

Child Poverty Council
Full Service Schools Discussion
9/4/15

What is the definition of a full-service community school?

A full-service community school means a public elementary or secondary school that works with its local educational agency and community-based organizations, nonprofit organizations, and other public or private entities to provide a coordinated and integrated set of comprehensive academic, social, and health services that respond to the needs of its students, students' family members, and community members. In addition, a full-service community school promotes family engagement by bringing together many partners in order to offer a range of supports and opportunities for students, students' family members, and community members.

Disparity in School Readiness

Full-service schools address the multiple factors that heavily impact student achievement by incorporating services at the school site to provide academic and non-academic supports students need to succeed. As defined by the Coalition for Community Schools, a community school is: both a place and a set of partnerships between the school and other community resources; Its integrated focus on academics, services, supports and opportunities, leads to improved student learning, stronger families and healthier communities. Schools become centers of the community and are open to everyone—all day, every day, evenings and weekends." (Coalition for Community Schools website, www.communityschools.org)

One Stop Shop – Improve Access to Vital Services

In this model of schooling, the alignment of existing programs, funds, and agencies capitalizes on the available funding, human capital, and other resources for a more efficient use of powerful yet underutilized services (physical health, mental health, dental, etc.). In short, the 'one-stop-shop' of full service schools improves access to vital services to the people most at need.

Integration of Existing Services Allows Teachers to focus on instructional core

Community schools aim to coordinate services that meet the divergent supplemental needs of students and thus free teachers to focus on the instructional core, which is directly connected to improved student achievement (Dryfoos & Quinn, 2005).

Progressive History

Jane Addams, founder of the U.S. Settlement House Movement Addams believed that social ills were interconnected and that they must be approached holistically. She expanded settlement houses from people's homes into schools. During this time, John Dewey also embraced the importance of community schooling. In his 1902 speech "The School as Social Centre"

Expanded during the depression schools were seen as a large financial investment and citizens wanted to see their dollars go to good use. Thus, school facilities were appropriated for

multiple purposes including leisure activities, adult health and counseling services, and parent education. This activity required schools to stay open beyond the normal school day (Benson, et al., 2009).

Following World War II the focus on community schools continued, but broadened as the lens was shifted to wider education reform. In Flint, Michigan community school pioneer Charles Mott argued that schools should be open for use by the public when not being used during the regular school day (Benson, et al., 2009).

War on Poverty - education reform during and beyond this time was impacted by James Coleman's "Equality of Educational Opportunity" report, popularly referred to as The Coleman Report. The publication announced that external environments including the home, neighborhood, and peer networks have a greater impact on a student's academic performance than schools (Traub, 2000).

Throughout the late 1980s and 1990s, state-based initiatives grew to support community schools. Various initiatives, borne out of innovation and a need to respond to the needs of the urban poor, sprung up independent of one another (Dryfoos, 2005). Joy Dryfoos, a researcher and key player in the movement since 1983 remarked about this time, "it seemed to me that a "revolution" was actually taking place before our eyes" (Dryfoos & Maguire, 2002, pg. 2).

2000 and after expansion to states – Obama supports place based schools

In Practice – varied landscape of implementation and service provision

In practice, full-service schools embody a rich and varied landscape of implementation and service provision. Nationwide, these schools differ widely in their governance structure, operational style, and coordination of services offered. For example, some schools are driven by a single schoolteacher in the school who may form partnerships with outside organizations and require constituents to travel to acquire services, while others have embedded full-service positions that coordinate required services from within the school.

Vermont

- Act 46 – “AOE and AHS in consultation with school districts, supervisory unions, social service providers, and other interested parties, shall develop a plan for maximizing collaboration and coordination between the Agencies in delivering social services to Vermont public school students and their families.”
- Molly Stark School
- School based health clinics – Federally Qualified Health Centers – Can we expand SBHC – Need look at outcomes
- Variety of programs happening at schools Ex. Farm to Table
- Technical Assistance – What exists? What can we do to better integrate?
- Focus on low-income areas