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Pittsburgh Public Schools: Community Schools

Final Report

JULY 2019

Leah Brown | Neil Naftzger | Frances Miller

MAKING RESEARCH **RELEVANT**

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1. Introduction

The Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS) Community Schools initiative aims to support students, their families, and the broader school community by creating partnerships among district schools and community-based organizations and providers. Community Schools aim to cultivate conditions that allow children to succeed by developing student learning, engaging families, improving school effectiveness, and revitalizing the community (Blank, Melaville, & Shah, 2003).

The key components of Community Schools are ensuring that (a) the needs and assets of the school community are identified and (b) high-quality programming and services are provided. The latter should address these needs while considering the assets of the school community, particularly the academic, social, and emotional needs of students enrolled in Community Schools.

Recent evidence shows that well-implemented Community Schools can support school improvement (Maier, Daniel, Oakes, & Lam, 2017). The results from rigorous impact studies of various well-implemented Community School strategies—as reviewed by Maier et al. (2017)—have demonstrated improvements in reading and mathematics achievement, grade point average, school-day attendance, behavioral incidents, and student perceptions of school climate. In addition, Community Schools have been shown to improve parent involvement and engagement, which, in turn, is connected to how well students perform in school.

2. Community Schools in Pittsburgh Public Schools

Beginning in July 2016, PPS committed to creating partnerships between schools and community resources by developing a Community Schools policy and sustaining funding for these schools in collaboration with local, state, and federal entities (School District of Pittsburgh, 2016).

PPS's Community School mission aims to ensure the following (Pittsburgh Public Schools, 2018):

- Children are prepared to enter school.

- Students attend school regularly.

- Students are actively involved in their community.

- Families are involved with their children's education.

- Schools collaborate with families and communities.

- Students are provided the resources they need to succeed academically.

- Students are healthy (physically, socially, and emotionally).

- Students are in safe, supportive, and stable environments.

- Communities are desirable places to live.

Schools are formally designated as Community Schools through an application process that is managed by a steering committee, whose members are determined by the district superintendent.

PPS's Community Schools policy consists of 10 standards, which fall into two categories: (a) structures and functions and (b) opportunities (see Figure 1). The structures and functions are designed to identify the building blocks that are needed to successfully implement Community Schooling. Opportunities support high-quality teaching and learning. The aims of these standards and how schools address them will be discussed in more detail in the Findings section of this report.

Figure 1. Community School Standards

Structures and functions	Opportunities
1. Collaborative leadership 2. Planning 3. Coordinating infrastructure 4. Student-centered data 5. Continuous improvement 6. Sustainability	7. Powerful learning 8. Integrated health and social supports 9. Authentic family engagement 10. Authentic community engagement

3. Current Evaluation

During the 2018–19 school year, PPS contracted with the American Institutes for Research (AIR) to conduct an evaluation of Community Schools within the district. The evaluation aimed to address questions of implementation and gather preliminary data about the perceptions of impact.

The implementation evaluation addressed questions of fidelity to the PPS Community Schools model and conditions for successful implementation, replicability, and sustainability. The six research questions were as follows:

1. What strategies do schools use to implement Community Schools, and to what extent are schools implementing the Community Schools model with fidelity?

2. What are the primary drivers of effective implementation of the Community Schooling strategy?

3. What services and supports are provided to students and families by outside partner agencies, including local and regional service agencies, universities, hospitals, and other allied health education and human service agencies?

4. To what extent are community partners providing services with quality?

5. What are staff perceptions and understanding of the Community Schools model?

6. What are the challenges with implementing Community Schools and how can the implementation be improved?

The outcome evaluation aimed to answer two additional research questions:

7. How do key school stakeholders define success for the Community School effort at their school?

8. To what extent do staff perceive improvements in student outcomes by being in a Community School or receiving specific services?

AIR used three data sources to answer the research questions: (a) qualitative data gathered from interviews and focus groups with key stakeholders; (b) observations of afterschool activities; and (c) program documents, including monthly reports and service updates, site plans, and needs assessment reports. Appendix A provides a complete description of the sample, data sources, and analytic approach used.

4. Limitations of the Current Evaluation

This evaluation has several important limitations. Much of the information was self-reported by the site manager, lead partners, and school staff who are stakeholders invested in the initiative's success and could be biased in their impressions. Further, information came from a limited number of respondents. The evaluation did not collect objective measures of outcomes (e.g., examination of student record data) but relied on perceptions from key stakeholders.

5. Findings

The following subsections describe the key findings from the evaluation that triangulate across data sources. We begin by providing findings organized by each of the 10 Community School Standards and then present information about perceived outcomes.

Structures and Functions

The Community School structures (as listed in Figure 1) include collaborative practices to ensure that families, educators, and community members are connected to the Community School's vision; capacity-building supports that are responsive to the needs of Community

Schools; and stakeholder engagement that facilitates relational trust, a focus on equity, and a continuous improvement process.

Standard 1: Collaborative Leadership

In Community Schools, all stakeholders, including the school, community partners, and the district, should share responsibility for establishing and holding stakeholders accountable for the desired outcomes. As such, the school should establish a Community Schools site-based leadership team, which involves families and community members, community partners, school leadership, school staff, and students. The team should be led by a site manager who guides collaborative planning, implementation, and oversight of Community Schools. Also, the principal should work with the site manager to ensure that community partners are integrated into and coordinated with other school programs and services.

Site-Based Leadership Team. Site managers from all five Community Schools said they had site-based leadership teams. According to the monthly reports, the site teams at three of the five schools have regularly monthly meetings. One school site team met regularly during the fall but was unable to sustain these meetings in the spring because of scheduling conflicts. One school did not meet regularly during the school year. During the interviews, site managers mentioned that the primary challenges with convening the site team were (a) not enough staff in the school and competing priorities among staff ($n = 2$) and (b) scheduling meetings to fit within people's schedules ($n = 2$).

In three of the five schools, site managers chose members for the team; two schools used a hybrid approach in which the site manager selected some site team members and some school staff volunteered to participate (see Table 1).

Table 1. Site Team Formation Method

	Arsenal 6–8	Faison K–5	Langley K–8	Lincoln PK–5	Westinghouse 6–12
Site manager selected members	✔		✔	✔	
Site manager selected some members and some members volunteered		✔			✔

Note. Data came from site manager interviews and site team interviews.

Most of the site team members had diverse roles (see Table 2). The roles that were most commonly included were the site manager (five schools), teachers (five schools), and community members (four schools). Only one school included students on its site team.

Table 2. Roles of Staff on the Site Teams

	Arsenal 6–8	Faison K–5	Langley K–8	Lincoln PK–5	Westinghouse 6–12
Site manager	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Teachers	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Principal or assistant principal		✔	✔	✔	
Guidance counselor or social worker		✔	✔		✔
School nurse	✔		✔		✔
Support staff		✔			✔
Students			✔		
Parents or family members		✔	✔	✔	
Community members		✔	✔	✔	✔

Note. Data came from school action plans and site manager interviews.

Interview and focus group respondents discussed some additional roles that they felt would be beneficial to include on the site teams. For example, early childhood education staff (three respondents from three schools); students (three respondents from two schools); parents (two respondents from two schools); and additional teachers (two respondents from two schools). Some of the strategies that site managers mentioned when engaging families, community members, and staff included building relationships with stakeholders (*n* = 2), targeting stakeholders who are invested in school improvement to serve as champions (*n* = 2), and engaging with local businesses and community organizations (*n* = 2).

According to the monthly reports, site teams most frequently discussed what programming to offer (mentioned in nine monthly reports of five schools), the site action plan (mentioned in six monthly reports of four schools), planning for specific events (mentioned in five monthly reports of two schools), developing resources for future implementation (mentioned in four monthly reports of two schools), and reflecting on progress (mentioned in four monthly reports of four schools).

Although all schools had a site team, only two site managers said that the site team has the ability to make decisions related to Community Schools implementation (one site manager said that such power is split between the principal and the site team). Two site managers said the principal ultimately has the decision-making power, and one site manager said the decision-making power is divided between the principal and the lead partner agency.

Principal Engagement. Almost all site managers (*n* = 4) said principal support and buy-in is critical to the success of Community Schools. However, the level of principal involvement and the quality of the relationship between the site manager and the principal varied by school. Two site managers said they have formal weekly meetings with the

> *"If the principal doesn't see [the site manager] as their right-hand person, the person that they can trust, a lot of the stuff starts to break down because you really have to build that strong relationship with the principal because if you're not working together, then you're never going to be as successful as we'd all like to be."*

school principal; one site manager also indicated having frequent informal meetings at the school. One site manager does not have formal meetings with the principal but is in constant communication and has informal meetings frequently. Two site managers said they rarely or never meet with the school principal, and the principal was not involved with implementation of the Community Schools model. Of the three site managers who met with their principal, most of them described the principal as being supportive and said they have an excellent relationship. One site manager said the relationship is "fair to good."

The most common way that both site managers and principals said that principals were involved in the Community Schools model was in providing input on programming or Community Schools events (four respondents from three schools). Some principals engage site managers by including them on the leadership team (two respondents from two schools), and some support site managers by offering them support more generally (two respondents from two schools).

Similarly, each lead partner had a different experience working with the school principals. One lead partner rarely communicated with the principal and primarily allowed the site manager to liaise with the principal. The other lead partner indicated having an excellent relationship with the principal, but the partner was not always as engaged as desired.

Standard 2: Planning

Planning for Community Schools involves three key components:

- There should be a shared vision and mission across all stakeholders, including school staff, families, and community partners.

- Schools should conduct a needs assessment and regularly solicit input from school staff, students, families, and community members.

- Site teams within each school should work collaboratively to develop a site action plan, which outlines the academic and nonacademic goals of the school as they pertain to Community Schools and the ways they will measures progress toward these goals. The action plan should

describe the roles of families, community partners, the site team, and the site manager. It should be informed by existing school- and student-level data (e.g., attendance, achievement scores), data collected from the needs assessment, and the school improvement plan.

Shared Vision. In the middle of the academic year, respondents universally reported a lack of shared vision for the Community School concept at their campuses. For example, five respondents (from three schools) said they do not believe a shared vision exists among key stakeholders, including school staff and community partners. However, five respondents from three schools said they believe a shared vision exists within members of the site team, and three of these respondents said this vision is not known by other school staff or families. Only one respondent said a shared vision exists across key stakeholders, including staff, community members, and families.

According to the site managers, by the end of the school year, some schools ($n = 3$) made progress toward developing a shared vision, but none of them felt that they were at a point where they needed to be. One site manager said that the school has made great strides in developing a shared vision among parents and partners, but securing buy-in from the teachers has proven difficult. Two site managers noted the lack of consistent communication between stakeholders as a barrier to developing a shared vision, whereas another voiced concern that initiative direction and leadership have been unclear.

Needs Assessment. According to the site managers, all five schools completed the needs assessment during the 2017–18 academic year and then used the needs assessment to develop each school's action plan. The needs assessment consisted of three questionnaires: one for students, one for staff, and one for families and community members. Two site managers said they used the needs assessment to identify priority areas. However, most site teams did not recall seeing the results of the needs assessment or were confused about what we were referring to when we asked about it ($n = 3$).

Most respondents reported the following challenges in effectively using data from the needs assessment:

- Low response rates, especially among parents (five respondents from five schools)
- Difficulty interpreting reports (three respondents from three schools)
- Findings not accurately reflecting the needs of the school and the community (three respondents from three schools)
- Timeliness of data and reporting (three respondents from two schools)
- Vague findings (two respondents from two schools)

Site managers and site teams made some suggestions for improving the needs assessment process. Among these suggestions are the following: Provide incentives to parents to increase response rates (three respondents from two schools), ask parents how they would like to be involved in the school (three respondents from three schools), and streamline the process by holding a 1-day survey administration event within the school (three respondents from three schools).

As part of this evaluation, AIR revised the needs assessment process. The revised needs assessment consists of 30 indicators that aim to ensure that

- families are actively involved in their children's education,

- students are actively involved in learning and their community,

- students are healthy,

- students live and learn in stable and supportive environments, and

- students succeed academically.

The revised needs assessment processes incorporates six data sources: (a) student needs assessment questionnaires (versions for Grades 3–5 and 6–12), (b) the staff needs assessment questionnaire, (c) the family needs assessment questionnaire, (d) the community member needs assessment questionnaire, (e) school-level records on achievement and attendance, and (f) other survey data collected by PPS (i.e., Tripod survey data, PPS Parent Survey data). Copies of the needs assessment questionnaires are in Appendix B.

Action Plans. Four of the five site managers reported collaborating with their site teams to develop the site action plan, and three site managers said the principal was involved in the process. In one school, the site team was not involved; instead, the site manager had informal discussions with school staff generally about the needs of the school. Teams selected priorities by considering gaps in supports as identified by the needs assessment (five respondents from four schools), incorporating the school improvement plan (four respondents from two schools), and conversing with school staff (three respondents from two schools). Two site teams mentioned that they created a chart to further clarify the vision for Community Schooling during the process.

Respondents from three schools said they further "triaged" the priorities by focusing on what services or programs would have the most impact on their school. Most schools look to the action plan when deciding what services or programs to bring to the school (five respondents from four schools).

AIR examined the action plans from each school to determine what elements they included in their plans.

- All five schools aligned their action plans with the Community School Standards.

- All five schools identified specific community partners or resources that are needed to achieve the priority or goal.

- Four schools aligned their action plan with the school's improvement plan.

- Three schools provided a rationale for why they identified the priority or goal (e.g., based on the needs assessment, based on conversations with school staff).

- Three schools identified the current status and next steps, which allows them to measure progress toward their goal.

Standard 3: Coordinating Infrastructure

Central to coordinating infrastructure is establishing a site manager who facilitates alignment of school, family, and community resources. The site manager should be a member of the school's leadership team and facilitate communication between the principal, teachers, other school staff, and community partners. In addition, the school should coordinate with community partners to ensure that the school is addressing issues identified in the needs assessment and assessing the effectiveness of provided services to continually improve supports.

Role of the Site Manager. Site managers ($n = 5$), principals ($n = 4$), and representatives from the lead agency ($n = 2$) said that the primary role of the site manager was to direct all aspects of Community Schools, including scheduling, overseeing partner meetings, and responding to partner challenges. However, each site manager approaches this process slightly differently. For example, site managers mentioned recruiting and onboarding new partners ($n = 4$), helping other school staff identify services ($n = 3$), scheduling programming ($n = 2$), convening partner meetings ($n = 5$), and supervising or observing partner activities or programs ($n = 3$). Other roles that site managers commonly mentioned were leading the site team ($n = 4$), supporting other school staff with addressing student needs ($n = 4$), and meeting with teachers ($n = 3$). Table 3 presents the roles of the site manager at each Community School. All site managers are involved with some sort of school team or process. For example, four site managers said they were part of the school leadership team, three said they were involved with school improvement planning meetings, and three said they were involved with instructional or resource teams.

Table 3. Roles of Site Manager

	Arsenal 6–8	Faison K–5	Langley K–8	Lincoln PK–5	Westinghouse 6–12
Leading the site team		✔	✔	✔	✔
Fulfilling immediate student needs (e.g., clothing, food)	✔	✔	✔	✔	
Coordinating and maintaining school partnerships	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Attending to the needs of specific students		✔	✔	✔	
Meeting with teachers		✔	✔	✔	
Supervising Community Schools staff and volunteers		✔		✔	
Parent outreach		✔		✔	
Field trips and school events		✔		✔	

Note. Data came from site manager interviews.

Coordination Between School and Community Partners. Principals from all schools with a lead partner (*n* = 3) said that they meet with leaders from the lead partner at least every other month. One principal said that most communication between the lead partner and the school went through the site manager. Two principals said they believed that the relationship between them and the lead partner was a quality one.

One way that schools and community partner members coordinate is through partner meetings. As previously mentioned, all five site managers said that they convene partner meetings. On average, schools met with partners for 5 of the 6 months between October and March (range = 2–6 months). According to the monthly reports, site managers and partners talked during the partner meetings about challenges and best practices (mentioned in six monthly reports of two schools), planning events or activities (mentioned in six monthly reports of two schools), collaboration between partners (mentioned in five monthly reports of four schools), integration of partners into the school (mentioned in three monthly reports of two schools), logistical processes (mentioned in four monthly reports of four schools), and the standard operating procedures (SOPs) and Community Schools model (mentioned in four monthly reports of four schools). See Table 4 for specific topics discussed at each school.

Table 4. Topics Discussed During Partner Meetings

	Arsenal 6–8	Faison K–5	Langley K–8	Lincoln PK–5	Westinghouse 6–12
SOPs and the Community Schools model	✔	✔		✔	✔
Process for monthly service updates		✔	✔		✔
Collaboration between partners		✔	✔	✔	✔
Logistics (e.g., permits, OST applications)			✔	✔	✔
Integration into school		✔			✔
Challenges and best practices		✔			✔
Planning activities or events		✔		✔	
Logic models		✔		✔	
Using data to understand progress toward goals		✔	✔		

Note. OST = out-of-school time. Data came from the monthly reports.

Standard 4: Student-Centered Data

Schools and community partners should establish systems and agreements to share both student-level and aggregate data, and these data should be used by site teams to prioritize resources and prepare plans to make sure that all students get the opportunities and supports that they need.

None of the respondents from the five schools and two lead partners mentioned establishing data-sharing agreements with community partners or having systems in place to share data. However, two respondents (from two schools) said that they are working with the district to develop a system. Instead, most respondents (five respondents from four schools) said they use informal methods of sharing data (e.g., spreadsheets) between community partners and the school. These spreadsheets contain student-level data about the services that students are receiving and attendance in those services. In addition, three principals said that site managers receive school-level aggregate data about student performance during school meetings (such as the leadership team meetings). In all cases, the site manager serves as the primary avenue for data sharing between the school and community partners. Two respondents (from two schools) said that the OST office shares data with them quarterly about student achievement, including grades and test scores. One site manager was unsure of data-sharing policies and practices because the district oversees that area.

Most respondents (four respondents from three schools) said that data are used to inform individual student services (e.g., homework help, tiered supports, counseling). One of these site managers said that this happens through meetings with the student service team. However, two respondents (from two schools) indicated a challenge with data use: They do not have access to real-time data, which would allow them to be more preventive rather than reactionary.

Standard 5: Continuous Improvement

Schools should develop a continuous quality improvement process that uses individual student data, participant feedback, and aggregate outcomes to assess program quality and develop strategies for improvement. Issues requiring policy or procedural changes and resource needs should be communicated to leaders and staff at the systems level. Site managers and site teams should identify opportunities for professional development that will enable all stakeholders to develop the knowledge, skills, and abilities to be more effective in their roles.

Assessing Quality. During the interviews, none of the site managers, site teams, or lead partners described a formal process for assessing the quality of services. The most common way that site managers ($n = 3$) and lead partners ($n = 2$) assessed quality was by reviewing attendance records as a proxy for student satisfaction.

Three site managers and one lead partner mentioned conducting informal observations of programs or activities to gauge student engagement or interest. Two site managers said that they examine information submitted by partners in the monthly service updates, and one site manager said no process is in place for assessing quality. Of the two site teams asked about how they assess quality, neither was aware of whether their school had a process for doing so.

Professional Development. Four of the five site managers and both lead partner agencies discussed the professional development opportunities in which they participated during the year. However, none mentioned whether the professional development was informed based on data analysis or continuous improvement. However, one lead partner indicated providing trainings based on staff needs. All site managers from a lead agency ($n = 3$) said the lead agency facilitated or provided most of the training. The professional development that site managers mentioned included attending the Community Schools conference ($n = 3$), trainings on family engagement ($n = 2$), the LUMA training ($n = 2$), and trainings on cultural sensitivity ($n = 2$). In addition, two site managers said they attended trainings provided by their school on topics such as multitiered systems of support and restorative practices. Site managers mentioned some additional professional development topics that they felt would benefit them, including navigating school culture ($n = 1$), encouraging staff buy-in ($n = 1$), and engaging families ($n = 1$).

One site manager also suggested that site managers get more opportunities to visit other Community Schools to observe what they are doing.

When asked about how staff who run Community Schools programs are trained, two site managers said that new staff are given an orientation binder, one site manager said that staff members receive a 2-day orientation, and one site manager said that staff do not receive any formal professional development. Most site managers said program staff do not receive ongoing professional development (*n* = 3), but one said that staff do engage in professional development.[1]

Standard 6: Sustainability

Three aspects are associated with sustainability:

- The school should have a strategy for strengthening shared ownership and buy-in of the Community Schools model among school staff, families, and community partners. Students, families, community members, and school staff should be knowledgeable about the services and supports that are available.

- Community partners should commit to a long-term relationship with the school, and their organizational culture should be aligned with that of the school.

- Schools and community partners should work together to establish budgets and develop a plan to sustain funding for the Community Schools.

Staff Buy-in and Shared Ownership. In three schools, three respondents said that the site manager communicates with school staff daily. Most commonly, site managers and staff discussed coordinating services (e.g., tutoring; eight respondents from five schools) and the needs of specific students (five respondents from two schools). Four site managers said that they attended staff meetings, which gave them an opportunity to engage with school staff, and three respondents (from three schools) said that site managers reach out to school staff to find out what they need.

Almost all site managers (*n* = 4) said that they shared SOPs with school staff by e-mail; three of these staff managers also reported conducting a formal presentation to staff about the SOPs. However, overall, staff understanding of the Community Schools model was mixed. Most site managers (*n* = 4) said some staff have a good understanding of what Community Schools are but others do not. In two of these schools, staff who participated in the focus groups said that the site manager communicates with them on an ongoing basis about what is happening with

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[1] One site manager did not discuss training that is provided to program staff.

Community Schools, which supports staff understanding of the model. In two of the staff focus groups, respondents said that most staff do not understand what the site manager's role is.

Similarly, staff buy-in on the Community Schools model is inconsistent. Two site managers said most staff buy into the Community Schools model, one site manager said that some staff buy in and others do not, and another site manager said most staff do not buy into it. Most site managers (*n* = 3) said staff understanding of and buy-in on the model has improved throughout the school year because they see that it is meeting some of their needs.

One barrier to achieving staff buy-in is that they have "initiative fatigue" and see Community Schools as just another thing that will come and go (three respondents from one school). Another barrier to staff buy-in is a lack of understanding of the initiative and their role in it (four respondents from three schools). Other barriers that site managers mentioned included communication difficulties (*n* = 4), not enough time for staff (*n* = 3), and the school did not prioritize the Community Schools model (*n* = 2).

> *"Really, how we do things is just as important as what we're doing. And so, with that I've been able to have very honest conversations with the principal. There was a lack of trust really."*

Three site managers said they are developing infrastructure that will support the sustainability of Community Schools. For example, two site managers said they are developing a Community Schools resource guide that includes all available services and programs as well as relevant contact information. The guide will be shared with stakeholders at all levels, including teachers, partners, and families.

> *"Sometimes it seems as though they look at it as, 'This is your thing, you do that, and that's your thing, I'm gonna do my principal thing, teachers are doing their teacher thing.'"*

Respondents made some recommendations on how to improve staff understanding of Community Schools and buy-in for the model:

- Hold presentations with school staff (e.g., lunch and learn) about Community Schools (four respondents from four schools).

- Identify staff who already have bought into Community Schools and use them as champions for the model to garner support from other staff (two site managers).

Community Partners. The study team did not interview community partners and does not have data about the extent to which they are committed to long-term relationships with the Community Schools. This area should be explored in future evaluations.

Funding and Budgets. None of the interviews or focus groups specifically addressed funding and budgets, but 10 respondents (from five schools) mentioned that one of the biggest challenges is a lack of funding or resources to support Community Schools.

Opportunities

A Community School provides various student-centered opportunities that support high-quality teaching and learning. These opportunities are both coordinated with each other and responsive to the needs of the school and fall into four categories: powerful learning, integrated health and social supports, authentic family engagement, and authentic community engagement.

Across the five schools, 135 partners provided services (mean = 25.2, range = 5–39). Some of these partners provided services on an ongoing basis during the school year, and others provided services only once or twice.

Standard 7: Powerful Learning

Community Schools encourage powerful learning by encouraging teachers and community partners to work together to ensure that they provide a well-rounded and enriching curriculum during both the school day and OST (both after school and summer school). Programs should integrate youth development principles, with an emphasis on student voice and leadership. Students should be provided opportunities that will enable them to develop academic, social, emotional, health, and civic competencies (Institute for Educational Leadership, 2017).

Some schools are aligning services provided during OST with what is happening during the school day. For example, two site managers said they examine student data and have conversations with teachers to match students in need of specific academic support with afterschool tutors in those subjects. One site manager mentioned aligning field trip opportunities with class content. Three site action plans are designed to address areas of need identified in the school improvement plan.

The site team did not speak to students and, therefore, does not have data about student voice and leadership. However, only one school included a student on the site team.

All five schools included goals or priorities related to powerful learning in their action plans. The most common goal was related to providing enrichment opportunities (see Table 5).

**Table 5. Action Plan Goals Related to Powerful Learning**

	Arsenal 6–8	Faison K–5	Langley K–8	Lincoln PK–5	Westinghouse 6–12
Academic support					✔
Workforce development					✔
Enrichment	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔

Note. Data came from the site action plans.

Across four schools,[2] 77 partners or programs provided powerful learning opportunities (mean = 19.3, range = 16–22).[3] As seen in Figure 2, the largest number of these partners provided enrichment programming, such as structured recess activities that engage students in group activities, employ listening skills, use gross and fine motor skills, promote team building, and develop concentration skills. Some provided students with leadership opportunities (e.g., through organizations such as Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts), and others provided academic support (e.g., tutoring).

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[2] Data about Arsenal's partners were not available.

[3] Some of these partners provided sustained services throughout the school year, and some were one-time opportunities.

Figure 2. Number of Partners Providing Powerful Learning Opportunities to Students
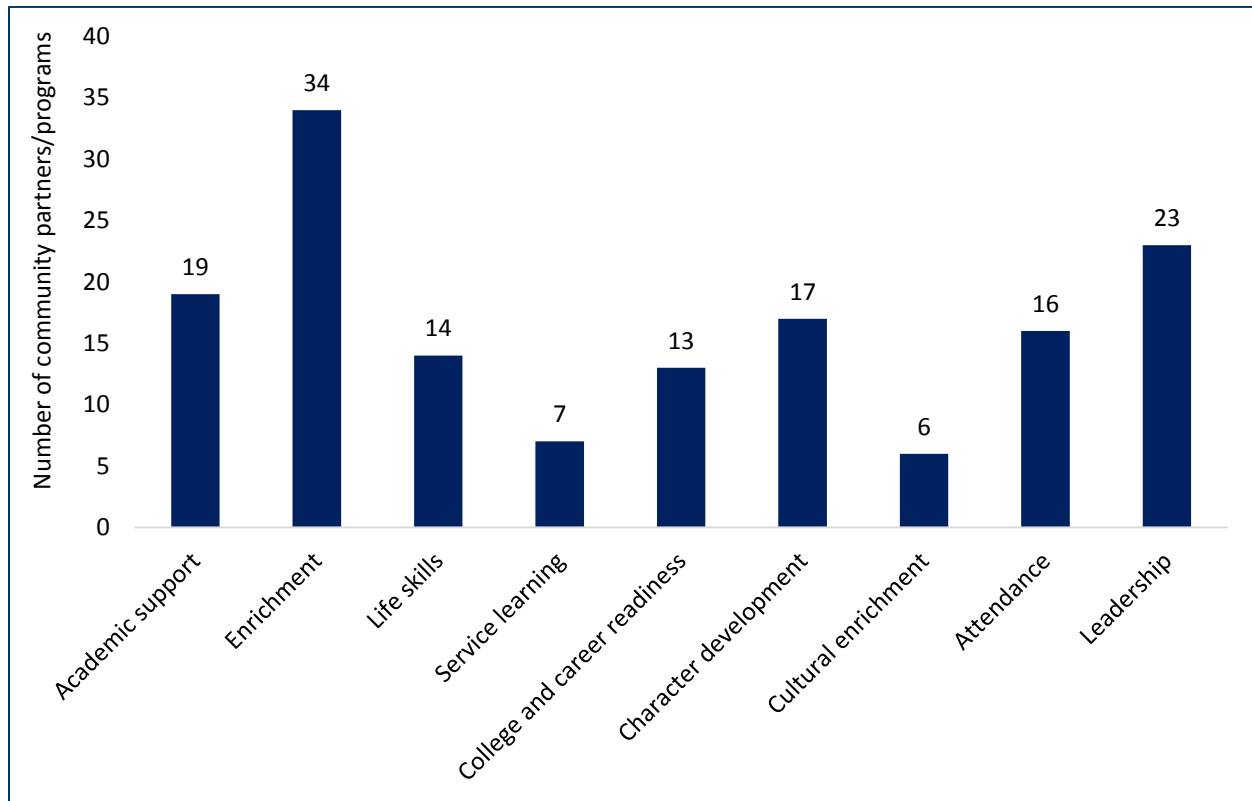
Note. Data came from the monthly service updates.

Standard 8: Integrated Health and Social Supports

In a Community School setting, the basic physical, mental, and emotional health needs of young people and their families are recognized and addressed as a core aspect of Community Schooling. These services should be responsive to the needs of students and families and should focus on both prevention and treatment.

Four of the five schools included goals or priorities related to integrated health and social supports in their action plans. The most common goal was to provide health, dental, and vision services or clothing (e.g., care closet; see Table 6).

Table 6. Action Plan Goals Related to Integrated Health and Social Supports

	Arsenal 6–8	Faison K–5	Langley K–8	Lincoln PK–5	Westinghouse 6–12
Health, dental, and vision services		✔	✔	✔	
Clothing	✔	✔	✔		

|	Arsenal 6–8	Faison K–5	Langley K–8	Lincoln PK–5	Westinghouse 6–12
Food or nutrition	✔		✔		
Social and emotional supports			✔		
Mental health				✔	
School climate or safety		✔			
Restorative practices or discipline			✔		

Note. Data came from the site action plans.

Across four schools,[4] 51 partners or programs provided opportunities for integrated health and social support (mean = 12.8, range = 7–20).[5] As seen in Figure 3, the largest number of these partners provided social and emotional support, such as mentoring and social skills development programs. Some provided students and families with food and nutrition, and some provided opportunities for physical fitness (e.g., boxing, basketball).

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[4] Data about Arsenal's partners were not available.
[5] Some of these partners provided sustained services throughout the school year, and some were one-time opportunities.

Figure 3. Number of Partners Providing Integrated Health and Social Support Opportunities to Students
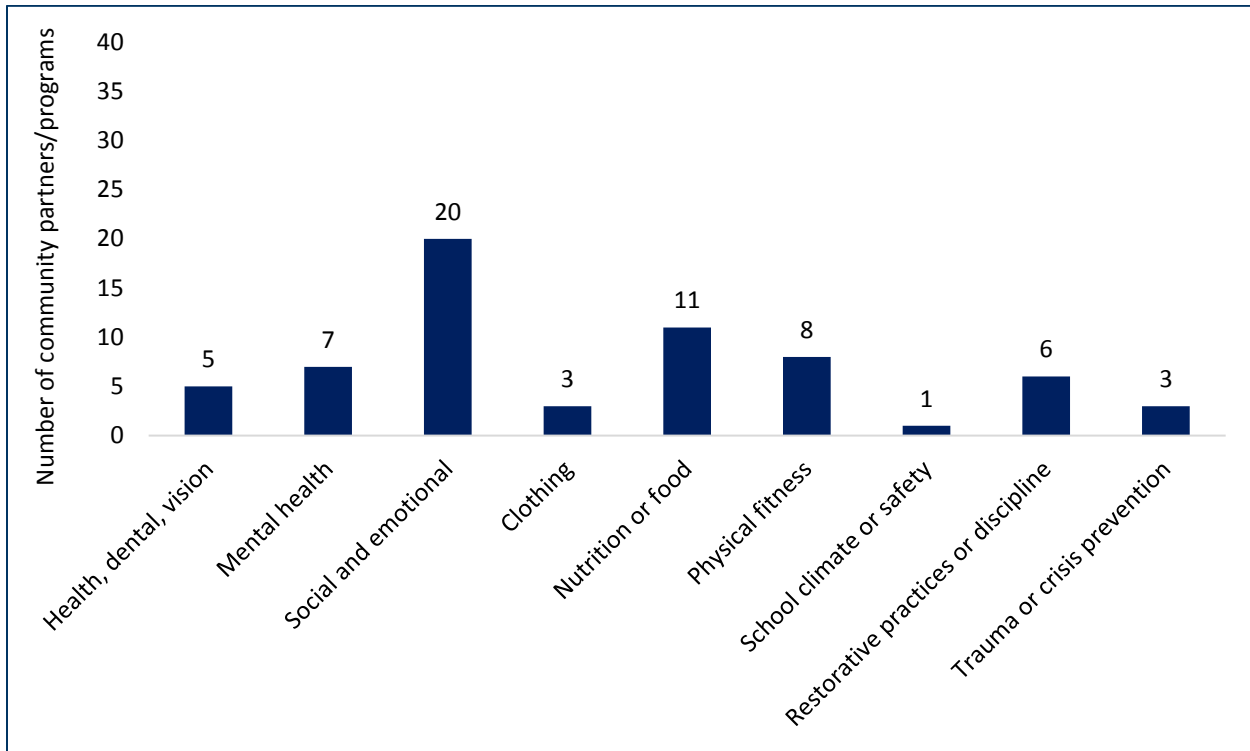
Note. Data came from the monthly service updates.

Standards 9 and 10: Authentic Family and Community Engagement

Community Schools aim to ensure that educators, families, community members, community partners, school staff, and school leadership demonstrate trusting relationships. In Community Schools, families can inform decision making and are given leadership opportunities. Families and communities should see the school as a hub for learning and community development, and the school should be accessible outside the normal school day.

Parent Engagement. All five site managers said that they consider parent and family engagement a crucial part of the Community Schools process. However, three site managers said that parents are not very involved with Community Schools. One site manager mentioned that family involvement is improving, and most site teams ($n = 3$) do include at least one parent on the team.

In addition, some site managers ($n = 4$) mentioned other ways in which they engage with parents and families, such as family nights ($n = 4$), Parent School Community Council meetings ($n = 3$), parent newsletters ($n = 1$), volunteer opportunities ($n = 1$), and parent workshops ($n = 1$). Some barriers to parent engagement that site managers reported included general

communication (*n* = 3), transportation (*n* = 2), and the fingerprinting process that is required of all PPS volunteers (*n* = 1).

Community Engagement. Site managers discussed collaborating with community members, such as neighborhood organizations (*n* = 4), church representatives (*n* = 2), and government officials (*n* = 1). However, one site manager did mention that it was very difficult to engage with community organizations.

Accessibility of the School. One challenge mentioned by seven respondents (from five schools) was that the schools do not have the resources necessary to ensure that the school building can be accessed during OST. For example, three respondents from two schools said that they do not have adequate staff necessary to keep the building open for programs or activities that occur during OST (e.g., security, custodial staff, crossing guards). Four respondents from four schools noted that there is not enough room in the building to accomplish some of the initiatives or run some programs. For example, in one school, the site manager said that the school received a grant to create a parent center, but there is no space in the building to accommodate it.

Opportunities. All five schools included goals or priorities related to authentic family and community engagement in their action plans. The most common goal was to provide family workshops (see Table 7).

Table 7. Action Plan Goals Related to Authentic Family and Community Engagement

	Arsenal 6–8	Faison K–5	Langley K–8	Lincoln PK–5	Westinghouse 6–12
Family workshops	✔	✔	✔	✔	
Adult education			✔	✔	
Workforce development					✔
Volunteer opportunities			✔		
Community building or engagement			✔		✔

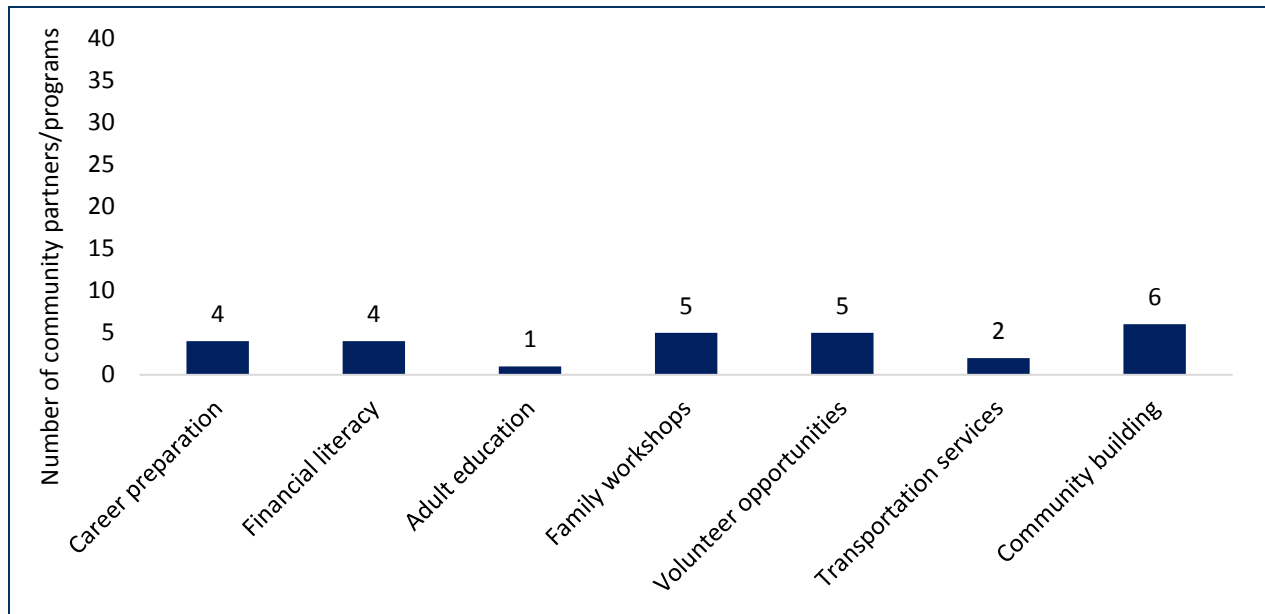*Note.* Data came from the site action plans.

Across four schools,[6] 17 partners or programs provided opportunities for authentic family and community engagement (mean = 4.3, range = 1–8).[7] As seen in Figure 4, the largest number of these partners provided opportunities for community building (e.g., community advocacy). Some provided workshops (e.g., family support, youth empowerment) or volunteer

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[6] Data about Arsenal's partners were not available.
[7] Some of these partners provided sustained services throughout the school year, and some were one-time opportunities.

opportunities to families and community members. In four schools, one need commonly mentioned by staff and families who completed the needs assessments was academics and instruction. In that respect, the schools are responsive to this need because they have multiple partners that provide enrichment opportunities and academic support.

Figure 4. Number of Partners Providing Authentic Family and Community Engagement Opportunities

Note. Data came from the monthly service updates.

Program Quality

During the site visits, the AIR team conducted observations of afterschool activities using two versions of the Program Quality Assessment (PQA): the Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA) and the School-Aged Program Quality Assessment (SAPQA). The PQA is used to identify strengths and weaknesses in the quality of programming and articulates what types of supports and opportunities should be available to youth participating in afterschool programs to support positive youth development.

These tools are validated instruments for measuring the quality of youth afterschool programs and include items that focus on observable practices at the point of service (i.e., where adults and youth interact and engage in programming). Both the YPQA and SAPQA have four domains, with various scales falling in each domain (see Table A3 in Appendix A) that are rated 1, 3, or 5, with 5 representing best practice.

The AIR team conducted observations of two discrete activities at each of the four schools that had afterschool programming operating at the time of the site visits. Additional details about the PQA and the scoring and analytic process is in Appendix A.
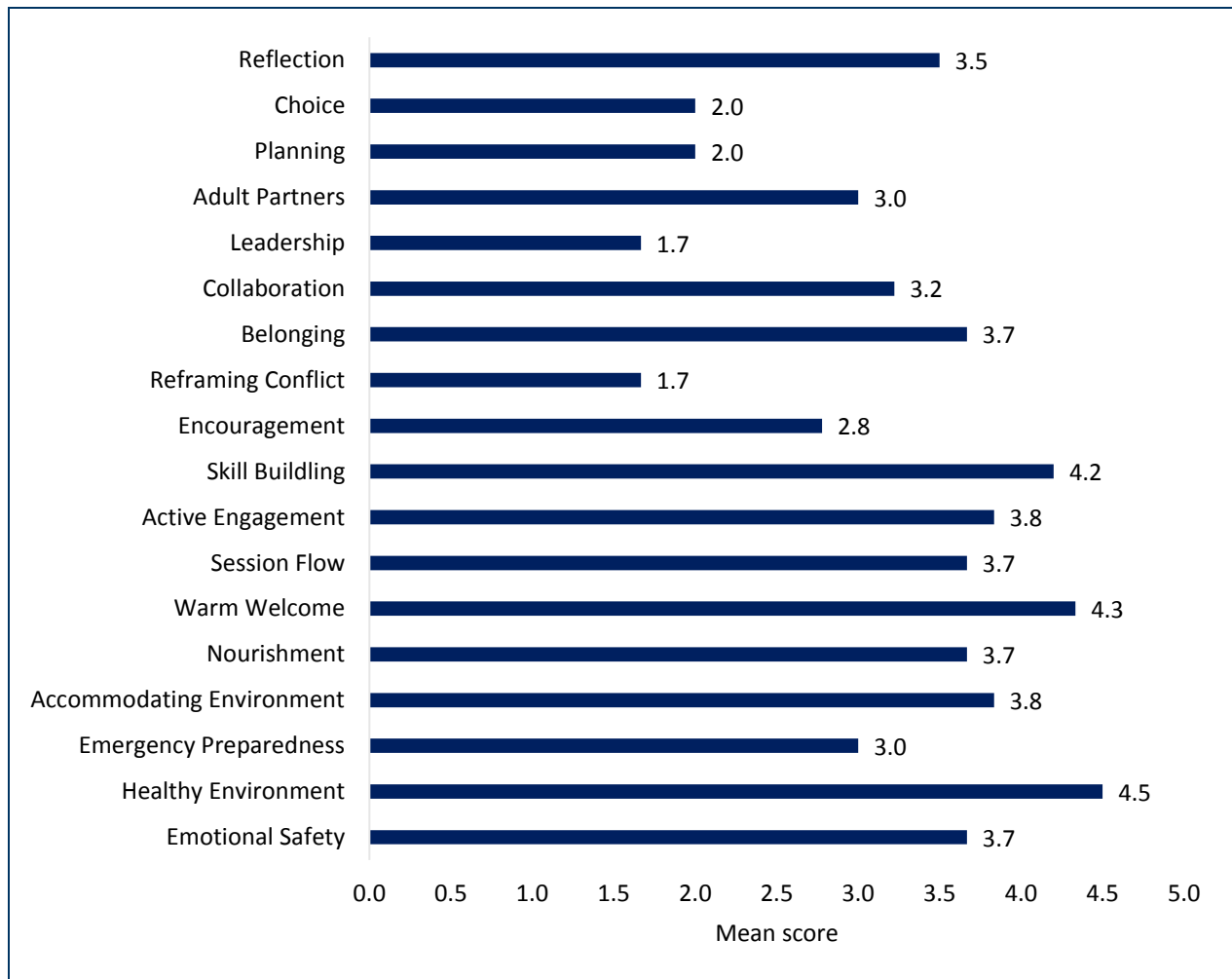
The following areas of strength were identified during the observations:

- **Healthy environment** includes all aspects of the physical programming environment (e.g., the space is clean, free of hazards, and has adequate lighting).

- **Warm welcome** rates the foundation for youth–adult interactions (e.g., how staff greet youth as they enter the program space, the tone of voice that staff use, and the integration of friendly gestures). For example, in one school, the observer noted that staff use warm and patient language with youth.

- **Skill building** represents the extent to which staff members support youth in building skills during programming (e.g., encouraging youth to attempt higher skill levels, modeling skills). For example, in one school, the observer noted that staff always gave examples to youth on how to improve when youth were struggling.

The growth areas were as follows:

- **Reframing conflict** refers to how adults use youth-centered approaches to reframe conflict (e.g., using a calm approach, seeking input from all youth involved, helping youth identify the link between actions and consequences). For example, in one situation, a staff member responded to a negative behavior from youth with yelling and embarrassing comments.

- **Leadership** means the extent to which youth have opportunities to act as mentors and facilitators (e.g., youth mentor other individual students, youth lead group activities, youth can practice group processing).

- **Planning** is the extent to which youth can make plans for the future of projects or activities (e.g., actually making plans, using planning strategies).

- **Choice** refers to the extent to which young people can make authentic choices within the context of the program (e.g., open-ended content choices, process choices).

Figure 5 presents the mean scores for all YPQA scales.

Figure 5. Youth Program Quality Assessment Scaled Scores

Category	Mean score
Reflection	3.5
Choice	2.0
Planning	2.0
Adult Partners	3.0
Leadership	1.7
Collaboration	3.2
Belonging	3.7
Reframing Conflict	1.7
Encouragement	2.8
Skill Buildling	4.2
Active Engagement	3.8
Session Flow	3.7
Warm Welcome	4.3
Nourishment	3.7
Accommodating Environment	3.8
Emergency Preparedness	3.0
Healthy Environment	4.5
Emotional Safety	3.7

Note. Data came from the PQA observations.

It is important to note that both the areas of strength and the opportunities for growth follow the typical pattern for what is commonly observed when conducting assessments using the PQA, except for the Reframing Conflict score, which is lower than is what is typically observed. Practices such as Leadership, Planning, and Choice are generally scored lower primarily because (a) some of the practices outlined in these scales are expected to be less present in each and every offering observed given the length of a typical activity session and the arc of activities across time that may require the use of different approaches depending on what phase the activity is in, and (b) some of these practices require a greater degree of skill in terms of facilitation and scaffolding to implement (e.g., youth have multiple opportunities to make plans for projects and activities). Nevertheless, staff ability to use these practices is a sign of higher program quality because these types of opportunities have been shown to be effective is supporting positive youth development.

Benefits to Schools, Youth, Families, and the Community

When staff were asked about what defines success for Community Schools, the most common response was improved parental engagement (four respondents from four schools). Other ways that staff defined success included improved community engagement (three respondents from three schools), the school being seen as a hub for the community (three respondents from three schools), and students having their needs met (three respondents from three schools). Two respondents (from two schools) said that if the program was successful, there would be improvements in the quality of life in the community (e.g., less crime, decreased unemployment).

The most important ingredient to success that was noted by eight respondents (from four schools) is building relationships with and trust from different stakeholders, including parents, youth, and community members. Two site managers explained that it is critical for all stakeholders to have a common vision for Community Schools.

Benefits to Schools. Respondents mentioned that because of Community Schools, services are more coordinated and integrated (four respondents from two schools). Others mentioned that the Community Schools model improves the culture and climate of the school by building a culture of support (three respondents from two schools). However, some respondents did not think that Community Schools had any impact on the culture of the school (two respondents from two schools).

Benefits to Youth. The most commonly mentioned benefit to youth that was mentioned by respondents was that they are exposed to more learning opportunities (13 respondents from five schools). Other benefits to youth that were mentioned included receiving services that addressed some of their basic needs (e.g., health care, food; 12 respondents from five schools), and youth are more connected with and trusting of school staff (11 respondents from five schools). Two respondents mentioned the following benefits to youth: improved confidence (two respondents from two schools), improved engagement in school (two site managers), increases in students' college readiness or college-going mind-set (two respondents from two schools), improvements in the ways that the school addresses students' social and emotional needs (two respondents from two schools).

Benefits to Families. The most common benefit to families that respondents mentioned was that they are more connected to and trusting of the school as a result of the Community Schools model (eight respondents from three schools). Respondents also mentioned that they noticed improved parent engagement (e.g., involvement in parent nights, attendance at parent-teacher conferences; four respondents from two schools), and families are receiving services that address their needs (four respondents from three schools). Two site managers

said they believe that parents are more aware of what is going on in the school. However, four respondents (from two schools) said that they did not believe Community Schools were having an impact on families in any way.

Benefits to the Community. Most respondents (nine respondents from five schools) said that they do not think the Community Schools model is having a large impact on the community yet. One site manager explained that because the needs of the school are so great, it is difficult to find time to go out into the community, which is an area for growth. Some respondents did mention benefits to community members, however. For example, being a Community School brings community members into the building (five respondents from four schools), and community members are more connected and trusting of the school (five respondents from three schools).

As implementation of the Community School model grows and matures, PPS will need to begin considering how best to measure the impact of implementation of the strategy on student outcomes. In our experience, although certain types of school-related data, such as assessment scores, school-day attendance, and disciplinary incidents, can be used to partially assess the impact of Community Schooling, we have found that other forms of outcome measurement may be necessary, particularly in relation to students feeling connected to school, having opportunities to learn about and try new things that foster interest development, and the development of outcomes that pertain more to social and emotional development. Eventually, the district will likely need to consider how best to assess the impact of Community Schooling on student outcomes.

Supports and Challenges

Overall, site managers had mixed feelings about how implementation of the Community Schools model went this academic year. Two site managers thought it went well, two said it was fair, and one site manager did not think implementation went well.

Supports. Respondents reported three supports that were key to their success in the implementation of Community Schools:

- **Standard Operating Procedures.** Four site managers and one principal said one of the things that helped them was having SOPs as a guide for their work. All five site managers said they use the SOPs to explain the work and structure of Community Schools to stakeholders. Some respondents ($n = 2$) said the SOPs were beneficial in allowing site managers to hold external providers accountable. Two site managers said that the SOPs help build uniformity and garner buy-in from school staff. One site manager said, "And it defines the work for us. It makes it clear like this is part of the job of a Community School.

[The] site manager is implementing these different aspects of infrastructure within the school." One site manager suggested that it would be helpful to have the vision of Community Schools more streamlined and define Community Schools somewhere in the SOPs.

- **Support From the Community Schools Coordinator.** All five site managers said they have a good relationship with the Community Schools coordinator, and this person is accessible when needed. Two site managers and two lead partners said the coordinator has been a great resource in helping them implement the Community Schools model. Four site managers said the coordinator does a good job with providing resources or helping them navigate relationships and school demands. Two site managers said the coordinator allows them to take the lead in their role and does not micromanage them, which they appreciated. However, one site manager said it would be beneficial for the coordinator to spend more time in the school building to build trust from the principal and school leadership. That being said, the majority of principals (*n* = 3) said they have minimal contact with the coordinator, but some felt the level of support was adequate (*n* = 2).

- **Collaboration Between Site Managers.** Three respondents said that one of the greatest supports they have is the ability to collaborate with other site managers. For example, one site manager explained as follows:

  I think the interaction with the other site managers and hearing how they did things, how things went at their school, especially [those who have] been doing it for a little bit. I think that was the most helpful for me, as far as having a point of reference to say "You're either way off-base or you're right on track, or here's another way to approach or do things."

Challenges. Respondents noted five factors that posed a challenge as they implemented the Community Schools model:

- **Funding and Resources.** The challenge most commonly mentioned by respondents was that they do not have enough funding or resources to support Community Schools (10 respondents from four schools). For example, some people said that not enough people are available with the time to do the work, and others said that they do not have a budget to pay for supplies or support events.

- **Communication.** Nine respondents (from five schools) said communication across stakeholders (e.g., schools, partners, district) is a challenge, which contributes to confusion about the vision and goals for Community Schools across stakeholders. In addition, all five site managers and some site teams (*n* = 3) said it was difficult to communicate with parents, teachers, and community members. This challenge was reiterated in the monthly reports, in

which site managers said communication between the school and Community Schools staff is the primary challenge with moving the work forward (mentioned in 12 monthly reports of two schools). Site managers have begun to address these communication breakdowns by having more frequent face-to-face meetings with staff and families (*n* = 2), focusing on clear messaging *(n* = 2), and generating written communication to share with the community (*n* = 2).

- **Disconnect Among District, School, and Lead Partner.** During conversations with key staff, many respondents (eight respondents from five schools) said that tension exists among the district, schools, and lead partners about the direction that Community Schools should take. As mentioned earlier, part of what contributes to this situation is the fact that the agencies do not have a shared vision. At times, the site managers mentioned feeling pulled in different directions by each of their supervisors. One way that the respondents suggested to improve this challenge was to have more conversations that include all stakeholders.

- **Access to the School Building.** As mentioned earlier, accessibility to the building poses a major challenge to providing opportunities to students (seven respondents from five schools).

- **Turnover in Key Staff.** Two respondents said that site manager turnover creates a disruption in programming and the relationships on which Community Schools are founded. Also, three respondents said that when school leaders change, it becomes difficult to establish an agenda and shared vision for Community Schools (three respondents).

6. Discussion and Next Steps

Strengths

The evaluation uncovered four key strengths of Community Schools implementation in PPS:

- **Support Provided by the District to Site Managers.** All site managers were satisfied with the level of support provided by the district and noted that it was one of the things that helped them become successful in their role.

- **Site Teams.** All schools have site teams, and most of them are meeting regularly. Further, the site teams are made up of diverse roles. In the future, schools may consider expanding the site teams to include more parents, community members, and students.

- **Action Planning.** All site teams have developed action plans, which mapped onto the Community School Standards. Many of the action plans aligned with the school improvement plan and provided information about the current status and next steps.

- **Services.** Schools have many partners that provide a variety of services. The partners are aligned generally with the priorities established in each school's action plan, but there is insufficient information to help understand whether the services are responsive to the needs of the community.

Areas for Growth

The evaluation uncovered five areas in need of development in future years:

- **Shared Vision and Shared Decision Making.** Almost all respondents discussed challenges in establishing a shared vision across school staff, families, community partners, and the district. Further, many respondents discussed a disconnect between the priorities of the district, the lead partners, and each school. Generally, we would recommend that each school go through a formal and intentional process to create a written vision for their Community School. This process should involve multiple stakeholders, including the principal, the site team, community partners, community members, parents, students, teachers, school staff, and district representatives. Part of crafting the vision also should include developing a plan for communicating that vision through informal and formal communication channels with each stakeholder group so that they are aware of the vision and have the opportunity to provide feedback on how they are experiencing implementation of the Community School strategy relative to the adopted vision. This step is critical if Community Schooling is to be perceived as an integrated, whole school reform strategy that seeps into each aspect of school operation.

  In addition to creating a shared vision, we found other attributes associated with effective Community Schools (Naftzger et al., forthcoming), including the following:

  - Create and maintain feedback loops, including both formal and informal check-ins with stakeholders about how they are experiencing Community Schools programming.

  - Create opportunities for shared decision making among key stakeholder groups that are supported and fostered by building administration.

  - Foster a culture of shared responsibility for positive youth outcomes.

  - Develop active advisory boards.

  In AIR's work in other districts, we have found that when these things are absent, both school-day staff and parents feel disconnected from Community Schools programming, and implementation of the strategy suffers. However, when schools can do these things effectively, we have found that schools have higher levels of parent engagement, greater school-day staff buy-in to the Community School strategy, and a school environment that is seen as safe and welcoming for students and families. Making this happen requires sustained commitment and effort from both the principal and the site manager.

- **Staff Buy-in.** Although most of the site managers shared the SOPs with school staff and have had conversations with school staff about the SOPs, all the schools are having difficulty with garnering staff understanding of Community Schools and buy-in to the model. Addressing this issue can be supported through the vision creation, communication, and shared decision-making processes described previously.

- **Continuous Quality Improvement.** None of the schools has established a formal process for continuous quality improvement. In AIR's work with other districts, we have them develop or select tools and processes that help schools (a) intentionally think about ways to improve implementation of the Community Schools strategy and (b) improve the quality of programming that is provided directly to youth. In terms of the former, we helped Chicago Public Schools develop a set of rubrics that allowed schools to (a) self-assess on how well they were implementing components of the Community Schools strategy based on the implementation framework adopted by the district, (b) identify areas where implementation could be improved, and (c) develop action steps to enhance implementation in that area. Such tools also can be used as a platform for building stakeholder and school staff buy-in to Community Schooling as a strategy. In some cases, Chicago Public Schools has shared the rubrics with other districts that have requested access to this tool.

  In terms of improving program quality, we have observed several districts adopt tools such as the PQA as a platform for improving the quality of program offerings. PPS should consider adopting similar types of quality improvement tools and processes and supporting school efforts to engage in such quality improvement processes. Opportunities for growth identified through such efforts also could inform professional development opportunities to enhance the ability of school and partner staff to implement the Community School strategy and design and deliver high-quality programming for participating youth.

- **Data Sharing and Use.** Although most schools are collecting some data regarding program attendance, they are not using formal processes (e.g., memoranda of understanding) or systems to ensure that data are shared between community partners and schools. In addition, there is inconsistent usage of student-level performance data to inform student services, and the performance data that are used are available only on a quarterly basis, which makes it difficult for schools to be responsive to students' needs. Future work should be done to support schools in creating systems to encourage data sharing and use, but these efforts should not happen in isolation. Schools should first consider the question of how student data can be used to both (a) further the vision established for implementation of the Community School strategy at a given school and (b) inform continuous quality improvement efforts. In this sense, efforts to gain access to and use student data should be linked with other recommended approaches to enhance overall implementation of the strategy.

- **Needs Assessment.** A similar recommendation can be made about collecting and using needs assessment data, in terms of ensuring that these data reflect and inform the vision and support quality improvement efforts. All the schools conducted needs assessments; however, several respondents mentioned that they did not feel that the information was useful in developing their action plans. Future work should be done by PPS to ensure that the needs assessments collect information and result in reports that can be used by the site teams to develop their action plans and feed data into any quality improvement processes adopted by the district.

Assessing Community School Impact

As implementation of Community Schooling continues to develop and mature, there will be a growing interest on the part of key stakeholders to better understand how implementation of the strategy is having a positive impact on students. In our work with other districts, we have approached this question in a couple of different ways.

Measuring Youth Experiences That Promote Positive Development. A common element of many Community Schools is the provision of additional enrichment and learning activities after school, which was a common element of how the strategy is being implemented in PPS as well. In the past 2 decades, significant work has been done within the afterschool and youth development fields to define the common features of learning environments that promote positive youth development and how these components are linked to youth outcomes (Durlak, Mahoney, Bohnert, & Parente, 2010; Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Kataoka & Vandell, 2013; Pierce, Bolt, & Vandell, 2010; Vandell, Reisner, & Pierce, 2007). This body of research has shown that program effects vary depending on the quality of youth experiences while attending these types of activities, and certain types of program features are more likely to promote key youth experiences. Among the more common features that have emerged from this body of work are intentional efforts to facilitate supportive relationships (staff–youth and youth–youth relationships), the emergence of positive social norms, and youth engagement, particularly by providing skill-building opportunities and opportunities for agency and autonomy. Tools such as the YPQA describe practices that are designed to support youth having many of these key experiences while participating in programming.

Afterschool programs also are a possible mechanism for closing the opportunity gap between youth from lower and higher income communities. Afterschool programs can provide youth from low-income communities the opportunity to explore and be exposed to learning environments and settings that they otherwise would not have access to, helping these youth (a) make better sense of the world; (b) have a more expansive set of prior knowledge from which to draw on when connecting with, understanding, and processing school-day content; (c) form an identity as they refine their interests and future aspirations; and (d) potentially build

social capital by connecting with mentors within and outside the program, thus reinforcing attainability of aspirations (Mahoney, Larson, Eccles, & Lord, 2005). A significant element of afterschool programming is providing exposure to new content, ideas, and concepts that serve to promote positive youth development in a variety of ways, including the following:

- Supporting youth in developing new interests

- Getting to know youth they otherwise would not interact with, in a more informal setting than the school day, resulting in new friendships

- Being active participants in learning activities through project- and inquiry-based learning opportunities and settings that afford youth the opportunity to experience a sense of agency and autonomy, thus enhancing their sense of confidence and self-efficacy when encountering other challenges while participating in learning activities

In light of this, in AIR's work in other districts, we have encouraged the adoption of youth survey measures (typically in Grades 4 and up) that allow for an exploration of the extent to which youth have these types of experiences while participating in afterschool and summer learning activities provided under the auspices of the implementation of the Community Schools strategy, including scales from the Youth Motivation, Engagement, and Beliefs survey that AIR helped modify and expand by working with the Youth Development Executives of King County (Washington). Example scales from this survey can be found in Appendix C.

Assessing Impact on School-Related Outcomes. In other districts we work with, AIR has undertaken two types of analyses to assess how Community School implementation impacts school-related outcomes.

- **Propensity Score Matching (PSM) and Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM)**. These two approaches are typically employed to examine how student participation in Community School activities during the span of one to two school years may be impacting school-related outcomes. A typical evaluation question addressed by applying these methods would be akin to the following: What impact did participation in Community School programming for 120 hours or more during the 2017–18 and 2018–19 school years have on a series of school-related outcomes compared with similar students enrolled in Community Schools but not participating in programming?

  In any evaluation of a program where participants are not randomly assigned to participate in the program or not, the issue of selection is paramount. We know it is likely that youth who participate in Community School activities may be different from those who do not attend in important ways. These differences can potentially bias estimates of program effectiveness because they make it difficult to disentangle preexisting differences between

youth who attended the program and those who did not, from the effect of attending the program. PSM is a method for mitigating this bias.

In brief, PSM works by first analyzing the group of students exposed to Community School programming at the desired dosage level in terms of demographics, baseline assessment scores, and so on as important predictors of student inclusion in the treatment group. Based on this analysis, PSM can create a comparison group of nonparticipants that replicates the participant group on key characteristics found to be important to predicting the likelihood that a student will end up in the treatment group. HLM can then be used to assess how enrollment in the treatment group impacted the domain of school-related outcomes examined.

We tend to use this combined approach when implementation of the strategy is still in its early phases and the primary way youth experience Community School implementation is through activities and services provided after school and during the summer.

- **Comparative Interrupted Time Series (CITS).** This design is employed when implementation of the Community School strategy has reached a higher level of maturity in a given school and has seeped into all aspects of school operation, impacting every facet of how the school operates and works with students and their families. Here, Community Schooling has emerged as a full school reform effort that is felt in the entire culture and climate of the schools, and students are expected to be impacted by strategy implementation simply by being enrolled in the school in question. Unlike PSM that focuses on student-level treatment, treatment is examined at the school level in a CITS design the way we have employed it. An example of an evaluation question addressed when employing this design would be as follows: What impact do higher implementing Community Schools have on a series of school-related outcomes compared with similar, non-Community Schools?

  CITS is a data-intensive design because it requires data to be collected and analyzed for a several year period to estimate the impact on student outcomes. We have chosen to employ this design only when schools have been implementing the strategy for more than 5 years and have shown to have reached a point where the strategy is having a broader impact on how the school operates.

Irrespective of the approach used, the outcomes we have examined have included assessment results (both state and interim), grades, school-day attendance, disciplinary incidents, and scales associated with school climate surveys.

Finally, given the resources that need to be dedicated to undertaking these types of analyses, we always encourage districts to wait to conduct these types of analyses until implementation of the strategy has reached a point where impacts can likely be expected.

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Appendix A. Methods

This appendix describes the sample, data sources, and analytic approach used in this evaluation.

Sample

AIR collected qualitative data in all five schools that participated in the Community Schools initiative during the 2018–19 school year (Arsenal 6–8, Faison K–5, Langley K–8, Lincoln PK–5, and Westinghouse 6–12). Table A1 describes the key characteristics of the schools that participate in Community Schools compared with all schools in PPS. Compared with the district average, in 2017–18, PPS Community Schools had a larger percentage of students who were African American, a smaller percentage of students who were White, and a larger percentage of students who were economically disadvantaged.

Table A1. School Characteristics of Sample, 2017–18 School Year

	PPS Community Schools	All PPS schools
School level[a]		
Elementary schools	2	23
Middle schools	1	7
High schools	0	4
K–8 schools	1	11
6–12 schools	1	5
Average student enrollment	427	399
Student demographic characteristics[b]		
Percentage African American	84%	52%
Percentage American Indian or Alaska Native	<1%	<1%
Percentage Asian	<1%	4%
Percentage Hispanic	<1%	3%
Percentage Multiracial	8%	8%
Percentage Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	<1%	<1%
Percentage White	6%	33%
Percentage English language learners	<1%	5%
Percentage economically disadvantaged	91%	70%

[a]Retrieved from https://www.pghschools.org/domain/17. [b]Retrieved from http://discoverpps.org/westinghouse/enrollment on May 17, 2019.

Within these schools, AIR conducted interviews with five site managers, five principals, and two directors from lead community partners. We also conducted focus groups with four site teams (total *n* = 19) and school staff from five schools (total *n* = 16). Table A2 shows the number of participants by role in each school.

Table A2. Roles of Focus Group Participants

	Site team focus group[a]	Staff focus group[b]
Teacher	7	5
Guidance counselor or social worker	4	1
Administrative staff (e.g., dean, parent coordinator)	2	2
Support staff	2	8
Parent	3	2
Community member	2	0

[a]This column totals more than 19 because one participant identified as both a parent and a teacher. [b]The total in this column is 18 because two respondents served in two roles.

Data Sources and Analytic Approach

AIR used three data sources to answer the research questions: qualitative data from interviews and focus groups with key stakeholders, observations of afterschool activities, and program documents (including monthly reports and service updates, site plans, and needs assessment reports).

Interview and Focus Group Data

Instruments and Data Collection Approach. AIR developed interview and focus group protocols to gather systematic information about the vision, mission, and goals of Community Schools; implementation of the strategy; partnerships and program delivery; the needs assessment process; family engagement; integration with the school; support from the district; and reflections and recommendations. The focus groups were semistructured in that the interviewers covered a defined set of questions, but they also allowed interviewees to discuss other topics that were not on the protocol if the interviewer thought the topic was relevant to the study.

AIR conducted two rounds of telephone interviews with the site managers (one in December 2018 and one in April 2019). In addition, AIR conducted site visits to the five schools on January

15–18, 2019, during which we led in-person interviews with principals, focus groups with the site teams, and focus groups with school staff (including teachers and support staff).[8]

Analytic Approach. AIR analyzed qualitative data from the interviews and focus groups using research-based procedures for coding, reducing, organizing, and categorizing data (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003; Dey, 1993; LeCompte, 2000). We used a grounded theory approach to (a) identify the Community School approach and best practices, (b) uncover alignment with policies and strategies, and (c) identify stakeholders' perceptions of implementation. We began our qualitative analysis of these sources by reading and coding, using analytic memos to note the strategies and supports identified in the documents. This inductive approach allowed AIR analysts to uncover major themes and patterns within and across sources. The grounded theory approach to interview analysis allowed the AIR research team to employ a cross-case design and pattern matching technique (Yin, 2009). The AIR team triangulated data from the multiple measures (i.e., interviews, observations, focus groups) and sources (e.g., school staff, administrative staff, Community School staff, and partner agency staff) to identify patterns of practice. The study team analyzed across measures and sources to identify patterns and themes. We also looked for additional, emergent themes in the data that were not initially identified (Yin, 2009). The AIR team summarized key findings by pattern and theme, and example responses provide support for quantitative findings with quotes and examples found in the qualitative data.

Observation Data

Instrument and Data Collection Approach. The AIR site visit team used the YPQA and the SAPQA developed by the David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality to measure the quality of youth afterschool programs. The YPQA was used for activities that were provided to students in Grades 6–12. The SAPQA was used for activities provided to students in Grades K–5. Researchers used the SAPQA in one school and the YPQA at three schools. No programming was observed in one school. The YPQA and SAPQA include items that focus on observable practices at the point of service (i.e., where adults and youth interact and engage in programming).[9]

Scoring on the YPQA and SAPQA takes place at the domain, scale, and item levels. The YPQA and SAPQA each have four domains, with various scales falling in each domain (see Table A3) The term *domain* refers to a group of scales within one section of the tool. The domain score is the average of the scale scores for each domain. The term *scale* refers to a group of items

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[8] The procedures to protect human research participants were described to each person in the focus groups, and each person signed a consent form before the focus groups began. With permission from the participants, audio of each focus group was recorded and transcribed to ensure that all information was captured accurately. AIR staff also took notes during the interviews and focus groups.

[9] Staff who conducted the observations were trained on the measures and achieved full reliability on the instrument prior to entering the field.

within one section of the scale. The scale score represents the average of the scores (one per item) that make up the scale.

Table A3. YPQA and SAPQA Domains and Scales

Domain	YPQA scales	SAPQA scales
Safe Environment	Emotional Safety, Healthy Environment, Emergency Preparedness, Accommodating Environment, Nourishment	Emotional Safety, Healthy Environment, Emergency Preparedness, Accommodating Environment, Nourishment
Supportive Environment	Warm Welcome, Session Flow, Active Engagement, Skill Building, Encouragement, Reframing Conflict	Warm Welcome, Session Flow, Active Engagement, Skill Building, Encouragement, Flexible Environment
Interaction	Belonging, Collaboration, Leadership, Adult Partners	Managing Feelings, Belonging, School-Aged Leadership, Interactions With Adults
Engagement	Planning, Choice, Reflection	School-Aged Planning, School-Aged Choice, Reflection, Responsibility

Site visitors rated each item with a discrete score of either 1, 3, or 5; a score of 5 represented best practice. It should be noted that the rating scale is not continuous (i.e., a rating of a 2 or 4 at the item level was not possible); however, item scores may then be averaged to create scale and domain scores that occur within the full range of 1–5. In addition to the numeric rating, site visitors documented evidence of practices observed that supported the rating.

Analytic Approach. AIR produced mean scores at the item, scale, and domain levels. We then produced descriptive statistics that summarized the means and standard deviations for each school and across schools.

Program Records

Instruments and Data Collection Approach. AIR used four types of program records in its analysis: monthly reports, monthly service updates, site plans, and needs assessment reports.

Monthly Reports. Monthly reports were completed by the site managers at each of the five schools using a Web-based Google Docs document. The reports collected information about the number of partner agencies, the numbers of students and adults served, special events and projects, student and family highlights, partner meeting updates, site team meeting updates, and growth areas. The AIR team analyzed data beginning in October 2018 through March 2019. Four site managers completed the monthly reports during each month this period and one completed them for 5 of the 6 months, for a total of 29 reports.

Monthly Service Updates. Monthly service updates were completed by community partners that provide services within the five schools using a Web-based Google Docs document. The updates collected information about the numbers of students and adults served, a summary of the services that were provided, special events and projects, accomplishments, and barriers and growth areas. The AIR team analyzed data beginning in October 2018 through March 2019. During this period, 69 community partners completed the monthly service updates. Table A4 shows the number of community partners that completed the monthly service updates by school and the average number of partners that completed the update each month.

Table A4. Number of Monthly Service Updates by School

	Number of community partners	Average number of service updates completed each month
Arsenal 6–8	5	0.0
Faison K–5	39	14.2
Langley K–8	32	8.7
Lincoln PK–5	33	4.2
Westinghouse 6–12	28	6.8

Site Action Plans. Each school site team completed site action plans in fall 2018. These plans provided a comprehensive strategy for the Community Schools model that the site team planned to address and the programs or services that it planned to partner with. The site plans were developed in conjunction with the school improvement plans and needs assessments and provided details about how the school site team planned to remove barriers to support academic success for students and strengthen relationships between the school and the community.

Needs Assessment Reports. The needs assessments were conducted during the 2017–18 school year. The needs assessment process consisted of three questionnaires: one for students, one for staff, and one for parents and community members. AIR analyzed summary reports, which were developed by Hanover Research, and summarized findings from the needs assessments, including what schools do well and could do better, what services parents and community members would like to see at the school, what programs or activities students attend, and what programs or activities students enjoy participating in.

Analytic Approach. These data were analyzed qualitatively using the same procedures used for the interview and focus group data.

Appendix B. Needs Assessment Questionnaires

Pittsburgh Public Schools

Expect great things.

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Student Questionnaire (Grades 3–5)

We need your help! We want to create a school that is welcoming, fun, and meets the needs of all our students. This is your opportunity to give us your ideas for how we can make the school better.

1. What school do you attend?
   - Arlington PreK-8
   - Faison K–5
   - King K-8
   - Langley K–8
   - Lincoln PreK–5

2. What grade are you in?
   - 3rd
   - 4th
   - 5th

3. What is your gender? _____

4. What language(s) do you speak? (Check all that apply.)
   - English
   - Spanish
   - Polish
   - Chinese
   - Indian (dialects)
   - Other_____

5. How do you get to school?
   - Walk
   - School bus
   - Driven/drive
   - City bus
   - Other: _____

6. Where do you go for homework help? (Check all that apply.)
   - Parent/grandparent
   - Sibling
   - Friends
   - Teachers
   - Tutoring center
   - Afterschool program
   - The internet
   - Other _____
   - I don't ask for homework help

7. What do you usually do after school? (Check all that apply.)
   - Hang out with friends
   - Homework
   - Go to an afterschool program
   - Play sports
   - Go to school clubs
   - Play video games
   - Participate in a church activity
   - Visit community center
   - Visit library
   - Babysit family members
   - Volunteer or community service
   - Work
   - Other _____

8. Usually, why do you miss school when you are absent?
   - Was sick
   - Felt very sad or stressed
   - Didn't get enough sleep
   - Didn't feel safe at school or getting to and from school
   - Behind in schoolwork
   - Had no way to get to school
   - Parent needed me at home
   - Was bored in school
   - Other _____
   - I don't know

9. What activities would you like to see offered at your school?

Academic	
Homework help	
Science Club	
Math Club	
Reading Club	
Writing Club	
Computer Club	
Robotics	

Sports and Recreation	
Swimming	
Flag football	
Basketball	
Soccer	
Baseball	
Soccer	
Volleyball	
Skating	
Gymnastics	
Cheerleading	

Arts	
Musical instruments	
Choir	
Theater	
Dance Club	
Arts and crafts	
Murals/wall painting	
Photography	
Cooking/nutrition	
Sewing/knitting/fashion	
Gardening	

Social Activities	
Chess/board games	
Movie night	
Museums	
Bowling	
Plays/concerts	
Field trips	

Which activities would you like to see that are not included in this list?

10. Please tell us your level of agreement with the following statements about yourself:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. I feel like a real part of my school.	O	O	O	O
b. People here notice when I'm good at something.	O	O	O	O
c. Other students in my school take my opinions seriously.	O	O	O	O
d. People at this school are friendly to me.	O	O	O	O
e. I'm included in lots of activities at school.	O	O	O	O

11.   How safe do you feel…

	Not safe	Somewhat safe	Mostly safe	Very safe
a. In the hallways of the school?	O	O	O	O
b. In the bathrooms of the school?	O	O	O	O
c. Outside around the school?	O	O	O	O
d. Traveling between home and school?	O	O	O	O
e. In your classes?	O	O	O	O

12.   In this school, how do students get along?

	Not at all true	Somewh at true	Mostly true	Completely True
a. Students here are friendly with each other.	O	O	O	O
b. Students here treat each other with respect.	O	O	O	O
c. Students here listen to what the teachers tell them to do.	O	O	O	O
d. Students here don't tease or bully others.	O	O	O	O
e. Students here support and help one another.	O	O	O	O

13.   How often…

	Never	Some days	Most days	Every day
a. Do you eat breakfast?	O	O	O	O
b. Do you eat lunch?	O	O	O	O
c. Do you eat dinner?	O	O	O	O
d. Are you physically active?	O	O	O	O
e. Do you feel sad or lonely?	O	O	O	O
f. Do you feel anxious or stressed?	O	O	O	O

14. Students might describe themselves in many ways. We have listed some things students might say or think about themselves. How true is each statement for you?

	Not at all true	Somewhat true	Mostly true	Completely True
a. Overall, I am satisfied with myself.	O	O	O	O
b. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.	O	O	O	O
c. I am able to do things as well as most other people.	O	O	O	O
d. I take a positive attitude toward myself.	O	O	O	O
e. I feel like I have much to be proud of.	O	O	O	O
f. All in all, I am inclined to think that I am a success.	O	O	O	O

15. What do you hope you will do in the programs that are provided during and after school?

	Yes	No	Don't Know
a. Learn new things.	O	O	O
b. Get help with schoolwork.	O	O	O
c. Work on projects.	O	O	O
d. Try new things.	O	O	O
e. Go to places I have never been before.	O	O	O
f. Play games or sports.	O	O	O
g. Make new friends.	O	O	O
h. Get better at doing things I'm interested in.	O	O	O
i. Have lots of fun.	O	O	O

16. What is your favorite thing about your school (examples: teachers, cafeteria food, friends, programs, technology)?

17. What is your favorite school or after school program or activity (examples: sports, family nights, youth council, community service)?

18. What things would you like to change about your school? (examples: schedule, cafeteria food, technology)?

Pittsburgh Public Schools

Expect great things.

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Student Questionnaire (Grades 6–12)

We need your help! We want to create a school that is welcoming, fun, and meets the needs of all our students. This is your opportunity to give us your ideas for how we can make the school better.

1. What school do you attend?
   - o Arsenal 6–8
   - o Langley K–8
   - o Westinghouse 6–12
   - o University Prep 6-12

2. What grade are you in?
   - o 6th
   - o 7th
   - o 8th
   - o 9th
   - o 10th
   - o 11th
   - o 12th

3. What is your gender? _____

4. How do you describe yourself or your family? (Check all that apply.)
   - o Latino (Mexican, Latin American, Puerto Rican)
   - o African American (Black)
   - o Caucasian (White)
   - o Asian
   - o Native American
   - o Other

5. What language(s) do you speak? (Check all that apply.)
   - o English
   - o Spanish
   - o Polish
   - o Chinese
   - o Indian (dialects)
   - o Other_____

6. How do you get to school?
   - o Walk
   - o School bus
   - o Driven/drive
   - o City bus
   - o Other: _____

7. Where do you go for homework help? (Check all that apply.)
   - o Parent/grandparent
   - o Sibling
   - o Friends
   - o Teachers
   - o Tutoring center
   - o Afterschool program
   - o The internet
   - o Other _____
   - o I don't ask for homework help

8. What do you usually do after school? (Check all that apply.)
   - o Hang out with friends
   - o Homework
   - o Go to an afterschool program
   - o Play sports
   - o Go to school clubs
   - o Play video games
   - o Participate in a church activity
   - o Visit community center
   - o Visit library
   - o Babysit family members
   - o Volunteer or community service
   - o Work
   - o Other _____

9. Usually, why do you miss school when you are absent?
   - o Was sick
   - o Felt very sad or stressed
   - o Didn't get enough sleep
   - o Didn't feel safe at school or getting to and from school
   - o Behind in schoolwork
   - o Had no way to get to school
   - o Parent needed me at home
   - o Was bored in school
   - o Other _____
   - o I don't know

10. What activities would you like to see offered at your school?

Academic	
Study skills	
Homework help	
Tutoring	
Science Club	
Math Club	
Reading Club	
Writing Club	
College preparation	
Computer Club	
Gaming/coding	
Robotics	
Mindfulness (e.g. yoga)	
Leadership activities	

College and Life Skills	
Youth council/advisory	
Community service	
Mentoring	
ACT/SAT prep	
College fairs/tours	
Financial aid	
Choosing a college	
Scholarship aid	
Career day	
Resume writing	
Job applications	
Interview skills	
Job shadowing	
Completing college applications	

Sports and Recreation	
Fitness/weightlifting	
Flag football	
Gymnastics	
Cheerleading	
Swimming	
Running/jogging club	
Golf	
Skating	
Yoga/Pilates	

Arts	
Musical instruments	
Music production	
Choir	
Theater	
Dance Club	
Arts & crafts	
Murals/wall painting	
Photography	
Cooking/nutrition	
Sewing/knitting/fashion	
Gardening	

Which activities would you like to see that are not included in this list?

Social Activities	
Chess/board games	
Movie night	
Field trips	
Museums	
Bowling	
Plays/concerts	

11. When would you prefer activities to be offered?
   o Afterschool
   o During the summer
   o On the weekends
   o During school breaks

12. Students might describe themselves in many ways. We have listed some things students might say or think about themselves. How true is each statement for you?

	Not at all true	Somewhat true	Mostly true	Completely True
a. Overall, I am satisfied with myself.	O	O	O	O
b. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.	O	O	O	O
c. I am able to do things as well as most other people.	O	O	O	O
d. I take a positive attitude toward myself.	O	O	O	O
e. I feel like I have much to be proud of.	O	O	O	O
f. All in all, I am inclined to think that I am a success.	O	O	O	O

13. Please tell us your level of agreement with the following statements about yourself:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. I feel like a real part of my school.	O	O	O	O
b. People here notice when I'm good at something.	O	O	O	O
c. Other students in my school take my opinions seriously.	O	O	O	O
d. People at this school are friendly to me.	O	O	O	O
e. I'm included in lots of activities at school.	O	O	O	O
f. School staff make sure all students are planning for life after graduation.	O	O	O	O
g. School staff work hard to make sure that all students are learning.	O	O	O	O
h. High school is preparing me for the future.	O	O	O	O
i. All students are encouraged to go to college.	O	O	O	O
j. School staff pay attention to all students, not just the top students.	O	O	O	O
k. School staff work hard to make sure students stay in school.	O	O	O	O
l. I worry about crime and violence in this school.	O	O	O	O
m. Students at this school are often teased or picked on.	O	O	O	O
n. Students at this school are often threatened or bullied.	O	O	O	O

14. How safe do you feel...

	Not safe	Somewhat safe	Mostly safe	Very safe
a. In the hallways of the school?	O	O	O	O
b. In the bathrooms of the school?	O	O	O	O
c. Outside around the school?	O	O	O	O
d. Traveling between home and school?	O	O	O	O
e. In your classes?	O	O	O	O

15. How often do your parents do the following?

	Never	Sometimes	Most of the time	All of the time
a. Encourage you to work hard at school.	O	O	O	O
b. Support the things you like to do outside of school.	O	O	O	O
c. Listen to you when you need to talk.	O	O	O	O
d. Show they are proud of you.	O	O	O	O
e. Take time to help you make decisions.	O	O	O	O

16. What do you hope you will do in the programs that are provided during and after school?

	Yes	No	Don't Know
a. Learn new things.	O	O	O
b. Get help with schoolwork.	O	O	O
c. Work on projects.	O	O	O
d. Try new things.	O	O	O
e. Go to places I have never been before.	O	O	O
f. Play games or sports.	O	O	O
g. Make new friends.	O	O	O
h. Get better at doing things I'm interested in.	O	O	O
i. Have lots of fun.	O	O	O

17. In this school, how do students get along?

	Not at all true	Somewh at true	Mostly true	Completely True
a. Students here are friendly with each other.	O	O	O	O
b. Students here treat each other with respect.	O	O	O	O
c. Students here listen to what the teachers tell them to do.	O	O	O	O
d. Students here don't tease or bully others.	O	O	O	O
e. Students here support and help one another.	O	O	O	O

18. How often...

	Never	Some days	Most days	Every day
a. Do you eat breakfast?	O	O	O	O
b. Do you eat lunch?	O	O	O	O
c. Do you eat dinner?	O	O	O	O
d. Are you physically active?	O	O	O	O
e. Do you feel sad or lonely?	O	O	O	O
f. Do you feel anxious or stressed?	O	O	O	O

19. What is your favorite thing about your school (examples: teachers, cafeteria food, friends, programs, technology)?

20. What is your favorite school or after school program or activity (examples: sports, family nights, youth council, community service)?

21. What things would you like to change about your school? (examples: schedule, cafeteria food, technology)?

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS NEEDS ASSESSMENT

School Administrator, Teacher, and Staff Questionnaire

1. What is your role in the school?
   - School administrator (e.g., principal, assistant principal)
   - Teacher
   - Counseling staff (e.g., social worker, guidance counselor)
   - Other school staff, please specify_____

NEEDS ASSESSMENT SCALE			
	Low Degree of Need (1–3) Adequate resources exist in this area to meet the needs of the students and families.	**Moderate Degree of Need (4–6)** Resources exist in this area, but more are needed to meet the needs of our students and/or families.	**High Degree of Need (7–9)** Resources do not exist in this area and are needed for our student population.
Please circle the number that you believe best rates the degree of need in our school/community	Low	Moderate	High
	1 2	3 4	5 6

2. To what extent does your school address the following student needs:

Cognitive Development						
	Low		Moderate		High	
Academic Remediation (e.g., tutoring, reteaching)	1	2	3	4	5	6
Academic Enrichment (e.g., service learning, visual art)	1	2	3	4	5	6
Academic Support in Mathematics (e.g. STEM, projects, experiments)	1	2	3	4	5	6
Academic Support in ELA/Reading (e.g., book clubs, reading circles)	1	2	3	4	5	6
Physical Development						
Health Services (e.g., flu, dental, vision)	1	2	3	4	5	6
Nutrition Education (e.g., cooking workshops, resources)	1	2	3	4	5	6
Organized Sports (e.g., basketball, soccer, cheerleading)	1	2	3	4	5	6
Recreational Programs & Activities (e.g., chess, arts and crafts)	1	2	3	4	5	6
Regular Exercise (e.g., gym, swimming, recess)	1	2	3	4	5	6
Emotional Development						
Positive Behavior Support	1	2	3	4	5	6
Counseling and Therapy	1	2	3	4	5	6
Restorative Practices	1	2	3	4	5	6
Crisis Intervention	1	2	3	4	5	6
Self-Management	1	2	3	4	5	6
Self-Awareness	1	2	3	4	5	6
Student Social Development						
Communications Skills	1	2	3	4	5	6
Social Awareness	1	2	3	4	5	6
Relationships with Peers	1	2	3	4	5	6
Relationships with Adults	1	2	3	4	5	6
Ability to Work in a Group	1	2	3	4	5	6
Leadership Skills	1	2	3	4	5	6
Bullying	1	2	3	4	5	6
Family Support for Students	1	2	3	4	5	6

Student Resiliency Characteristics						
High Expectations for Success	1	2	3	4	5	6
Growth Mindset	1	2	3	4	5	6
Strong Sense of Self	1	2	3	4	5	6
Responsible Decision Making	1	2	3	4	5	6
Critical Thinking Skills	1	2	3	4	5	6
Hopes and Dreams for Future	1	2	3	4	5	6
Problem Solving Skills	1	2	3	4	5	6

3. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
a. School administrators and teachers work closely with parents to meet students' needs.				
b. This school regularly communicates with parents about how they can help their children learn.				
c. School administrators and teachers work at communicating to parents about support needed to advance the school mission.				
d. School administrators and teachers encourage feedback from parents and the community.				
e. School leadership encourages teachers to communicate regularly with parents.				
f. School administrators and teachers really try to understand parents' problems and concerns.				
g. Parents are greeted warmly when they call or visit the school.				

4. On average, how frequently do you have contact with parents and other caregivers of students in your class/program?
   o Daily
   o Weekly
   o Biweekly
   o Monthly
   o Bi-monthly
   o Quarterly

5. On average, what kind of contact is made:
   o Written
   o Telephone
   o At school
   o In their home

6. Please indicate if you would like to become more involved in any of the following school activities:
   o Facilitate professional development. Topic of interest: _____
   o Join the Community Schools Site Team or Planning Team
   o Facilitate enrichment programs (e.g., afterschool program, sports, youth leadership council)
   o Provide academic support (e.g., tutoring, remediation)
   o Engage in community outreach
   o Other_____

7. What services or programs would you most like to see added or improved for each of the following groups at the school?

Stakeholder Group	Service/Program 1	Service/Program 2	Service/Program 3
Example: Students	*Service learning (e.g., community garden)*	*STEM (e.g. robotics)*	*Behavioral (e.g., peace circles)*
Students			
Families			
Community Members			
Teachers			
Administrators			

8. Please list the top three (3) areas you think the school community **does well** to prepare students **academically**. (e.g., support services, afterschool programs, school climate, community resources)
    a.
    b.
    c.

9. Please list the top three (3) areas you think the school community **does well** to support students **nonacademically** (e.g., service learning, organized sports, arts, music, youth council)
    a.
    b.
    c.

10. Please list the top three (3) areas you think the school community **should improve** to better prepare students **academically** (e.g., mental health, behavioral support, teaching conditions, parental involvement)
    1.
    2.
    3.

11. Please list the top three (3) area you think the school community **should improve** to better prepare students **nonacademically** (e.g., extracurricular activities, career explorations, afterschool programs)
    1.
    2.
    3.

12. Please rate your level of interest in the following professional development content areas.

	Very Interested	Interested	Not Interested
Community Schools district policy, standard operating procedures, and expectations			
Classroom management			
Behavior management			
21st century learning with technology			
Positive youth development			
Social-emotional learning			
Motivating students/growth mindset			
Understanding cultural and ethnic differences			
Family engagement			
Restorative practices			
Data-driven decision making			

13. Please specify any additional professional development topics (not listed above):

Thank you so much for sharing your thoughts and experiences today! We appreciate your input!

Pittsburgh Public Schools

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COMMUNITY SCHOOLS NEEDS ASSESSMENT
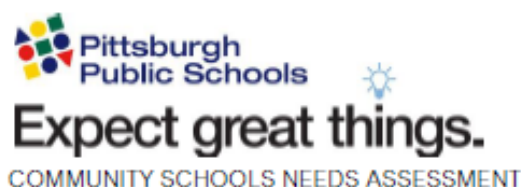
Parent and Family Questionnaire

Community schools help students learn by partnering schools, families, and community groups to create a successful academic and social experience for children. Community schools provide intensive support, based on the unique needs of each school community. The data collected from this survey will guide school staff in developing programs and services that support the needs of students, the school, and the community.

1. Please select the school your child attends:
   - Arlington PreK-8
   - Arsenal 6–8
   - Faison K–5
   - King K-8
   - Langley K–8
   - Lincoln PreK–5
   - Westinghouse 6–12
   - University Prep 6-12

1. In what neighborhood or area do you live?

   _____

2. How do you describe yourself or your family? (please check all that apply)
   - Latino (Mexican, Latin American, Puerto Rican)
   - African American (Black)
   - Caucasian (White)
   - Asian
   - Native American
   - Other

3. What language(s) do you speak? (please check all that apply)
   - English
   - Spanish
   - Polish
   - Chinese
   - Indian (dialects)
   - Other, please specify_____

4. Are you interested in volunteering to help at the school?
   - Yes
   - No

5. If yes, how would you like to volunteer? (please check all that apply)
   - Lead an activity or service for students
   - Assist school staff with a student activity or service
   - Lead an activity or service with adults
   - Join a parent/family advisory group (e.g., PSCC, Community Schools Site Team)
   - Greet students and answer questions
   - Help with school administrative tasks
   - Fundraising for school activities
   - Other, please specify:

   _____

6. Are there specific skills or expertise that you could contribute at the school?
   - English language arts
   - Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM)
   - Foreign language, please specify:

   _____

   - Cultural appreciation and diversity
   - Homework help/tutoring
   - Sports/physical fitness
   - Computer/technology skills
   - Creative arts
   - Other, please specify:

   _____

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7. What **five** services and activities would you like to see offered to students?

Employment	Education	Health and Safety	Recreational
o Internship/on-the-job training	o Tutoring/homework help	o Drug and alcohol education or counseling	o Sports and exercise classes
o Job placement services (e.g., resume writing)	o College readiness (e.g., college tours)	o Mental health counseling and therapy	o Art or music classes
Home and Nutrition	o Leadership opportunities	o Health services (e.g., flu, dental, vision)	o Social activities (field trips, tours, etc.)
o Nutrition education (e.g., cooking classes)			o Community service opportunities
Please list any additional services not listed that should be offered:			o Recreational programs (e.g., chess, arts and crafts)

8. Which **five** services and activities do you believe are most needed by **parents and family members**?

Employment	Home and Nutrition	Health and Safety	Recreational
o Internship/on-the-job training	o Housing services (e.g., tenant's rights)	o Drug and alcohol education or counseling	o Gardening
o Job placement services (e.g., resume writing)	o Food or clothes donations	o Mental health counseling and therapy	o Sports and exercise classes
Education	o Nutrition education (e.g., cooking classes)	o Health services (e.g., flu, dental, vision)	o Book club
o GED classes	o Home-delivered meals	o Safety (e.g., self-defense)	o Art or music classes
o Continuing education	o Transportation services	**Parenting**	**Other Services**
o English as a second language	**Income Management**	o How to help your child succeed at school	o Legal aid
o College readiness (e.g., college tours)	o Household financial counseling	o Parenting skills	o Childcare
o Technology classes	o Tax preparation assistance	o Parent advisory group	o Immigration services

Please list any additional services not listed that should be offered:

9. If you could make changes to your community school, what would they be? (please check all that apply)
   - o More activities, programs, or services for students
   - o Better communication from school staff concerning activities, programs, or services
   - o More activities for students on weekends
   - o More activities, programs, or services for families and community members
   - o Other, please specify:
   _____

10. What are the best times for you to attend activities, programs, or services? (please check all that apply)
    - o Mornings
    - o Afternoons
    - o Evenings
    - o Other, please specify_____

11. Do you require transportation in order to attend school events or activities?
    - o Yes
    - o No

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12. What do you think is the best way to get other parents involved with your community school?
    - ○ Personal outreach by school staff
    - ○ Presentations at school meetings
    - ○ Outreach by parents who are already involved
    - ○ Sign-up fairs in front of school
    - ○ Telephone calls by teachers
    - ○ Telephone calls by other parents
    - ○ Home visits
    - ○ Parent socials
    - ○ Community flyers
    - ○ Afterschool program family nights
    - ○ Schoolwide events (pancake breakfast, multicultural fair, etc.)
    - ○ Other, please specify: _____

13. What day of the week is best for you to attend activities, programs, or services? (please check all that apply)
    - ○ Monday
    - ○ Tuesday
    - ○ Wednesday
    - ○ Thursday
    - ○ Friday
    - ○ Saturday
    - ○ Sunday

14. What is the best way to communicate with you?
    - ○ Text
    - ○ E-mail
    - ○ Social media
    - ○ Phone
    - ○ Letter sent home with students
    - ○ Other, please explain_____

15. Please share the top three things you like about your community school (e.g., school staff, extracurricular activities, technology, parent outreach, behavioral support).
    a.
    b.
    c.

16. What changes, if any, would you like to see at the school (e.g., transportation, communication, nutrition, volunteer opportunities)?
    a.
    b.
    c.

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Pittsburgh Public Schools

Expect great things.

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Community Member Questionnaire

Community schools help students learn by partnering schools, families, and community groups to create a successful academic and social experience for children. Community schools provide intensive support, based on the unique needs of each school community. The data collected from this survey will guide school staff in developing programs and services that support the needs of students, the school, and the community.

1. Please select the school that is located in your community:
   o Arlington PreK-8
   o Arsenal 6–8
   o Faison K–5
   o King K-8
   o Langley K–8
   o Lincoln PreK–5
   o Westinghouse 6–12
   o University Prep 6-12

2. Are you interested in volunteering to help at the school?
   o Yes
   o No

3. If yes, how would you like to volunteer? (please check all that apply)
   o Lead an activity or service for students
   o Assist school staff with a student activity or service
   o Lead an activity or service with adults
   o Join a parent/family advisory group (e.g. PSCC, Community Schools Site Team)
   o Greet students and answer questions
   o Help with school administrative tasks
   o Fundraising for school activities
   o Other, please specify:
   _____

4. Are there specific skills or expertise that you could contribute at the school?
   o English language arts
   o Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM)
   o Foreign language, please specify:
   _____
   o Cultural appreciation and diversity
   o Homework help/tutoring
   o Sports/physical fitness
   o Computer/technology skills
   o Creative arts
   o Other, please specify:
   _____

5. What day of the week is best for you to attend activities, programs, or services? (please check all that apply)
   o Monday
   o Tuesday
   o Wednesday
   o Thursday
   o Friday
   o Saturday
   o Sunday

6. What are the best times for you to attend activities, programs, or services? (please check all that apply)
   o Mornings
   o Afternoons
   o Evenings
   o Other, please specify_____

1

7. What is the best way to communicate with you?
   - Text
   - E-mail
   - Social media
   - Phone
   - Community flyers
   - Church bulletins
   - Local paper
   - Radio
   - Other, please explain_____

8. If you could make changes to your community school, what would they be? (please check all that apply)
   - More activities, programs, or services for students
   - Better communication from school staff concerning activities, programs, or services
   - More activities for students on weekends
   - More activities, programs, or services for families and community members
   - Other, please specify: _____

9. What **five** services and activities would you like to see offered to students?

Employment	Education	Health and Safety	Recreational
o Internship/on-the-job training	o Tutoring/homework help	o Drug and alcohol education or counseling	o Sports and exercise classes
o Job placement services (e.g., resume writing)	o College readiness (e.g., college tours)	o Mental health counseling and therapy	o Art or music classes
Home and Nutrition	o Leadership opportunities	o Health services (e.g., flu, dental, vision)	o Social activities (field trips, tours, etc.)
o Nutrition education (e.g., cooking classes)			o Community service opportunities
Please list any additional services not listed that should be offered:			o Recreational programs (e.g., chess, arts and crafts)

10. Which **five** services and activities do you believe are most needed by parents and family members?

Employment	Home and Nutrition	Health and Safety	Recreational
o Internship/on-the-job training	o Housing services (e.g., tenant's rights)	o Drug and alcohol education or counseling	o Gardening
o Job placement services (e.g., resume writing)	o Food or clothes donations	o Mental health counseling and therapy	o Sports and exercise classes
Education	o Nutrition education (e.g., cooking classes)	o Health services (e.g., flu, dental, vision)	o Book club
o GED classes	o Home-delivered meals	o Safety (e.g., self-defense)	o Art or music classes
o Continuing education	o Transportation services	**Parenting**	**Other Services**
o English as a second language	**Income Management**	o How to help your child succeed at school	o Legal aid
o College readiness (e.g., college tours)	o Household financial counseling	o Parenting skills	o Childcare
o Technology classes	o Tax preparation assistance	o Parent advisory group	o Immigration services
Please list any additional services not listed that should be offered:			

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Appendix C. Example Youth Experience Survey Scales and Items

This appendix outlines scales that have been taken from the Youth Motivation, Engagement, and Beliefs Survey originally designed by the Youth Development Executives of King County and modified by AIR for use in several statewide and local 21st Century Community Learning Center evaluations. This information is provided here to show examples of how each proposed measure related to youth experiences in programming could potentially be measured.

Thinking about the adults in this program, how true are these statements for you? In this program, there is an adult here . . .

Positive interactions with the program's adult activity leaders	Not at all true	Somewhat true	Mostly true	Completely true
a. Who is interested in what I think about things.	O	O	O	O
b. Who helps me when I have a problem.	O	O	O	O
c. Who I enjoy being around.	O	O	O	O
d. Who has helped me find a special interest or talent (something I'm good at).	O	O	O	O
e. Who asks me about my life and goals.	O	O	O	O
f. Who I will miss when the program is over.	O	O	O	O

At this program, how do kids get along? Indicate how true each statement is based on your own experience in this program.

Positive interactions with other youth	Not at all true	Somewhat true	Mostly true	Completely true
a. Kids here are friendly with each other.	O	O	O	O
b. Kids here treat each other with respect.	O	O	O	O
c. Kids here listen to what the teachers tell them to do.	O	O	O	O
d. Kids here don't tease or bully others.	O	O	O	O
e. Kids here support and help one another.	O	O	O	O

Please indicate if you have had the following experiences in this afterschool program.

In this afterschool program, . . .	Not at all	Sort of	Yes, definitely
Opportunity to try new things			
a. I tried new things.	○	○	○
b. I got to do things here I don't get to do anywhere else.	○	○	○

In this afterschool program, . . .	Not at all	Sort of	Yes, definitely
Having skill-building experiences			
a. I set goals for myself.	○	○	○
b. I learned to push myself.	○	○	○
c. I worked hard to get better at something.	○	○	○
d. I did things that challenged me in a good way.	○	○	○

Now think about this particular program. When you are at this program, how often . . .

Opportunities to experience a sense of agency and autonomy	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
a. Do you get to choose how you spend your time?	○	○	○	○
b. Do you get to suggest your own ideas for new activities?	○	○	○	○
c. Do you get to choose which activities you do?	○	○	○	○
d. Do you get to help plan activities for the program?	○	○	○	○
e. Do you get the chance to lead an activity?	○	○	○	○
f. Do you get to be in charge of doing something to help the program?	○	○	○	○
g. Do you get to help make decisions or rules for the program?	○	○	○	○

Now think about how this afterschool program has helped you the most. Pick up to three areas where you think the program has helped you the most. This program has helped me . . .

Youth-reported ways they have benefitted from program participation	Pick three
Feel good about myself.	○
Feel more confident.	○
Make new friends.	○
Find out what is important to me.	○
Find out what I'm good at doing.	○
Find out what I like to do.	○
Discover things I want to learn more about.	○
Learn things that will help me in school.	○
Learn things that will be important for my future.	○
Think about the kinds of classes I want to take in the future.	○
Think about what I might like to do when I get older.	○
Learn about things that are important to my community.	○
Feel good because I am helping my community.	○
This program hasn't actually helped me.	○

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