August 2018

Evaluation of the Newark South Ward Community Schools Initiative

2017-18 Evaluation Report

Submitted to:
Newark Trust for Education

metis associates

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Table of Contents

Figures and Tables

Executive Summary

The South Ward Community Schools Initiative (SWCSI) is a **collaborative partnership between the Newark Public Schools (NPS) and the City of Newark**. SWCSI began in 2015 as a school transformation strategy designed to address the barriers that prevent students from reaching their full potential.

The goal of the SWCSI is to transform schools into nurturing, supportive hubs where students and families can access the resources they need to engage and thrive in education, career, and community. The SWCSI model is based on six key elements:

- High Expectations for Learning Supported by Clear Instructional Vision, Rigorous Instructional Practice and Integrated Student Supports
- Capacity to Address Student Health and Mental Health
- Quality In-School and Expanded Learning Time/Opportunities
- Community of Engaged, Supportive Adults
- High Capacity Partnerships and Resource Coordination/Integration
- Integrated Student Data Information System & Approach to Learning Analytics

EVALUATION METHODS

- Interviews with key stakeholders from lead agencies, partnering organizations, and members of the National Advisory Board and Children's Cabinet.
- Visits at 5 participating schools, which included interviews/focus groups with principals, Community School Directors, teachers, members of the site-based leadership team (SBLT), and parents
- Analyses of publicly available student data (chronic absenteeism, academic performance, and graduation data)
- Review of program documentation, including needs assessments, schools' strategic plans, marketing materials

Five South Ward schools—Avon Community School, Belmont Runyon, BRICK Peshine, Malcom X Shabazz High School, and Spencer Miller—were selected, through a rigorous competitive process, to transform their schools into community schools. After an intensive planning process, the schools began full implementation during the 2016-17 school year.

Metis Associates, in partnership with the Center for Research and Evaluation on Education and Human Services (CREEHS) at Montclair State University, was selected in 2017 to conduct a 2-year evaluation of SWCSI. The evaluation, which includes formative and summative components, is designed to document the successes, challenges and lessons learned, and assess the impact of the initiative on key student, family, school, and community outcomes. The following sections summarize the preliminary findings to date.

IMPLEMENTATION FINDINGS

After a systematic review of documentation, and interviews and focus groups with key stakeholder groups, a number of overarching accomplishments and challenges were identified—both at the systems level and at the school level—and are highlighted in the chart on the next page.

LEVEL	IMPLEMENTATION SUCCESSES	IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES
Systems-level	- Collaborative partnership and strong commitment from NPS and the Mayor's Office - Oversight and support from Newark Trust for Education (the intermediary agency) - Creation of a National Advisory Board and the Children's Cabinet - Technical assistance and expertise from the National Center for Community Schools - Development of a research-based community schools model with input from varied stakeholder groups	- Need for greater transparency and shared understanding of the SWCSI - Need for more clarity on the roles of lead agencies and oversight/support groups - Lack of a sustainability plan - Lack of a uniform and comprehensive data management and information system
School-level	- Increased awareness and understanding of the SWCSI in schools and the community - Development of inclusive decision-making processes at the schools – for example, through the creation of site-based leadership teams with representation from key stakeholder groups - Development of new partnerships and increases in services for students, families, and staff	- Need for improved communication with school stakeholders, and between lead agencies and schools - Need for more expert consultation and inter-visitations - Need for more training, resources, and services around health/mental health and academic performance - Logistics in managing, planning and implementing the SWCSI grant

PRELIMINARY OUTCOMES

Data on 2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17 student outcomes were collected from publicly available sources. Data for the 2017-18 school year (the second implementation year) were not available at the time this report was written. Overall, early results were very promising and show that:

- **Chronic absenteeism rates declined in 3 of the 5 SWCSI schools**. The largest decline was observed for Spencer Miller (from 43% in 2014-15 to 29% in 2016-17). In comparison, chronic absenteeism rose districtwide from 29% in 2015-16 to 32% in 2016-17.

- **Proficiency rates in ELA improved in 4 of the 5 SWCSI schools.** The largest gain was observed for BRICK Peshine, from 11% in 2014-15 to 26% in 2016-17. The proficiency rate also increased districtwide, from 22% in 2014-15 to 31% in 2016-17.

- **Math proficiency rates improved in all 3 SWCSI schools for which 2016-17 data were available.** The largest gain was observed for Avon Community School, with the proficiency rate more than doubling from 9% in 2014-15 to 19% in 2016-17. The proficiency rate also increased districtwide, but to a lesser extent, from 17% in 2014-15 to 23% in 2016-17.

- **The 4-year high school graduation rate has steadily declined at Malcom X Shabazz**, from 69% in 2014-15 to 61% in 2016-17. In contrast, the district's 4-year graduation rate increased over the same period of time, from 70% in 2014-15 to 79% in 2016-17.

During site visits at all 5 participating schools, key stakeholders (including principals, Community School directors, teachers, parents, and members of the SBLT) reported that the SWCSI has led to a number of positive outcomes for their students, teachers, schools, families, and the community. A number of common themes emerged from the interviews and focus groups and are summarized below.

POPULATION	OBSERVED OUTCOMES	REPRESENTATIVE QUOTES
Students	• Increased student motivation and engagement • Improved social and emotional skills • Improved student attendance, which many stakeholders attributed to the efforts of Success Mentors • Increased number and variety of school resources and supports available to students • Improved student academic achievement	*Our Success Mentors program is part of our attendance initiative and, of the 80 students that we're working with, 57% of those students have increased attendance.* *Being able to partner with YDC* [Youth Development Clinic] *and UBHC* [Rutgers University Behavioral Health Care] *has allowed us to support our scholars around the socio-emotional learning.*
Parents and families	• Increased parent involvement and engagement at social events • Increased number of parent volunteers • Improved parent-teacher relationships • Increased attention to parents' opinions and concerns • More supports and resources for families • Increased parents' knowledge and desire to be informed about school offerings • Increased parents' ability to advocate for their needs and their families' needs	*We've had families come out and be engaged in a way that they have never been engaged before, which is huge.* *In terms of the parental involvement, I think that it* [the impact of SWCSI] *has been extremely positive and noticeable. It's something that we get a lot of compliments on.*
School	• Improved student-teacher and parent-teacher relationships • More positive teacher perceptions of the school • More teachers looking forward to coming to work • Increased staff participation in school events • Increased awareness and use of trauma-informed practices	[The Community Schools Initiative] *helped me to understand that I have to look beyond just the classroom. I have to really look at the whole child in order to figure out how to help them.*
Community	• Increased community participation in school events and community activities • Increased number of community partnerships • Strengthened relationships between the schools and their communities • Improved school reputation • More parent workshops from community partners	*The number of community activities and participation has been tremendously positive.*

PRIORITY AREAS MOVING FORWARD

As schools and the district continue to implement the community schools model, a number of challenges and recommendations were identified in the evaluation.

- Refine the governance structure and leadership model and clarify the roles and responsibilities of all lead agencies and key stakeholder groups.

- Continue to promote awareness and greater transparency for the overall initiative.

- Secure additional funding and clarify current grant requirements to expand services provided, particularly around academic preparation and student and family health and mental health services.

- Create and implement a sustainability plan that is driven by the initiative's mission and long-term vision.

- Develop a centralized data management system to ensure that services, outputs, and outcomes can be tracked in a uniform and systematic manner.

I. Introduction

The South Ward Community Schools Initiative (SWCSI) began in 2015 as a collaborative partnership between the Newark Public Schools and the City of Newark Office of the Mayor. Five schools in the South Ward geographical area were selected, through a rigorous competitive process, to transform their schools into community schools. After an intensive planning process, the schools began full implementation in the 2016-17 and 2017-18 school years.

SWCSI VISION
The goal of the South Wards Community School Initiative (SWCSI) is to transform schools into supportive, nurturing hubs where students and families can access the resources they need to engage and thrive in education, career, and community.

Metis Associates, in partnership with the Center for Research and Evaluation on Education and Human Services (CREEHS) at Montclair State University, was retained to conduct a two-phase evaluation of the Newark SWCSI. In phase 1, which was completed in 2017-18, the evaluation sought to document the successes and lessons learned to date from efforts to bring this commitment to fruition, and to gather insights that can inform the initiative's direction. In phase 2, the evaluation will continue to assess the nature and intensity of the initiative's efforts, and will assess its impact through a rigorous quasi-experimental comparative evaluation design.

Using a mixed-methods design, the Metis/CREEHS 2-year evaluation is guided by a number of questions derived with input from key stakeholders during the collaborative process of developing the initiative's overarching logic model.

PROCESS/IMPLEMENTATION QUESTIONS

- To what extent are planned interventions implemented in SWCSI schools?
- How are district, school, and community stakeholders engaged in planning, prioritizing and designing activities?
- What resources were necessary or unexpectedly important? What additional resources may be needed?
- To what extent have partners (Newark City, Newark Public Schools, Newark Trust for Education) formed an effective coalition, including a shared vision/mission/purpose?
- To what extent is the current leadership model effective in supporting the successful implementation of the initiative?
- To what extent is there progress towards devising and implementing a plan for sustainability of the overall initiative?
- What lessons have so far been learned about implementing the community school initiative?

OUTCOMES QUESTIONS

- Since the start of the SWCSI, what changes have been observed in **student-related outcomes**, including: student attendance, academic behaviors, socio-emotional learning skills and academic performance and high school graduation?

- Since the start of the SWCSI, what changes have been observed in **family-related outcomes**, including: family involvement in school-related activities, family involvement in the initiative overall, and family and community view of schools as a resource aligned with their needs?
- Since the start of the SWCSI, what changes have been observed in **teacher-related outcomes**, including: teachers' perception of support, teacher attendance, and teachers' understanding of trauma-informed practices?
- Since the start of the SWCSI, what changes have been observed in **school- and community-related outcomes**, including: school climate; strong leadership teams; school ownership of the initiative; school plans for creating systems-level change; institutionalization of practices; maintaining partnerships; and community involvement in the initiative?

To answer these questions, Metis conducted the following activities for the Phase 1 descriptive study:

- Development of an overarching **logic model for the initiative** and evaluation questions for the Metis/CREEHS study;
- **Key stakeholder interviews** with representatives from NPS, the Mayor's office, partner agencies, and members of the National Advisory Board and the Children's Cabinet;
- **Site visits** at the 5 participating schools, which included interviews and focus groups with principals, Community School Directors, teachers, members of the site-based leadership teams (SLBTs), and parents;
- **Descriptive analyses** of publicly available demographic, attendance, achievement, and high school graduation data
- Systematic **review of program documentation** (e.g., SWCSI school applications, school strategic plans, and communication materials regarding the initiative).
- Development of a **rigorous evaluation design** for the Year 2 evaluation phase (included in Appendix A of this report)

Although the evaluation also called for student and parent surveys, changes in the district and the initiative's leadership resulted in this information being unavailable at the time this report was written. If survey data are provided, results will be presented in an addendum to this report. Copies of the evaluation instruments for Phase 1 are included in Appendix D of this report.

II. Historical Context

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY SCHOOL?

The Coalition for Community Schools defines a community school as "both a set of partnerships and a place where services, supports and opportunities lead to improved student learning, stronger families and healthier communities" (Coalition for Community Schools, n.d.a). In the community school model, public schools become hubs for the community, providing a wide array of educational, social, and health services for both children and adults and operating year-round during the day, evenings, and weekends. By working to address the complex needs of a community, community schools help to create conditions for student success in places where poverty, racism, and low access to supplemental resources hinder learning (Oakes, Maier, & Daniel, 2017).

WHEN AND WHY DID COMMUNITY SCHOOLS ORIGINATE?

The community schools approach originated in the late 1800s with the establishment of urban settlement houses, which provided learning opportunities as well as health and social services to new immigrants. In the early 1900s, educators and social reformers sought to locate such services in America's public schools. Investments of the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation in the Flint, Michigan community the 1930s as well as its education investments in the 1960s--which were aimed at engaging young people and adults in lifelong learning and establishing schools as the centers of communities providing social, educational, and recreational opportunities--helped to further the model. The current generation of community schools took hold in the late 1980s and early 1990s with the development of several national models-- Beacons, Bridges to Success, and the Children's Aid Society (Coalition for Community Schools, n.d.a; The Children's Aid Society, 2011). Today, the Full-Service Community Schools program provides federal support for the planning, implementation, and operation of community schools (U.S. Department of Education Office of Innovation and Improvement, 2018).

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF COMMUNITY SCHOOLS?

Evaluations of community school initiatives across the country have shown that students in community schools demonstrated better outcomes than comparison school students with respect to school readiness; work habits, efforts, and attitudes toward learning; academic achievement; credit attainment; staying in school; and high school graduation (Coalition for Community Schools, n.d.b). Furthermore, research shows that community schools provide a strong return on investment, with studies showing that every dollar invested in community schools returns between $10 and $15 of social value (Oakes et al., 2017).

III. The SWCSI Model

SWCSI TIMELINE

The Newark Public Schools (NPS) serves over 35,000 students in 65 public schools. More than 90 percent of NPS students identify as Black/African American or Latino/Hispanic, and nearly 8 of every 10 students qualify for free and reduced-price lunch. Approximately 17% of NPS students have individualized education plans, and 10% are English language learners. NPS schools are struggling with high rates of chronic absenteeism (which is defined as students missing more than 10% of days enrolled) and academic underperformance (with less than a quarter of NPS students meeting the standard for proficiency in English language arts and math).

The South Ward Community Schools Initiative (SWCSI)—a **collaborative partnership between NPS and the City of Newark Office of the Mayor**—began in 2015 as a school transformation strategy designed to address the barriers that prevent students from reaching their full potential. The goal of the SWCSI is to transform schools into nurturing, supportive hubs where students and families can access the resources they need to engage and thrive in education, career, and community.
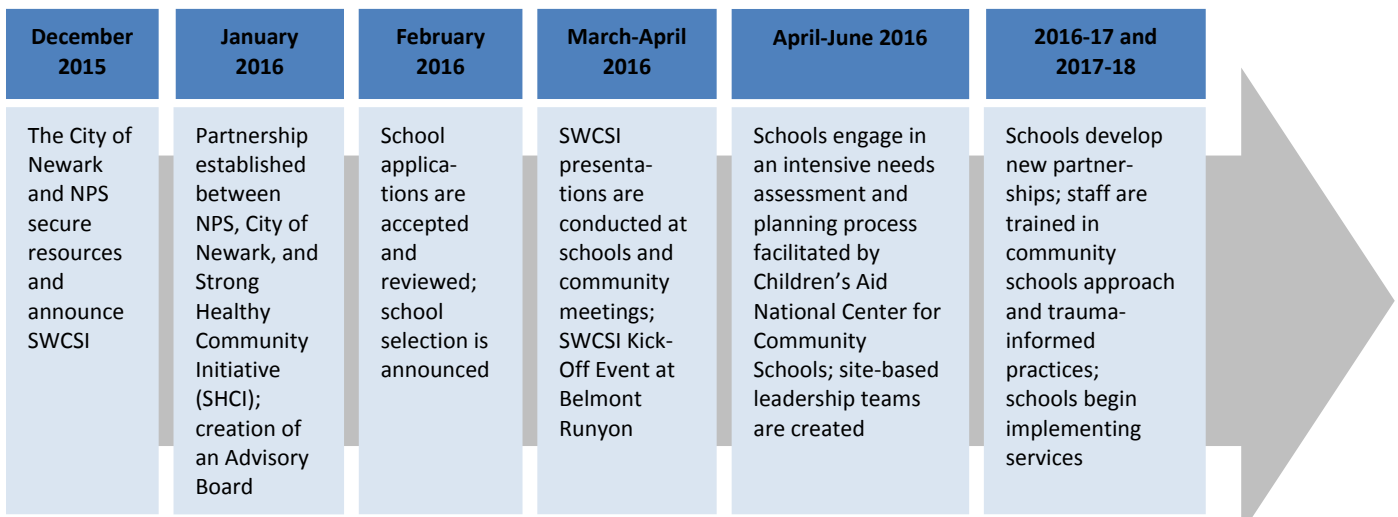
> "
> *A citywide Community Schools strategy is vital to ensuring our schools develop the capacity needed to help every child become ready for college, career and citizenship. Our schools need a comprehensive and expanded approach to school transformation because it takes more than a teacher to disentangle a child from the barriers and lack of opportunity that poverty creates for their development.*
>
> Mayor Baraka
> November 2015

After securing the resources in December 2015, the initiative began an intensive planning process, which included: the selection of participating schools through a rigorous competitive process; a comprehensive needs assessment to inform the initiative's goals and implementation; community presentations to garner the support of the community and promote a shared understanding of the initiative; and the development of structures in schools—such as site-based leadership teams (SBLTs)—to support SWCSI implementation. Figure 1 shows a timeline of the initiative's key planning and implementation milestones.

Figure 1: SWCSI Planning and Implementation Timeline

December 2015	January 2016	February 2016	March-April 2016	April-June 2016	2016-17 and 2017-18
The City of Newark and NPS secure resources and announce SWCSI	Partnership established between NPS, City of Newark, and Strong Healthy Community Initiative (SHCI); creation of an Advisory Board	School applica-tions are accepted and reviewed; school selection is announced	SWCSI presenta-tions are conducted at schools and community meetings; SWCSI Kick-Off Event at Belmont Runyon	Schools engage in an intensive needs assessment and planning process facilitated by Children's Aid National Center for Community Schools; site-based leadership teams are created	Schools develop new partner-ships; staff are trained in community schools approach and trauma-informed practices; schools begin implementing services

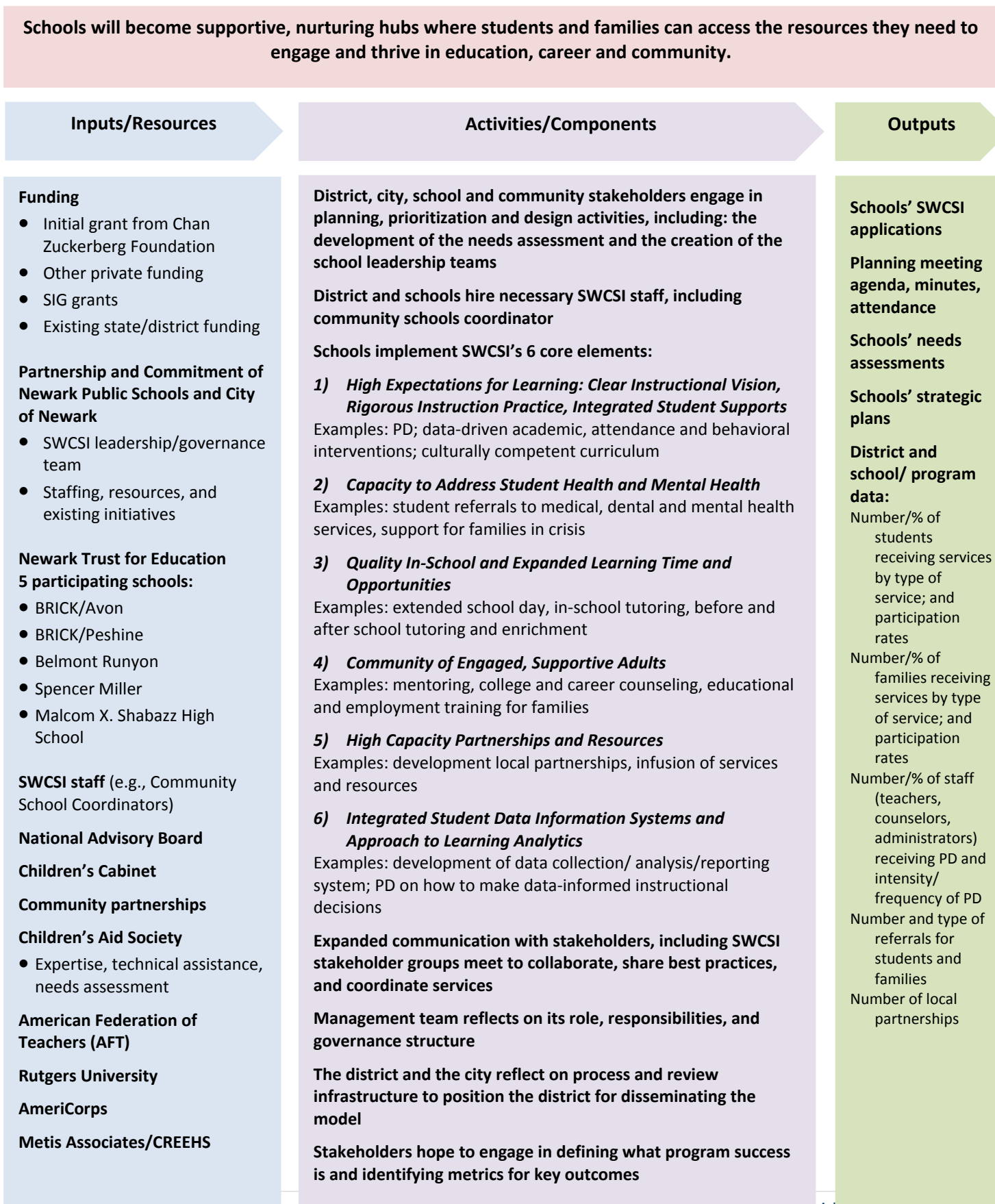**THE GOAL AND KEY COMPONENTS OF THE SWCSI MODEL**

The goal of the SWCSI is to **transform schools into nurturing, supportive hubs** where students and families can access the resources they need to engage and thrive in education, career, and community. The model is based on six key elements, described in the chart below.

Figure 2: Key Elements of the SWCSI Model

SWCSI MODEL ELEMENTS	DEFINITION
High Expectations for Learning Supported by Clear Instructional Vision, Rigorous Instructional Practice and Integrated Student Supports	Strong core instructional program, with high quality teaching, challenging curriculum, high expectations for achievement, and an approach to student support services that is fully aligned and integrated with the school's instructional program.
Capacity to Address Student Health and Mental Health	The school builds and adds to its existing capacity by partnering with health, mental health and social service providers who deliver needed services and contribute to the school's wellness environment.
Quality In-School and Expanded Learning Time/Opportunities	The school integrates strategies that motivate and engage student learning, respond to student need and interest, and allow lowest performing students more opportunity to access high quality instructional supports to achieve proficiency.
Community of Engaged, Supportive Adults	Families feel a mutual respect and collaboration with school leadership; students, parents and other stakeholders are actively involved in the collaborative learning goals of students.
High Capacity Partnerships and Resource Coordination/Integration	The school fully integrates partnerships that support school design, manages community school operations, effectively coordinates student supports and maximizes family and community engagement. Partners include business, health, faith-based, higher education, local government, foundations and community volunteers.
Integrated Student Data Information System & Approach to Learning Analytics	Systemic use of data paired with human capital to identify strengths and challenges of each student and tailor strategies for prevention, intervention and enrichment services to ensure student success.

With input from key stakeholder groups, Metis Associates and CREEHS developed a logic model for the SWCSI. The logic model, which is a living document, is a visual representation of the SWCSI initiative and includes: the inputs and resources, key components and activities, outputs, and short-, mid-, and long-term outcomes. Linkages and connections illustrated in the logic model provided a framework for the development of evaluation questions. The logic model is presented in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Logic Model for the South Ward Community Schools Initiative (SWCSI)

Schools will become supportive, nurturing hubs where students and families can access the resources they need to engage and thrive in education, career and community.

Inputs/Resources	Activities/Components	Outputs
Funding • Initial grant from Chan Zuckerberg Foundation • Other private funding • SIG grants • Existing state/district funding **Partnership and Commitment of Newark Public Schools and City of Newark** • SWCSI leadership/governance team • Staffing, resources, and existing initiatives **Newark Trust for Education** **5 participating schools:** • BRICK/Avon • BRICK/Peshine • Belmont Runyon • Spencer Miller • Malcom X. Shabazz High School **SWCSI staff** (e.g., Community School Coordinators) **National Advisory Board** **Children's Cabinet** **Community partnerships** **Children's Aid Society** • Expertise, technical assistance, needs assessment **American Federation of Teachers (AFT)** **Rutgers University** **AmeriCorps** **Metis Associates/CREEHS**	**District, city, school and community stakeholders engage in planning, prioritization and design activities, including: the development of the needs assessment and the creation of the school leadership teams** **District and schools hire necessary SWCSI staff, including community schools coordinator** **Schools implement SWCSI's 6 core elements:** 1) *High Expectations for Learning: Clear Instructional Vision, Rigorous Instruction Practice, Integrated Student Supports* Examples: PD; data-driven academic, attendance and behavioral interventions; culturally competent curriculum 2) *Capacity to Address Student Health and Mental Health* Examples: student referrals to medical, dental and mental health services, support for families in crisis 3) *Quality In-School and Expanded Learning Time and Opportunities* Examples: extended school day, in-school tutoring, before and after school tutoring and enrichment 4) *Community of Engaged, Supportive Adults* Examples: mentoring, college and career counseling, educational and employment training for families 5) *High Capacity Partnerships and Resources* Examples: development local partnerships, infusion of services and resources 6) *Integrated Student Data Information Systems and Approach to Learning Analytics* Examples: development of data collection/ analysis/reporting system; PD on how to make data-informed instructional decisions **Expanded communication with stakeholders, including SWCSI stakeholder groups meet to collaborate, share best practices, and coordinate services** **Management team reflects on its role, responsibilities, and governance structure** **The district and the city reflect on process and review infrastructure to position the district for disseminating the model** **Stakeholders hope to engage in defining what program success is and identifying metrics for key outcomes**	**Schools' SWCSI applications** **Planning meeting agenda, minutes, attendance** **Schools' needs assessments** **Schools' strategic plans** **District and school/ program data:** Number/% of students receiving services by type of service; and participation rates Number/% of families receiving services by type of service; and participation rates Number/% of staff (teachers, counselors, administrators) receiving PD and intensity/ frequency of PD Number and type of referrals for students and families Number of local partnerships

SWCSI Logic Model (Continued)

Short-Term Outcomes	Mid-Term Outcomes	Long-Term Outcomes	Impact

Note: The SWCSI Management team is working with the independent evaluation team towards building consensus around defining metrics for the initiative's outcomes

STUDENTS

Short-Term Outcomes	Mid-Term Outcomes	Long-Term Outcomes	Impact
Increased attendance **Reduction in chronic absenteeism rates** **Improved academic behaviors** • Class participation, homework completion **Improved social and emotional development** • Self-confidence, persistence, growth mindset, conflict resolution, leadership skills **Increased connectedness to adults**	**Improved health and mental health** **Decreased disciplinary actions and referrals** **Improved academic achievement** **Increased postsecondary aspirations, knowledge and preparation**	**Increased high school graduation rates** **Development of postsecondary plans** **Increased enrollment and completion of postsecondary education**	**Students are healthy and successful in college and career and as contributing members of their communities.**

FAMILIES/PARENTS

Short-Term Outcomes	Mid-Term Outcomes	Long-Term Outcomes	Impact
Increased family involvement in school activities **Increased involvement in children's education** **Improved view of school as a resource for family/ student support**	**Increased parent advocacy skills** **Increased parent participation in health, mental health, career and educational programming**	**Improved health, mental health, career and educational attainment for parents**	**Families are healthy and more economically stable.**

SCHOOLS

Short-Term Outcomes	Mid-Term Outcomes	Long-Term Outcomes	Impact
Improved teacher perceptions of support **Improved teacher attendance** **Improved referral system**	**Improved teacher quality and pedagogy** **Increased use of trauma-informed strategies** **Improved school culture and climate**	**Improved teacher retention** **Stronger school leadership teams** **Improved school rankings in district enrollment system**	**Schools are safe, supportive and stable environments for students, families, staff and community stakeholders.**

COMMUNITY

Short-Term Outcomes	Mid-Term Outcomes	Long-Term Outcomes	Impact
Improved view of school as a resource because school efforts align with community needs	**Increased community engagement**	**Strengthened school-community relationships**	**Communities are desirable places to live.**

SYSTEMS

Short-Term Outcomes	Mid-Term Outcomes	Long-Term Outcomes	Impact
Development of a shared mission among city agencies and key stakeholders	**Increased collaboration and coordination of services provided in schools and communities**	**Policies, processes, and systems are put in place among city agencies to ensure sustainability of successful practices**	**Systems facilitate success for students, families, schools and communities.**

IV. What are the implementation successes and challenges of SWCSI to date?

IMPLEMENTATION SUCCESSES

Systems-Level Implementation Successes

Since 2015, the SWCSI initiative has made significant progress in developing a shared governance structure, securing the staffing and financial resources needed for the planning and early implementation phase, and creating an infrastructure and processes to oversee and support the implementation of the community schools model in participating schools. Key informants identified a number of factors that have positively contributed to this process.

- **Strong commitment from the city and the district.** A driving force behind the community schools initiative in Newark is the strong support of Mayor Baraka and the Mayor's Office of Comprehensive Community Education. Furthermore, the school district has invested significant resources and staff into the initiative. The strong commitment from both lead agencies was seen by key stakeholders as critical to the success of the initiative, even though the shared governance structure has also resulted in tensions and a lack of clarity on each agency's roles and responsibilities.

- **Improved communication and shared leadership.** Stakeholders indicated that there has been an improvement in the types and frequency of communications from the initiative's leadership and the way the lead agencies work together. Frequent management team meetings were seen as key to this process. As one stakeholder noted,

  And I think there's another piece that's important from my lens, is that we have the Mayor's Office working with us. We have the Newark Trust working with us, and you have the school district. So those three governing bodies are trying to make sure that resources are coming in concert towards all the schools, and we're still trying to make sure that we're working together, and not working independently at times. We're much better at that. We do meet bi-weekly. We are definitely trying to make sure that resources are not being duplicated. So just by us doing that, it's kind of helping the schools see how to tap into resources. When we write grants, we write grants for all the schools. When we have meetings, all the schools are invited. When we have partnerships that are either coming from the Mayor's Office, or coming from the district, all the school leaders, or all the school coordinators are involved. So when we have those meetings, the messages are very clear that we're talking to all the partners and stakeholders.

- **Creation and support from a National Advisory Board.** The National Advisory Board was created as a national network of organizations and individuals tasked with contributing to the development and sustainability of the Newark Community Schools Initiative by promoting and advocating for the community school effort in Newark and leveraging national resources and relationships to inform and support the initiative. The support from the Advisory Board was seen as one of the strengths of the initiative. Stakeholders commented,

The National Advisory Board, I think, is very healthy to have. It's such a diverse group of thinkers, and it truly is a good group of think-tank members, who have actually done this work across the country, who have actually opened up our eyes to various resources. We've had very helpful conversations with the folks in Oakland, Philadelphia, Connecticut. Those conversations have allowed us to evolve much quicker, because a) the work is already being done, b) you already see how it's going to take us to get to that point. So from a National Advisory perspective, those conversations I've found to be very fruitful and beneficial. You have a wide array of perspectives, and you have people that push back constructively, that have allowed us to think well.

I think one of the strengths is that we have a large kind of variety of folks with expertise that, you know, kind of spans a large gamut. We're able to kind of harness all of that, and leverage it to help the effort.

■ **Support from the Children's Cabinet.** The initiative a' Cabinet, comprised of members from local city agencies and advocacy groups, NPS, and community-based organizations (CBOs). The goal of the Children's Cabinet is to "align and develop systemic processes to address social, emotional, mental, and physical health needs both inside and outside the schools."

Several key informants indicated this group has been extremely helpful in raising schools' awareness of available resources and avoiding duplicative efforts. One stakeholder suggested that the Cabinet create a resource directory with contact information "to have the menu of options readily available for them." Another stakeholder commented,

> "
>
> *The Children's Cabinet is now bringing people to the table that are willing to do the work, and at no cost, whereas before, we were either spending money, or writing grants. Now we're having folks saying, "No, we don't need to spend money. There's an organization over there that can help this particular population of students or families." So the Children's Cabinet has been very integral to making sure that our collective resources are pulled together.*
>
> SWCSI Stakeholder

When I sat in the chair as a principal, you really don't know all the interagency components that can help our schools that come from the city. And when the Children's Cabinet came on board, and I started seeing the resources that were available in the law enforcement side, the health and human services side, the housing side, those are all aspects that actually help the schools work better, and it makes the work of the leadership much more seamless. So the Children's Cabinet has opened up a lot of resources for our schools, and definitely for our principals.

■ **Technical assistance by the Children's Aid National Center for Community Schools.** Since early on, the initiative has engaged the services of the National Center for Community Schools, and its Children's Aid, to provide their expertise, guidance and technical assistance—both at the initiative level and for the schools. In addition to participating in strategic meetings with the leadership and as part of the Advisory Board, the Children's Aid conducted in-depth needs assessments for each school and provided professional development for their teachers during the initiative's planning period.

Furthermore, with the support and expertise from the Children's Aid, the initiative was able to tailor and develop its own research-based community schools framework that was greatly informed with the input of multiple stakeholder groups, thus contributing to a greater sense of ownership over the resulting SWCSI model.

School-Level Implementation Successes

- **Increased awareness and understanding of the SWCSI in schools and the community.** The initiative and the schools have engaged in numerous efforts to increase key stakeholders' awareness and understanding of community schools, including trainings for staff, community events and presentations, cross-partner meetings, and communications from the district and from the schools' Family Engagement specialists. When asked to reflect on whether there is a shared understanding of the initiative, one stakeholder commented,

    I think that we have come a long way from when we first started. I think that initially it was still treated as independent organizations working with the school. I would say that we are probably 50% towards the goal of full integration with all the stakeholders. They know the work of the school. They're definitely in connection and in concert with the school's mission and vision. [However] the work that makes everything very seamless, and very uniform, as far as planning, as far as events, that part still is growing. Like I said, I think we're much further ahead a year and a half later, than we were previously.

- **Development of inclusive decision-making processes at the schools.** All five of the South Ward Community Schools established site-based leadership teams (SBLT) to serve as vehicles for development and oversight of School Improvement Plans, using a community school approach. Principals and Community School Directors in all five sites have met monthly with other key stakeholders, including teachers, parents, community partners, and in some cases students. These groups reviewed data together and developed ideas for the development of strategic partnerships to address student and family needs identified in the data reviews. The SBLTs were seen as key driving forces of the initiative, allowing for more diverse perspectives and input and generating a greater awareness of the state of the initiative at their school.

- **Development of new partnerships and increases in services for students, families, and staff**. SWCSI schools developed partnerships with local businesses, municipal services, and universities. The schools also have implemented interventions that are aligned with students' academic and attendance needs, support family stability and success, provide staff development and support, and address community issues. Examples of services and interventions are included in the school case study summaries included in Appendix B in this report. Furthermore, according to stakeholders and a review of the schools' strategic plans, interventions were aligned with the schools' strategic goals and needs for improvement. As one school staff member commented,

    I think that some of the accomplishments have been where we are now – we have developed some partnerships, we have developed some key programs… for example, the afterschool program. We also have a weekend Saturday program, which deals with ESL, because of our strong Spanish population. One of the big challenges that we have here is absenteeism. So there has been a creation of a team called the Success Mentor Program, which is there to help combat absenteeism. And we brought in some other partnerships, like Play Works, United Way of Essex. Iron Bound Community Corporation, which deals with financial workshops. So these are some of the things that we've incorporated and brought in, to help kind of bridge that gap again.

IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES AND PRIORITY AREAS

Systems-Level Challenges and Priority Areas

The following were key systems-level challenges and priority areas identified by key stakeholders:

- **Need for greater transparency and clarity on role of lead agencies.** Although stakeholders reported improvements in the way the lead agencies work together, several stakeholders indicated that this continues to be an area for growth. Each agency has their own expectations, responsibilities, and regulations; laying those out in advance was one suggestion to avoid confusion, implementation delays, or roadblocks. As one stakeholder explained,

  > *I think we all still kind of struggle with the leadership at the executive level. You have a triangulation between entities, and each entity has fiscal restraints, or fiscal responsibilities. And sometimes, you know, a district of our size that has a $1 billion budget, there are certain expectations, and certain things that we need to do, and probably want to do, in leveraging our resources. And the same goes for how the city operates, and then how the Trust operates. So there are times when those concessions probably need to be mapped out, I would say, much further in advance.*

  The need for greater transparency and a stronger communication strategy also came out during interviews, not just on how the money is being spent but also in terms of the types of work that is taking place at the schools and the outcomes of that work. Stakeholders commented,

  > *I think the last big piece for me is that, we talk about transparency, and we've talked about making sure that communications on the work of the community schools is out there in the community. We need to be more transparent on the work, and I think we're still wrestling with, what does that look like, and how consistently are they going to come out? We put reports up, and we put reports around the spending. But I think we need to be prepared to go deep in how the outcomes of the work are also being explained.*

  > *I think there's a shared understanding, but there's definitely more work to be done. And a lot of that starts at the initiative level. So you know, we have no outward-facing information. When I came into this job, I didn't really know much about it, and I'm a life-long Newarker, born, raised, and educated in Newark. Since I joined this effort, I have been talking about having some sort of website for the initiative.*

- **Lack of sustainability plan.** Crafting a comprehensive sustainability plan was described by stakeholders as a key priority area moving forward. Key stakeholders noted that this sustainability plan should be driven by the initiative's vision and not the fiscal considerations because "there's a level of skepticism that the work is going to end when the money stops." The sustainability plan should also be long-term to ensure the initiative "is sustainable for decades, as opposed to years."

> "
> *We are at that crucial point where sustainability of the project needs to not lie in just the hands of one or two, or three people. Sustainability of the project needs to be in the voices of several key executive members, and then really, really clearly spelled out at the leadership level of the schools. Because there's a lot of good momentum and work that's starting to happen.*
>
> SWCSI Stakeholder

■ **Lack of uniform data management system.** The lack of a uniform data management system has hindered the initiative's ability to track its implementation benchmarks, services provided, and progress towards the key outcomes in a uniform, systematic, and timely manner. It is suggested that the initiative consider investing in a system that would allow for this level of tracking and could "speak" to the district's student information system, PowerSchools.

School-Level Challenges and Priority Areas

Based on a review of available documentation and interviews and focus groups with key stakeholder groups at all five schools, a number of common implementation challenges were identified and are described below.

■ **Communication with NPS/Newark Trust for Education.** Across sites, schools reported inconsistent communication between school leadership, NPS, and the Newark Trust for Education, which caused delays in implementation.

■ **Communication with school stakeholders.** Some school stakeholders noted that their schools need to provide a clearer description of what a community school is and means to all stakeholders, including students, staff, and parents. Stakeholders also expressed a need to better inform parents and families of the resources available to them as a part of this initiative, although several schools reported significant improvements in this area.

■ **Expert Consultation.** School stakeholders were unsure about how well they were implementing the initiative. They expressed a desire for an outside consultant who can tell them if they were going in the right direction. Additionally, school stakeholders believed that all school staff would benefit from visiting other community schools to learn about best practices and lessons learned. Community School Directors (CSD) also indicated a need for more training and guidance so that they better understand their role in the initiative; it was suggested that NPS consider providing CSDs with individual training, which could also cover other topics such as how to institutionalize partnerships and services. Finally, some stakeholders also indicated that more district-level support is needed to assist each school in implementing the initiative.

■ **Training/Resources.** School stakeholders reported needing more resources to support teacher and student mental health, such as professional development (PD) on how to manage student trauma, crises, and behavioral issues. Stakeholders identified a need for more academic interventions for struggling students, which could be accomplished by providing teachers with training on teaching strategies appropriate for different types of learners and providing additional academic supports (i.e., tutoring) to students during school hours. Stakeholders requested ongoing PD to underline the importance of new concepts. To address the basic needs of families in the South Ward, schools reported desiring more resources that support community needs, such as more medical/dental vans or a health clinic, food pantry, and washers and dryers.

■ **Logistics.** School Stakeholders expressed difficulty with managing the planning, administration, and execution of the Community School grant. Stakeholders desired greater flexibility and clearer guidelines on how to use the grant funds. Confusion and delays when implementing interventions hindered some schools' abilities to make timely payments to vendors and community partners, which they saw as limiting their ability to form long-term partnerships.

V.

VI. What are the preliminary outcomes of SWCSI?

STUDENT OUTCOMES

During site visits, principals, Community School Directors, teachers and members of the SBLT reported observing a number of positive outcomes for students that they attributed to the SWCSI. These are described in more detail in the school case study summaries in Appendix B. Common themes across schools included:

- Increased student motivation and engagement in learning
- Gains in students' social and emotional skills
- Improved student attendance, which many stakeholders attributed to the efforts of Success Mentors
- Infusion of school resources available to students
- Improved student academic achievement

These outcomes are based on self-reported data from school staff. Unfortunately, student survey data and 2017-18 attendance and achievement data were not available at the time this report was written. These data will be reported in the Year 2 report.

> **"**
>
> *Our Success Mentors program is part of our attendance initiative and of the 80 students that we're working with, 57% of those students have increased attendance.*
>
> *Being able to partner with YDC and UBHC has allowed us to support our scholars around the socio-emotional learning. Because we do have a lot of scholars that have serious challenges and barriers, having extra hands to help us facilitate that process has been most impactful.*
>
> *Students have taken advantage of our early morning tutoring and hot breakfast program. In addition, kids come out for our Saturday Club enrichment program*
>
> SWCSI School Staff

Data on student outcomes were collected from publicly available sources and are presented next. It should be noted that although 2016-17 represented the first year of implementation, schools were focused on developing new partnerships and getting services started, therefore gains may not have yet materialized to their fullest extent. Overall, results from descriptive analyses were promising and show that:

- **Chronic absenteeism rates declined in 3 of the 5 SWCSI schools**. The largest decline was observed for Spencer Miller (from 43% in 2014-15 to 29% in 2016-17) and Malcom X Shabazz (from 79% in 2014-15 to 67% in 2016-17). In comparison, chronic absenteeism rose districtwide from 29% in 2015-16 to 32% in 2016-17. (Figure 4)

- **Proficiency rates in ELA improved in 4 of the 5 SWCSI schools.** The largest gain was observed for BRICK Peshine, from 11% in 2014-15 to 26% in 2016-17. The proficiency rate also increased districtwide, from 22% in 2014-15 to 31% in 2016-17. (Figure 5)

- **Math proficiency rates improved in all 3 SWCSI schools for which 2016-17 data were available.** The largest gain was observed for Avon Community School, with the rate more than doubling from 9% in 2014-15 to 19% in 2016-17. The proficiency rate also increased districtwide but to a lesser extent, from 17% in 2014-15 to 23% in 2016-17. (Figure 6)

- **The 4-year high school graduation rate has steadily declined at Malcom X Shabazz**, from 69% in 2014-15 to 61% in 2016-17. In contrast, the district's 4-year graduation rate increased over the same period of time, from 70% in 2014-15 to 79% in 2016-17. (Figure 7)

Figure 4: Chronic Absenteeism Rates, by School
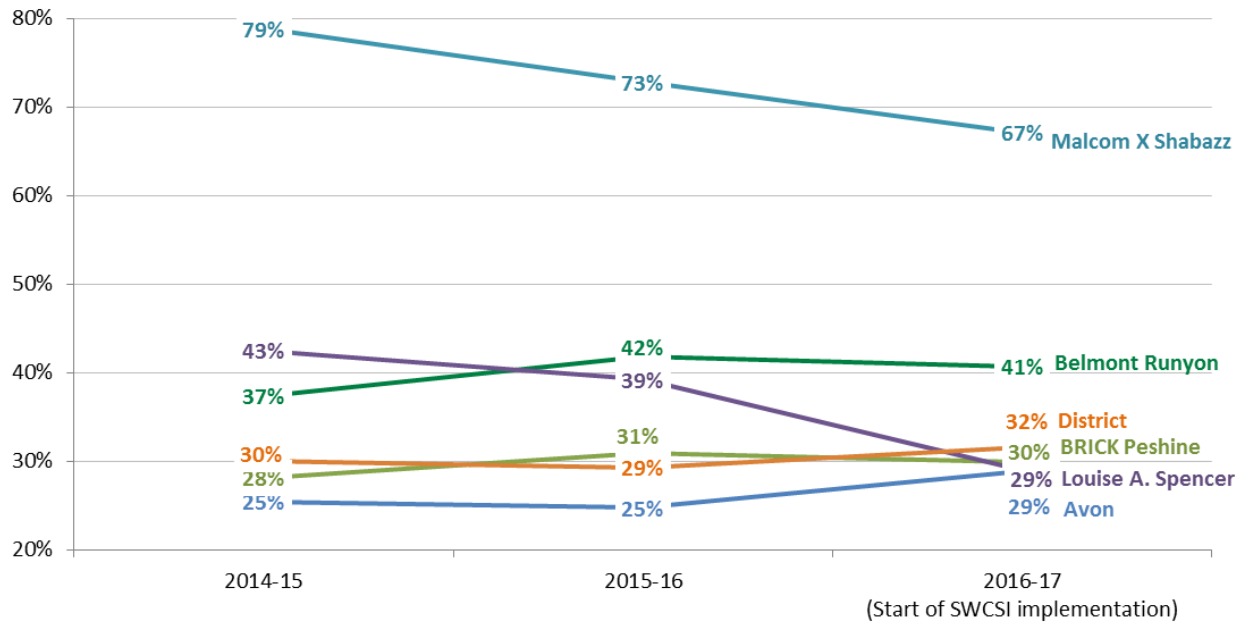
Source: NJ School Performance Reports; 2014-15 Shabazz data from http://content.nps.k12.nj.us/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Attendance-piece-for-the-website.pdf; District data from http://content.nps.k12.nj.us/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Attendance-Outcomes-2016-17-deck.pdf

Figure 5: Proficiency Rates in English Language Arts, by School
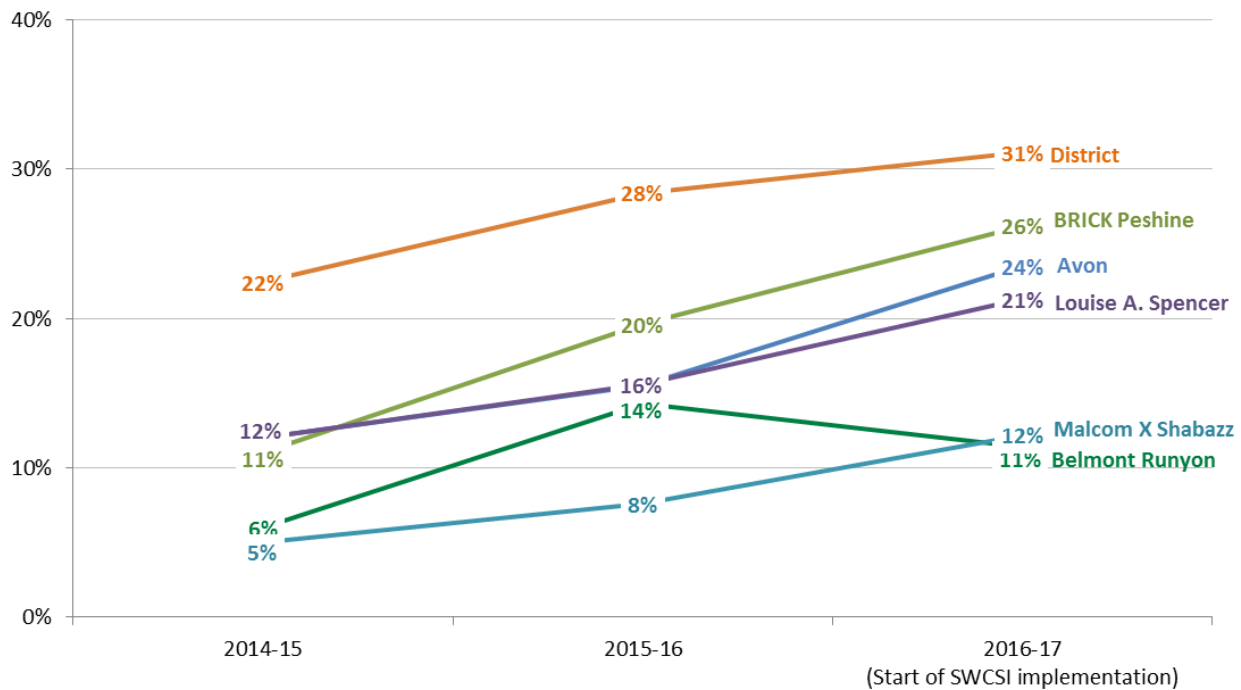
Source: NJ School Performance Reports; District data from http://content.nps.k12.nj.us/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/PARCC_2016-17-outcome.pdf

Figure 6: Proficiency Rates in Mathematics, by School
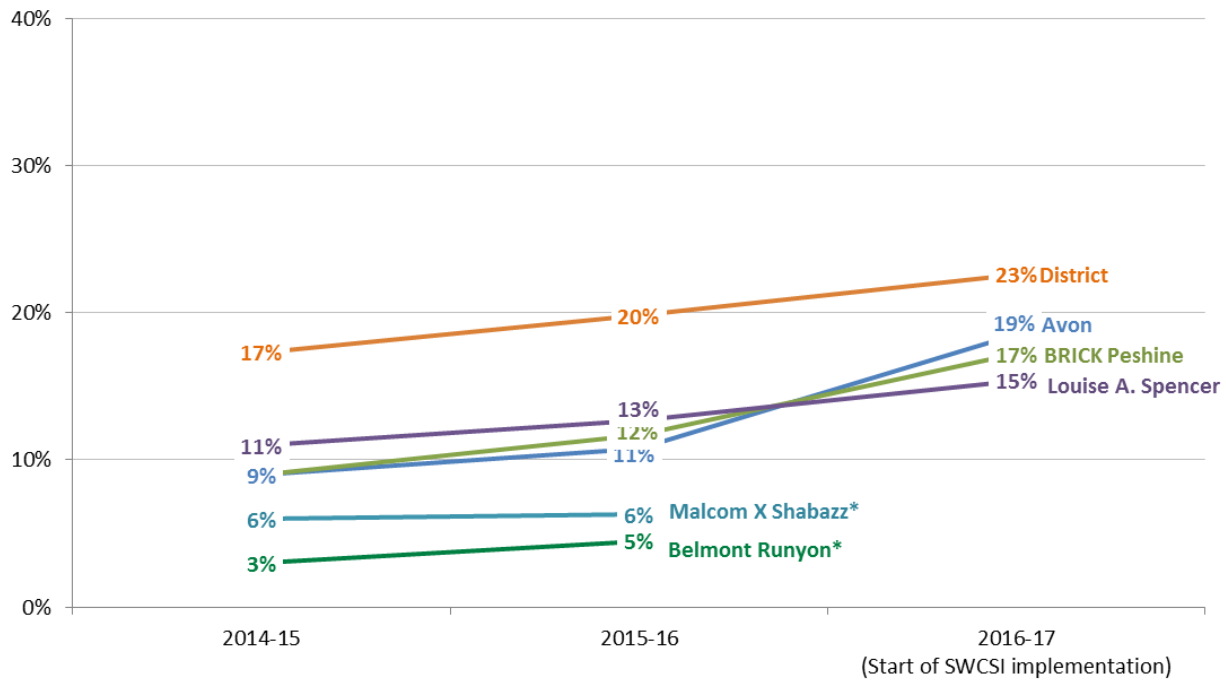
Source: NJ School Performance Reports; District data from http://content.nps.k12.nj.us/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/PARCC_2016-17-outcome.pdf

* According to the NJ School Performance Reports, 2016-17 Malcolm X Shabazz and Belmont Runyon data were available for too few students to report the given information, or the data represent a small percentage of students.

Figure 7: 4-Year High School Graduation Rate
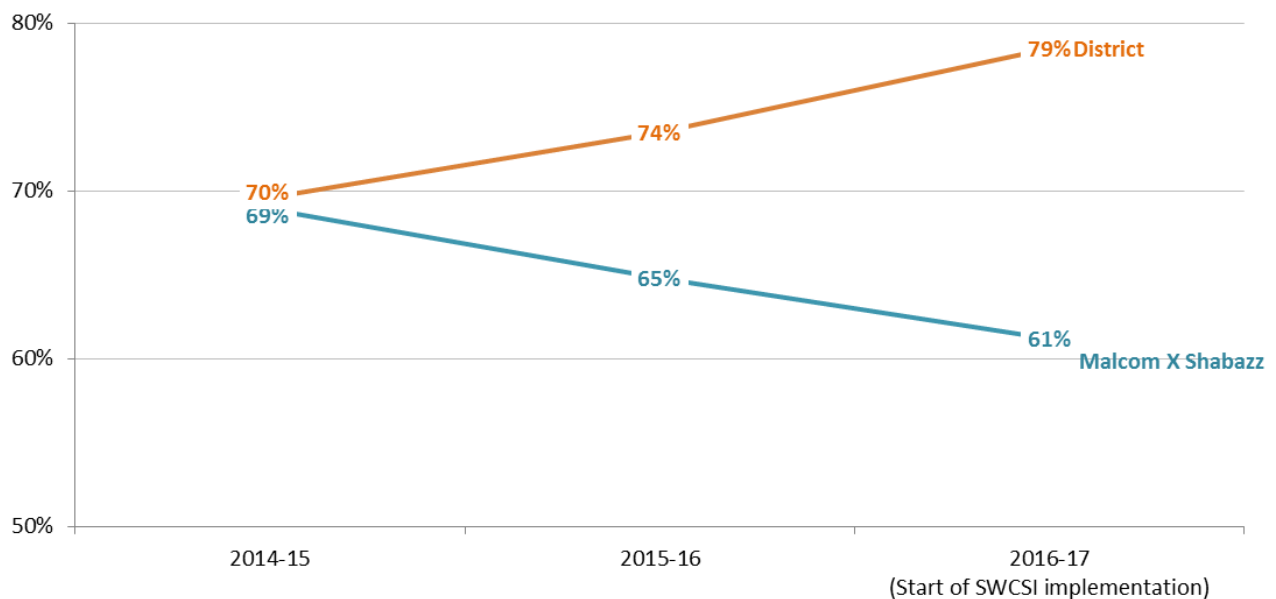
Source: NJ School Performance Reports

PARENT AND FAMILY OUTCOMES

In interviews and focus groups, there was also strong agreement among school staff that the SWCSI has resulted in some preliminary gains in parent and family outcomes; yet many interviewees also noted family engagement was a challenge and they will continue focusing their efforts in this area in years to come. Common themes around the impact of SWCSI on family outcomes included:

● Increased parent involvement and engagement at social events

● Increased number of parent volunteers

● Improved parent-teacher relationships

● Increased attention to parents' opinions and concerns

● More supports and resources for families

● Gains in parents' knowledge and desire to be informed of what is offered at the school

● Increased parents' ability to advocate for their needs and their families' needs

The Year 2 (2018-19) evaluation will include a parent survey that will assess the initiative's impact on parents and families.

SCHOOL AND EDUCATOR OUTCOMES

During the site visits, school staff in each school reported positive changes in their understanding of community schools and trauma-informed practices, and more positive school climate in general. Comments from staff fell typically in one or more of the following areas:

● Improved student-teacher and parent-teacher relationships

● More positive teacher perceptions of the school

● More teachers looking forward to coming to work

● Increased staff participation in school events

● Increased awareness of trauma-informed practices, resulting in teachers paying more attention to underlying student issues when teaching

The Year 2 (2018-19) evaluation will include an educator survey that will capture staff feedback around the supports they have received, as well as their perceptions of the impact of those supports on key educator and school outcome areas.

COMMUNITY OUTCOMES

"

We've had families come out and be engaged in a way that they have never been engaged before, which is huge.

We did have a break-through with some of the events that we planned and the number of parents that actually came out, for example our Core Family Night.

In terms of the parental involvement, I think that it [the impact of SWCSI] has been extremely positive and noticeable. It's something that we get a lot of compliments on.

SWCSI School Staff

"

There was an increase in folks that said the environment is a great place to teach.

As compared to what I've heard from last year, we've definitely seen an increase of staff participation.

[The Community Schools Initiative] helped me to understand that I have to look beyond just the classroom. I have to really look at the whole child in order to figure out how to help them.

SWCSI School Staff

During the site visits, school staff in each school also reported improved outcomes for the community. Major themes emerged from the qualitative data, including:

- Increased community participation in school events and community activities

- Increased number of community partnerships

- Strengthened relationships between the schools and their communities, as demonstrated by new and expanded partnerships

- Improved school reputation, as a result of community partnerships and improved performance in student academics and athletics

- Increase in the number of parent workshops facilitated by community partners

"

The number of community activities and participation has been tremendously positive.

SWCSI School Staff

VII. Moving Forward

Overall, the results from the evaluation are positive and show that the initiative has made progress in developing a shared governance structure; securing resources for the planning and early implementation of the initiative; and leveraging the support from a number of groups, which included the intermediary role of the Newark Trust for Education, technical assistance from the National Center for Community Schools, and the expertise and resources from a National Advisory Board and the Children's Cabinet. Schools have also made significant strides by adopting inclusive oversight and decision-making structures (for example, through the development of site-based leadership teams); expanding their portfolio of services and supports for students, staff, and families; and developing new partnerships that can help support the full implementation of the model. Preliminary results (through 2016-17) show positive trends in reducing chronic absenteeism and improving academic performance in most schools.

As the district, the city, and the schools continue to implement the community schools model, a number of challenges and recommendations were identified in the evaluation and are described below.

■ **Refine the leadership model and governance structure.** Stakeholders agreed that there is value in a shared governance structure, since it demonstrates the strong commitment of the city and the district to the initiative. However, stakeholders also identified a need to refine the leadership model and clarify the roles and responsibilities of all lead agencies and key stakeholder groups. The initiative should continue to research effective leadership models to find a viable governance structure that can maximize the impact of this initiative.

■ **Continue to promote awareness and greater transparency for the overall initiative**. Key stakeholders identified a need for greater transparency and clarity around the work that is being conducted by the initiative overall, and the participating schools. Stakeholders also noted a need for greater transparency in terms of the preliminary outcomes and lessons learned in schools thus far. It should be noted that this latter concern will be addressed through the rigorous evaluation work that is currently being carried out by Metis Associates. School stakeholders also commented on a need for more staff trainings and community events to raise awareness and increase understanding of community schools and available resources among key stakeholder groups, including students, staff, families and the community.

■ **Secure additional funding and clarify current grant requirements to expand services provided**. Although schools have begun implementing numerous interventions and supports, stakeholders identified a need for additional services, specifically around academic supports and mental health resources for students and families. In addition to securing additional funding, schools commented that loosening the current grant funding requirements (and/or providing greater clarify on what they can use the funds for) would help re-allocate resources to meet some of their pressing needs.

■ **Devise and implement a sustainability plan**. Conversations around sustainability are still in the early stages. The district and the city should devise a sustainability plan that is driven by the initiative's mission and vision and clearly identifies: short- and longer-term goals for the initiative; diverse funding sources to support the work; initiative-level and school-level partners that can leverage additional resources; and systems to monitor the implementation and success of the initiative.

■ **Strengthen the data management system.** Data for the initiative are being collected via multiple methods by different stakeholder groups. There is no central repository for the data. Furthermore, schools do not have a uniform system for recording implementation and service data. The initiative should engage the services of an external vendor to develop a data management system that can

systematically track the services, outputs, and outcomes/impact of the initiative, as a whole, and as implemented in each school.

Appendix A: 2018-19 Rigorous Evaluation Design

Beginning in summer of 2018, Metis and its sub-contractor – CREEHS (Center for Research and Evaluation on Education and Human Services at Montclair State University) – will conduct a rigorous evaluation of the initiative that will be participatory, systematic, and cumulative, with links between activities, outcomes and contexts that can yield definitive insights into the nature and extent of implementation fidelity and project impact. The proposed evaluation will include formative and summative components, use multiple sources of quantitative and qualitative data, and use multiple methods of analysis. Specifically, the evaluation will be designed to: 1) assess the nature and intensity of program implementation within and across the five participating schools; 2) document overarching successes, challenges, and lessons learned; and 3) assess the impact of the initiative through a rigorous quasi-experimental comparative design.

The following are the key evaluation activities that will be conducted during the 2018-19 school year:

- Follow-up site visits to each of the five SWCSI schools, which will include interviews with school administrators and community school directors, and focus groups with teachers and members of the site leadership teams;

- Interviews with key SWCSI leadership and stakeholders;

- Administration and analyses of online surveys of parents and educators;

- Analysis of student surveys administered by project staff;

- Descriptive analyses of existing program records, service data, and documentation to assess program implementation, linkages with participants, and fidelity;

- Rigorous comparative analyses of demographic, school attendance, suspension, academic achievement, high school graduation, and other data;

- Preparation of a final comprehensive report in the summer/fall of 2019. In this report, Metis will present descriptive and analytic findings, as well as a narrative explanation of the data and interpretation of findings. The report will also highlight the initiative's achievements and successes, and explore challenges encountered and strategies to overcome these challenges, as well as recommendations for program improvements; and

For the impact evaluation, Metis will use propensity score matching (PSM) techniques, a widely-used statistical approach to generating a comparable group of non-participants without random assignment, to identify a matched comparison group of students attending the SWCSI schools. Specifically, students will be matched 1:1 with comparable students in similar non-participating schools based on important observed baseline characteristics related to the outcomes of interest. Depending on data quality and availability, the matching variables may include, but not be limited to: (1) at the student level – student age, grade level, prior school attendance, measures of baseline academic achievement, and membership in subgroups identified by No Child Left Behind (NCLB);[1] and (2) at the school level—enrollment size, geographic location, percent low-income, percent minority, percent male, percent English language learners, percent special education students, and percent previous cohort proficient in fifth grade state tests.

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[1] Race/ethnicity, gender, eligibility for free/reduced price meals (as a proxy for low-income), special education status and English language learner status.

Appendix B: Individual Case Studies

Metis Associates – in partnership with the Center for Research and Evaluation on Education and Human Services (CREEHS) – was retained by the Newark Trust for Education as the evaluation partner for the South Ward Community Schools Initiative. CREEHS conducted site visits at the five Newark Public Schools community schools in May and June 2018 to learn how school stakeholders have implemented the initiative, document any successes and challenges to date, and collect any recommendations for moving forward.

CREEHS sought to conduct two interviews and two focus groups at each of the five schools (a total of 20 data collection points), including: individual interviews with each the Principal and Community School Director and focus groups with each the Site-Based Leadership Team (SBLT) and a selection of teachers. In total, 18 of these 20 activities were completed, with the exception of a SBLT focus group at one school (the SBLT meeting was observed instead) and a teacher focus group at another school. Focus

The following pages present a summary of findings for each school:

- Avon Avenue School
- Belmont Runyon
- BRICK Peshine
- Shabazz
- Spencer Miller

Summaries include the following sections:

- School Background
- Decision-Making
- Interventions Supported by the Community School Initiative
- Community School Initiative Outcomes
- Challenges
- Recommendations

School Background

Avon Community School is an elementary/middle school in Newark's South Ward. During the 2017-2018 school year, the school served 494 students in Pre-K through eighth grade with all students identifying as Black (91%) or Hispanic (9%). In comparison, Black and Hispanic students comprise most of the students (43% and 46%, respectively) served by the Newark Public Schools (NPS)[2] and fewer than half of the students (15% and 28%, respectively) served by public schools across the State of New Jersey.[3]

The majority of Avon students are economically disadvantaged (83% qualify for free lunch) compared with 78% of students districtwide.[4] Seventeen percent (17%) of student population receive special education services compared with 16% of NPS students districtwide.[5]

Avon Community School is challenged by high student absenteeism rates and low academic performance. In fall 2017, one-third (33%) of Avon's students were chronically absent[6], defined as those missing 10% or more of the school days. In comparison, in the 2015-2016 school year, 23% of K-8 students in NPS were chronically absent,[7] the most recent data available for NPS. Across tested grades, few students *met or exceeded expectations* on the English language arts (ELA) and math portions (23% and 18%, respectively) of the spring 2017 Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) test. In comparison, about one-third of NPS students in grades 3-8 *met* or *exceeded expectations* in ELA or math (33% and 26%, respectively) the same year.[8]

The following summary is based on data collected from Avon Community School stakeholders, including the principal, the Community School Director (CSD), the site-based leadership team (SBLT), teachers, and parents.

Decision-Making

School-level stakeholders reported that they want decisions to be made collectively and include a community voice. The school's SBLT includes "ground-level people" (e.g., administrators, Community School Director (CSD), parents, teachers, community members, guidance counselors, and a Community Engagement Specialist) who are directly involved in the school and in the community in order to make the most effective decisions. When there is an issue needing resolution, they make sure to include the opinions of those who would be impacted by the decision. As indicated during the focus group, the SBLT considers the needs of the school and figures out possible ways to address issues, bearing in mind different members' points of view. The SBLT reflects on the data provided to them as a team and comes up with the most suitable interventions to address the data.

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[2] Data from Newark Public Schools website: http://www.nps.k12.nj.us/

[3] Data from State of NJ: Department of Education website: https://www.nj.gov/education/data/

[4] Data from Newark Public Schools website: http://www.nps.k12.nj.us/

[5] Ibid.

[6] Data from: http://content.nps.k12.nj.us/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Avon-Avenue-School_School_Summary_2018-02-06.pdf

[7] Data from: http://content.nps.k12.nj.us/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Attendance-piece-for-the-website.pdf

[8] Data from Newark Public Schools website: http://www.nps.k12.nj.us/

Interventions are prioritized based on the Community School grant guidelines. The interventions address "3 Tiers,": 1) the entire school community, 2) groups of students, and 3) individual students. Grant funds primarily are spent on academic and instructional resources for Tiers 1 and 2, but stakeholders reported that there is a lack of resources to meet individual student needs. Community school stakeholders also indicated a need to meet Avon students' needs for other basic necessities such as food, hygiene products, and clothing.

Interventions Supported by the Community School Initiative

Avon has implemented interventions that meet students' academic and attendance needs, as well as interventions that support family stability and success. According to stakeholders and a review of the school's strategic plans, interventions are aligned with the school's strategic goals and needs for improvement in student behavior (as demonstrated by a decline in the number of dean referrals). The Needs Assessment showed a high need for mental health, social services, and academics. Interventions also were selected to address student attendance and ELA achievement. The school has also developed partnerships with local businesses and universities. Key interventions that have been implemented by the school include:

FOCUS	INTERVENTIONS
Student Academics and Attendance	- Academic interventions: System 44 (ELA Support) - Attendance interventions: Success Mentors - Behavior Interventionists - Kings Program (boys only) - High school for a day (8th graders) at Shabazz
Family Stability and Success	- Trunk or Treat event - Nutrition: Fruits and vegetables are provided once a week for staff, students, parents/families, and the community - Art Showcase - Awards Ceremony
Staff Development and Support	- Trauma-informed professional development - De-escalation workshop
Community Partnerships	- Health programs (e.g., eye doctor) - Fruits and vegetables donated - Newark Montclair Urban Teacher Residency at Montclair State University - Rutgers University

Community School Initiative Outcomes

As a result of the community school initiative, Avon stakeholders indicated they have achieved a number of important outcomes, including: improved student attendance, increased school pride among staff and students, and more resources for parents. These are described in more detail below.

TARGET POPULATION	OBSERVED OUTCOMES	REPRESENTATIVE QUOTES
Students	• Improved student attendance, which stakeholders attribute to Success Mentors • Increased school pride among students, which stakeholders attribute to students being able to give input in creating a school logo and mascot	*"Success Mentors are folks that have been able to connect with our children with chronic absences to get them here. They call, they go by the classes, they meet them."*
Parents and families	• Positive feedback from parents/families on Back-To-School night • Increased supports and resources for families	*"We've had families come out and be engaged in a way that they have never been engaged before, which is huge."*
School	• Increased school pride among staff • Increased connections to families, as a result of to school staff reaching out individually to build trust • More favorable responses on The New Teacher Project (TNTP) Insight survey than in previous years	*"Our staff recently took the TNTP insight survey, and one of the domains is learning environment and from spring of last year to spring of this year we went up from 5.3 to 6.7 out of 10."* *"There was an increase in folks that said the environment is a great place to teach."*
Community	• The SBLT has not yet seen an impact on the larger community	

Challenges

According to key stakeholders, Avon has been challenged by the need for resources to assist individual students who are struggling behaviorally and/or academically. More assistance is needed in the area of

case management to address mental health or home life issues. In addition, the school is challenged by grant restrictions that inhibit the use the funds to implement interventions that better fit the needs of the school.

Recommendations

- More flexibility with grant funds would allow the school to implement additional interventions that meet the needs of the school and students.

- The SBLT would benefit from more training and an external resource who could advise them on the implementation of their interventions.

- The school would benefit from greater consistency in staff involved the initiative.

School Background

Belmont Runyon is an elementary/middle school in Newark's South Ward. During the 2017-2018 school year, the school served 525 students in Pre-K through eighth grade with nearly all students identifying as Black (87%) or Hispanic (12%). In comparison, Black and Hispanic students comprise most of the students (43% and 46%, respectively) served by the Newark Public Schools (NPS)[9] and fewer than half of the students (15% and 28%, respectively) served by public schools across the State of New Jersey.[10]

The majority of Belmont Runyon students are economically disadvantaged (85% qualify for free lunch) compared with 78% of students districtwide.[11] Fifteen percent (15%) of the student population at Belmont Runyon receive special education supports compared with 16% of NPS students districtwide.[12]

Belmont Runyon is challenged by high student absenteeism rates and low academic performance. In fall 2017, 44% of students were chronically absent,[13] defined as those missing 10% or more of the school days. In comparison, in the 2015-2016 school year, 23% of K-8 students in NPS were chronically absent,[14] the most recent data available for NPS. Across tested grades, few students *met or exceeded expectations* on the English language arts (ELA) and math portions (12% and 9%, respectively) of the Spring 2017 Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) test. In comparison, about one-third of NPS students in grades 3-8 *met* or *exceeded* expectations in ELA or math (33% and 26%, respectively) the same year.[15]

The following summary is based on data collected from Belmont Runyon stakeholders, including the principal, Community School Director (CSD), site-based leadership team (SBLT), teachers, and parents.

Decision-Making

School-level stakeholders reported that all school staff play an equal part in the decision-making process, especially in working together to expand services. Decisions are focused on the "3 tiers," which are: 1) the entire school community, 2) groups of students, and 3) individual students. The role of the SBLT is to make decisions based on data (e.g., literacy, attendance) and to find ways to address specific growth areas. The team is also responsible for dealing with academic concerns, identifying professional development needs, and fostering parent involvement. The SBLT is made up of the Principal, Community Engagement Specialist, Community Outreach Coordinator, Community School Director, social worker, teachers, security, and a volunteer parent. The team's central goal is to give a voice to a wide range of stakeholders in the planning and implementation of key initiatives at the school. According to stakeholders, interventions are prioritized based on grant requirements (i.e., what could be paid for by grant funds). For example, the SBLT would be charged with determining whether they could support academic or attendance needs as opposed to basic needs, such as hygiene, housing, and food.

Interventions Supported by the Community School Initiative

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[9] Data from Newark Public Schools website: http://www.nps.k12.nj.us/departments/data-research/district-summary/
[10] Data from State of NJ: Department of Education website: https://www.nj.gov/education/data/
[11] Data from Newark Public Schools website: http://www.nps.k12.nj.us/
[12] Ibid.
[13] Data from: http://content.nps.k12.nj.us/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Belmont-Runyon-Elementary-School_School_Summary_2018-02-06.pdf
[14] Data from: http://content.nps.k12.nj.us/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Attendance-piece-for-the-website.pdf
[15] Data from Newark Public Schools website: http://www.nps.k12.nj.us/

Belmont Runyon has developed partnerships with local businesses, municipal services, and universities and has aimed to implement interventions that meet students' academic and attendance needs, as well as interventions that support family stability and success. According to key stakeholders and a review of the school's strategic plans, interventions are aligned with the school's plans and needs for improvement in attendance, school culture and climate, academics, parent engagement, and mental health. These include:

FOCUS	INTERVENTIONS
Student Academics and Attendance	- Attendance interventions: Success Mentors - Playworks: Structured recess - Dream Team: Community service (7th & 8th graders) and mentoring from Shabazz HS students - Academic interventions: Math clinic, morning kickstart tutoring program, ELA interventionists - Saturday Club for students: Chess, photography, dance - Behavioral interventions: groups held each day of the week, which focus on different behavioral dispositions
Family Stability and Success	- Community Food Pantry (1st & 3rd Fridays) - Job training classes - Saturday Club for parents: Positive Action, Book Club - Anger Management workshop for parents and children - Dental/Medical van (quarterly) - Medicaid support for families - Family District Club - Mother-Son and Father-Daughter dances - Core Family Night (focused on academics) - Back to School Night
Staff Development and Support	- Adverse trauma - Positive Action - Trainings on respect and culture - Overview of community schools initiative and budget
Community Partnerships	- Local welfare office - SNAP program - Greater Newark Conservancy - Shoprite - Neighborhood Barber Shop - My Brother's Keeper Newark initiative - Newark Public Library - Rutgers University - PlayWorks - Princeton University PerformCare Mobile Response

Community School Initiative Outcomes

As a result of the community school initiative, Belmont Runyon stakeholders indicated they have achieved a number of important outcomes, including: infusion of student and parent resources, improvements in student attendance and parent involvement, creation of partnerships, and a better reputation within the community. These are described in more detail below:

TARGET POPULATION	OBSERVED OUTCOMES	REPRESENTATIVE QUOTES
Students	• Increased school resources available to students • Slightly improved student attendance, which stakeholders attribute to the efforts of Success Mentors	*"Students have taken advantage of our early morning tutoring and hot breakfast program. In addition, kids come out for our Saturday Club enrichment program."*
Parents and families	• Increased parent involvement • Increased knowledge and desire to be informed of what is offered at the school • Increased parent ability to advocate for their needs and their families' needs • More parents' needs are able to be met, because more help and services are available	*"We have seen some parent participation in some of the events that we sponsor so we're looking to have more but we feel as though we did have a break-through with some of the events that we planned and the number of parents that actually came out, for example our Core Family Night."* *"We've definitely seen an increase in family engagement; I mean, it's evident."*
School	• Increased teacher understanding of adverse trauma, which makes them better able to help students • Increased staff participation in school events	*"As compared to what I've heard from last year, we've definitely seen an increase of staff participation."*
Community	• Strengthened relationship between the school and the community, as demonstrated by new partnerships • Improved school reputation, as a result of community partnerships which have allowed the community to see a different side of the school	*"With our partnerships…that has really helped expand the Community School model here at Belmont Runyon."*

Challenges

According to key stakeholders, there is a need at Belmont Runyon to raise awareness among school stakeholders regarding the community school model and its implications. The current principal and CSD were not on staff when planning for the Belmont Runyon Community School Initiative began, which meant that decision-makers had to work together to ensure that the school would provide the wrap-around services the school community needs. Strategic partnerships quickly were formed to address community needs. In addition, the school has faced staffing and funding challenges for the programs they are implementing.

Recommendations

- To increase understanding of what a community school is and means, professional development should be provided for all staff in the school, not just the school leaders. In addition, stakeholders reported that all members of the school would benefit from the opportunity to visit another community school.

- To address the academic needs of students, the school should consider providing additional academic interventions and supports.

- Stakeholders suggested that the school create a healthcare center or expand the availability of medical/dental vans to continue to address families' basic needs.

School Background

BRICK Peshine is an elementary/middle school in Newark's South Ward. During the 2017-2018 school year, the school served 734 students in Pre-K through eighth grade with all of the student population identifying as Black (90%) or Hispanic (10%). In comparison, Black and Hispanic students comprise most of the students (43% and 46%, respectively) served by the Newark Public Schools (NPS)[16] and fewer than half of the students (15% and 28%, respectively) served by public schools across the State of New Jersey.[17]

The majority of BRICK Peshine students are economically disadvantaged (85% qualifying for free lunch) compared with 78% of students districtwide.[18] About one-quarter (23%) of the student population receives special education supports compared with 16% of NPS students districtwide.[19]

BRICK Peshine is challenged by high student absenteeism rates and low academic performance. In fall 2017, one-third (32%) of BRICK Peshine's students were chronically absent,[20] defined as those missing 10% or more of the school days. In comparison, in the 2015-2016 school year, 23% of K-8 students in NPS were chronically absent, the most recent data available for NPS.[21] Across tested grades, few students *met or exceeded expectations* on the English language arts (ELA) and math portions (26% and 17%, respectively) of the spring 2017 Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) test. In comparison, about one-third of NPS students in grades 3-8 *met* or *exceeded* expectations in ELA or math (33% and 26%, respectively) the same year.[22]

The following summary is based on data collected from BRICK Peshine stakeholders, including the principal, Community School Director (CSD), site-based leadership team (SBLT), teachers, and parents.

Decision-Making

School-level stakeholders reported that everyone has a voice in the decision-making process; leadership responsibilities are shared at this school. The SBLT includes teachers, counselors, student council members, the Community Engagement Specialist, the social worker, and the Community School Director (CSD). In SBLT meetings, stakeholders discuss the needs of the school, which include culture and climate, discipline, and attendance. When making decisions, the SBLT considers the needs and vision of the school and determines the services, interventions, and resources that would be most effective at reducing the personal and academic barriers faced by students and families. The SBLT then determines the best ways to use the funding within the parameters of the grant. Everyone leaves each SBLT meeting with an "action item" to accomplish before the next meeting.

Interventions Supported by the Community School Initiative

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[16] Data from Newark Public Schools website: http://www.nps.k12.nj.us/

[17] Data from State of NJ: Department of Education website: https://www.nj.gov/education/data/

[18] Data from Newark Public Schools website: http://www.nps.k12.nj.us/

[19] Ibid.

[20] Data from: http://content.nps.k12.nj.us/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Peshine-Avenue_School_Summary_2018-02-06.pdf

[21] Data from: http://content.nps.k12.nj.us/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Attendance-piece-for-the-website.pdf

[22] Data from Newark Public Schools website: http://www.nps.k12.nj.us/

BRICK Peshine has developed partnerships with local businesses, municipal services, and universities and has aimed to implement interventions that meet students' academic and attendance needs, as well as interventions that support family stability and success. According to stakeholders and a review of the school's strategic plans, interventions are aligned with the school's plans and needs for improvement in school culture and climate, discipline, mental health, and attendance. These include:

FOCUS	INTERVENTIONS
Student Academics and Attendance	• Academic interventions: After-school tutoring, summer program for honors scholars • Extended learning program (based on student interests) • Attendance interventions: Success Mentors and incentives • Expanded socio-emotional learning team/curriculum • Yoga for regulation • Dedicated arts area
Family Stability and Success	• • • Parent Workshops Hygiene Closet Math and Literacy Nights

Staff Development and Support	• Staff training on:
	  ✓ Trauma-informed care
	  ✓ Dyslexia
	  ✓ Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)
	  ✓ Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM)
	  ✓ Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying (HIB)
	  ✓ Kickboard System

Community Partnerships	• Youth Development Clinic (YDC) • Rutgers University Behavioral Health Care (*UBHC*) Clinicians • Newark Police Department - Bullying • Local churches • Audible • SWAG project - Urban farming • New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) • Montclair Art Museum • Disney

Community School Initiative Outcomes

As a result of the community school initiative, BRICK Peshine stakeholders indicated they have achieved a number of important outcomes, including: increased student attendance, increased staff participation in interventions, and an improved reputation within the community. These are listed more specifically below:

TARGET POPULATION	OBSERVED OUTCOMES	REPRESENTATIVE QUOTES
Students	• Improved student attendance • Increased overall student enrollment • Improved student academic achievement • Decreased behavioral incidents, attributed to the school's expansion of its socio-emotional learning curriculum	*"The most impactful* [on student academic achievement] *has actually been the after-school tutoring...I believe it's been most impactful because [of] the way that this tutoring is based on teacher* [subject area] *strengths."*
Parents and families	• Increased attention to parents' opinions and concerns	*"I think parent voice is very strong in this school."*
School	• Increased awareness of trauma, resulting in teachers' attention to underlying student issues • Improved teacher perceptions of school climate • Increased teacher participation school interventions • Increased teachers to student voice	*"[The Community Schools Initiative] helped me to understand that I have to look beyond just the classroom. I have to really look at the whole child in order to figure out how to help them."* *"I can say, based on the reputation that I've heard about Peshine before, that it is definitely different in a positive way."*
Community	• Improved school reputation in the community, attributed to improved performance in student • academics and athletics Increased number of community partnerships	*"Being able to partner with YDC* [Youth Development Clinic] *and UBHC* [Rutgers University Behavioral Health Care] *has allowed us to support our scholars around the socio-emotional learning. Because we do have a lot of scholars that [sic] have severe, serious challenges and barriers, having extra hands to help us facilitate that process has been most impactful."*

Challenges

Stakeholders reported that BRICK Peshine struggles with teacher retention, partly due to the extended day schedule. In addition, the school needs more funding for academic trips and assistance in expanding

programs in order to reach more children. Parent and family knowledge of available resources and engagement also were identified as ongoing challenges.

Recommendations

- Teachers would benefit from ongoing trainings to improve staff's ability to implement what they are learning.

- Teachers would benefit from training focused on teaching strategies directed at improving student achievement.

- More academic support during school hours should be provided for academically struggling students.

- The school should consider providing students and teachers with more mental health resources and supports.

- The school should consider revising its communication strategy and expanding when and how it communicates with parents to increase parent awareness, engagement and involvement.

School Background

Malcolm X Shabazz is a high school in Newark's South Ward. During the 2017-2018 school year, the school served 459 students in grades 9 through 12 with nearly all students identifying as Black (92%) or Hispanic (7%). In comparison, Black and Hispanic students comprise most of the students (43% and 46%, respectively) served by the Newark Public Schools (NPS)[23] and fewer than half of the students (15% and 28%, respectively) served by public schools across the State of New Jersey (NJ).[24]

The majority of Shabazz students are economically disadvantaged (68% qualify for free lunch) compared with 78% of students districtwide.[25] One-quarter (25%) of the student population receives special education supports compared with 16% of NPS students districtwide.[26]

Shabazz is challenged by high student absenteeism rates and low academic performance. In fall 2017, the majority (71%) of Shabazz's students were chronically absent,[27] defined as those missing 10% or more of the school days. In comparison, in the 2015-2016 school year, about half (48%) of grade 9-12 students in NPS were chronically absent, the most recent data available for NPS.[28] Across the tested grades, few students *met or exceeded expectations* on the English language arts (ELA) and math portions (13% and <1%, respectively) of the spring 2017 Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) test. In comparison, higher proportion of NPS students in grades 9-11 *met* or *exceeded* expectations in ELA or math (28% and 13%, respectively). In 2017, Shabazz had a four-year graduation rate of 60% compared with 78% for NPS students districtwide and 90% for NJ students statewide.[29,30]

The following summary is based on data collected from Shabazz stakeholders, including the principal, Community School Director (CSD), site-based leadership team (SBLT), and teachers.

Decision-Making

School-level stakeholders reported that those who could be impacted by specific decisions or programs are able to provide input into the decision-making process. The SBLT is comprised of the principal, teachers, a Rutgers University partner, Community School Director (CSD), and students. The SBLT meets monthly and makes the final decisions based on everyone's input. The SBLT works to ensure that community and school interventions are aligned with the needs of children and families, including academic achievement, socio-emotional concerns, and school safety. Interventions are prioritized based on funding guidelines.

Interventions Supported by the Community School Initiative

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[23] Data from Newark Public Schools website: http://www.nps.k12.nj.us/

[24] Data from State of NJ: Department of Education website: https://www.nj.gov/education/data/

[25] Data from Newark Public Schools website: http://www.nps.k12.nj.us/

[26] Ibid.

[27] Data from: http://content.nps.k12.nj.us/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Malcolm-X-Shabazz-High-School_School_Summary_2018-02-06.pdf

[28] Data from: http://content.nps.k12.nj.us/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Attendance-piece-for-the-website.pdf

[29] Data from Newark Public Schools website: http://www.nps.k12.nj.us/

[30] Data from State of NJ: Department of Education website 2017 graduation rates: https://www.nj.gov/education/data/

Shabazz has developed partnerships with local businesses, municipal services, and universities. According to stakeholders and a review of the school's strategic plans, interventions are aligned with the school's strategic goals and needs for improvement in student achievement and community wellness. The school has aimed to implement interventions that meet students' academic and attendance needs, support family stability and success, and address community issues.

School staff have received professional development. These interventions include:

FOCUS	INTERVENTIONS
Student Academics and Attendance	• Academic interventions: STEM initiatives, SAT prep, Rutgers Future Scholars Program, Pathways to Achievement program (Saturday tutoring), Image Program, Leaders for Life (credit recovery) • Attendance interventions: Success Mentors • Apple labs and technology • Student Youth Court program • Career Day • Solar Suitcase Project • College Application assistance
Family Stability and Success	• • Parent workshops Health and Wellness fair
Staff Development and Support	• • Trauma Workshop for staff • Three-day Institute for Student Achievement (ISA) training • Apple technology training • Blended learning trainings Community school visitations
Community Partnerships	• • Rutgers University Apple

Community School Initiative Outcomes

As a result of the community school initiative, Shabazz stakeholders indicated they have achieved a number of important outcomes, including: increased student motivation, increased parent involvement, and improved teacher perceptions of the school. These are listed more specifically below:

TARGET POPULATION	OBSERVED OUTCOMES	SCHOOL STAKEHOLDER QUOTES
Students	• • Increased student motivation and engagement • Improved student attendance Increased college application and acceptance rates	*"Our attendance has gone up the last three months."* *"[For the Solar Suitcase Project], we had kids coming in an hour plus before the start of school and that's unheard of in this neighborhood."*
Parents and families	• Increased parent involvement and engagement at social events • More parent volunteers Improved parent-teacher relationships	*"We have some parents that volunteer in the main office every day."*
School	• • Improved student-teacher relationships • More positive teacher perceptions of the school More teachers looking forward to coming to work	*"We've had at least 7 [or] 8 teachers who seek additional training who had better experiences and it helped them to develop closer relationships with students because of these initiatives with STEM and the Apple computer science coding initiative."*
Community	• Increased community participation in school events	*"[At] a health and wellness fair that occurs both last year and this year, all five community schools come together. …The fair is held here at Shabazz on the football field and that I think is the greatest outreach to all of our families."*

Challenges

According to key stakeholders, one of the main implementation challenges has been engaging the community, parents, and families. In addition, the school needs to overcome a negative community perception, which stakeholders believe has contributed to low student enrollment. Though the school has increased its community partners, the school needs additional funding for interventions and programs.

Recommendations

- The SBLT would benefit from more training and an external resource who could advise them on the implementation of their interventions, including assessing what they have implemented and identifying/recommending future interventions.

- More flexibility with grant funds and increased funding would allow this school to implement additional interventions that meet the needs of the school community.

School Background

Louise A. Spencer Elementary School recently merged with Miller Street School. Now called Spencer Miller Community School, this elementary/middle school is located in Newark's South Ward. During the 2017-2018 school year, the school served 775 students in Pre-K through eighth grade with all of the student population identifying as Black (60%) or Hispanic (40%). In comparison, Black and Hispanic students comprise most of the students (43% and 46%, respectively) served by the Newark Public Schools (NPS)[31] and fewer than half of the students (15% and 28%, respectively) served by public schools across the State of New Jersey (NJ).[32]

The majority of Spencer Miller's students are economically disadvantaged (84% qualify for free lunch) compared with 78% of students districtwide.[33] Eighteen percent (18%) of the student population receive special education supports compared with 16% of NPS students districtwide.[34]

Spencer Miller is challenged by high student absenteeism rates and low academic performance. In fall 2017, 44% of students were chronically absent,[35] defined as those missing 10% or more of the school days. In comparison, in the 2015-2016 school year, 23% of K-8 students in NPS were chronically absent, the most recent data available for NPS.[36] Across the tested grades, few students *met* or *exceeded expectations* on the English language arts (ELA) and math portions (24% and 15%, respectively) of the spring 2017 Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) test. In comparison, about one-third of NPS students in grades 3-8 *met* or *exceeded* expectations in ELA or math (33% and 26%, respectively) the same year.[37]

The following summary is based on data collected from Spencer Miller stakeholders, including the principal, Community School Director (CSD), site-based leadership team (SBLT), teachers, and parents.

Decision-Making

According to key stakeholders, Spencer Miller has an inclusive decision-making process where everyone who could potentially be impacted by a decision is able to give their input. The SBLT includes representatives from the previous Spencer and Miller schools. The SBLT is comprised of: Community Engagement Officers, the Community School Director, the Principal and members of the administrative team, parents, teachers, and members of the Positive Action Committee. The SBLT meets monthly. Before each meeting, the SBLT plans out an agenda. Frequent meeting topics include: chronic absenteeism, the Spencer Miller merger, school climate/culture, funding/budget, and initiative events. Together, the SBLT reviews data and uses the Newark Trust guidelines to align resources; identifies the best services for the school; and plans events for parents, children, and/or the community. All stakeholders are encouraged to give their input and the SBLT makes the final decisions.

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[31] Data from Newark Public Schools website: http://www.nps.k12.nj.us/

[32] Data from State of NJ: Department of Education website: https://www.nj.gov/education/data/

[33] Data from Newark Public Schools website: http://www.nps.k12.nj.us/

[34] Ibid.

[35] Data from: http://content.nps.k12.nj.us/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Miller-Street-at-Spencer_School_Summary_2018-02-06.pdf

[36] Data from: http://content.nps.k12.nj.us/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Attendance-piece-for-the-website.pdf

[37] Data from Newark Public Schools website: http://www.nps.k12.nj.us/

Interventions are prioritized based on what the grant funds will cover, though stakeholders reported that the guidelines on how to use the Community School funds are not completely clear. The SBLT members know the needs of the school based on living and/or working in the community, but are not always able to use the funds for those needs because of grant guidelines. Stakeholders reported that academics, attendance and parent engagement interventions have been the school's top priorities. There has been little emphasis on mental health services and basic needs.

Interventions Supported by the Community School Initiative

The members of the SBLT are unaware of a needs assessment for the community school. The school's strategic plan is mostly focused on a need for increased student achievement and family engagement to support increased student achievement. The neighborhood around the school is plagued by violence and poverty. There is also a large population of bilingual students that need assistance with ELA. According to stakeholders and a review of the school's strategic plans, interventions are aligned with the school's plans and needs for improvement attendance, academics, and parent engagement. Community School interventions include:

FOCUS	INTERVENTIONS
Student Academics and Attendance	- Attendance interventions: Success Mentors, Symbol lounge, celebrations Academic interventions: Saturday program and after-school program, STEAM curriculum
Family Stability and Success	- Workshops with community partners: Financial empowerment, ESL classes, health/mental health, community-based organization presentations, homelessness - Mandatory student-parent activities and events - Field trips - Events: Hispanic heritage, Black history month, talent show, father-son basketball game
Staff Development and Support	- Trauma-informed PD - Guided reading workshop - Math/Literacy interventions Teacher Appreciation Week
Community Partnerships	- Boy Scouts of America Local ice cream vendor

Community School Initiative Outcomes

As a result of the community school initiative, Spencer Miller stakeholders indicated they have achieved a number of important outcomes, including: improved student attendance, increased parent engagement, and increased community partners' involvement. These are listed more specifically below:

TARGET POPULATION	OBSERVED OUTCOMES	SCHOOL STAKEHOLDER QUOTES
Students	- Improved student attendance, which stakeholders attribute to the efforts of Success Mentors - Increased excitement about school	*"Our Success Mentors program is part of our attendance initiative and of the 80 students that we're working with, 57% of those students have increased attendance."*
Parents and families	- Increased knowledge of the initiative - Increased parent involvement and engagement at social events	*"In terms of the parental involvement, I think that it has been extremely positive and noticeable. It's something that we get a lot of compliments on."*
School	- Increased teacher involvement in school activities, such as coaching sports or leading groups/clubs	*"We've done a really good job at establishing a sense of community across the board in terms of participation in social events."*
Community	- More parent workshops from community partners - Increased participation in community activities	*"The number of community activities and participation has been tremendously positive."*

Challenges

As indicated by key stakeholders, the school has been challenged by the need to redefine its identity, both as a newly merged school and as a community school. Spencer Miller also has been challenged by low parent engagement, specifically regarding educational and informative workshops. Stakeholders noted that

many parents do not understand what being a community school means. In addition, students' behavioral problems, mental health concerns, and basic needs have not yet been addressed by interventions.

Recommendations

- Workshops or informational meetings should be provided for all school stakeholders, especially parents, to increase understanding of what is a community school.

- The school should consider providing additional academic interventions and supports to address the academic needs of students.

- The school would benefit from additional training and resources to support students' emotional and mental health issues. Stakeholders identified a need for more clinicians for children who need support.

- The SBLT would benefit from more training on how to institutionalize partnerships.

- The SBLT would benefit from clarification on how the funds can be used.

- The initiative should consider allowing greater flexibility with the grant funds so that students' mental health and lack of basic necessities (e.g., food, clean clothing, hygiene products) can be addressed.

Appendix C: References

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Appendix D: Evaluation Instruments

Evaluation of the South Ward Community Schools initiative
School Staff Consent Form

Metis Associates has been retained by the Newark Trust for Education as the evaluation partner for the South Ward Community Schools Initiative (SWCSI) being implemented in Newark Public Schools (NPS), Newark, New Jersey. In partnership with the Center for Research and Evaluation on Education and Human Services (CREEHS) at Montclair State University, Metis/CREEHS is conducting visits at each participating school, which includes individual and focus group interviews with principals, community schools directors, members of the site leadership team, and teachers. The purpose of these interviews is to gather school staff's feedback on the Community Schools Initiative, including perceived successes and challenges, and suggestions for improvement. These individual and focus group interviews should take approximately 30 minutes to 1 hour.

Participation in this interview is voluntary, but we encourage you to please take the time to participate. If you are uncomfortable answering a question, you may skip that question. Also, with your consent, we would like to record the interview/conversation in order to assist with note-taking. Only the researchers at Metis/CREEHS will have access to the recording and any transcription. The recording will be erased after the discussion is transcribed.

Your responses will be kept confidential. Even though we will not share your answers with anyone else, we cannot control what other participants in the focus group might share after the group ends. You should not share any information that you don't want other participants to hear; including information that you feel may put your employment at risk. If you want to share any response privately, you may talk to us after the focus group is over or share hand-written notes on the focus group protocol handout. All information that could potentially identify an individual will be removed from transcripts and reports. If we want to include a quote and attribute it to you, we will request your permission first. All study data will be destroyed three years after the completion of the project.

If you have any questions about the study, please feel free to contact Julia Alemany, the Study Manager, at jalemany@metisassoc.com or at 866-248-4612. If you have questions about the rights of human subjects, please contact Michael Scuello at mscuello@metisassoc.com or at 866-248-4612.

_____

Please sign below if you consent to participate in this discussion.

_____   _____   _____
Signature   Name   Date

Please sign below if you consent to be recorded.

_____   _____   _____
Signature   Name   Date

Evaluation of the South Ward Community Schools Initiative
Key Stakeholder Consent Form

Metis Associates has been retained by the Newark Trust for Education as the evaluation partner for the South Ward Community Schools Initiative (SWCSI) being implemented in Newark Public Schools (NPS), Newark, New Jersey. As part of this work, we are conducting interviews with key stakeholders. This interview is designed to gather your feedback on the Community Schools Initiative, including your and your organization's role, perceived successes and challenges, and suggestions for improvement. This interview should take approximately 20-30 minutes.

Participation in this interview is voluntary, but we encourage you to please take the time to participate. If you are uncomfortable answering a question, you may skip that question. Also, with your consent, we would like to record the interview/conversation in order to assist with note-taking. Only the researchers at Metis/CREEHS will have access to the recording and any transcription. The recording will be erased after the discussion is transcribed.

Your responses will be kept confidential. All information that could potentially identify an individual will be removed from transcripts and reports. If we want to include a quote and attribute it to you, we will request your permission first. All study data will be destroyed three years after the completion of the project.

If you have any questions about the study, please feel free to contact Julia Alemany, the Study Manager, at jalemany@metisassoc.com or at 866-248-4612. If you have questions about the rights of human subjects, please contact Michael Scuello at mscuello@metisassoc.com or at 866-248-4612.

_____

Please sign below if you consent to participate in this discussion.

_____   _____   _____
Signature   Name   Date

Please sign below if you consent to be recorded.

_____   _____   _____
Signature   Name   Date

Evaluation of the South Ward Community Schools Initiative
Community Schools Director Interview Protocol

Good morning/afternoon. My name is _____ and I work for the Center for Research and Evaluation on Education and Human Services (CREEHS) at Montclair State University. As you may know, Metis Associates – in partnership with CREEHS – was retained by the Newark Trust for Education as the evaluation partner for the South Ward Community Schools Initiative (SWCSI). Through this interview, we hope to learn more about your role and your involvement in this initiative, successes and challenges to date, and recommendations moving forward. Your individual responses will be kept confidential. We will not include any names in any of our reports. If we want to include a quote and attribute it to you, we will request your permission first. With your permission, I would like to record this interview to help with note-taking. I will erase the recording as soon as the transcription is done. No one outside of CREEHS or Metis will have access to the recording or transcript. Is it okay to record? [DISTRIBUTE AND COLLECT CONSENT FORM] Do you have any questions before I begin?

1. How long have you been in your current position?

We'd like to know more about your role and involvement in this initiative.

2. When and how were you first introduced to the initiative?
    a. Were you involved in the planning process? If so, please describe your role during that time.

3. What are your current responsibilities with regard to the Community Schools Initiative?

The following questions are about the Community Schools Initiative as implemented in your school.

4. From your perspective, what is the goal or ultimate impact of the Community Schools Initiative?

5. To what extent do key stakeholders at the school (e.g., staff, families) have a common shared goal, understanding of, and agenda for this initiative? If not, what could be done to promote a shared understanding?

6. What methods, if any, does your school use to identify school and community needs? Please describe any formal or informal needs assessments that have been conducted at this school. Who prepared them? What information was collected and from whom?
    a. [Probe if needed] Are you familiar with the needs assessment prepared by the Strong Healthy Communities Initiative? And the needs assessment prepared by Children's Aid Society? If yes, were the needs identified in these assessments the most important/relevant ones?
    b. What were the key school and community needs identified through any formal or informal needs assessment?
    c. Are you familiar with this school's NPS strategic plan?
        i. How, if at all, are this school's strategic goals and plans aligned to the needs of this school? Please provide examples.
        ii. How if at all, are the school's interventions aligned to the school's strategic goals? Please provide an example.

7. Who is involved in the planning, prioritizing and implementation of community schools-related activities?

a. What does the decision-making process look like? Who is involved in making decisions? What works well? And how could the process be improved? *[Be sure to distinguish between decision makers and processes for planning, prioritizing and implementing]*

b. From your perspective, to what extent is the current leadership model for the overall Community Schools Initiative effective in supporting the successful implementation of the initiative? What works well? What needs to be improved?

Next, we would like to get more information about each of the six main components of the Community Schools Initiative, including implementation successes, challenges, and observed outcomes.

The first component of the model is "**High Expectations for Learning: Clear Instructional Vision, Rigorous Instructional Practice, Integrated Student Supports.**" Examples of activities would be: PD for staff; data-driven academic, attendance and behavioral interventions; culturally competent curriculum.

8. As a result of the Community Schools Initiative, has your school added, enhanced, or expanded any activities or supports in this area? Please describe.
    a. What has been most successful or impactful and why?
    b. Has your school experienced any challenges implementing this component?
    c. What other supports may be needed related to this component?

The next component of the model is "**Capacity to Address Student Health and Mental Health**." Examples of activities or services could be: student referrals to medical, dental and mental health services, and support for families in crisis.

9. As a result of the Community Schools Initiative, has your school added, enhanced, or expanded any activities or supports in this area? Please describe.
    a. What has been most successful or impactful and why?
    b. Has your school experienced any challenges implementing this component?
    c. What other supports may be needed related to this component?

The next component of the model is "**Quality In-School and Expanded Learning Time and Opportunities**." Examples of activities or services could be: tutoring (before, during or after school) or other afterschool enrichment programs.

10. As a result of the Community Schools Initiative, has your school added, enhanced, or expanded any activities or supports in this area? Please describe.
    a. What has been most successful or impactful and why?
    b. Has your school experienced any challenges implementing this component?
    c. What other supports may be needed related to this component?

The next component of the model is "**Community of Engaged, Supportive Adults**." Examples of activities or services could be: mentoring, college and career counseling, and educational and employment training for parents/community.

11. As a result of the Community Schools Initiative, has your school added, enhanced, or expanded any activities or supports in this area? Please describe.
    a. What has been most successful or impactful and why?

b. Has your school experienced any challenges implementing this component?

c. What other supports may be needed related to this component?

The next component of the model is "**High Capacity Partnerships and Resources**." Examples of activities or services would be: development local partnerships, infusion of services and resources, and referrals to outside services.

12. As a result of the Community Schools Initiative, has your school developed any new partnerships or adopted any new resources? Please describe.
    a. What has been most successful or impactful and why?
    b. Has your school experienced any challenges implementing this component?
    c. What other supports may be needed related to this component?

The final component of the model is "**Integrated Student Data Information Systems and Approach to Learning Analytics**." Examples of activities or services could be: the development of data collection/ analysis/reporting system and PD on how to make data-informed instructional decisions.

13. How is your school tracking the services you provide to students, teachers, and families? What platform/software do you use? Are data entered consistently across activities? And how about outcome data (e.g., attendance, disciplinary, achievement data)? How often and how do you and others at this school use these data?

14. Has your staff participated in any PD on how to make data-informed instructional decisions?

15. Has your school experienced any challenges in collecting, analyzing and using data? What other supports may be needed in this area?

The next few questions are about **perceived impact, overarching challenges, and suggestions for improvement.**

16. In your opinion, what impact has the Community Schools Initiative had so far on **students**? (Probe for: attendance, academic behaviors, social and emotional skills, academic performance.) Please provide examples.

17. In your opinion, what impact has the Community Schools Initiative had so far on **teachers**? (Probe for: trauma-informed practices, use of data, teacher attendance/retention, views of the school.) Please provide examples.

18. In your opinion, what impact has the Community Schools Initiative had so far on **parents and families**? (Probe for: involvement in school activities, involvement in children's education, views of the school, ability to advocate, connections to health, employment, education services) Please provide examples.

19. In your opinion, what impact has the Community Schools Initiative had so far on **schools and the community**? (Probe for: school climate, school ownership of the initiative, development of site leadership teams, development of partnerships, community engagement) Please provide examples.
    a. In your opinion, what progress, if any, has your school had in developing plans for creating systems-level change, institutionalizing practices, and maintaining partnerships?

20. What challenges or obstacles, if any, has your school experienced thus far as part of this initiative? And how, if at all, have they been addressed?

21. Are there any other supports or resources that you have not mentioned yet that your school needs to implement the Community Schools Initiative?

22. Is there anything else you'd like to say about the initiative?

Thank you again for taking the time to share your thoughts and valuable insights!

Evaluation of the South Ward Community Schools Initiative
Principal Interview Protocol

Good morning/afternoon. My name is _____ and I work for the Center for Research and Evaluation on Education and Human Services (CREEHS) at Montclair State University. As you know, Metis Associates – in partnership with CREEHS – was retained by the Newark Trust for Education as the evaluation partner for the South Ward Community Schools Initiative. Through this interview, we hope to learn more about your role and your involvement in this initiative, successes and challenges to date, and recommendations moving forward. Your individual responses will be kept confidential. We will not include any names in any of our reports. If we want to include a quote and attribute it to you, we will request your permission first. With your permission, I would like to record this interview to help with note-taking. No one outside of CREEHS or Metis will have access to the recording or transcript. I will erase the recording as soon as the transcription is done. Is it okay to record? [DISTRIBUTE AND COLLECT CONSENT FORM] Do you have any questions before I begin?

1. How long have you been in your current position?

We'd like to know more about your role and involvement in this initiative.

2. When and how were you first introduced to the initiative?
   a. Were you involved in the planning process? If so, please describe your role during that time.

3. To what extent do key stakeholders at the school (e.g., staff, families) have a common shared goal, understanding of, and agenda for this initiative? If not, what could be done to promote a shared understanding?

The following questions are about the Community Schools Initiative as implemented in your school.

4. What methods, if any, does your school use to identify school and community needs? Please describe any formal or informal needs assessments that have been conducted at this school. Who prepared them? What information was collected and from whom?
   a. [Probe if needed] Are you familiar with the needs assessment prepared by the Strong Healthy Communities Initiative? And the needs assessment prepared by Children's Aid Society? If yes, were the needs identified in these assessments the most important/relevant ones?
   b. What were key needs at this school?
   c. How, if at all, are this school's strategic goals and plans aligned to those needs? And to community needs? Please provide examples.
   d. How if at all, are the school's interventions aligned to the school's strategic goals? Please provide examples.

5. Who is involved in the planning, prioritizing and implementation of community schools-related activities?
   a. What does the decision-making process look like at your school? Who is involved in making decisions? What works well? And how could the process be improved? *[Be sure to distinguish between decision makers and processes for planning, prioritizing and implementing]*
   b. From your perspective, to what extent is the current leadership model for the overall Community Schools Initiative effective in supporting the successful implementation of the initiative? What works well? What needs to be improved?

Next, we would like to get more information about the services and activities offered this year as part of the Community Schools Initiative. You already discussed many of these activities the last time we interviewed you, but we'd like to get an update.

6. Since we last spoke, what progress has your school made in implementing activities and services as part of the Community Schools Initiative?
   a. What activities or components have been most successful to date and why?

The next few questions are about **perceived impact, overarching challenges, and suggestions for improvement.**

7. In your opinion, what impact has the Community Schools Initiative had so far on **students**? (Probe for: attendance, academic behaviors, social and emotional skills, academic performance.) Please provide examples.

8. In your opinion, what impact has the Community Schools Initiative had so far on **teachers**? (Probe for: trauma-informed practices, use of data, teacher attendance/retention, views of the school.) Please provide examples.

9. In your opinion, what impact has the Community Schools Initiative had so far on **parents and families**? (Probe for: involvement in school activities, involvement in children's education, views of the school, ability to advocate, connections to health, employment, education services) Please provide examples.

10. In your opinion, what impact has the Community Schools Initiative had so far on **schools and the community**? (Probe for: school climate, school ownership of the initiative, development of site leadership teams, development of partnerships, community engagement) Please provide examples.
    a. In your opinion, what progress, if any, has your school made in developing plans for creating systems-level change, institutionalizing practices, and maintaining partnerships?

11. What challenges or obstacles, if any, has the initiative (and/or your school) experienced thus far? And how, if at all, have they been addressed?

12. Are there any other supports or resources that your school needs to implement the Community Schools Initiative?

13. Is there anything else you'd like to say about the initiative?

Thank you again for taking the time to share your thoughts and valuable insights!

Evaluation of the South Ward Community Schools Initiative
Site Leadership Team Focus Group Protocol

Good morning/afternoon. My name is _____ and I work for the Center for Research and Evaluation on Education and Human Services (CREEHS) at Montclair State University. As you may know, Metis Associates – in partnership with CREEHS – was retained by the Newark Trust for Education as the evaluation partner for the South Ward Community Schools Initiative. Through this focus group, we hope to learn more about your role and your involvement in this initiative, successes and challenges to date, and recommendations moving forward. Your individual responses will be kept confidential. We will not include any names in any of our reports. If we want to include a quote and attribute it to you, we will request your permission first. With your permission, I would like to record this interview to help with note-taking. No one outside of CREEHS or Metis will have access to the recording or transcript. I will erase the recording as soon as the transcription is done. Is it okay to record? [DISTRIBUTE AND COLLECT CONSENT FORM] Do you have any questions before I begin?

14. What is your current position and how long have you been in this position?

We'd like to know more about your role and involvement in this initiative.

15. When and how were you first introduced to the Community Schools Initiative? What was your first impression?

16. From your perspective, what is the ultimate goal of the Community Schools Initiative?

17. To what extent do key stakeholders at the school (e.g., staff, families) have a common shared goal, understanding of, and agenda for this initiative? If not, what could be done to promote a shared understanding?

18. What are the most pressing needs in your school and community? To what extent do you think the Community Schools Initiative as implemented in your school helps to address these needs?

Next, we would like to get more information about the role of the site leadership team.

19. When was the site leadership team created at this school?

20. What is the role of the site leadership team? And with regard to community school implementation:
    a. How often do you meet?
    b. What topics do you discuss?
    c. Have you received any supports or training related to effective site leadership teams, for example on how to use data? What was most helpful?
    d. Does the site leadership team use data to inform the work that you are doing? What type of data do you review and how often?
    e. In your opinion, what successes or positive changes, if any, have occurred to date as a result of the school leadership team?
    f. What other supports or resources does the site leadership team need?
    g. Any other suggestions for improvement?

21. From your perspective, to what extent is the current leadership model for the overall Community Schools Initiative effective in supporting the successful implementation of the initiative? What works well? What needs to be improved?

The next few questions are about **perceived impact, overarching challenges, and suggestions for improvement** for the overall Community Schools Initiative at this school.

22. In your opinion, what impact has the Community Schools Initiative had so far on **students**? (Probe for: attendance, academic behaviors, social and emotional skills, academic performance.) Please provide examples.

23. In your opinion, what impact has the Community Schools Initiative had so far on **teachers**? (Probe for: trauma-informed practices, use of data, teacher attendance/retention, views of the school.) Please provide examples.

24. In your opinion, what impact has the Community Schools Initiative had so far on **parents and families**? (Probe for: involvement in school activities, involvement in children's education, views of the school, ability to advocate, connections to health, employment, education services) Please provide examples.

25. In your opinion, what impact has the Community Schools Initiative had so far on **schools and the community**? (Probe for: school climate, school ownership of the initiative, development of partnerships, community engagement) Please provide examples.
    b. What progress, if any, has your school had in developing plans for creating systems-level change, institutionalizing practices, and maintaining partnerships?

26. What challenges or obstacles, if any, has your school experienced thus far as part of this initiative? And how, if at all, have they been addressed?

27. Are there any other supports or resources that your school needs to implement the Community Schools Initiative?

28. Is there anything else you'd like to say about the initiative?

Thank you again for taking the time to share your thoughts and valuable insights!

Evaluation of the South Ward Community Schools Initiative
Teacher Focus Group Protocol

Good morning/afternoon. My name is _____ and I work for the Center for Research and Evaluation on Education and Human Services (CREEHS) at Montclair State University. As you may know, Metis Associates – in partnership with CREEHS – was retained by the Newark Trust for Education as the evaluation partner for the South Ward Community Schools Initiative. Through this focus group, we hope to learn more about your role and your involvement in this initiative, successes and challenges to date, and recommendations moving forward. Your individual responses will be kept confidential. We will not include any names in any of our reports. If we want to include a quote and attribute it to you, we will request your permission first. With your permission, I would like to record this interview to help with note-taking. No one outside of CREEHS or Metis will have access to the recording or transcript. I will erase the recording as soon as the transcription is done. Is it okay to record? [DISTRIBUTE AND COLLECT CONSENT FORM] Do you have any questions before I begin?

1. What is your current position and how long have you been at this school?

2. When and how were you first introduced to the Community Schools Initiative? What was your first impression?

3. From your perspective, what is the ultimate goal of the Community Schools Initiative?

4. What are the most pressing needs in your school and community? To what extent do you think the Community Schools Initiative as implemented in your school helps to address these needs?

Next, we'd like to learn more about **supports and professional development opportunities for teachers**.

5. What trainings or supports have you received this year and/or last year?
    a. What were the topics? (Probe for: use of data, trauma-informed practices, curriculum)
    b. What was most helpful about these trainings and supports?
    c. What could be improved?
    d. What other training or supports do you need?

The next few questions are about **perceived impact, overarching challenges, and suggestions for improvement** for the overall Community Schools Initiative at this school.

6. To your knowledge, what have been the most successful activities or services that your school has added, enhanced, or expanded as a result of the Community Schools Initiative? For students? For teachers? For families? [Provide examples if needed]

7. In your opinion, what impact has the Community Schools Initiative had so far on **you and other teachers at this school**? (Probe for: trauma-informed practices, use of data, teacher attendance/retention, views of the school.) Please provide examples.

8. In your opinion, what impact has the Community Schools Initiative had so far on **students**? (Probe for: attendance, academic behaviors, social and emotional skills, academic performance.) Please provide examples.

9. In your opinion, what impact has the Community Schools Initiative had so far on **parents and families**? (Probe for: involvement in school activities, involvement in children's education, views of the school, ability to advocate, connections to health, employment, education services) Please provide examples.

10. In your opinion, what impact has the Community Schools Initiative had so far on **schools and the community**? (Probe for: school climate, school ownership of the initiative, development of partnerships, community engagement) Please provide examples.
    c. What progress, if any, has your school had in developing plans for creating systems-level change, institutionalizing practices, and maintaining partnerships?

11. What challenges or obstacles, if any, has your school experienced thus far as part of this initiative? And how, if at all, have they been addressed?

12. Are there any other supports or resources that your school needs to implement the Community Schools Initiative?

13. Is there anything else you'd like to say about the initiative?

Thank you again for taking the time to share your thoughts and valuable insights!

Evaluation of the South Ward Community Schools Initiative
Key Stakeholder Interview Protocol

Good morning/afternoon. My name is _____. As you may know, Metis Associates was retained by the Newark Trust for Education as the evaluation partner for the South Ward Community Schools Initiative. Through this interview, we hope to learn more about your role and your involvement in this initiative, successes and challenges to date, and recommendations moving forward. Your individual responses will be kept confidential. We will not include any names in any of our reports. If we want to include a quote and attribute it to you, we will request your permission first. With your permission, I would like to record this interview to help with note-taking. No one outside of CREEHS or Metis will have access to the recording or transcript. I will erase the recording as soon as the transcription is done. Is it okay to record? [DISTRIBUTE AND COLLECT CONSENT FORM] Do you have any questions before I begin?

29. When and how were you first introduced to the Community Schools Initiative? What was your first impression?

30. From your perspective, what is the ultimate goal of the Community Schools Initiative?

31. What is your role in the overall initiative? Has your role changed over time, and if so, how?
    a. Please describe your involvement if any, in the design, planning, and implementation of this initiative.

32. [If part of the management team, the National Advisory Board or the Children's Cabinet] What is the role of this group? What works well? What could be improved?

The next few questions are about the initiative's network of key stakeholders.

33. To what extent do key stakeholders have a common shared goal, understanding of, and agenda for this initiative? If not, what could be done to promote a shared understanding?

34. How are members working together to achieve shared goals, including goals that emerge over time?

35. How are you, your organization, or your group contributing resources to the network? (What resources are you or your organization contributing to the network?)

36. How have you and/or other key stakeholders benefited from this network?

Next, we'd like to learn more about the management and oversight of the initiative.

37. From your perspective, to what extent is the current leadership model effective in supporting the successful implementation of the initiative?
    a. What does the decision-making process look like at the initiative level?
    b. What's working well?
    c. What needs to be improved?

The next few questions are about overarching successes, challenges and lessons learned.

38. In your opinion, what impact has there been so far at the systems-level? Probe for:
    a. Shared mission among city agencies and key stakeholders
    b. Increased collaboration and coordination of services
    c. Policies, processes, and systems are being put in place among city agencies to ensure sustainability of successful practices
    d. Other?

39. What challenges or obstacles, if any, has the initiative experienced thus far? And how, if at all, have they been addressed or could they be addressed?

The last few questions are about resources and sustainability.

40. To what extent is there progress towards devising and implementing a plan for sustainability of the overall initiative? Please describe.
    a. Who is involved in those discussions? Who else should be involved?
    b. What challenges, if any, are there to sustaining this initiative? How have or can these challenges be addressed?
    c. Are there any other supports or resources that the initiative needs to continue to move forward at this time?

41. Is there anything else you'd like to say about the initiative?

Thank you again for taking the time to share your thoughts and valuable insights!

Evaluation of the South Ward Community Schools Initiative
Online Parent Survey – Spring 2018

This survey asks about your child's school, your participation in school activities and events, and your suggestions for improvement. As you can see, we have not asked you for your name or any other personal information. All survey responses are anonymous. No one will know you participated. This survey is optional and you may skip any question. The survey should take about 15 minutes to complete. The information that you provide will be used to help the school improve services for your child. Thank you for your help!

1. **Which of the following schools does your child attend? If you have more than one child and they are attending different schools, please think of your oldest child who attends one of these schools.**
   ❐ BRICK Avon   ❐ BRICK Peshine   ❐ Spencer Miller

   ❐ Belmont Runyon   ❐ Malcom X Shabazz High School

2. **For how many years has your child attended this school?**
   ❐ This is the first year   ❐ 2 years   ❐ 3 years   ❐ 4 or more years

3. **What grade is your child in? Check all that apply.**

   ❐ Grade K   ❐ Grade 4   ❐ Grade 8   ❐ Grade 12

   ❐ Grade 1   ❐ Grade 5   ❐ Grade 9

   ❐ Grade 2   ❐ Grade 6   ❐ Grade 10

   ❐ Grade 3   ❐ Grade 7   ❐ Grade 11

4. How much do you agree or disagree with each statement about your child's school?	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Students feel welcome.	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐
Students feel safe.	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐
I feel welcome.	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐
Teachers care about students.	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐
Students respect teachers.	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐
Teachers respect students.	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐
Students can get the help they need in school.	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐
I enjoy being part of this school community.	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐
I feel supported.	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐
This school reflects the background and culture of the students who attend it.	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐

How much do you agree or disagree with each statement about your child's school?	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Students have a say at this school	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
Students have an opportunity to develop their interests	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
Students have opportunities to excel in areas other than academics.	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
This school keeps me informed about my child's school day.	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
This school tries to involve me in school events or activities.	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
This school provides important resources for parents (like employment, education, health-related).	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏

About two years ago, your child's school became a "Community School". We'd like to know if you have seen/observed any changes during this period.

5. Over the past two years, how has each of the following improved or declined at your child's school?	Got better	Stayed the same	Got worse	Don't know
School safety	❏	❏	❏	❏
School climate (what students, parents, and staff think about the school)	❏	❏	❏	❏
General communications from your school	❏	❏	❏	❏
Communication from your school or teacher regarding your child's progress	❏	❏	❏	❏
School staff's understanding of your child's needs	❏	❏	❏	❏
School staff's understanding of your family's needs	❏	❏	❏	❏
Afterschool tutoring or enrichment opportunities for students	❏	❏	❏	❏
Services, workshops, and referrals for parents	❏	❏	❏	❏
Parent involvement in school activities	❏	❏	❏	❏
Community involvement in school activities	❏	❏	❏	❏
Your involvement in school activities	❏	❏	❏	❏
Your involvement in your child's education	❏	❏	❏	❏

6. Have you participated in any of the following activities? If so, how satisfied were you with them?	Have you participated?		If yes, how satisfied were you with this activity?				
	No	Yes	Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Parent-teacher conference	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
Open house night	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
Parent workshop	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
School celebratory events (school performances, holiday celebrations, awards ceremonies, etc.)	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏

7. Have you received any of the following services? If so, how satisfied were you with them?	Have you received?		If yes, how satisfied were you with this service?				
	No	Yes	Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Ongoing communications from the school about school news, announcements, and events	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
Ongoing communications from your teacher about your child	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
Support from a guidance counselor	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
Referrals for your child to outside services	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
Referrals for you or other adults to outside services (e.g., employment, education, health-related)	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏

8. What else could the school do to support you and your child(ren)?

Thank you for completing this survey!