



Why Educators Support Community Schools

A community school brings together a set of partnerships that helps students overcome the barriers that cause them to lose focus and hope. Their emphasis on caring for and uplifting all of a child's various needs (academics, health, nutritional, psychological, etc.) is what sets these schools apart. These successful outcomes are achieved through the collaboration of several partners and volunteers, from pediatricians and dentists to mentors. By providing these comprehensive services directly on the school campus, community schools strengthen students, support parents and build up neighborhoods.

Community schools recognize that students cannot focus inside the classroom if their basic needs are not being met outside the classroom. Students who are hungry, sick, anxious, or troubled may be too overwhelmed to learn. At the more than 5,000 community schools across the nation, their needs are acknowledged and addressed.

Community Schools Address the Achievement Gap and the Opportunity Gap

- Community schools bring neighborhoods together under one roof and work to address obstacles to student learning and family stability.
- The community schools' collaborative approach connects students and families to trusted partners and programs -- doctors, dentists, mental health, and social service supports.
- When students are happy and healthy at home and at school, we see positive outcomes: they're ready for school, attend consistently, have stronger social skills and succeed academically, physically, socially, and emotionally.

Community Schools Foster Parental and Community Connections

- Because every school's community is unique, every community school is unique. Community schools are based on the premise that those closest to students and their environment are in the best position to make the choices that will ensure success.
- While educators' expertise is valued and respected, all stakeholders are empowered as partners with a voice in the learning community.
- Community schools enlist trusted neighborhood partners who reflect and share the priorities, values and culture of the communities they serve. They adapt to their community's needs and expand support services to the entire community. Many provide community support services such as health care, mental-health counseling, and other support, before, during, and after school, on the weekends and all year long.

Community Schools Give Students More Time to Learn and Teachers More Time to Teach

- Community schools ensure all students, regardless of ZIP code, receive the support, tools and time to learn.
- Together, all stakeholders—educators, parents, partners and local leaders—advocate for a strong and proven curriculum, engaging students with culturally relevant, challenging material and robust classes.
- Because the more time students spend in school, the better, community schools focus on positive discipline practices as well as social and emotional learning supports, resulting in fewer suspensions and harsh punishments.
- Community schools champion high-quality teaching, smaller class sizes and customized learning over high-stakes testing to foster a love of learning.

Single schools, entire school districts, cities and counties have embraced the community school concept. Community schools are successful because they deliver real solutions to students in struggling schools. By enlisting community partners, this proven, collaborative model unites and transforms entire communities in the effort to build the schools our students deserve.