



Education Public Policy Proposal

Community Schools: Creating a Fair Chance for All Students

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Question?

How Can State Policy Promote Effective Strategies That Reduce Non-Academic Barriers to Learning and Lead to Improved Student Performance?



Overview

- What is a community school?
- Current situation in Pennsylvania
- How to finance proposal
- Anticipated results



Our Answer

Emerging evidence suggests that Community Schools may positively impact student achievement, with the potential to positively impact attendance, absenteeism, and dropout rates (Moore & Emig, 2014).

Community schools are also about focusing joint community and school resources on student success which leads to community success.



What is a Community School?

- **Leveraging of community resources** to provide services to students and families, including physical and mental health, vision, enrichment, ELL
- **Integrated focus** on academics, health and social services, youth and community development and community engagement
- **Schools are the center of the community** and bring together many partners to offer a range of supports and opportunities to children, youth, families and communities and are open to everyone – all day, every day, evenings and weekends. As a result of its comprehensive plan for meeting the needs of students and families, a strong community school drives both student success and community health

Community Schools lead to improved student learning, stronger families and healthier communities



Examples of community schools ...

The Coalition for Community Schools, based in Washington, DC, considers community schools a strategy rather than a monolithic model.

- Child Trends estimates that more than 1.5 million students in nearly 3,000 public schools in the United States are enrolled in schools engaged in some aspect of this practice which they term Integrated Student Supports, and that 75% of the students being served are high-poverty children of color.
- Excellent examples can be found in Nashville, Cincinnati, New York City, Tulsa, and Boston
- In Pennsylvania, the Bethlehem Area School District has begun a process of high-level cross-sector collaboration between local universities, corporations, hospitals, and the Lehigh Valley United Way funding the site coordinator in four community schools



Primary Non-Academic Barriers to Academic Achievement

- **Inadequate health care**
- **Food insecurity**
- **Family relations and family stress**
- **Deteriorating neighborhood characteristics**

Source: Berliner, David C. (2009). *Poverty and Potential: Out-of-School Factors and School Success*. Boulder and Tempe: Education and the Public Interest Center & Education Policy Research Unit. Retrieved [date] from <http://epicpolicy.org/publication/poverty-and-potential>



Community Schools' Effectiveness

Student Learning: significant and widely evident gains in academic achievement and in essential areas of non-academic development.

Family Engagement: increased stability and are more able to meet basic needs. They communicate more with teachers and are more involved in their children's school.

School Effectiveness: improved parent-teacher relationships and increased teacher satisfaction and more positive school environments.

Community Vitality: better use of school buildings, increased security, heightened community value and better rapport among students and residents.

Community Schools in Action...

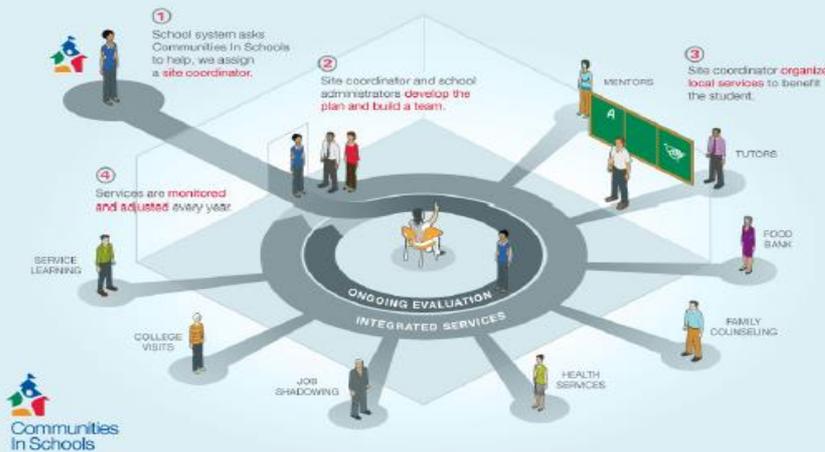
http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_detailpage&v=1RvqgEoch8&list=PL1104DE7676760782



How Communities In Schools Works

Through a school-based site coordinator, Communities In Schools connects students and their families to critical community resources tailored to local needs. Our **evidence-based** and **rigorously evaluated** model has been proven to help children succeed in school.

Creating a Community of Support



During the 2009-2010 school year, Communities In Schools served more than 1.35 million students in 3,000 schools. Of the at-risk students monitored who received targeted interventions:

- 98% of students monitored as potential dropouts remained in school.
- 77% of students met their attendance improvement goals.
- 88% of students met their behavior improvement goals.
- 79% of students met their reduced suspensions goals.
- 82% of students met their academic achievement improvement goals.
- 82% of students met their reduction in high-risk behavior goals.
- 79% of graduating students went on to some form of post-secondary education.

Community Schools are Smart Schools



Conventional School Model

Conventional school models, like outdated rotary phones, serve a primarily binary function - teachers teach and students learn. Like smart phones, community schools have a strategically-aligned network of programs, partnerships, and strategies that connect students, their families, and the community to needed supports. Students receive real-world instruction to help them develop the problem-solving skills needed for the 21st Century.





Funding for Initiative

Allow Title I to cover:

- a) Coordination of services**
- b) Technical assistance & capacity building**
- c) Family literacy**

Allow Title II to cover:

- a) Instruction related activities**
- b) Professional development**



Results Focused

- Children are ready to enter school
- Students succeed academically
- Students are actively involved in learning and their community
- Students are healthy: physically, socially and emotionally
- Students live and learn in stable and supportive environments
- Families are involved and supportive—of children and their education
- Communities are desirable places to live



**A Shared Vision is Key
to a Sustainable Community School.**

“Few if any forces in human affairs are as powerful as a shared vision.”

(Peter Senge, 1990)