

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY PUBLIC
SCHOOLS Board of Education
Upper Marlboro,
Maryland

1100
Policy No.

BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Community Schools

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students in Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) can achieve at high academic levels, and that all PGCPS families, students, and staff, as well as other key stakeholders, share the responsibility for student success in order to contribute to thriving communities.

Community Schools create positive conditions for learning in both schools and communities in partnership with families, governmental leaders and agencies, businesses, as well as nonprofit and faith-based organizations.

In PGCPS, Community Schools shall serve as an effective educational and holistic strategy to address both concentrated poverty and remove barriers to academic success, and to achieve equitable outcomes for all students.

The Board of Education, through this policy, affirms the belief that community schools offer the school system the optimum opportunity to focus on academics, physical, mental, and emotional health services, youth development, expanded learning opportunities, and family and community supports to ensure students are ready and able to learn. Community schools are also recognized as an evidence-based strategy for school improvement under the federal Every Student Succeeds Act.

This policy establishes the administrative responsibilities for the support and implementation of a Community Schools Strategy that provides high-quality teaching, integrated social supports, and family and community engagement in order to improve educational outcomes and the well-being of PGCPS students.

Definitions

1. *Community School* - a place and a set of partnerships between the school and other community

resources, focused on academics, health and social services, youth and community development, as well as family and community engagement with the mission of improving student learning, strengthening families, and creating healthier communities. Community Schools include the following components as driven by the needs/asset assessment: culturally relevant and engaging curriculum as defined by the Board, an emphasis on high quality teaching, wrap around supports, healthy school climate and positive discipline practices such as restorative justice, family and community engagement and inclusive school leadership. The community school is facilitated by a coordinator who leads the process of an assets and needs assessment to inform priorities and the school-based strategic plan.

2. *Community School Director (“CSD”)* - An individual employed full-time by PGCPs that serves as the Central Office administrative leader for the entire listing of community schools. This position is required, but not limited, to foster collaboration between Community Schools, prepare new schools to become Community Schools, and the coordination of any necessary and appropriate training, hiring and placement, and the professional development of Community School Coordinators.
3. *Community School Coordinator (“CSC”)* - An individual employed full-time by PGCPs or a lead partner through an established Memorandum of Understanding that is highly qualified and trained to facilitate the established community school framework in partnership with the school system’s CSD, their assigned school principal, administrative leadership team, staff, and larger school community. The CSC is a member of the school’s leadership team and may be provided access to student records as authorized and appropriate under federal and state law.
4. *Lead Partner-A community-based organization approved by the Community School Steering Committee to co-lead with PGCPs the community school strategy at designated schools through a cost-sharing partnership. The lead partner and coordinator for a school shall be selected through input from the principal, teachers, families, and other key stakeholders.*
5. *School-Based Strategic Plan* – A comprehensive strategy facilitated by the individual school’s CSC that, in conjunction with the Board of Education’s approved Strategic Plan for the school system, seeks to remove barriers to academic success and strengthen opportunities for learning and enrichment during and beyond the school day through strategic, results-focused school- community partnerships. The strategic plan is based on the school’s defined vision, addresses the results of a comprehensive needs and assets assessment and is supported by a school based team including the community school coordinator, principal, educators and other school staff, parents, community partners, and students.
6. *Community School Steering Committee (“CSSC”)* – A public body developed to support the vision, policy, and resource alignment for the community school strategy at the district level.

7. *Asset and Needs Assessment*: A systematic process led by the CSC in partnership with school and community stakeholders to review school and community data, including academic, non-academic, quantitative, and qualitative, to determine the specific assets, needs and interests of the school community. The results of the assessment will address key challenges and measure progress of the school.

Community School Steering Committee (CSSC) Charge, Membership and Meeting Requirements

The CSD will serve as the Chair of the Steering Committee, and in collaboration with the school district and school board, the CSSC will make recommendations on how many schools will open each year and which schools will be approved. The CSSC will also oversee the entire PGCPS Community School Initiative. The CSSC will meet every other month and the CSD will provide regular reports on the progress of the Community School Initiative including, but not limited to, the number of community schools, how many were created and ended during the specific period, and objective outcomes for schools that had their status considered for renewal at the end of their term. Meeting notices shall be publicized on the school system website and open to the public.

Decisions will be made by majority vote if a quorum is present. At the first meeting of the CSSC, a vice-chair and secretary will be elected. The CSSC will provide input in the criteria for application and employment of coordinators; as well as provide substantive input in the development of the administrative procedure regarding implementation.

Membership:

(Total of fifteen [15] members; eight [8] members represent a quorum)

- 2 representatives from the Board of Education, one being the Student Member and one being a member of the Board of Education
- 1 representative from the Prince George's County Department of Social Services
- 3 representative each from the Prince George's County Public Schools including one certified/training personnel in restorative practice selected by the CEO
- 4 members from the nonprofit, business/higher education, philanthropic and faith based community
- 4 members of the collective bargaining units that represent PGCPS employees, with at least one per each unit
- 1 parent from the Board of Education's Parent and Community Advisory Council, selected by simple majority vote of the councilmembers

Community School Application, Selection, Professional Development, Evaluation, and Continuation Process

Pursuant to this Board Policy, and under advisement of the CSSC, the CSD shall develop an application process, selection rubric, and evaluation that will assess progress made by the school particularly on the needs identified by the assets and needs assessment. The CSD shall also establish proper employment criteria for the CSCs and create templates for the school-based strategic plan and assets and needs assessment. . Once approved by PGCPS to operate as a community school, the term of approval for operation shall have an effective term of

five academic years with an initial evaluation after three (3) years. PGCPs training and professional development for the community school strategy shall be open to all PGCPs staff who wish to apply to become a community school.

At the time of the passage of this policy, any school operating as a community school through a lead partner organization shall be required to apply the following school year to become a PGCPs-recognized community school should they wish to continue as a community school. Any school in such status is also eligible for all support including training and professional development from PGCPs for the community school strategy.

In the expansion of community schools, PGCPs shall first use all available funds allocated for community schools to employ district-employed CSCs, then invite lead partner organizations to employ CSCs in additional schools through a cost-sharing partnership.

The Board of Education and school system may use community forums, focus groups, surveys, and other methods to involve parents, students, and school-based staff in the periodic review of established community schools, as well as any proposed amendments, as necessary, to this policy.

The Board's goal is to increase the number of community schools each year contingent on available funds and the overall progress of the community schools initiative as reported by the CSSC, and as informed by the number of schools that demonstrate interest through an application or another formal means such as a letter of interest the prior year. The Board also encourages the administration to leverage existing eligible funds for the expansion of community schools to more schools.

Administrative Charge

Following the selection of the CSD and CSSC, the CEO shall establish an Administrative Procedure implementing this policy.

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