needs.) The bill outlines the following schedule and categories for these additional funds:

Starting in the 2014–15 school year: An additional weight for low-income students who are eligible to participate in free or reduced price meal programs; an additional weight for students attending a high school with a four-year graduation rate of below 75 percent in the past school year.

Starting in the 2016–17 school year: An additional weight for 11th and 12th grade students participating in approved career and technical education programs. The bill would put DCPS' central office on a "funding diet" by requiring that DCPS allocate at least 80 percent of its local formula funding directly to schools, leaving 20 percent for central office functions. This would be a significant decline from the approximately 32 percent of funds that currently go to central office administration.

- Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA), 1990: KERA established Kentucky Family Resource and Youth Services Centers as a component of the new funding formula. These centers help support programming aligned with the Community School strategy. There are currently 823 funded centers serving nearly 1,200 schools that share an allocation of \$50 million, which averages to roughly \$42,000 per school. Funding for these centers has fluctuated between \$48 and \$57 million since 2002. Schools where at least 20 percent of the student population

is eligible for free or reduced school meals may compete for FRYSC funding. Approximately 55 percent of students enrolled in Kentucky's public schools are eligible for free school meals.

- 5) School Construction/Modernization Funding:** Any legislation or appropriations designated for school construction or modernization is a great opportunity to include provisions that new schools have dedicated community space. Legislation can also explicitly outline that any new schools function as Community Schools.

Current examples:

- The Maryland state legislature approved a \$1.2 billion bond for school construction and modernization for Baltimore City Public Schools. The Family League of Baltimore, the city's Community Schools intermediary, successfully worked with Baltimore City Public Schools to ensure that the first phase of new schools (22) are designed as community hubs with dedicated community space, in line with the Community School strategy.

State Use of Federal Funds for Community Schools:

Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grant: This \$1.6 billion pot of money comes from Title IV of the Every Student Succeeds Act and is called "21st Century Schools." This funding can be used to hire or designate a Community School Coordinator. States and districts receive this as formula funding. Any district that receives at least \$30,000 must designate at least 20% of the funds toward supporting well-rounded students, and another 20% toward supporting safe and healthy students. The Community School Coordinator is explicitly referenced as an allowable use of funds in the bucket of supporting safe and healthy students.

21st Century Community Learning Centers: This \$1 billion federal grant commonly goes to afterschool programming and is now extended to learning opportunities programming and supports the Community School strategy. Many places use these funds to support Community Schools funding.

Full Service Community Schools: Districts, institutions of higher education and community-based organizations can apply to this competitive grant to implement Community Schools. The grant awards approximately \$500,000 per year over 5 years. The new Every Student Succeeds Act calls on Congress to award at least 10 grants each year. This is included in Title IV under the program "Community Support for School Success."

Title I funds: As the largest formula funding for K–12 students, Title I funds may be used in several ways to support student achievement. In the 2009 ARRA guidance, the Coalition successfully inserted language to clarify that Title I funds could be used to support school-community coordination and specifically, funding the coordinator position.

However, there is an opportunity to pursue Title I funds for Community Schools more aggressively through state legislation. For example, state legislation could allocate more funding for Title I schools to develop or strengthen school-community coordination that would support the development of Community Schools and additional funding for coordinators.

Other State Agencies: Any other state agencies beyond education that fund programs for children and families are potential sources of funding for Community Schools. The challenge is to work with these state agencies to identify their common objectives and recognize the effectiveness and cost-savings in cross-agency collaboration and funding.

Taxing Strategies: Legislation may be developed to leverage taxes toward financing Community Schools. For example, taxpayers engaged in a unitary business with one or more corporations could be required to do combined reporting, for which the revenue accrued would go toward a state Community Schools fund. Similarly, through adoption of the "throwback rule," the Legislature can drive improved student and community outcomes by requiring its corporate citizens to contribute their fair share of state tax revenues that would then go toward a state Community Schools fund.

APPENDIX H: Resources

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<http://www.otlcampaign.org/reports/raising-revenue/policies/>

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New Jersey School Boards Association

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Testimony for the Joint Committee on Public Schools

Community Schools

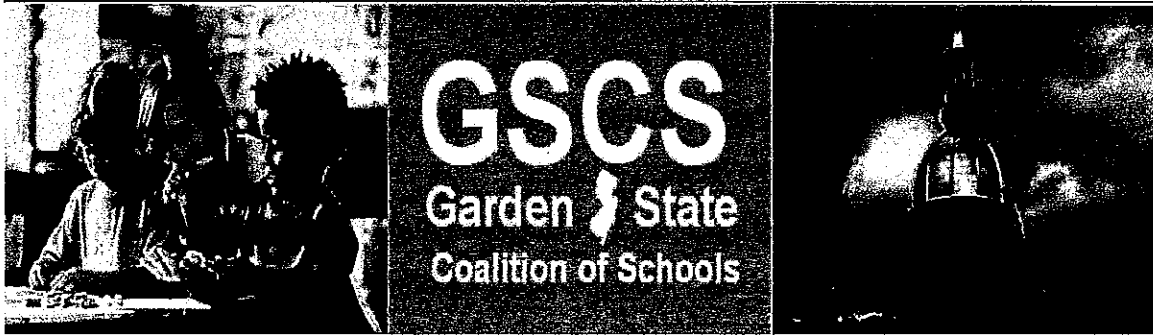
April 11, 2018

The New Jersey School Boards Association (NJSBA), a federation of 586 local boards of education and 70 charter school associate members, provides training, advocacy and support to advance public education and promote the achievement of all students through effective governance.

NJSBA supports the intent and establishment of community schools in New Jersey Public School Districts. Community schools share common characteristics that make them unique in education. These schools bring educators and community partners together to deliver services and a range of opportunities to help students and families. These schools are open to everyone in the community during both school hours and after school hours as well.

NJSBA's policy supports collaborative partnerships between home, community, social service agencies and local school districts to provide quality educational opportunities for all children. We support efforts to provide financial and technical assistance to districts to develop community schools. Examples of partnerships may include child care programs, prenatal care and counseling for teenage parents, and recreational and educational programs in the evenings and weekends.

NJSBA also believes that the oversight process of community schools should take place beginning with NJ Department of Education. The department has the authority to approve a community school within a school district and assist in coordinating all funding opportunities. The school district and the board of education should be the decision makers on specific services and hours to be open since they are best suited to assess the needs of their individual communities.



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**Joint Committee on Public Schools
Community School Testimony, April 11, 2018**

Twenty-five years ago, I wrote an article for the *New York Times* entitled, “This Town Will Die Without Our School,” about the impending closure of a suburban public high school and the effect that closure on the life of the town. The school was the only sizeable gathering space, home to numerous school and non-school programs and the nexus of its community. It had many of the characteristics of what we now call a “community school”.

I have never forgotten the passionate and connected parents and community members I interviewed for that article. They viewed their school as the beating heart of their town. This is the traditional role of the public school and one that has sometimes been forgotten in our rush to compartmentalize and quantify all aspects of our communal lives.

Nurturing Partnerships

GSCS believes that the future of public education is inextricably tied to strategic partnerships. The community schools movement seeks to facilitate those partnerships between schools and local social service agencies, higher education institutions, businesses and non-profit entities. These efforts—small and large—bring services, programs and resources into schools, with the aim of nurturing students, their parents and community members. In its ideal form, the community school creates a whole that is stronger than the sum of its parts.

Challenges

As with any promising idea, there are challenges. School security comes to mind immediately. Funding is another. Ideally, partners from the for-profit and non-profit sectors would fund services that they provide within school buildings. Some Federal, state and local funding might also be available for specific purposes.

Existing school structures sometimes need substantial alterations to make them suitable for community programs and personnel. Districts planning new facilities have an advantage, because secure, dedicated community space can be included in the design phase. A successful case in point is New Brunswick High School, which was specifically designed to include what is now a branch of the Eric B. Chandler Health Center, operated by the Robert Wood Johnson Medical School of Rutgers University.

Key Components

Successful community schools are well organized, with clear lines of authority, consistent communications and reliable partners. Large scale efforts might involve the designation of a leading partner, who is able to take on organizational, logistical and administrative responsibilities that cannot be handled by school district officials.

Sharing Versus Paring

Policy makers often propose large-scale school district consolidation as the answer to the school funding crisis. We believe that in some cases consolidating resources in community schools is a better alternative, because it is focused on sharing community wealth, rather than paring budgets.

Many Routes to Success

Every community and school population has different needs and should be encouraged to implement community school components in ways that best meet those needs. Our communities have strengths that are waiting to be tapped. We believe that the community school movement is one way of doing so.

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS:

THE CURRENT & FUTURE POLICY ENVIRONMENT IN NEW JERSEY

THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
TRENTON, NJ
APRIL 11, 2018

Julie Borst and Greg Stankiewicz
NJ Community Schools Coalition

Introducing the NJ Community Schools Coalition

The Coalition brings together people and organizations from across our state to increase and strengthen the use of community school models for the benefit of public school students and their families.

These models explicitly recognize that district and charter schools can and should serve as “**hubs**” for their communities.

These models are able to serve as **vehicles for equity**.

GOALS OF THE NJ COMMUNITY SCHOOLS COALITION:

- Use the Community School model as a vehicle to unite the public behind positive, locally-controlled approaches to helping public schools overcome obstacles that are holding back high-needs students
- Demonstrate that this model works in urban, suburban, & rural districts
- Help make up for past underfunding by leveraging community partners in districts with some of the greatest needs
- Provide evidence through a pilot initiative that this approach is worth expanding statewide

WORKING TOGETHER AS A COALITION:

- **Working together with:**
 - New Jersey Association of School Administrators (NJASA)
 - New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association (NJPSA)
 - New Jersey School Boards Association (NJSBA)
 - New Jersey Education Association (NJEA)
 - American Federation of Teachers-NJ (AFT-NJ)
 - Healthy Schools Now Coalition
- **Working with NJ experts already in existing community school initiatives:**
 - Paterson Education Fund (Paterson)
 - Center for Civic Engagement, Montclair State University (Orange, NJ)
 - Mercer Street Friends (Trenton, NJ)

What's Currently Happening In New Jersey?

Data and survey findings from Borst & Stankiewicz, "A Scan of Community School Models Across New Jersey's Public Schools," December 2017.

THE CONTEXT IN NEW JERSEY:

➤ **Funding Cuts:**

- School funding formula had been underfunded by \$9 billion over 8 years
- School Development Authority lacks funds to replace facilities in poorest communities

➤ **At the Same Time, a Growing Need for Increased Public School Services:**

- School age population increasingly poor & minority
- Student population growing in many high-poverty districts, due to immigration & gentrification

A VARIETY OF COMMUNITY SCHOOL MODELS

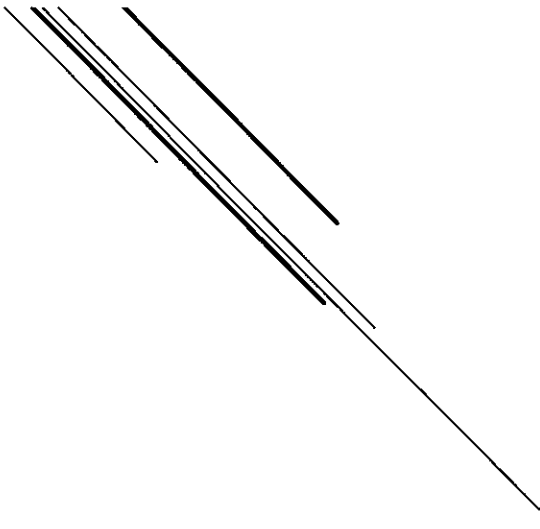
- Nonprofit-led: **Mercer Street Friends in Trenton; Paterson**
- University-assisted: **Montclair State University & Orange Community School Initiative**
- District-led: **Newton; Newark**

242x

NJ COMMUNITY SCHOOLS AWARDED MULTI-YEAR FEDERAL FUNDING:

U.S. Department of Education Full Service
Community Schools grants:

- Paterson
- Orange
- Trenton



2017 SURVEY OF NJ SUPERINTENDENTS

- 51 districts responded
- 14 districts stated that they had community schools
- 49 of 51 districts utilize partnerships with nonprofits and other stakeholders

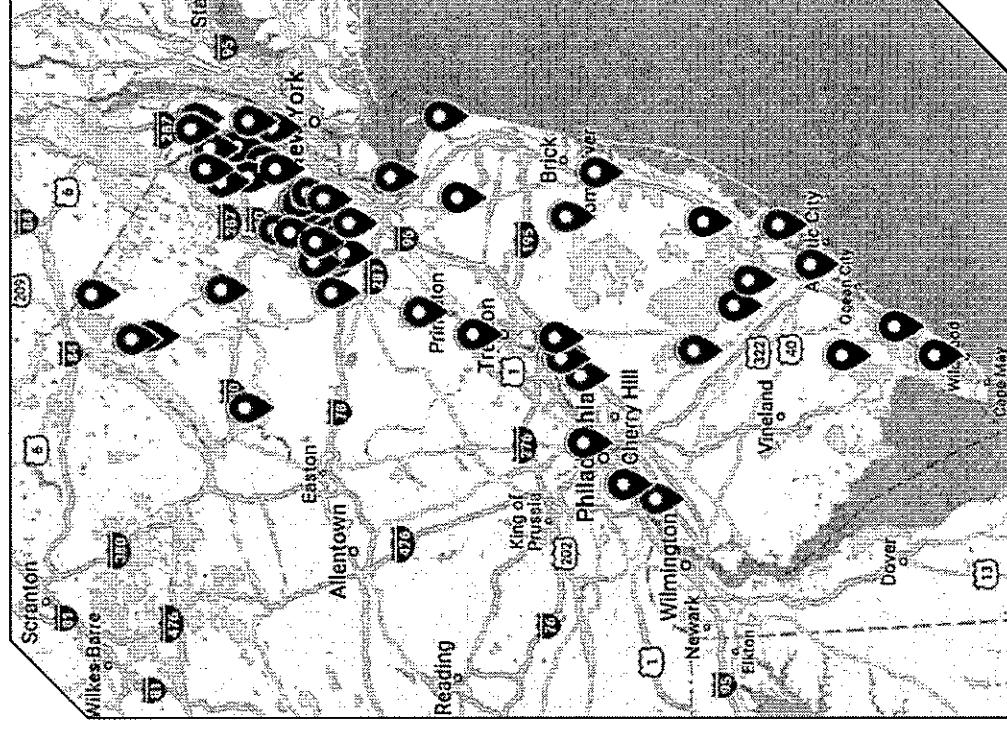
SURVEY UNDERTAKEN IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE NJ ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS (NJASA)
AND NJ PRINCIPALS AND SUPERVISORS ASSOCIATION (NJPSA)

New Jersey Community Schools

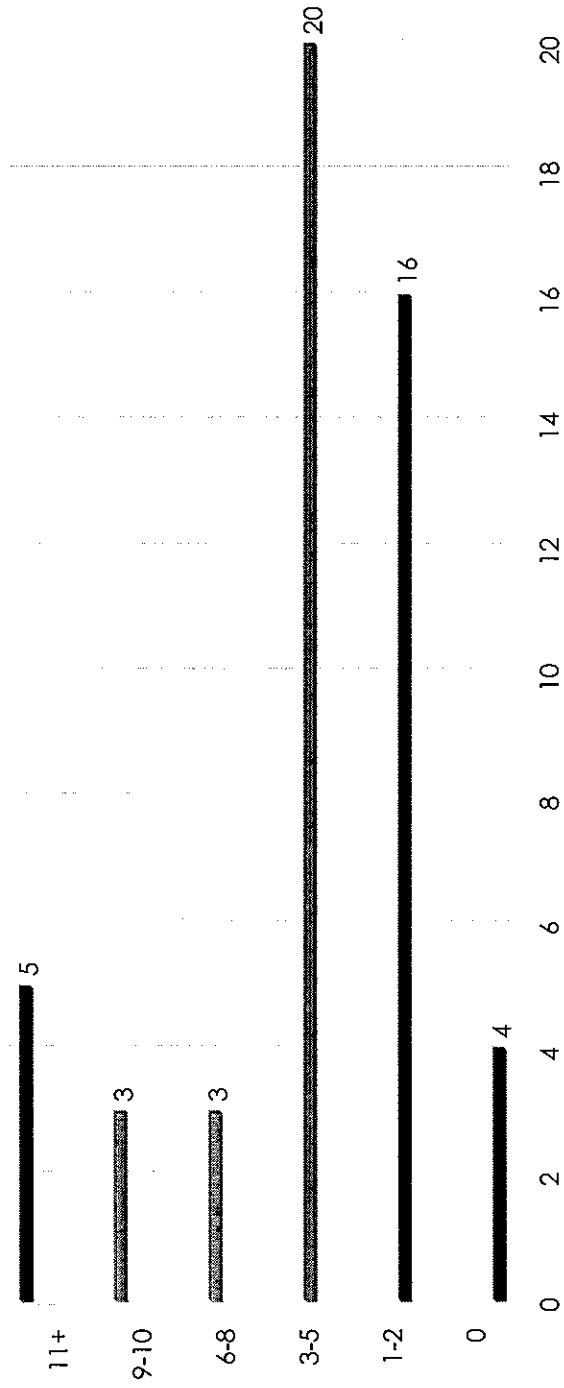
Red tags are districts that identify themselves as having community schools.

Blue tags are districts that do not, but do some component of community school work.

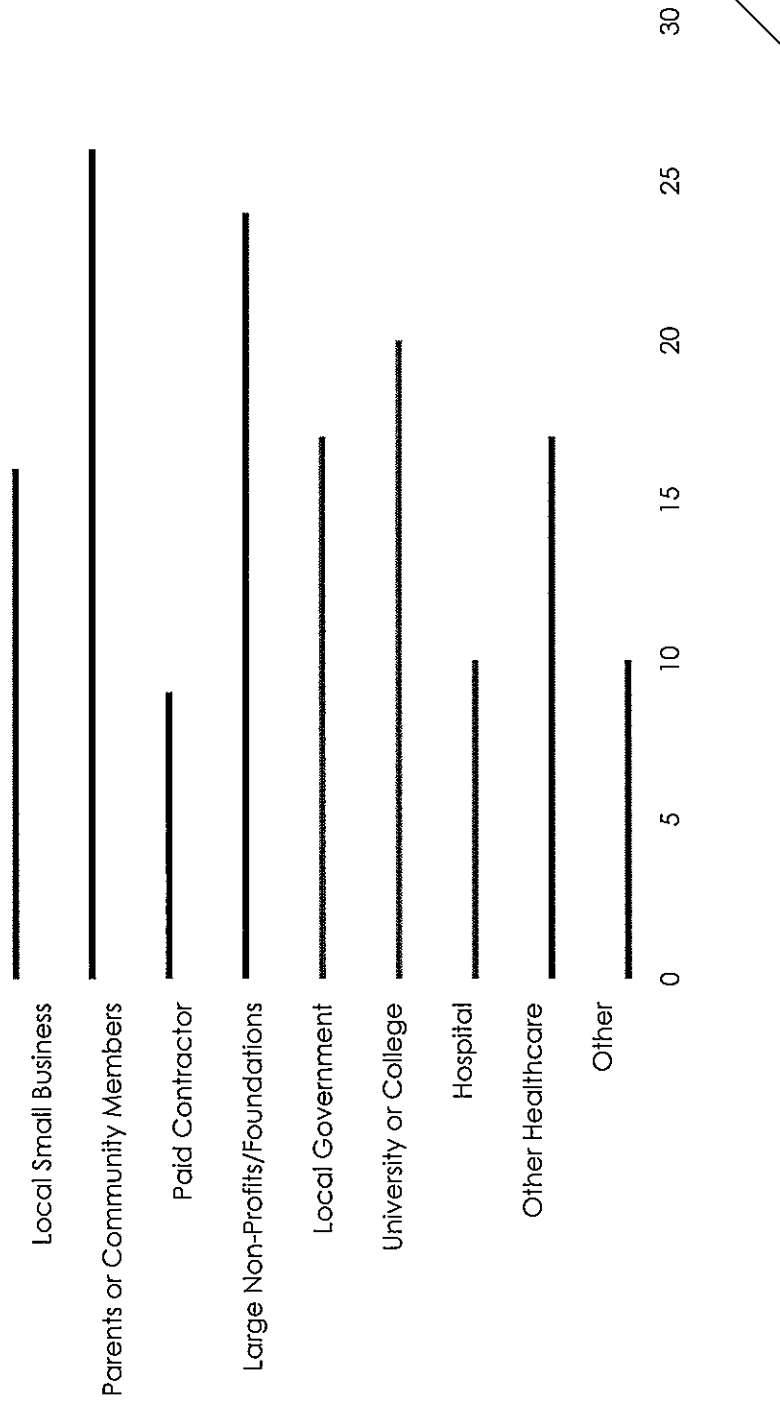
Green tags are districts that identified themselves as doing community school work only with special education students.



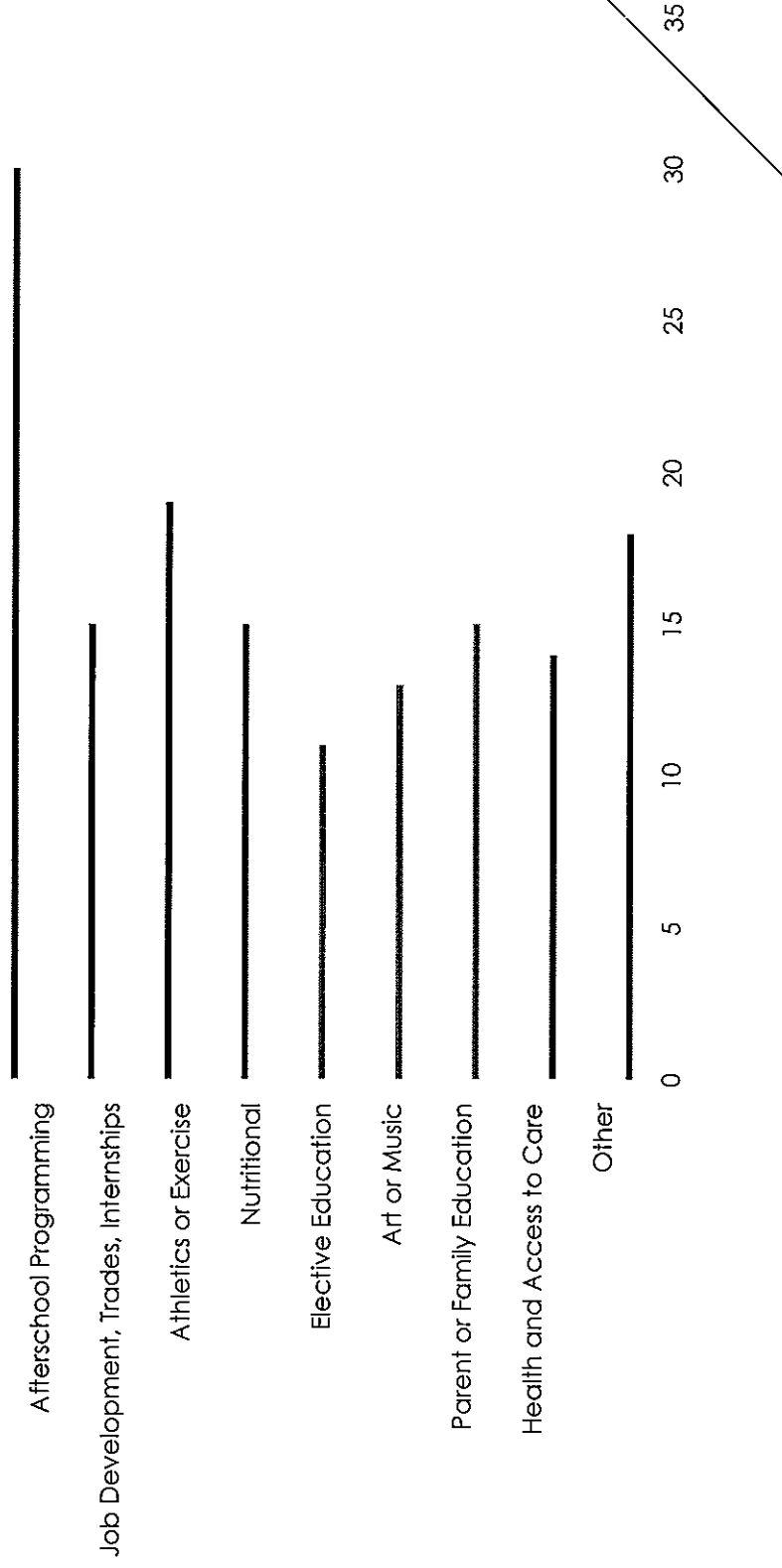
APPROXIMATELY HOW MANY ORGANIZATIONS HAVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH SCHOOLS IN YOUR DISTRICT?



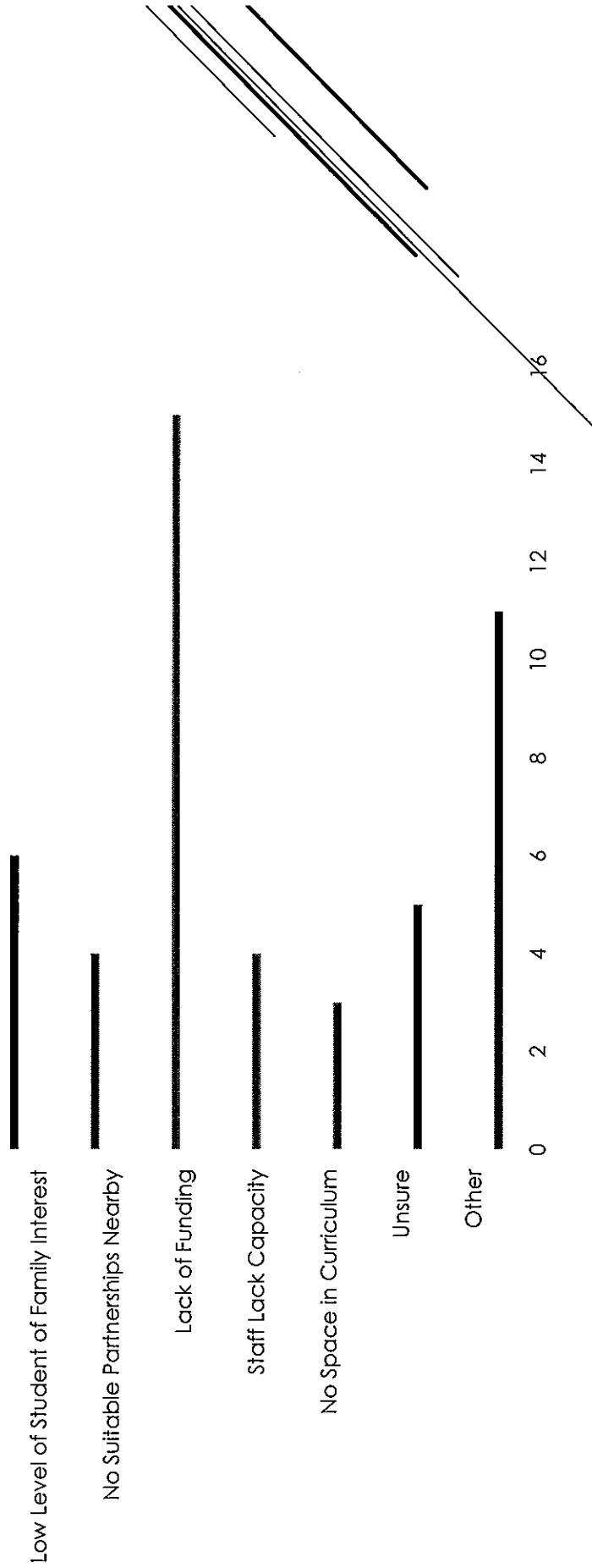
WHO ARE YOUR PARTNERSHIPS WITH?



WHAT DO THE PARTNERSHIP(S) PROVIDE?



WHAT IS THE BIGGEST OBSTACLE TO CREATING SUSTAINABLE PARTNERSHIPS IN YOUR DISTRICT/SCHOOL?



FINDINGS

- School districts already rely on partnerships, with the majority reporting 3+
- NJ districts are facing a tremendous financial squeeze, making it hard to provide the services their students need
- As school populations in NJ and across the U.S. become more diverse and poorer, the costs to serve them are increasing
- School districts seek ways of delivering better services for special needs students
- They also identify a need for many other services, including health and mental health
- Superintendents acknowledge that it is hard for them to undertake a needs assessment ahead of implementing new services and partnerships

COMMUNITY SCHOOL MODEL CAN HELP MEET THESE NEEDS

- Way to rationally identify & prioritize students' needs
- Build from ground-up developments already underway
- Target chronic absenteeism
- Use collaborative governing
- Anchor through social emotional learning approaches
- Strengthen school security-- increased sense of community and better student emotional support
- Key: identify, train & place a Community Schools Coordinator in each school

BENEFITS OF COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

- Improved outcomes due to wraparound services & collaborative, cohesive systems of interventions
- Help close achievement gap for lower-income students through integrated supports & extended school day
- Better student outcomes through family & community engagement

Source: Julia Daniel with Jon Snyder, "Community Schools as an Effective Strategy for Reform," Scope & NEPC, December 2015

LATEST RESEARCH

- 2017: The Learning Policy Institute finds that community schools meet evidence-based criteria for school improvement under Every Child Succeeds Act (ESSA); recommends as a school improvement strategy.
- 2014: Report from ChildTrends: integrated student supports (ISS) reduce grade retention and dropout rates, while increasing attendance, math achievement, and GPA.
- 2013: A social return on investment study of Children's Aid Society Community Schools found that **every dollar spent returns between \$10.30 and \$14.80 of social value**

Source: Mary Kingston Roche, Coalition for Community Schools

RELYING ON COMMUNITY ASSETS & EXPERTISE:

- **Local Government** – *Public*
- **Institutions of Higher Education** -- *Nonprofit*
- **Businesses** -- *Private*
- **Community-Based Organizations** -- *Nonprofit*
- **Health Systems** – *Public, Nonprofit, Private*
- **Faith-Based Communities** -- *Nonprofit*
- **Volunteer Organizations** -- *Nonprofit*

25/2

THE COALITION'S CURRENT EFFORTS:

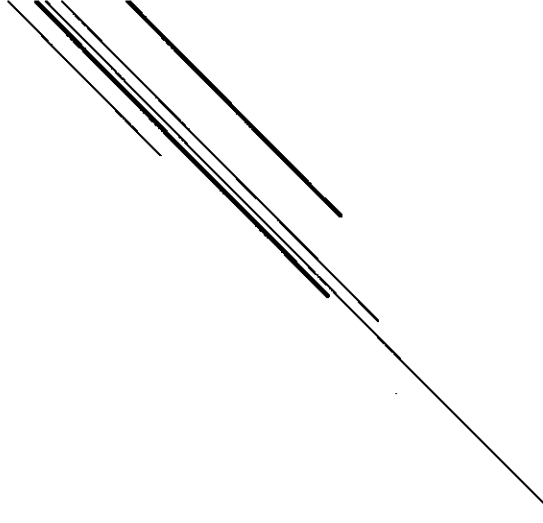
- **Develop support for a \$26 million, 5-year pilot community school initiative:**
 - To provide centralized training and hiring of 50 community school coordinators for 50 additional district & charter schools
 - The NJ DOE would select an independent entity to provide outside evaluation
 - Any other district/charter school could also take advantage of training about the community school model
 - Training would be subcontracted to current nonprofit providers
- **Initiative stronger thanks to input from stakeholders & from members' review at Oct. 2017 Coalition Convening**

WORKING TO EXPAND COALITION:

- **Leverage Regional Funders:**
 - Presenting at the upcoming Council of NJ Grantmakers' Education Funder Affinity Group
- **Reaching out to the Community Development Field:**
 - Presented webinar in March for the Housing & Community Development Network of NJ (HCDNNJ)
- **Creating Contacts with Health Institutions:**
 - Writing a report for New Jersey Health Initiative, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, on strengthening links between community schools & health institutions
 - Use Medicaid and nonprofit hospitals' community benefits obligations to fund health & mental health services

AN OPPORTUNITY TO DEEPEN THIS DISCUSSION:

- Are there other efforts and approaches that we can learn about from you to include?
- How can we partner and learn from each other, to try to bring these strategies to scale in NJ?



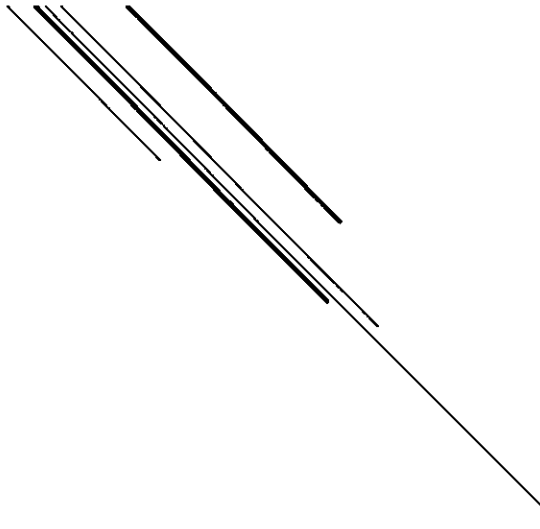
NEW JERSEY COMMUNITY SCHOOLS COALITION

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**A SCAN OF COMMUNITY SCHOOL MODELS ACROSS NEW JERSEY'S PUBLIC SCHOOLS:
PROMOTING AN EQUITY AGENDA WHILE BETTER SERVING THE EDUCATIONAL,
PHYSICAL, AND MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS OF STUDENTS AND FAMILIES**

**Prepared by: Julie Borst and Gregory Stankiewicz, Ph.D.
Co-Coordiators, New Jersey Community Schools Coalition***

December 2017

**New Jersey Community Schools Coalition brings together people & organizations from across our state to increase and strengthen the use of community school models for the benefit of public school students and their families.*

"Community schools offer another alternative for achieving the goals of the equity framework."

--Susan DeJarnatt and Barbara Ferman, 2017¹

Purpose

This report builds upon "The State of Community Schools in New Jersey: A Growing Education and Health Reform Strategy," a December 2015 white paper supported by the New Jersey Health Initiatives Program.² It includes references to new literature and resources that have become available over the past two years. More broadly, it expands our understanding of the current community school policy environment in New Jersey by examining data from a 2017 survey of public school districts across the state. The report supplements this data with in-depth interviews with a subset of superintendents and organizational leaders who are spearheading cross-sector efforts to coordinate in-school services for New Jersey students. The report's ultimate purpose is to serve as a roadmap for ways to scale existing community school models and efforts in New Jersey, in order to use this powerful and flexible strategy to improve the lives of students, families, and other community residents.

We find that, since 2015, additional school districts in New Jersey are identifying themselves as pursuing community school models via partnerships with outside service providers. However, the majority of reporting districts, while not labeling themselves as community schools, also report that they are actively pursuing, or already undertaking, partnerships with outside providers. Our follow-up interviews indicate that districts developed these community school-like approaches in an organic, bottom-up manner to help ameliorate the loss of services due to funding cutbacks at the state level. Many of the districts also reported adopting this approach to better meet the challenges posed by student populations with more diverse needs, and those coming from families who are increasingly poor and non-native English-speaking.

While the conventional understanding is that these are challenges confronted by New Jersey school districts located in urban areas, our survey results and follow-up interviews find that many suburban and rural districts are facing similar conditions. These concerns were articulated by superintendents from Newton, in Sussex County in the rural northwest corner of New Jersey, which once served as a regional center of industry but subsequently saw its job base

¹ Susan DeJarnatt and Barbara Ferman, "Preserving Education as a Collective Good," in *The Fight for America's Schools: Grassroots Organizing in Education*, edited by Barbara Ferman, Cambridge, Ma: Harvard Education Press, 2017, p. 144.

² Reuben Jacobson, "The State of Community Schools in New Jersey: A Growing Education and Health Reform Strategy," Coalition for Community Schools, at the Institute for Educational Leadership, December 2015.

erode; Princeton, a wealthy suburban community in central Mercer County; and Red Bank, a historic community near the Shore in Monmouth County with a rapidly increasing low-income Latino population. In effect, New Jersey, considered the most suburban state in the nation, serves as a microcosm of the problems experienced by the national trends surrounding the “suburbanization” of U.S. poverty.³

Our research finds that New Jersey schools are seeking partners to help them provide their students with a host of needed services, including academic, physical health, and mental health. Our survey results and follow-up interviews reveal that many superintendents see the lack of mental health services as one of their most pressing needs, at a time when the opioid crisis has resulted in New Jersey’s teen overdose death rate more than doubling since 2000, to the sixth-highest level in the U.S. for the 2011-13 period.⁴ Moreover, data indicate that increasing numbers of New Jersey students are seeking mental help, being hospitalized for mental health concerns, and attempting to or dying by suicide.⁵ We feel that the community school model is a powerful strategy for allowing educational and community leaders to better meet such needs.

Defining the Community School Model

Community schools are public schools that explicitly identify themselves as critical “hubs” for their surrounding neighborhoods. They leverage the centrality of a physical school building in a specific neighborhood with the resources of nonprofit agencies, foundations, local businesses and other community partners to provide needed services in a holistic fashion to students and their families. The services provided reflect the specific needs identified by each community’s residents, including pre-care; after-care; adult education and job training; supplemental nutrition; physical and mental health; and dental and vision clinics.⁶

³ The Brookings Institution has focused academic attention on such trends. For a good summary of the research, see Elizabeth Kneebone, “The Changing Geography of US Poverty,” testimony before the House Ways and Means Committee, Subcommittee on Human Resources, February 15, 2017. Available at: <https://www.brookings.edu/testimonies/the-changing-geography-of-us-poverty/>

⁴ Trust for America’s Health, “Reducing Teen Substance Misuse: What Really Works, 2015,” November, 2015, pp. 23-24. Available at: <http://healthyamericans.org/assets/files/TFAH-2015-TeenSubstAbuse-FnlRv.pdf>

⁵ See, for example, the December 13, 2017, “Mercer County Superintendents’ Joint Call to Action,” signed by all district superintendents, stating that “We are in the middle of an alarming trend regarding teenage mental health concerns.” The statement goes on to say that “Partnerships in raising awareness and providing systems of support and care are critical.” This joint statement was precipitated by the fact that Mercer County had 7 cases of students dying by suicide over the preceding 20 months, but rates have been increasing in counties across the state, and have seen a sharp uptick nationally. See

http://www.princetonk12.org/?plugin=RWD&Templates=RWD&object=http://www.princetonk12.org/PPS_News/S05C1CA08-05C1D167&infobar=no

⁶ See Jacobson, p. 1. For an effective schematic of the Community Schools logic model, please see Figure 1, p. 2.

Ability of Community School Models to Holistically Address Specific Needs of Students and Neighborhoods

Community school models have been used for decades in the U.S. and have experienced a resurgence of popularity since the 1990s.⁷ One reason they are effective strategies is their inherent *flexibility* and *responsiveness*. They reflect an increased awareness of the need to provide services for a wide array of students' needs, whether academic, physical, or mental. Such an awareness is explicit, for example, in the following recent academic description of the community school model:

*While there are many different models, and implementation varies by location, [community schools] embrace certain fundamental principles, including: a focus on the healthy development and academic achievement of all children, strong engagement with families, and holistic education combined with wraparound services that address the social emotional and physical well-being of students. Placed at the center of the community, community schools develop strategic networks of partners and programs that address the needs of the students and families in ways that complement the overall objectives of the school. The significant flexibility within the schools allows them to be responsive to the particular needs of the student body and the larger community.*⁸

There is a large and growing body of research documenting the benefits of community schools.⁹ Recently, the national community school organizations highlighted that this approach can be utilized by schools and districts to meet the new federal requirement for "evidence-based interventions for high-poverty schools."¹⁰

The community school models' emphasis on addressing the totality of needs for all students is consistent with New Jersey's current education policy environment.¹¹ Furthermore, as

⁷ Jacobson, 2015, p. 1.

⁸ DeJarnatt and Ferman, 2017, p. 144.

⁹ Jeannie Oakes, Anna Maier, and Julia Daniel, "Community Schools: An Evidence-Based Strategy for Equitable School Improvement," Boulder, CO: National Education Policy Center, June 2017. Report and accompanying research compendium available at: <https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/community-schools-equitable-improvement-brief>

¹⁰ See Learning Policy Institute, "Community Schools Show Promise as School Improvement Strategy: Community Schools Strategy Can Be an Important Part of Systemic School Reform Under the Every Student Succeeds Act," Press Release, June 5, 2017. Available at: <https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/press-release/community-schools-show-promise-school-improvement-strategy>

¹¹ As just one example, see New Jersey School Boards Association, "Final Report: The Task Force on Student Achievement: Advancing Education for All Children," Trenton, NJ, March 2017, especially Chapter 9, "Social Emotional Learning." Available: <https://www.njsba.org/news-information/research/projects/student-achievement/>

described in more detail later in this report, there are partner organizations already working with New Jersey public schools that would be able to provide guidance, technical assistance, and needs assessments for an expansion in the number of schools explicitly utilizing community school models.

New Jersey Survey and Interview Findings

This report draws on survey data gathered from school districts across New Jersey to show how community school models are being utilized extensively in our state, whether explicitly in holistic, fully-functioning partnerships, or in a more organic, ad hoc fashion in which districts and schools respond to specific needs and opportunities (Please see Appendix A for detailed survey findings). The report also incorporates the results of interviews with selected superintendents and representatives of organizations that already are providing services to many schools in this state. This section summarizes the common themes that emerged from both the survey and interviews.

➤ School districts' current reliance on partnerships

One of the most striking themes that emerged from this research is the extent to which districts already rely on partnerships with outside providers. Forty-nine of the 51 districts answering our survey reported relying on such partnerships, with the majority stating that their schools relied on three or more such partnerships. While only 14 of these districts label themselves community schools, most districts have organically reached out to outside resources and partners. As the superintendent of the Newton Public Schools told us, his district could not afford the additional services he felt his student population needed, so, by necessity, the district was forced to reach out for services elsewhere. The problem, in his mind, was that this approach was not efficient or sustainable, since it by necessity devolved into a process of "reaching out for random, unconnected services." That is why he instead decided to follow the more formal model of community schools that was implemented in Bethlehem and the Lehigh Valley, in Pennsylvania.

➤ Financial pressure on districts

A second common theme was the financial pressure districts are facing. According to estimates from the Education Law Center, school districts have seen a cumulative state underfunding of \$9 billion since 2010, as compared to what they were supposed to receive under the State's own school funding formula.¹² Further damage has been done by cuts in State funding for other institutions and services. For example, in 2011, the State eliminated all funding for New Jersey After 3, the public-private partnership that had been providing after-school services for up to 15,000 mostly low-income New Jersey students.¹³

Our survey results provide evidence of the financial burden that districts are facing, with almost 40% of reporting districts stating that "lack of funding available to create a program in-house" was a factor in their creating a partnership with outside providers. However, as the Newton superintendent noted, this underfunding also prevents districts from successfully implementing and sustaining many of those partnerships. Responding districts identified "lack of funding" as the single biggest obstacle that they faced in creating *sustainable* partnerships. Other respondents reiterated this obstacle in their written comments at the end of the survey, with one writing that the community school model has "great potential to support communities; funding is lacking," while another noted that "Community Schools is a wonderful concept that we are already very active with, but what holds us back is lack of funding."

➤ Costs associated with changing demographics and increasing poverty among students

A related theme that was highlighted by many of the interviews was the increased costs associated with meeting the needs of a range of students, including those from poor or non-native-English speaking families. Recently-released census data provide evidence that this state is becoming increasingly diverse, with 18 of the 21 counties seeing a larger percentage of their residents speaking a language other than English at home over the 2012-16 period as compared to the 2007-11 period.¹⁴

¹² Education Law Center, "NJ's School Funding Reform Act State Summary," available at: <http://edlawcenter.org/research/school-funding-data.html>

¹³ Associated Press, "Budget Cuts Force Closure of N.J. Non-Profit that Funded After School Programs, October 26, 2011.

¹⁴ Carla Astudillo and Disha Raychaudhuri, "See the Rise of Non-English Speaking Residents in Your Town," NJ Advance Media for NJ.com, December 8, 2017. Available at: www.nj.com/data/2017/12/compare-how-many-non-english-speakers-at-home-are.html

Superintendents across the state emphasized the increased needs that their districts were being forced to meet because of their communities' changing demographics. For example, the Red Bank Borough Schools superintendent noted that more than 80% of his students qualify for Free- and Reduced- Price Lunch; more than 70% speak Spanish as their native language at home; and, last year, more than 60% of his primary school students were Limited English Proficient. For Newton, an influx of younger Latino families has meant that the student body has shifted from 30% Free- and Reduced-Price Lunch eligible to 50% over the nine-year tenure of the superintendent. And the superintendent of Princeton Public Schools pointed to the added complexity of having to care for a subset of his student body that is undocumented.

The Princeton district identified partnerships with multiple agencies as being "particularly successful in addressing the needs and concerns of many of our undocumented families." The nonprofit provider Mercer Street Friends has established the same partnership to provide eligible Princeton students with weekend and summer meals as it has with the two Trenton community schools, illustrating that schools in districts that are considered wealthy are facing similar issues, although at a smaller scale, as urban and rural districts that are more typically associated with issues of poverty.

➤ Districts' desire for stronger services for their special needs students

The survey results also identified another group of students who benefit from stronger partnerships -- students with special needs. Three districts indicated that they had partnerships with outside providers solely to help their special needs student populations. One respondent specifically mentioned the services provided by that district's "affiliation with Seton Hall University (SHU) and our secondary age students with autism. SHU provides our students with job sampling opportunities..."

➤ Districts' wide range of other needs met through partnerships, including health concerns

Districts also listed a wide variety of services being provided by partner organizations, with afterschool programming mentioned by 30 of the 51 districts. Health issues also were frequently mentioned -- 15 districts formed partnerships for nutritional programs, and 14 targeted "health and access to care" needs, with one district representative noting "We need a more broad-based community health program along with a family/parenting program." Other districts highlighted partnerships that offer dental clinics and flu shot clinics, while another district mentioned that "Through our partnerships with various health organizations we are able to host family health fairs where we offer health screenings and wellness services."

➤ Identification of mental health issues as a core need

Unfortunately, when we designed the survey, we failed to single out mental health services as a stand-alone category for the question “What do the partnership(s) provide?” This makes the fact that mental health concerns were repeatedly highlighted by respondents even more significant. Five districts specifically wrote about their partnership programs involving mental health services and counseling, with one respondent noting that, “There is simply an unmet need for wrap around mental health services.” In our interviews, the Princeton superintendent indicated that greater access to mental health services for students was one of his highest priorities, with a lack of available professionals resulting in a waiting period for services after a student is identified as requiring help. In Newton, middle and high school students identified anger management, stress management, and mental health services as priority issues. A core issue provided by the community school coordinator and lead agency for students in Rivera Community School in Trenton is mental health services, with the school principal giving the lead agency four rooms in the basement to allow mental health professionals and university mental health students to maintain a constant presence in that school.

➤ Difficulty for districts to undertake a needs assessment

A key component for any formal community school structure, and a critical management tool for district leadership teams more generally, is a needs assessment designed to prioritize issues that are most critical to a specific school, its student body, teachers and staff, and families. Unfortunately, in an era of resource scarcity, many districts do not have the time or capacity to carry out such assessments. In response to the survey question, “Have you or anyone in your district undertaken a formal ‘needs assessment’ in your school community,” only 43% of districts indicated that they had, even though most respondents have partnerships with outside providers. Without a needs assessment, partnerships become, in the words of the Newton superintendent, a process of “reaching out for random, unconnected services.”

A second obstacle to being able to implement a formal needs assessment is lack of in-house capacity. The Red Bank superintendent told us that, when he first arrived in the district, one-half of his managing team also was new. Therefore, no one had the time or the focus to do longer-term planning. This finding supports our proposal, discussed more fully in the sections that follow, that a critical need to scale community school models in New Jersey is to fund experts who can provide districts with already-established needs assessment tools, to streamline the process and to signal how important such long-term planning is for districts.

Needs assessment is difficult and time-consuming to do well. The community school coordinator from Mercer Street Friends spent a year working from an office in the basement of the Rivera Community School in Trenton to get a better understanding of the school's and community's needs before the principal of the school formally began the community school program.

National and Statewide Organizations and Coalitions That Can Help Bring Community School Models to Scale in New Jersey

In New Jersey, we already have organizations with the capacity to help districts undertake needs assessments, and otherwise guide districts in implementing community schools.

For example, one successful model is the School Culture and Climate Initiative (SCCI), a partnership between the United Way of Northern New Jersey and the College of Saint Elizabeth. The initiative is focused on school culture and mental health needs, with the foundation grant targeted at using this approach to respond to the trauma that many students and families experienced after Superstorm Sandy. So far, the SCCI partnership has worked with over 80 schools in northern New Jersey. As the co-directors of the initiative acknowledged to us, their assessment tools and approach, grounded in a focus on students' social emotional learning and using the approach of experts such as Rutgers University professor Maurice Elias, fits well with the approach and goals of community schools.¹⁵ The SCCI model emphasizes the importance of listening to stakeholder voices including, very importantly, the assessment of needs as articulated by students themselves. A co-director of the SCCI also chairs the New Jersey School Health and Climate Coalition, which brings together organizations and districts throughout the state that are focused on strengthening social emotional learning among students.

Another community schools resource is the Center for Supportive Schools (CSS), which was an original member of the New Jersey School Health and Climate Coalition. Besides the work it does on school climate and culture, CSS serves as the lead community school coordinating agency in 11 New York City community schools; provides services to over 100 other NYC schools; and is now serving as the lead community school coordinating agency for a recently-designated community school in Jersey City. As is the case with SCCI, CSS also believes in the

¹⁵ Dr. Elias also helped guide the New Jersey School Board's 2017 Task Force on Student Achievement, helping further influence the educational policy environment in New Jersey to take better account of the importance of social emotional learning for students in the state's schools. See NJSBA, "Final Report: The Task Force on Student Achievement," March 2017, as cited earlier.

importance of including student voices in needs assessments, as a prelude to the process of converting a school into a community school.

Universities also can be mobilized to support community schools. In their written comments, some of the districts that responded to the survey mentioned a variety of services provided to them by Seton Hall and Rutgers universities. An example of an even deeper partnership is the university-assisted community school initiative between Montclair State University and two elementary schools in Orange.¹⁶ Such a model can leverage the talents of Montclair State University faculty, staff, and students, and more easily organize resources, including students looking for Service Learning experience and credit, and AmeriCorps volunteers willing to be deployed into school environments.

These are just three examples of the types of local and regional partners available to school districts in New Jersey. There also are national organizations who are experienced in helping to implement community school models. Two prominent ones are the National Center for Community Schools at the Children's Aid Society, which has guided community school efforts in Orange and Paterson, and the national Coalition for Community Schools, to which the NJ Community Schools Coalition belongs.

Using Community School Models to Leverage Organic and Already-Existing Cross-Sector Efforts

Our research supports that community school models are powerful vehicles to promote equity, especially in a state that currently faces chronic school underfunding; large-scale demographic changes; an opioid epidemic; and a growing mental health crisis impacting high school and middle school students and their families.

Models exist for how to implement effective community schools. To move forward, New Jersey school districts and service providers need information about community school options, assistance with putting those options into place, and funding to support this work. We recommend combining public and private philanthropic resources to enable the expansion of sustainable community school models across New Jersey.

¹⁶ For additional information, see Jacobson, 2015, pp 11-12.

Public Sector Resources

The largest community school initiatives in New Jersey are those operating in Orange, Paterson, and Trenton, with funding from the US Department of Education. We do not anticipate ongoing dedicated federal funding for community schools. Therefore, we focus our recommendations at the state level.

In New Jersey, community school approaches have political support from both Governor-Elect Phil Murphy¹⁷ and prominent education committee members in the State Senate and Assembly.¹⁸ However, New Jersey faces budgetary challenges that make a large-scale community schools initiative politically unlikely at this time. In light of those budgetary challenges, the NJ Community Schools Coalition is recommending a more modest amount of state funding to be implemented as a pilot. The total cost of the pilot would be \$26 million, phased in over five years. The NJ Community Schools Coalition is working with sponsors in both legislative chambers to draft and introduce this community schools legislation during the first quarter of 2018.

The proposed legislation would authorize state funding to support:

- Hiring, training and ongoing employment of fifty dedicated community school coordinators, over the course of five years.
- Ongoing training and support for the community school coordinators, including opportunities to share knowledge and interact with each other and with service providers across the state.
- Training of district teachers and other relevant staff to familiarize them with community school approaches and help facilitate a school culture supportive of community schools.
- An awareness-building campaign to inform school districts, charter schools, and service providers across the state about community school models.
- An independent evaluation of the pilot's impact.

The goal would be to roll out the community schools initiative to the entire state at the end of the five-year pilot.

We believe that this approach is both politically feasible and sustainable. Despite the relatively modest price tag, this legislation would provide a critical component necessary to implement

¹⁷ Elana Knopp, "Murphy, Oliver Address Concerns at AFT Educator Roundtable," Tap Into Newark, August 29, 2017.

¹⁸ The then chairs of the NJ Senate and Assembly Education Committees and other Assembly Education Committee members expressed strong support for legislation to expand community schools in New Jersey, during a panel at a NJ Community Schools Coalition Convening held on October 20, 2017.

community schools -- trained, dedicated personnel to spearhead school-level community school initiatives.

This approach also would:

- minimize costs by centralizing the hiring, and the initial and ongoing training, of community school coordinators;
- eliminate the start-up costs for individual districts and charter schools of researching community school approaches, identifying potential service providers, and educating those providers about community schools;
- maximize efficiency in service provision and help to break down silos between service providers by centralizing outreach to providers across the state, educating providers about community schools, and facilitating connections among providers and between providers and school districts and charter schools.

Most importantly, this approach incorporates these efficiencies while still allowing individual districts and charter schools to build bottom up community school models that meet their specific needs.

Although the state would fund most of the key components of a statewide community schools initiative, we do not anticipate the state being able to provide all the resources necessary to implement community schools. That is where private philanthropic funders could play a critical role.

Private Philanthropic Resources

We believe there is a need for a coalition of private philanthropic funders to support nonprofit organizations in conducting needs assessments of public schools and providing services to those schools as part of a community schools initiative. As previously discussed, needs assessments are important for ensuring that community schools are addressing a community's most pressing challenges. Statewide and local nonprofits have the capacity to conduct such assessments but would need resources to support this work.

New Jersey nonprofit organizations also need financial support to enable them to provide services to district students. This support is particularly critical right now as many of our state's nonprofits are struggling after eight years of funding reductions by the Christie Administration. The financial stability of New Jersey nonprofits is likely to be undermined further by the recently-adopted federal tax legislation. The tax legislation is expected to shrink individual contributions to 501c3 nonprofits by reducing the number of households that itemize and increasing the income threshold for those impacted by the estate tax. The tax legislation's cap

on state and local tax deductions also may lead to a reduction in New Jersey state revenues, potentially further limiting state funding for nonprofit organizations.¹⁹

An additional concern is the federal tax legislation's elimination of the Affordable Care Act's individual mandate, a change that the Congressional Budget Office projects will increase health care premium costs and may result in up to 13 million fewer people having health insurance coverage by 2027.²⁰ This would increase the need for school-based health services even as funding to support those services would become further constrained.

We anticipate the needs for private philanthropic funding to be greatest up front. Once the service providers are identified, informed and connected to the districts, there will continue to be a need to enable them to provide the services, but the cost should decrease after the transition phase is completed.

Conclusion

Community schools are an effective means of addressing the myriad of challenges facing New Jersey public schools and of advancing equity among our students. This report lays out a strategy for expanding community schools in New Jersey by utilizing both public and private philanthropic support. With a Governor-Elect and legislative leadership supportive of community schools, this is an opportune time to marshal public sector resources. But the public sector cannot do it alone. The private philanthropic community also has an important role to play in expanding community schools. Doing so will have the additional benefit of strengthening nonprofit organizations across our state at a time of great vulnerability for that sector.

¹⁹ Linda M. Czipo, "For NJ Charities, Tax-Reform Bills Offer Little to Be Thankful For," *NJ Spotlight*, November 21, 2017.

²⁰ Congressional Budget Office, "Repealing the Individual Health Insurance Mandate: An Updated Estimate," November 8, 2017, Available at: <https://www.cbo.gov/publication/53300>

APPENDIX A: Survey Results

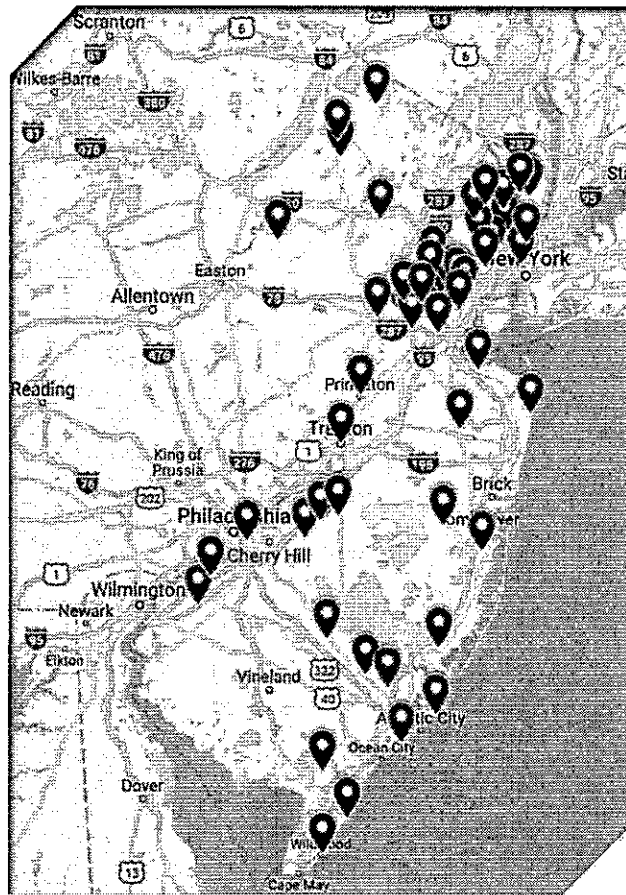
Introduction to the Survey

In September 2017, the New Jersey Community Schools Coalition, along with the New Jersey Association of School Administrators (NJASA) and the New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association (NJPSA), sent a survey to 550 New Jersey school districts. The responses, from 51 districts, represent communities from across the state (please see the map below). Responding districts included rural, urban, and suburban communities and spanned the entire range of socio-economic status, using the State's District Factor Group rankings of least- to most-wealthy communities. As we have noted, districts have been hard hit by lack of funding increases over the last eight years, along with a subset of districts that are facing growing school populations and changing demographics. As a result, students throughout New Jersey need many types of "extra" services in order to successfully access their education. The responses to this survey provide a snapshot of what those services are and how they are being delivered.

Red tags are districts that identify themselves as having community schools.

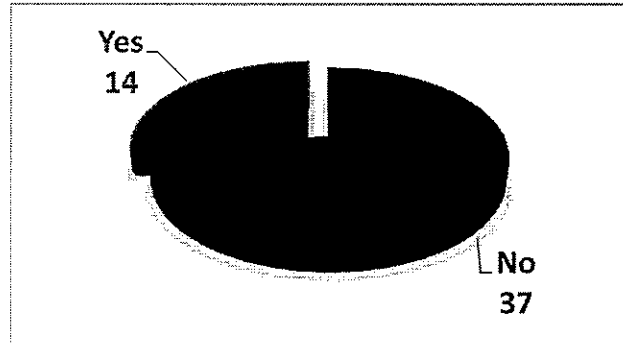
Blue tags are districts that do not self-identify as community schools, but are doing some component of community school work.

Green tags are districts that do not self-identify as community schools, but are doing community school work only to address special education needs.



Is any school in your district a Community School?

These are districts that either identify themselves as community schools or are specifically named as such.



Yes:

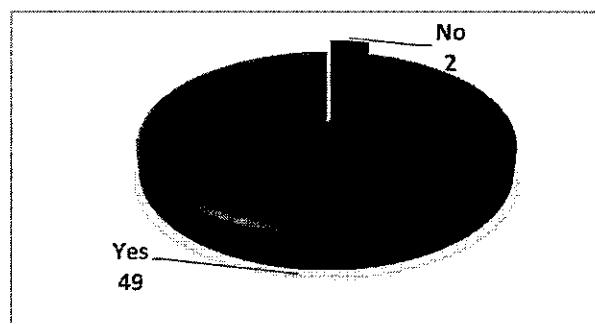
Carlstadt, East Rutherford School District, Piscataway Township, Little Egg Harbor, Egg Harbor City, Morris-Union Jointure Commission, Glen Ridge, Freehold Borough (K-8), Wildwood City, Newton Public Schools, Avalon/Stone Harbor, Easthampton Township School District, Greenwich Township in Warren Co., Woodbine

No:

Garwood, Scotch Plains-Fanwood, Green Brook, Roselle Park, Guttenberg, Union County Educational Services Commission, Chatham, Kingsway Regional, Kenilworth, Mine Hill, Roselle, Dumont, Brigantine, Rahway Public Schools, Princeton Public Schools, Oxford Township, Sussex-Wantage Regional, Kearny, Westfield, Saddle Brook, Keyport, Hammonton, Hoboken, Mount Laurel, Somerset County Vocational and Technical Schools, Warren Township, Passaic Valley Regional High School, Metuchen, Margate, Hainesport, Long Branch Public Schools, Woodbine, River Dell Regional, Manchester Township, North Bergen, Berkeley Township, Kittatinny Regional SD and Hampton Township SD, Galloway, North Plainfield

Do any schools in your district have partnerships with any organizations to provide services or educational opportunities to your students or their families?

Note that a high number of reporting districts, even those not identifying as “community schools,” have relationships with outside organizations and community members to meet the needs of their students.



Yes:

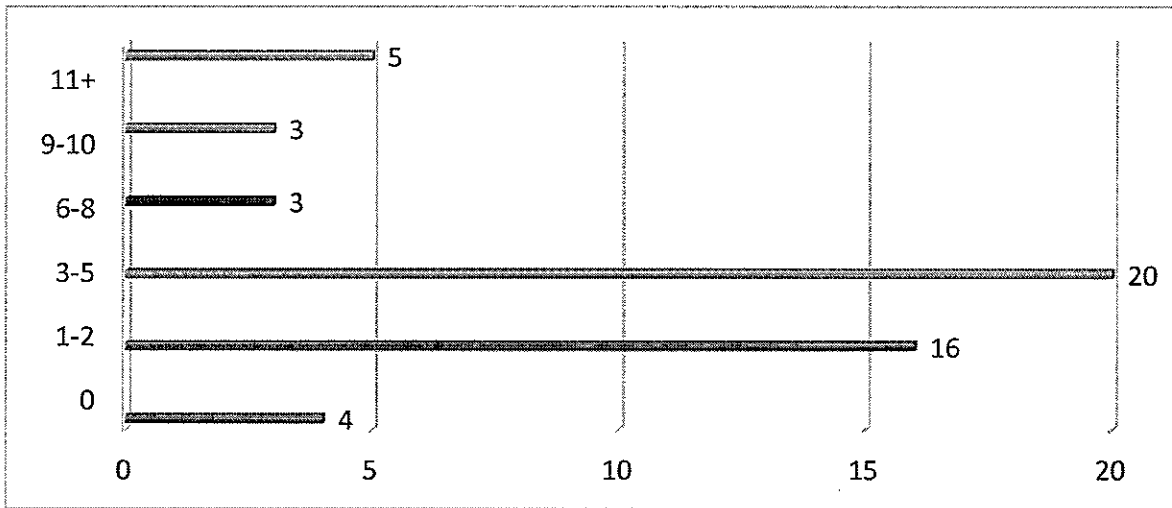
Carlstadt, East Rutherford School District, Piscataway Township, Little Egg Harbor, Egg Harbor City, Morris-Union Jointure Commission, Glen Ridge, Freehold Borough (K-8), Wildwood City, Newton Public Schools, Avalon/Stone Harbor, Easthampton Township School District, Greenwich Township in Warren Co., Woodbine, Scotch Plains-Fanwood, Green Brook, Roselle Park, Union County Educational Services Commission, Chatham, Kingsway Regional, Kenilworth, Mine Hill, Roselle, Dumont, Brigantine, Rahway Public Schools, Princeton Public Schools, Oxford Township, Sussex-Wantage Regional, Kearny, Westfield, Saddle Brook, Keyport, Hammonton, Hoboken, Mount Laurel, Somerset County Vocational and Technical Schools, Warren Township, Passaic Valley Regional High School, Metuchen, Margate, Hainesport, Long Branch Public Schools, Woodbine, River Dell Regional, Manchester Township, North Bergen, Berkeley Township, Kittatinny Regional SD and Hampton Township SD, Galloway, North Plainfield

No²:

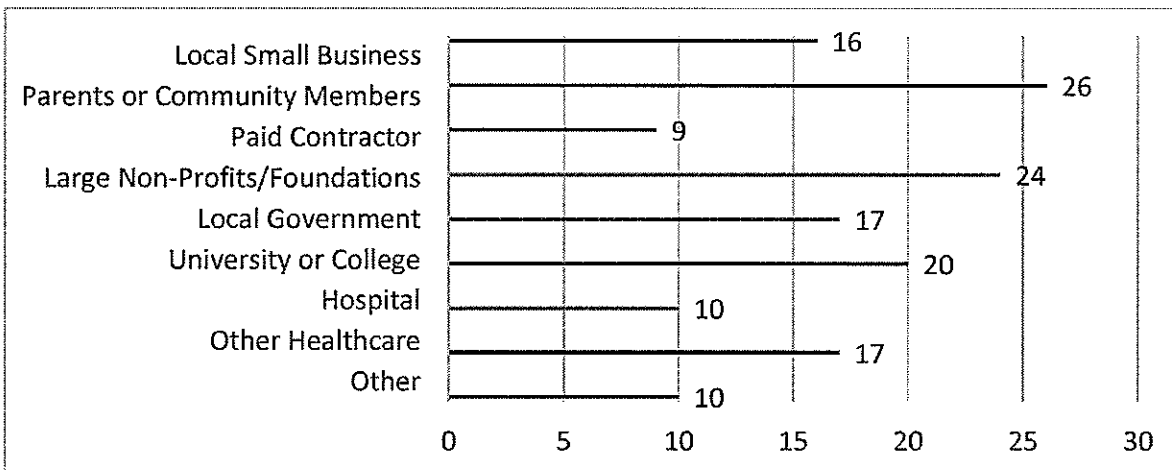
Garwood, Guttenberg

²In the original survey, six respondents answered “no” to this question, however, in the follow-up question, four of those listed organizations with whom they have partnerships. Only two of the six answered no in the original question and identified no partnerships. However, in the following question, four answered none.

Approximately, how many organizations have partnerships with schools in your district?



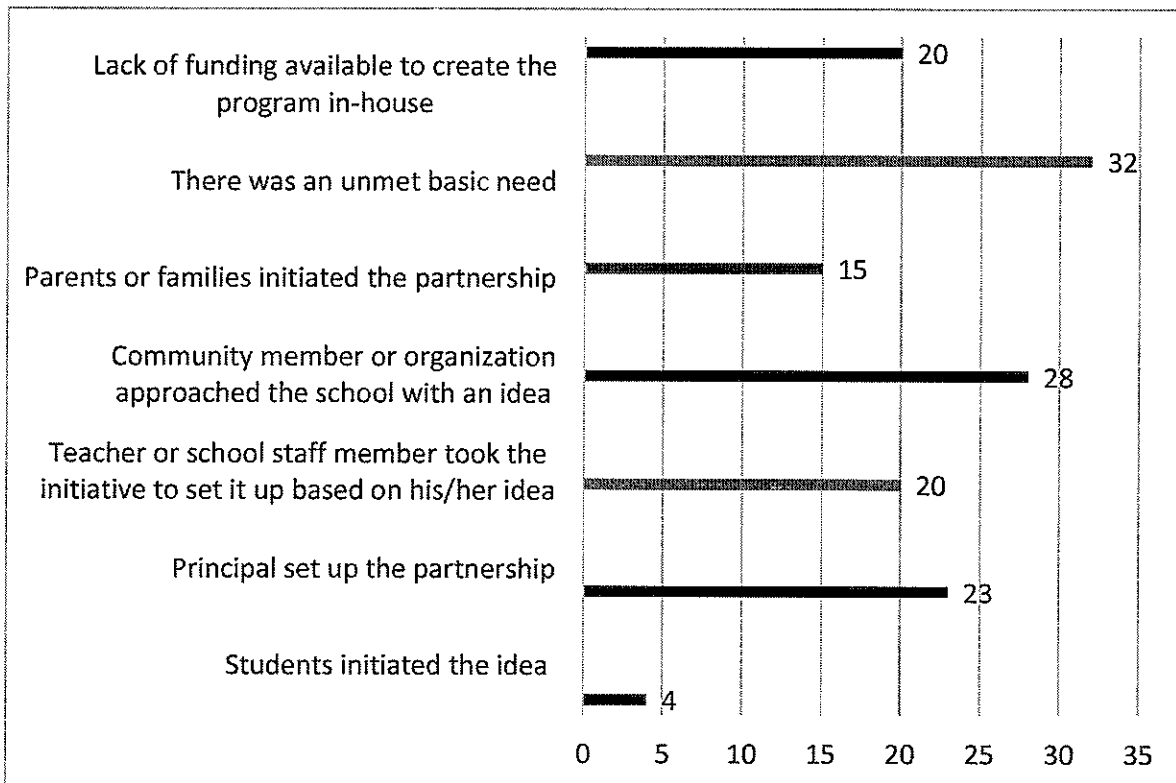
Who are your partnerships with? (Select all that apply)



Written comments:

Small local nonprofit
Small nonprofits
Margate Recreation Department
Wetlands Institute
Regional High School

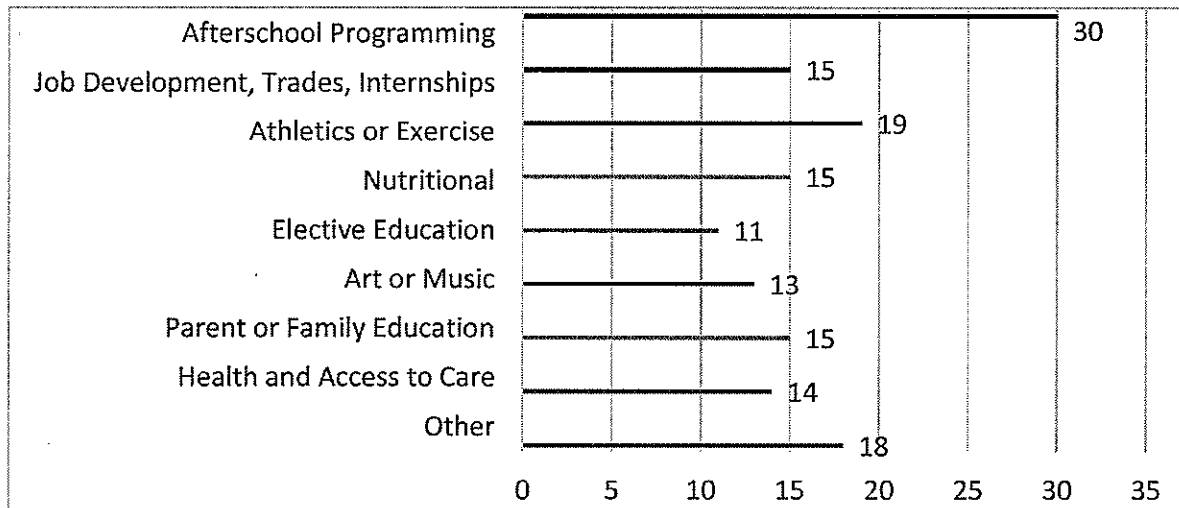
What factors contributed to the creation of your district's partnerships? (Select all that apply)



Written comments:

At the district level, we have a partnership with the Fanwood-Scotch Plains YMCA.
Superintendent set-up partnership and program
Directors set up affiliation agreements with local higher education institutions to provide consultations, school psychologist/ school social worker graduate interns.
County entities work well together to share resources. "Shared services" existed in our county before it was required.
The town's Recreation Department offers some cocurricular programs after school and during the summer.
Local government partnered with the school to construct a gym, classrooms, school and county library branch.

What do the partnership(s) provide?



Written comments:

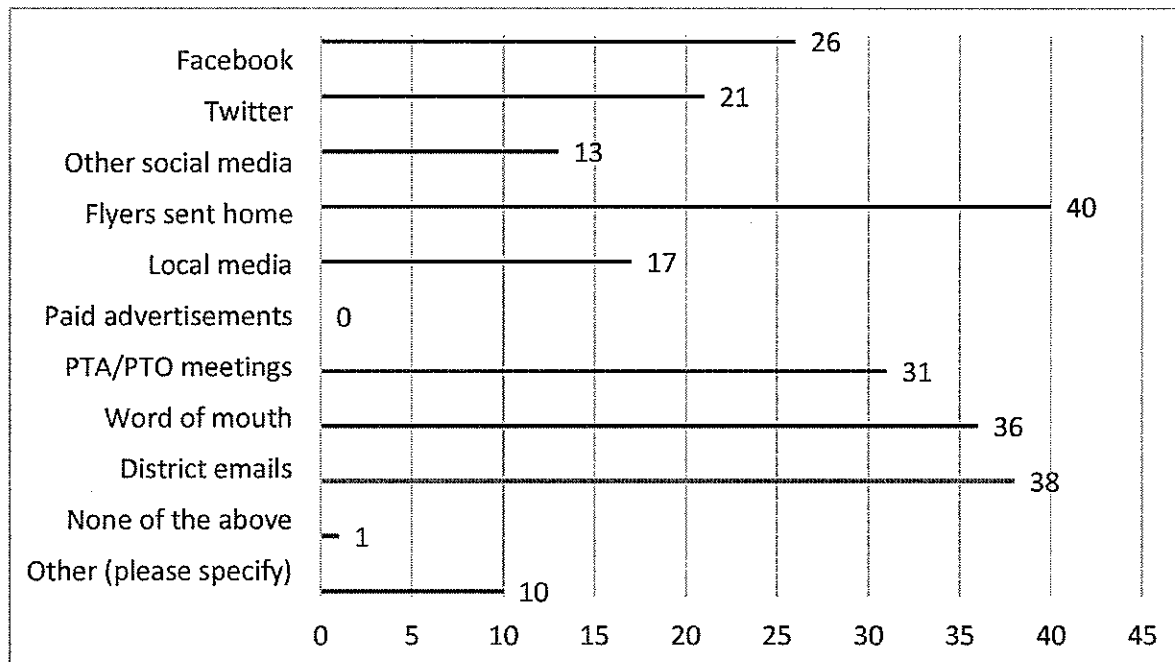
At the district level, we have a partnership with the Fanwood-Scotch Plains YMCA.
STEM/STEAM Opportunities to K-8 students.
Community sponsored events
Counseling center for students and their families
Mental health and substance use counseling.
Provided parent training in shared reading strategies at home to pre-K parents
Anti-Bullying programming (Olweus), Anti-Drug programming (LEAD)
Various services for children with special needs. They also offer services for support for the parents of students with special needs.
Mentoring
Counseling, recreation, mental health services. College courses, industry training and educational professional development
Planned parenthood and college information
Gifted education, family capacity building, drug prevention education, character education, community service opportunities, preschool coordination,
Summer STEAM program
Science/Wetlands Partnership, AtlanticCare Healthy Schools
Mental health services
Before and after child care
School supplies for students
Superintendent set-up partnership and program
Directors set up affiliation agreements with local higher education institutions to provide consultations, school psychologist/school social worker graduate interns.

County entities work well together to share resources. "Shared services" existed in our county before it was required.

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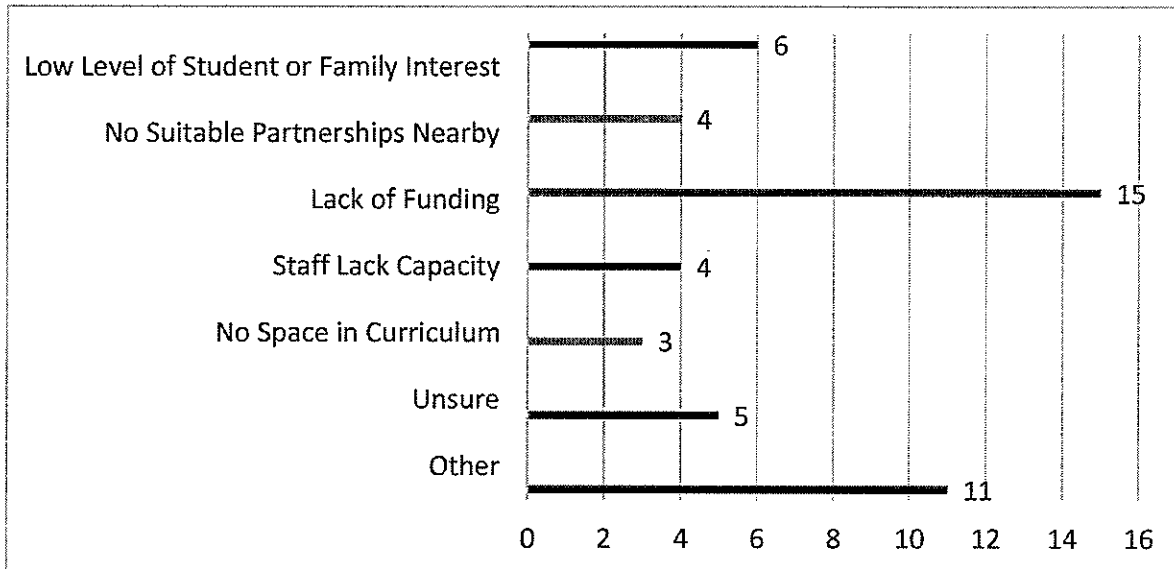
How did you get the word out about the services or partnerships available at your school?



Written comments:

Website and referrals by our staff members.
Newsletter, website
District and school websites.
District Website
Back to school nights
District all calls
Website
Website
District website
auto-call system

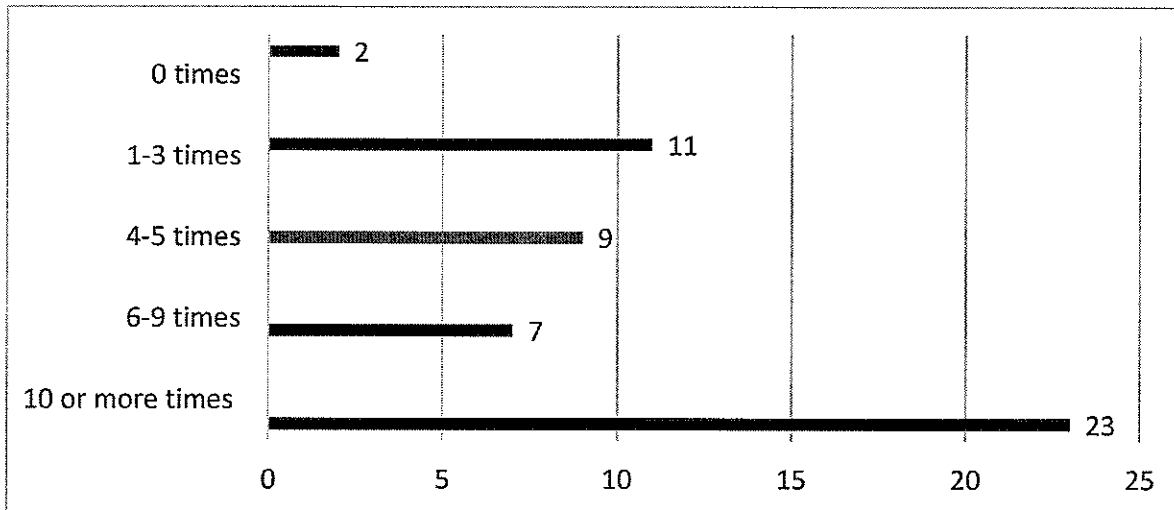
What is the biggest obstacle to creating sustainable partnerships in your district/school?



Written comments:

As a small district there is a lack of staff to create these partnerships.
No obstacles
With multiple partnerships, we do not have enough staff to oversee and optimize the good work being done.
Often it is assumed that everyone in our district is wealthy and does not require assistance. Luckily, our community is generous.
Don't really have any obstacles
Developing and maintaining relationships is time consuming.
Meeting academic priorities of reform take precedent right now
No obstacles
A stable source of funding
Time, extent of need across the county
Often, exploration is required to find partners - time investment

Not including Board of Education meetings, how many times over the past school year did district leadership engage with community members (i.e. parents, local organizations, student groups) regarding partnerships or other important school matters?



Please list 1-2 examples of your District's active engagement with community members around partnerships or decision-making.

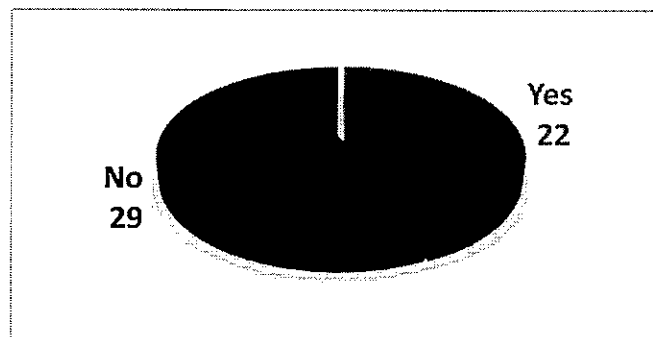
Healthy Schools Initiatives, School Gardens
"Green Brook 2020" monthly meetings on the status of the district and brainstorming opportunities for the years to come.
Attendance at Town Council meetings where open discussions took place.
Technology Plan Bond Referendum
We work closely with the town to provide students with additional opportunities.
Street fairs, memorial ceremonies, holiday town tree lighting
The Student Wellness Committee includes parents, teachers, student, nurses and administrators and supports and monitors wellness activities across the district. The before and after school care program interfaces with district administrators, parents and staff members to best serve our students.
Our CBI programs provide opportunities for engagement with a multitude of local businesses and corporations as well as other county and state agencies
Meetings with community members involved in the partnership.
Education Foundation to fund the upstart of several programs; Community Education Program to run SAT Prep and Summer Enrichment;
Strategic Planning; Community Council

Parent Forums
1. Regular attendance at planning meetings. 2. Reaching out to parents to elicit support
Special education parent advisory council; key communicators meetings with parents /building principals; local library representation to ensure collaboration
Parental involvement meetings
Parent/Student Engagement Committee; Strategic Planning
Our district participates in Coalition for Safe Communities which includes numerous stakeholders in its activities. This is just one example.
Monthly 'Coffee with the Superintendent' community meetings. District strategic planning.
We established a Diversity Council that, in addition to teachers and administrators, includes representatives from the YMCA, the Human Services Commission, Corner House, and a family counseling organization. We met multiple times in the past year, and we have been particularly successful in addressing the needs and concerns of many of our undocumented families.
Affiliation with Seton Hall University (SHU) and our secondary age students with autism. SHU provides our students with job sampling opportunities and our staff meet with the administration at SHU during the year. This is an outstanding, locally grown, partnership. Our students participate in Operation Shoebox, where students package at our school or the business location food or toiletries for our troops overseas. This is outstanding!
Attending all PTA meetings and events, attending all Education Foundation meetings and events, attending Chamber of Conference meetings
Superintendent Advisory Council Parent Involvement Nights in Math, ELA, Science and ESL
Bond Referendum Meetings (presentations, social media, surveys). After School Programs (meetings, flyers, emails)
Members of the staff serve on parent and community groups. Our staff tends to commit to our town. Our turnover is low and we know members of the community and local organizations.
Meetings with Booster Club organizations to work in collaboration with the school. Meetings with Mayor and Council look and finding ways for community groups and school groups can work together.
Education Foundation, Bayshore Success Center, Public Library
Outlining the establishment of an advanced practice nurse. Use of high school students in a heritage Chinese school to teach Chinese yoyo skills to elementary students in an after-school program.
Superintendent's Walk in the Park Engagement Series; Hoboken High School Parent Engagement Days at Housing Authority
Community wide emergency drill. Monthly district-wide PTO meetings.
Partnerships with Mid-Atlantic Center for the Arts for free after school programming; SPAN partnership; Dental clinic; flu shot clinic
Engagement with County business partnership and chamber of commerce, rotary or local businesses.
Survey regarding before-after school opportunities
Community forums, parent night financial aid workshops
SEPAG, Chinese school, Food Bank,
Creation of design team of community partners to provide guidance and support at the macro-level to the district's community schools model, and engage in partnerships at the micro-level that employ organizational strengths and provide mutual benefits.
Parent Curriculum Forums; Special Education Parents Advisory Council; Educational Foundation
Community Connections annual event, collaboration with other island district schools, other community events

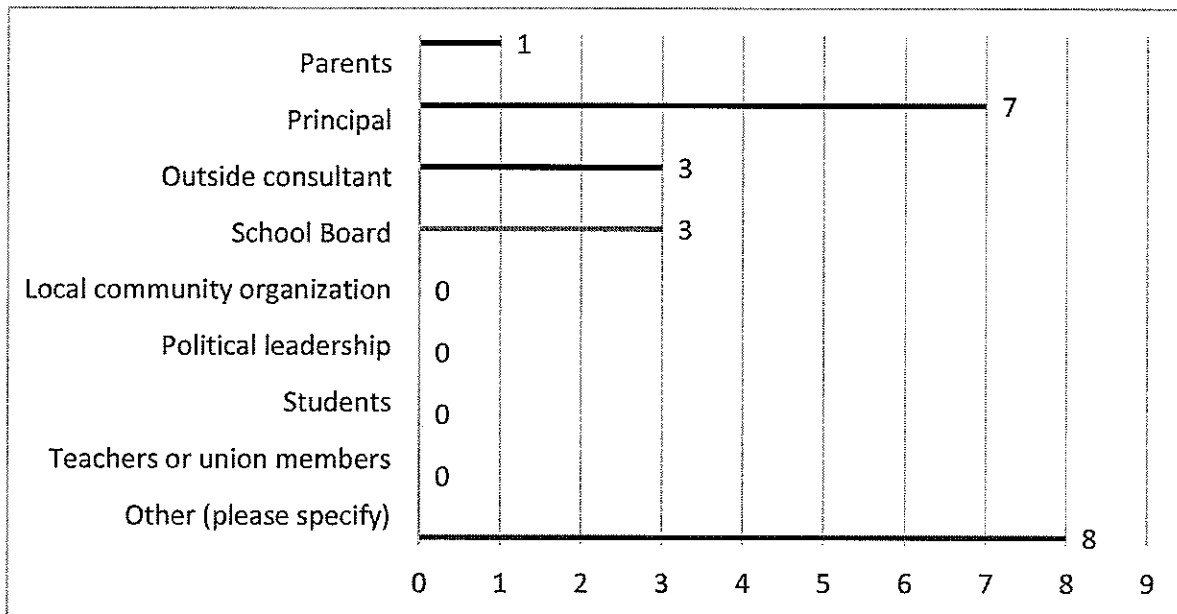
Highly active PTO. Strong relationship with sending regional HS Partnership with Township Committee
Our school gardens allow students to grow crops and donate a portion of the harvest to food pantries right here in our community. Through our partnerships with various health organizations we are able to host family health fairs where we offer health screenings and wellness services.
Looking into partnering with Stockton U. as a professional development school.
We utilize the PTO and the Special Education Parent Advisory Board as sounding boards.
Superintendent's Advisory Committee; Cooperation with Police on opioid instructional programs
Health night
We invite them to a stakeholder meeting.
We are working with a local child care agency for aftercare that is needed in our region. We also offer a community based pool program for children and adults. Lastly, we run a night school with a plethora of options for all ages.
Serve as members of a county group that plans for needs (led by United Way). Help plan fundraisers that support partnership between and among Cooper Levensen Law firm, the Food Bank of Southern NJ, and several Atlantic County school districts
Five parent forums held in mornings, evenings, Saturdays. Additional meetings with parents of students with disabilities, parents of ELL students, parents part of school safety committee, PTA presidents' meetings three times yearly.
Joint BOE and Township Meetings. Hosting statewide security summit

Have you or anyone in your district undertaken a formal "needs assessment" in your school community? (i.e. survey to parents, stakeholder focus groups, door-to-door interviews, etc.)

It is interesting to note that fewer than half of the respondents have done a formal needs assessment, even as they are providing services and engaging in partnerships.



Who in your district conducted the formal “needs assessment?”



Written comments:

Superintendent
Directors/ principals
Superintendent
Our Strategic Plan for 2018-2023 is currently being developed, which requires multiple surveys of various constituents.
Completed as part of Strategic Planning. District administration and Board worked together to develop and implement survey.
School Climate Survey
Did not complete
Superintendent, Principals, Teachers, Community Organizations

If you have thoughts, concerns, or further comments about Community Schools, school/organization partnerships, community engagement or the potential of these partnerships, please feel free to expand below.

These survey questions have given me food for thought and I plan to have a meeting and create a needs assessment survey to give to our parents.
List of current (successful) community schools?
Great potential to support communities; funding is lacking.
Having affiliation agreements with higher education institutions allow a school district to provide mental health services/ parent training for no cost
Community Schools is a wonderful concept that we are already very active with, but what holds us back is lack of funding.
The work of educating children and providing for their physical and emotional needs goes well beyond 8:00 - 3:00 and the traditional scope of the public schools. The Princeton Public Schools welcome the support of our community partners and would be excited about working with them to create true community schools that provide a broader network of resources for our students and families.
It would be great to learn about other district partnerships so we can all learn about new opportunities we might explore.
This is an excellent topic to share with districts all over our state. I also feel NJASA and groups such as NJSBA could scan the landscape outside of NJ to see how other states provide these opportunities.
Community partnerships take time to form. Schools and districts need to have continuity of committed staff members.
We would like to expand our community partnerships and opportunities to serve our students and their families as a true community school.
We have a shared service relationship with Stone Harbor School; our Avalon school building is used throughout the year by borough, recreation dept. and community library.
I think there is room to increase the number of partnerships. We do also partner with the local MAC for programs and assemblies, as well as counseling organization. Recently Boy Scouts have expressed an interest, too.
There is simply an unmet need for wrap around mental health services.
We need a more broad-based community health program along with a family/parenting program.

Individuals Interviewed for this Report

- Steve Cochrane, Superintendent of Schools, Princeton Public Schools, NJ
- G. Kennedy Greene, Superintendent, Newton Public Schools, NJ
- Patricia Heindel, Co-Director of the School Culture and Climate Initiative; Director, Center for Human and Social Development, College of Saint Elizabeth, NJ
- Catherine Nti, Executive Director New Jersey, Center for Supportive Schools
- Jared J. Ramage, Superintendent, Red Bank Borough Public Schools, NJ
- Liz Warner, Co-Director of the School Culture and Climate Initiative; Chair, New Jersey School Health and Climate Coalition; Associate Director, United Way of Northern New Jersey
- Site visit to Rivera Community Middle School, Trenton, NJ, with Principal Bernadette Trapp and Anniesha Walker, Community School Director and Mercer Street Friends Associate Director, during the November 2, 2017 Trenton Community School Mini-Conference

Author Biographies

Julie Larrea Borst is Co-Coordinator for the NJ Community Schools Coalition. Julie also is a volunteer organizer for Save Our Schools NJ; a Special Education Parent Advocate; and an education blogger who writes about special education, public education funding, and education policy. She serves as an Advisory Board member for the Public Education Defense Fund and on the Special Education Steering Committee for BATs. Julie regularly provides testimony to the NJ Senate and Assembly Education Committees, and to the NJ State Board of Education. She holds degrees in Applied Sciences and International Marketing Management from Pace University.

Gregory Stankiewicz serves as Co-Coordinator for the NJ Community Schools Coalition. Greg's previous policy experience includes working at the Office of Budget Operations and Review at the New York City Board of Education; for the State of New Jersey's Office of Management and Budget; and as Chief Operating Officer for the nonprofit New Jersey Community Capital, the largest community development financial institution in the state. Greg is an adjunct lecturer currently teaching a graduate course in community economic development for the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy, Rutgers University, New Brunswick. His research and writing focus on state and local fiscal issues, community development, urban politics, and public education. He holds a PhD in Public Policy and an MPA from the Woodrow Wilson School, Princeton University; master's and bachelor's degrees from Harvard University; and a graduate diploma with honors in International Law from the Australian National University.



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Good Morning to All Members of the Joint Committee on the Public Schools:

My name is Dr. Keith Benson. I am a Camden resident as well as a parent to a child who has attended and still attends public schools in Camden. I am a former Camden public school teacher of 13 years, and currently the President of the Camden Education Association. It is my pleasure to be here this morning to discuss Community schools and their impact in Camden.

I would first like to preface my following statements by explicitly declaring, good research matters for its potential to inform and influence policy. Unfortunately, however, what is often passed as research, has been simply organizations starting off with an agenda they wish to advance, and allowing their desired outcome to dictate their research. I am firmly against that practice for the simple fact that such actions cloud authentic findings and thereby prevents us from finding real approaches to improving public education, and the public education experience, for our children and neighborhoods.

As far as community schools go, conceptually, an overwhelming body of research is clear that the stronger the bond between communities and schools, between parents and schools, the more both students benefit in their chances for future academic success, and the more the community benefits in kind. This educational truism is one of the rare instances in education policy where there is little debate: that to improve schools, an engaged community with engaged parents are a prerequisite.

Community schools provide an educational approach to break down barriers that unfortunately exist between schools, community and residents. Ideally, all schools should be community spaces that educate and are responsive to the unique needs of its neighborhood and its residents. But this should especially be the reality in urban communities where students can benefit from the availability of expanded supports and services, and where residents who are mostly black and Latino of limited economic means, have been structurally forbidden from meaningfully participating in local public education systems due to various forms of takeover and marginalization.

Specific to Camden, our residents members have been shown there is no welcoming space for them to "lean in", to have critiques heard, or to participate within their local education institutions despite our schools being "public". Our district has been taken over by the state. We have an all-appointed school board and have not had the right to elect our board since

"There is NO **strength** without UNITY."

2002. On top of all of that, we have a state-appointed superintendent who has had total control over every decision relating to our schools for the past five years. The impact of such prolonged de-democratization in Camden, like other urban areas across the state and country, is that residents learn they are unwanted and not welcome in our public schools – and certainly not considered the partners and resources they should be.

To date however, Camden has 5 Community Schools where parents and community are explicitly welcome to participate in the daily operations of the school. The community communicates the desire to see certain things in their neighborhood schools, and the schools, through grant dollars accommodate their desires. Neighborhoods have requested expanded access to the arts through music classes at one school, learned about healthy food and eating habits at another; Community Schools provides glasses and optical care at another school; made residents aware of methods to care for pets at one community school, and in response to President Trump's push to limit immigration and deport immigrants, another school availed the local community to immigration attorneys to help individuals understand their rights.

These instances are not meant to indicate that Community Schools are one-off, events-oriented approach to education, but to indicate that Community Schools are responsive to the needs and wishes of their respective communities that have been shunned for much too long. And while Community Schools are a near-universally embraced approach to school turnaround by residents, especially when compared to closure and takeover, we still have yet to truly see the greatness Community Schools can be in future once the process and concept are fully adopted and implemented.

Developing and growing Community Schools takes time, and is not glamorous work, but no true progress is. Undoing decades of race and income-based marginalization takes time, but when investments in time, energy, and dollars coalesce in the Community Schools efforts, the results prove such investments to be worthwhile.

Our city, and cities like ours need more Community Schools and the full support of this Joint Committee. Thank You.

Dr. Keith E. Benson
President
Camden Education Association

Dr. Benson's Contact Number: 856.305.6193

"There is NO strength without UNITY."

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