



Center for Strategic Community Innovation

What Are Full Service Community Schools?

Full Service Community School refers to an **approach and an organizational concept** aimed at achieving educational success and physical, social, and emotional well being for students, families, and community. It is **not a program, nor a set of co-located services**.

A full service community school is one in which **multiple services**, (including the academic and learning experiences provided within the schools), are mobilized through **intentional partnerships** to provide opportunities, optimize assets, and address the identified needs of students, family, and community. The full service community school aims to optimize opportunities and quality of education, learning, and services. It is **equitable and culturally responsive**. Through effective **shared leadership, coordination, responsiveness**, and, a **collective responsibility** for student, family, and community success, the opportunities and services are **embedded and integrated** into the fabric of daily life in the school and into the landscape of the school community. *(Center for Strategic Community Innovation)*

A **core** characteristic of community schools is the **intentional integration** of varied supports, services, and opportunities into the daily fabric of the school. It involves:

- The development of a comprehensive array of services to address the needs of each and every student;
- The development of operational mechanisms that demand collaboration between academic, health and social services, and other supports and opportunities to support student success.
- The development of plan and policies to ensure equitable access to these services.

Key Elements of a Full Service Community School

Shared Leadership through formal structures at i) the **governance-oversight level** with clear roles and mandates and ii) the **site level** most often between a school Principal and a Community School Director, whereby the Principal focuses on academics, teaching and instruction, and overall school administration while the Community School Director focuses on all non-academic services and community-school partnerships.

Joint Responsibility and Commitment by all parties and at all levels articulated through clear and transparent formal agreements and commitments. Clear responsibilities of all parties (district, city, county, lead agency, school site, service providers, families, and community) ensures:

- Access to services
- Sustainability of services and operations
- Accountability for quality of curricula, teaching/ instruction and the type and quality of services
- Effective data collection and progress monitoring
- Better outcomes for students and families

A Clear Vision embraced by all stakeholders

Blended and Diverse Funding Resources wherein multiple stakeholders contribute and leverage funds.

Alignment of Goals and Desired Results between partners and stakeholders based upon identified needs.

A comprehensive Array of Services on campus to serve the multiple needs of students and their families.

Core services generally include: a rich instructional program and academic supports, after school/extended day/expanded learning that include many enrichment and recreation activities, health, mental health, case management, parent involvement, parent leadership and parent resources. **Other service examples** include: gang prevention and intervention, translation banks, basic need banks, service learning, college and career counseling, conflict resolution, adult education and skill development. This requires keeping the school open through the evening.

Integration of Services into the school's overall landscape and fabric of daily life. This necessitates the development of a seamless system with:

- A **strong connection and working relationship** between school faculty and staff and service providers focused on the whole child/student success
- A well-articulated system for **coordination of all services** both for student success and smooth operations
- Effective formal and informal **communication systems** amongst all academic and service components at the school
- **Optimization of access** to service opportunities for students and their families

Active Parent Engagement and participation in the school community

Active Community Connectedness and Engagement including:

- Effective **communications systems** with the community
- **Community engagement activities** for the purpose of promoting and supporting student and family success
- Recruitment and effective use of **Volunteers**
- **Community wide celebrations and events** for students, parents & community members
- **Service Learning** for students in the community
- **Internships** for students in the community
- Strategies for **Building Public Support** to sustain full service community schools

Interdisciplinary Staff and Professional Development that focuses on **the whole child** and enables each discipline to learn from other disciplines so as to forge mutual understanding, team work, and a common language.

Data Sharing and Evaluation amongst teachers, service providers, and community to assess outcomes, make improvements, add needed services, assist with decision making, and so on.

What Are Full Service Community School Districts?

A Full Service Community School District fully embraces **the Full Service Community Schools approach**. It develops **partnerships with key public and private entities**, such as city, county, community and faith based organizations, services, higher education, business, and community and family representatives. With its partners the district develops an **infrastructure for joint oversight, accountability, and service delivery** that speaks to joint ownership for the success of students, family and community. Internally, the District has a strong supportive relationship with its schools and the communities it serves. This is evidenced through its organizational design, systems, policies, operations, and professional development in which effective, high quality, responsive practices, and the sustained, optimal leveraging of resources are viewed as critical to ensuring successful students and healthy families and communities. *(Center for Strategic Community Innovation)*