



Book	BCPS Board Policies & Regulations
Section	A - Foundations and Basic Commitments
Title	Community School Strategy
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Status	Active
Cross References	FKA, KCA, LCA, ADH-RA, DJA-RA, FKA-RA, IHB, IHB-RA, KCA-RA, LCA-RA
Adopted	October 25, 2016
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POLICY

BALTIMORE CITY BOARD OF SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS

Community School Strategy

I. Purpose

A. The goal of the Community School Strategy is to ensure all students in Baltimore City Public Schools ("City Schools") are academically successful, graduate from school and are college, career and citizenship ready. Community Schools create positive conditions for learning in the school and the community in partnership with families. All families and communities have strengths and assets that are a valuable resource to schools. Community Schools:

1. Are inclusive and equitable,
2. Use a racial equity framework in order to ensure the success of children and
3. Serve as an effective strategy to address concentrated poverty.

Community schools embody and incorporate voices of the community- parents, teachers, school-based staff, residents, community associations and other key community stakeholders who all have a shared interest and investment in the wellbeing of children.

The Community School strategy offers an integrated focus on academics, health and mental health services, youth development, expanded learning opportunities and family and community supports to ensure students are ready and able to learn. The strategy recognizes the multiple aspects of children's development- cognitive, social, psychological, physical, moral and vocational.

This policy establishes the framework and responsibilities for the support and implementation of a Community School Strategy that provides comprehensive social supports, family stability and health services for students, families and community members in order to improve educational outcomes and the well-being of City Schools' students.

B. Upon enacting this policy, the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners ("Board") recognizes the commitment by the Mayor of Baltimore City and the Governor of the State of Maryland to sustain and grow the Community School Strategy in Baltimore City and around the State of Maryland. This policy outlines the commitment of the Board and City Schools to support, in partnership with communities, families and students, the larger Baltimore Community School Strategy.

C. The Board also recognizes that Baltimore City has existing relationships with external partners to provide:

1. Social, mental, physical and/or Out of School Time services to City Schools students;
2. Opportunities for family and community engagement in the school and its programming.

II. Definitions

A. **Action Plan** – A comprehensive strategy created by the Lead Agency (if applicable), Community School Principal, and partner(s) that in conjunction with the School Performance Plan[1], seeks to remove barriers to academic success by holding a core focus on creating a more equitable community through increasing opportunity and access for students, families and communities to the services that help provide basic human needs (shelter, health, food, etc.).

B. **Community member** – Any person who is not responsible for a child in City Schools but whose well-being will improve the general quality of life in a community for all its children.

C. **Community School Coordinator ("CSC")** – An individual employed full-time by the Board or Lead Agency, fully dedicated to facilitate the Community School Strategy in partnership with the Community School Principal and larger school community. **Community School Coordinators** employed by Lead Agencies may be approved, pursuant to the Board's Conducting Research and Surveys, and Data Sharing policy (Policy LCA), as School Officials and as such will receive the required access to data per that policy.

D. **Community School Steering Committee ("CSSC")** – A group assembled to oversee the formal designation process, partnership development, conflict resolution and evaluation of Community Schools.

E. **Lead Agency** – A community-based organization that may be chosen by a Community School Principal, teachers, families and other key stakeholders to co-lead the work of developing and sustaining the Community School Strategy at a City School.

F. **Match commitment** – Funding to supplement the cost of the strategy; collaboratively determined by the school principal and lead agency. In some cases, the match can be offset by the school's community schools/OST partner. The amount of the match can vary by school.

G. **Out of School Time ("OST")** – A program providing before, after-school, weekend and/or summer learning opportunities for youth at a Community School that enhances the core academic program of the Community School and is aligned with classroom learning.

H. **Parents or families** – These terms are used interchangeably and refer to the custodial and non-custodial caregivers of a child in City Schools.

I. **Partner or stakeholder** – An organization or individual providing resources, services, advocacy or programming in support of the Community School Strategy.

J. **Local Management Board ("LMB")** – Co-chair of the Community Schools Steering Committee. Must maintain LMB status which is designated by the Governor of Maryland and Mayor of Baltimore.

III. Policy Standards

A. The Community School strategy focuses on academics, enrichment, health and social supports, youth and community development and family engagement with the goal of student success, strong families and healthy communities. Using schools as hubs, the strategy brings educators, families, and other stakeholders together to offer a range of opportunities, supports, and services to children as well as their families and communities. The Board believes that all children, families and communities connected to City Schools should have access to great schools and strong systems of family and community support that prepare them for success in college, career, and citizenship. The goal of the Community School Strategy is to provide opportunities and eliminate barriers to academic success for families and students in our most distressed communities; thus significantly improving the developmental and educational outcomes of children and youth.

B. Successful Community Schools support school success by:

1. Leveraging additional resources to supplement the school's budget and expand the reach of the Community Schools Coordinator;
2. Creating sustainability and stability through shared leadership and responsibility;
3. Providing resources to support additional staffing required at the school;
4. Offering training and national expertise/resources
5. Building the capacity of families and community members
6. Providing resources for needed staffing
7. Creating partnerships to develop non-academic expertise in areas such as youth development, health/mental health, social work and community development.

C. The Community School Strategy is created through a set of intentional partnerships between a City School, the Lead Agency (if applicable), and other stakeholders that promote student achievement, positive conditions for learning, and the well-being of families and communities so that schools become centers of the community.

D. The Board supports a Community School Strategy continuum that creates school environments that are welcoming and led by an integrated belief system that transmits to students and families pride, opportunity, and high expectations through the collective efforts of youth, parents, businesses, faith communities, and community organizations. Community Schools not only serve the school community, but also have a responsibility to support and

provide access to resources to the broader community in which the school is situated. The health and climate of schools is mutually dependent on the health and climate of the surrounding community and as such, this strategy is both multi-generational as well as focused on the needs, assets and opportunities beyond the school itself.

E. The Community School continuum is:

I. An Engaged School

A school that is a warm and welcoming place and has embraced being a hub of the community; is open to and engages key stakeholders such as students, parents, and community members; develops key partnerships with community organizations to provide services to the school community and works with the community to provide access to the school facilities to enhance community partnerships on behalf of the students and their families.

II. A Partnership School

A school that demonstrates the characteristics of an Engaged School and has a strategic partnership plan that includes expanded learning opportunities for students beyond the school day that enhances the core academic program (eg. OST). The school's partnerships are used as key resources in the success of students and partnership integration is evident in the school day. There are broader opportunities for collaboration between key stakeholders. The Partnership School has a functioning, site-level coordinating entity e.g., School Family Council.

III. A Full Service Community School

A school formally designated by the Community School Steering Committee to be a City Schools Full Service Community School.

Each Full Service Community School:

- i. Demonstrates the characteristics of a Partnership School and has in place a set of strategic partnerships among the school and other community resources that enhance student achievement, positive conditions for learning and the well-being of families and communities;
- ii. Maintains a core focus on children, while recognizing that children grow up in families and that families are integral parts of communities;
- iii. Builds an integrated strategy that enhances academics and student well-being through enrichment, health and social supports, family engagement, youth and community development;
- iv. Is anchored by the work of a full-time site coordinator.
- v. Provides a base for parent and community advocacy on behalf of their children;
- vi. Has evidence of a restorative and positive school climate and safety program;
- vii. Has completed a planning phase including a needs assessment, asset map, staffing and professional development strategy, and evaluation plan and
- viii. Develops an Action Plan created by the Community School Principal, Lead Agency (if applicable), and school stakeholders aligned to the school's goals.

F. A Full Service Community School may, but is not required to, provide services within the school building such as dental clinics, early childhood centers and other student and family services that can serve students and families from the host school as well as neighboring school communities.

IV. Implementation Strategies

A. City Schools will develop and maintain active leadership in the Community School Steering Committee ("CSSC").

B. The CSSC will be co-chaired by the Chief Executive Officer ("CEO") of City Schools or their designee, and the CEO of the designated Local Management Board

1. The CSSC will also include key policy makers, school principals, community stakeholders, youth, funders and advocates with no more than 15 total members. The term of office for these additional members shall be three years and members shall serve no more than two terms.

2. In addition, City Schools' CEO/designee, the CEO may designate additional representatives to the CSSC from other key departments such as Academics, School Support, and Engagement. These additional representatives will be non-voting members.

3. The CSSC will meet quarterly at minimum.

4. Upon creation, the CSSC will establish any necessary self-governance procedures.

C. The CSSC will develop an application process for schools seeking designation as Full Service Community Schools including an application, timeline, and rubric. The CSSC will develop criteria for considering applications for Community Schools and those criteria will reflect research and best practices on the most effective models of Community Schools. Application guidelines will include a template and components of an Action Plan.

D. Each designated Full Service Community School will renew its status every three years through a process established by the CSSC that will consider outcomes in each of the following key areas: **academic performance, climate, community engagement/partnerships, governance and other community and neighborhood level indicators connected to the Community School Strategy and logic model.**

E. Schools currently acting as a Full Service Community School at the time of this policy's adoption will have one full school year after the completion of the CSSC's application process to apply for formal designation by the CSSC.

F. All Full Service Community School designations will be made annually no later than April 1st.

G. The Full Service Community School status will be considered in the hiring of a new Principal at a Full Service Community School. Lead Agencies that are members of the School Family Council will be invited to participate in the principal selection process. In traditional public schools, City Schools will do its best to select principals committed to the school's Community Schools program. Although Charter Schools conduct an alternative to the City Schools' Principal Selection Process, the Board recommends that the Lead Agency (where applicable) be invited to participate in the selection of the principal. .

H. As a co-chair of the CSSC, the CEO/designee will:

1. Support the Community Schools model as a key strategy to improve the well-being of students and create the conditions for successful educational outcomes to City Schools' students;
2. Allow the dedication of designated space in schools for the Community School Coordinator, whenever possible;
3. Make efforts to provide access to systems for the Community School Coordinator (upon designation as an External School Official) to collect, analyze, and respond to data on student and school indicators, such as attendance, achievement, and program participation, in accordance with Board Policy LCA;
4. Make every effort to ensure that match commitments will not change with a leadership transition.

I. As a co-chair of the CSSC, the designated Local Management Board will commit to

broadly supporting (through technical assistance, professional development, fundraising, programming quality oversight, monitoring, evaluation and systems alignment) all Full Service Community Schools.

V. Compliance

A. The Board and City Schools will use community forums, focus groups, surveys, and other methods to involve parents in the periodic review and proposed amendment, as necessary, of this policy.

B. The CSSC must report to the Board by August 1st on an annual basis on factors like the number of community schools, how many were created and ended during the period, and outcomes for schools that had their status considered for renewal at the end of their 3-year term.

VI. Legal and Policy References

A. Policy References

Related Board Policies: FKA, KCA, LCA

B. Administrative Regulation References

ADH-RA, DJA-RA, FKA-RA, IHB, IHB-RA, KCA-RA, LCA-RA

Sponsoring Officer: Chief of Staff

Policy History: New Policy, adopted October 25, 2016

[1] Charter Schools will align the Action Plan to the Mission and Vision of the Charter as well as the school's performance goals.

ADH- Community School Strategy.pdf (219 KB)