



New York City Community Schools Strategic Plan

Mayor Bill de Blasio's strategy to launch and sustain a system of over 100 Community Schools across NYC by 2017.

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Department of Education
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NYC Children's Cabinet

With recognition to the NYC Community Schools Advisory Board

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Executive Summary

A New Educational Philosophy

Mayor Bill de Blasio is committed to shifting New York City's educational landscape in a variety of ways, including the adoption of more holistic approach to student learning. During his first year in office, he implemented policies and programs that recognize and support the social, emotional, physical and academic needs of students. The Mayor has championed a "whole child" approach, pointing to its potential benefits for students in high-need communities who face a myriad of challenges inside and outside of the classroom.

This educational philosophy is reflected in his commitment to establishing 100 Community Schools, which aim to improve student achievement through strong partnerships among principals, parents, teachers, and Community Based Organizations (CBOs). A year into the Mayor's tenure, the de Blasio administration is already on track to surpass his initial goal with 128 Community Schools under development. As a result of this unprecedented commitment, NYC has become a national leader in an educational movement focused on addressing students' diverse needs, empowering parents to be active participants in their child's education, and engaging entire communities around student success.

This Strategic Plan serves as both an update on the work to date and a roadmap for moving forward. The document outlines the Community Schools Initiative within the context of the Mayor's larger agenda for children and families, summarizes the planning and operational work that has occurred over the past year, and outlines the key system-building efforts that will be implemented over the next three years.

Community Schools as Part of the Mayor's Equity Agenda

Mayor de Blasio envisions the expansion of Community Schools as a central strategy for achieving an equitable educational system. The initiative builds off of the Department of Education's (DOE's) Framework for Great Schools and is aligned with the administration's various efforts focused on youth and families, coming on the heels of expanding full-day pre-kindergarten to every four-year-old and offering afterschool programs to every middle schools student. With equity as a key driver, the administration will develop the next generation of Community Schools and establish the systems and structures to ensure they address inequality in sustainable ways. The programs and interventions provided in Community Schools are evidence-based strategies to close the achievement gap by expanding opportunities for young people. They prepare students—and families—to enter school on the right foot. By increasing student time in the classroom, as well as in the local museum, on the playing field, and in the chess club, Community Schools help prepare students to be college and career ready.

Community Schools in Practice

Every Community School is different and reflects the strengths and needs of its students, families, and local community. However, the most successful Community Schools are anchored in a set of common values that serve as a foundation:

- **Strong instruction** designed to provide personalized learning opportunities for students.
- **Robust engagement**, anchored in positive youth development, ensuring that schools are welcoming and empowering to students, families and community members.
- **Continuous improvement** using school and student data to tailor programming and instruction focused on results.

In addition, Community Schools share common features that support student learning:

- School leadership has a clear instructional vision and high expectations for all students.
- Schools implement a collaborative school governance structure that includes a lead CBO partner and members of the School Leadership Team (SLT).
- Expanded learning time includes academic interventions and enrichment activities and is aligned with school day curriculum and expectations.
- Student attendance is supported through drop-out prevention strategies.
- Parents and caregivers are real and active partners in their children's education.
- Positive youth development strategies are infused across academics, programs and services.
- Mental health, medical, and social services are available to students who need them.
- Community members are engaged in activities that help build a stronger school community.
- Family members have access to educational opportunities and programs that strengthen families.

Mayor de Blasio envisions the expansion of Community Schools as a central strategy for achieving an equitable educational system.

Evidence to Support Community Schools

There is a strong and diverse evidence base for the NYC Community School model. A NYC Department of Education (DOE) review of over 20 national studies found that Community Schools have positive impacts on academic achievement, graduation rates, post-secondary outcomes, attendance and attitudes towards school. Additionally, research has shown the following results:

- Community Schools see greater parent involvement and reduced student absenteeism, and consistent school attendance is strongly tied to academic improvement at all grade levels.
- Increasing parent engagement is proven to increase academic outcomes for students.
- Increased instructional time—measured as the time students are engaged in learning—along with tutoring and high expectations, are strong predictors of higher achievement.
- Higher teacher attendance and job satisfaction have been observed in Community Schools.
- Community Schools are an efficient strategy, demonstrating a strong return on public investment.

Core Elements of a NYC Community School

The administration has developed a framework to ensure consistency and quality across Community Schools, while also providing schools with sufficient flexibility to encourage innovation. That framework is based on the following Core Elements:

Core Programs and Services

- Expanded Learning Time
- Early Childhood Education
- Health Services
- Mental Health
- Parent and Family Engagement
- Community Engagement
- Guidance and Social Services
- Adult and Family Services

Core Structures Needed to Provide Services

- Dedicated Community School Director
- Ongoing Needs Assessment
- Defined Community Partnerships
- Intentional Coordination of Services
- Strategic Data Collection & Analysis
- Authentic School-Based Governance

Core Outcomes and Results:

Student-Level Results

- Increased attendance and student engagement
- Greater connectedness to adults and classmates in their schools
- Development of social and emotional skills necessary for success
- Improved academic performance

School-Level Outcomes

- Improved school culture and climate
- Families are more actively engaged in children's education
- More seamless service delivery through increased collaboration between schools and partners

Strategic Growth Plan

In order to meet – and surpass – the Mayor’s original goal of 100 fully developed Community Schools, the administration will execute several strategies for selecting, supporting, and developing Community Schools over the next several years. Those strategies include:

| Strategy | Timeline: Year 1 (2014-2015) Year 2 (2015-2016) Year 3 (2016-2017) | Estimated Number of Schools |
|--|---|-----------------------------|
| Attendance Improvement and Drop-Out Prevention (AIDP) Funding | Funding begins in Year 1; full implementation will happen over the course of Year 1 - Year 3 | 45 |
| Renewal Schools (non-AIDP) | Funding begins at the end of Year 1; full implementation will start at schools in September 2015 | 83 |
| Enhancing Existing Schools | Schools will be able to apply at the end of Year 2; services and supports are expected to start in Year 3 | 40 |
| New School Development Process | Pilot program in Year 1; inclusion of new schools opening in Years 2 and 3 | 16 |
| New Grant Process | Potential to start in Year 3 | TBD |
| TOTAL | | 200+ |

Funding Strategy

The NYC Community Schools Initiative involves a strategic approach to efficiently and effectively organizing public, private, school, and community resources to support student success. The administration is committed to working with all stakeholders to establish a coherent and sustainable funding strategy that provides consistency and clarity for schools and CBO providers. To start this work, the administration is focused on following these initial funding priorities:

- Making efficient use of current and new public resources;
- Establishing the framework for the City’s provision of “foundational funding”;
- Helping schools leverage existing and new resources to expand their programs; and
- Engaging private sector organizations in developing partnerships that support sustainability.

System-Building

Data Framework

The collection, analysis, and sharing of data are central to a well-functioning Community School’s ability to target and coordinate key services and interventions for students. The Community Schools Initiative’s Data Framework will develop systems and tools around four key areas:

- Asset mapping and needs assessment that paint a portrait of the strengths and needs of school populations and neighborhoods;
- Data collection platform that allows all relevant parties to use student and school data to inform decision-making at the school and system-level;
- Data sharing agreements that provide school and non-profit partners with access to key student data; and
- Metrics and evaluations that assess the impact of the Community Schools on student outcomes.

Parent and Community Engagement

Actively engaged parents, caregivers and community members are an essential ingredient in the NYC Community Schools model. The initiative will build the systems and capacity that allow school staff and families to establish collaborative partnerships that support students’ academic success and transform school culture. Participating schools will develop and implement a comprehensive engagement plan around the following goals:

- Establishing a positive school climate that reflects the culture and values of the community;

- Fostering collaborative decision-making that includes participation from principals, parents, teachers, CBOs, school staff, and community leaders around the school vision and plan;
- Employing the “Ladders of Engagement” strategy whereby parents and caregivers access multiple pathways and opportunities to become actively engaged in their child’s education and in the school community;
- Increasing family participation by making the school a hub of family and community activity and building family-school partnerships around student learning; and
- Fully integrate the broader community and culture into the school through activities such as community tours, the Asset Mapping and Needs Assessment process, and service provider fairs to share information on available resources.

Capacity Building

The City will develop a systemic approach to building school and CBO capacity to implement Community Schools with a focus on:

- Creating a shared understanding of the Community Schools strategy among all stakeholders: students, parents, schools staff, community members;
- Developing necessary skills among relevant stakeholders, including planning, goal-setting, problem-solving, data analysis, and shared leadership;
- Developing role-specific knowledge and skills among key players, including District Superintendents, principals, teachers, Community School Directors, other community partners, parents, and students;
- Facilitating continuous improvement and ensuring fidelity to the vision; and
- Creating forums for ongoing learning and joint problem-solving.

The City’s capacity building strategy starts by harnessing the expertise and knowledge of NYC’s experienced Community School partner CBOs and intermediary organizations. The administration will draw on this expertise and channel it into trainings, consultations, study visits, written materials, and school-based coaching.

City Agency Collaboration, Policy Alignment and Governance

To implement the Community Schools Initiative at scale, the administration will employ innovative and silo-breaking ways of thinking, partnering, and executing plans. This strategic plan outlines a major system-building effort that is dependent upon countless partners working with and across various types of resources and infrastructures to ensure a successful launch and implementation. Long-term success will also be dependent on the administration’s ability to establish aligned City policies that support the growth and development of Community Schools. This will be achieved through the following strategies:

- City Hall, through the Deputy Mayor for Strategic Policy Initiatives, will ensure that City resources, partnerships, and policies will be leveraged to support Community Schools.
- The new DOE Office of Community Schools, within the Division of School Support, will ensure that there is a clear alignment across all DOE offices around Community Schools policy and operations.
- The NYC Children’s Cabinet will coordinate the planning, policy alignment, and integration of City agencies services into Community Schools, helping to ensure there is ongoing collaboration, communication, and data-sharing across all 23 Cabinet agencies and Mayoral offices.
- The Community Schools Advisory Board will channel the expertise, energy, and ideas of outside individuals and organizations to help inform Community Schools policy and implementation.

Overview

Community Schools: The Right Approach at the Right Time

The NYC Community Schools Initiative is a central element of Mayor Bill de Blasio's effort to re-imagine the City's school system. Community Schools are neighborhood hubs where students receive high-quality academic instruction, families can access social services, and communities congregate to share resources and address their common challenges. With the Mayor's bold pledge to create more than 100 new fully-developed Community Schools over the next several years, NYC is now at the forefront of a national movement focused on a holistic and comprehensive approach to education in urban centers. This approach prioritizes student wellness, readiness to learn, personalized instruction, community partnerships and family engagement as key strategies to leverage better academic outcomes among high-need students.

NYC's newfound leadership role is fitting given that the Community School model has a rich and successful history in the City. Over the past 20 years, dozens of schools and local community groups have partnered to provide students, families and their neighborhoods with programming focused on boosting student achievement and increasing parent and community investment in schools. Throughout this period, they have experimented with various approaches, adjusting and calibrating them to the specific needs of each school and community, from the South Bronx to Washington Heights to East New York to the North Shore of Staten Island. In the process, these school partnerships have become national models for providing high-poverty school communities with innovative, collaborative and targeted services.

Community Schools offer a coordinated approach to increasing learning opportunities and improving students' academic performance through strong partnerships among principals, parents, teachers and Community Based Organizations (CBOs). Schools enter into a partnership with a CBO to offer a "whole child, whole community" approach, looking holistically at students, families and communities to ascertain their most pressing needs. Community School leaders and their partners recognize that students who are hungry, who can't see the blackboard due to poor vision, who are missing school regularly due to health or housing challenges, or who are stressed because of difficult family situations, will face critical challenges in the classroom. They recognize that there are certain things a school can and should do to help: provide an extra meal, connect mom or dad to job training, or enroll a student in an afterschool program. In most cases, the lead CBO partner provides some services and also plays a key coordinating role, pulling in other organizations as needed.

What Does a Community School Look Like in Practice?

Every Community School is different and reflects the strengths and needs of its students, families and local community. However, the best and most successful Community Schools are anchored in a set of common values that serve as a foundation:

- **Strong instruction** designed to provide personalized learning opportunities for students.
- **Robust engagement**, anchored in positive youth development, ensuring that schools are welcoming and empowering to students, families and community members.
- **Continuous improvement** using school and student data to tailor programming and instruction focused on results.

In addition, Community Schools share common features that support student learning:

- School leadership has a clear instructional vision and high expectations for all students.
- Schools implement a collaborative school governance structure that elicits active family and community participation, and includes the School Leadership Team (SLT) and lead CBO partner.
- Expanded learning that includes academic interventions and enrichment activities aligned with school day curriculum and expectations.
- Student attendance is supported through drop-out prevention strategies.
- Parents are real and active partners in their children's education.
- Positive youth development strategies are infused across academics, programs and services.
- Mental health, medical, and social services are available to all students who need them.
- Community members are engaged in activities that help build a stronger school community.
- Parents and caregivers have access to educational opportunities and other resources that strengthen families.

The CBO partner organizations are as diverse and varied as the schools they support. Given the Community Schools' diverse demographics and unique family and student experiences, the City sought out CBO partners that have the capacity to work with and support a variety of specialized populations. These populations include,

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but are not limited to, students and families in the shelter, child welfare, and criminal justice systems. Once they partner with the school, each provider organization is expected to assess their student populations and develop strategies for supporting students with unique needs such as English Language Learners, students with disabilities, and students who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning.

Seeding School Culture Change in all Schools

The concept of Community Schools is both intuitive and transformative.

On the one hand, the idea of schools helping to create conditions to foster student learning and providing them with the supports and services they need to succeed in the classroom seems natural. Intuitively, everyone understands that teachers and school leaders need help assisting students who can't see the blackboard, are unable to focus due to hunger, or present behavioral problems or attendance issues as a result of family struggles. Connecting schools to quality service providers and other resources in their communities can help to address these challenges. All types of schools, from traditional district schools to charter schools to transfer schools - at all grade levels - can benefit from increased partnerships, targeted services, and stronger community investment. By empowering families and engaging whole communities in the education of their young people, the Community Schools Initiative establishes a broader sense of responsibility for children and their outcomes.

On the other hand, to undertake that effort – and to do it well and at scale - we are asking entire school communities—educators, administrators, students, and parents—to operate in new ways, organizationally, financially, and culturally. For many schools, this will require a transformational change in mind-set, which is precisely the goal. The Community Schools strategy is intended to change the student experience and strengthen community connections to schools, both of which will require a significant shift in school culture.

For example, enlisting partner organizations to work with a school increases student access to important services, but it also increases the level of coordination and communication needed at all levels. For every new funding stream secured, there are often new reporting and accounting requirements. Similarly, creating robust parent engagement will involve the principal, the teachers, and the parents. As such, all parties will start by re-thinking their roles and interactions with each other.

The end goal is to change how the City collectively thinks about the role of schools, particularly in high-need neighborhoods. Our public schools can and should serve as hubs of education, community building, and service delivery in local communities. These Community Schools will become innovation labs, where all parties – parents, principals, teachers, students, and CBOs - will be encouraged to experiment and where the broader community will be encouraged to support and invest in them.

Outlining a Strategy for Success and Sustainability

Mayor de Blasio has committed to establishing over 100 comprehensive Community Schools during his first term. He is also committed to ensuring they are sustainable well beyond his tenure in office. What does sustainability mean for Community Schools?

- Successful and sustainable Community Schools are integrated into the fabric of the City's educational system.
- Their core funding is dedicated, while programmatic funding is as diversified as possible. They are not dependent on a single short-term funding stream.
- They are an integral aspect of City neighborhoods.
- They are supported by government systems and non-profit infrastructure.
- They are championed by parents and principals.
- They are a touchstone for each community and a model for the nation.

This sustainability is established through a variety of strategies: funding structures, system building, and policy changes. It is also achieved through culture shifts in individual schools and across the NYC educational system.

The remainder of this document outlines the City's strategy for establishing over 100 Community Schools, as well as how the administration will build their core elements across the system and create a sustainable support system.

In addition to outlining the strategy for selecting and supporting the schools, it is equally important to develop a strategy to sustain them over time. That sustainability strategy includes funding models, data collection and shared-outcomes, evaluation, and citywide policy alignment.¹

¹ This report was informed by the following documents:

- a. *Community Schools & Mayor de Blasio: Preparing the Next Generation for College and Careers*. (2014) Coalition for Educational Justice. <http://www.nyccej.org/1292/community-schools-mayor-deblasio>
- b. *Building Community Schools: A Guide for Action*. (2011) National Center for Community Schools. The Children's Aid Society. https://www.metlife.com/assets/cao/foundation/NCCS_BuildingCommunitySchools.pdf
- c. Belay, K., Mader, N., Miller, L. (2014) *Scaling the Community School Strategy in New York City: A System Building Guide*. (2014) Center for New York City Affairs & Children's Aid Society. http://static1.squarespace.com/static/53ee4f0be4b015b9c3690d84/t/5480bf6ce4b0c27762ea40c2/1417723756238/CommunitySchools_NYCFINAL.pdf
- d. *Community Schools Results*. (2013) Institute for Educational Leadership, Coalition for Community Schools. http://www.communityschools.org/assets/1/AssetManager/Community_School_Results_2013.pdf

Evidence to Support Community Schools

The Case for Community Schools

Mayor de Blasio's commitment to expanding the Community Schools model comes at a time when the City is broadly rethinking how, when, and where government services are provided to young people and their families. Across various initiatives, City Hall and government agencies are using research to inform policy, program development, and implementation. The Pre-Kindergarten for All initiative stemmed from early childhood development research around language acquisition and kindergarten readiness. The expansion of afterschool programming through School's Out NYC (SONYC) was grounded in research demonstrating the benefits of providing middle school students with opportunities to explore their interests and establish a sense of self. The DOE's Capacity Building Framework is structured around the latest research identifying the transformative elements that drive school improvement and prepare students to compete and engage as citizens in the 21st century.²

In the same vein, the Community Schools Initiative is based on demonstrated evidence of the strategy's success in lifting up students and communities. Mayor de Blasio and the DOE have invested in the Community Schools strategy because it is effective, efficient, and promotes equity in schools and communities.

Effectiveness

When implemented in a coordinated manner, Community Schools can have positive results for schools, families and communities. For example:

- Early childhood programs ensure that the youngest students are ready to learn when they enter kindergarten. They also provide working parents with safe, high-quality program options.
- Expanded learning programs increase learning time and provide opportunities for youth development at all stages of growth. They also give students the chance to engage with the broader community via mentoring programs or community service learning projects.
- School-based health clinics allow students to receive medical treatment in school and return to their classrooms ready to learn. They also allow parents to stay at work and avoid taking time off.
- Mental health counselors address students' mental health problems, including behaviors caused by stress or trauma. They also provide classroom teachers with another partner to support high-need students and allow the educators to keep their focus on academic instruction.
- Drop-out prevention strategies such as mentoring and tutoring keep students engaged in school and on-track for graduation. They also establish important relationships between students and trusted adults.
- Adult education programs provide parents and caretakers with the skills to secure better employment. They also help parents demonstrate the importance of education at all ages.
- Parent engagement programs bring families into schools, providing them with a sense of community and an opportunity to establish relationships with their students' teachers. They also prompt a valuable dialogue among families about their student's academic goals and progress.

These strategies are intuitive, but they are also research-based. Both nationally and in NYC, Community Schools have seen higher parent involvement and lower rates of student absenteeism. Regular school attendance is strongly tied to academic improvement at all grade levels.³ Research has demonstrated that instructional time—measured as the time students are engaged in learning—along with tutoring and high expectations, are strong predictors of higher achievement.⁴

Broadly speaking, increasing parent engagement is proven to increase academic outcomes for students.⁵ Studies have also shown higher teacher attendance and job satisfaction in Community Schools.⁶ Finally, a recent NYC DOE review of over 20 national studies found that Community Schools had positive impacts on academic achievement, graduation rates, post-secondary outcomes, attendance, and attitudes towards school.⁷

2 <http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/schools/framework/default.htm>

3 Balfanz, R. & Byrnes, V. The Importance of Being in School: A Report on Absenteeism in the Nation's Public Schools. (2012). Retrieved October 1, 2014, from <http://new.every1graduates.org/>

4 Dobbie, W. and Fryer, R. Jr, "Getting Beneath the Veil of Effective Schools: Evidence from New York City," NBER Working Paper, No. 17632, (December 2011). <http://www.nber.org/papers/w17632.pdf>

5 Hoover-Dempsey, K., Walker, J., Sandler, H., Whetsel, H., & Green, C., Wilkins, A. & Closson, K. (2005). Why Do Parents Become Involved? *The Elementary School Journal*, 106(2), 105-130. http://www.communityschools.org/assets/1/AssetManager/Evaluation_of_Community_Schools_joy_dryfoos.pdf

6 Dryfoos, J. G. Evaluation of Community Schools: findings to date. (2000). Retrieved October 1, 2014, from http://www.communityschools.org/assets/1/AssetManager/Evaluation_of_Community_Schools_joy_dryfoos.pdf

7 The list of studies can be found in the Appendix of this document on page 39.

Mayor de Blasio and the DOE have invested in the Community Schools strategy because it is effective, efficient, and promotes equity in schools and communities.

Efficiency

Research shows that Community Schools are not only an *effective* approach to education, they are an *efficient* approach as well. The Children’s Aid Society and The Finance Project collaborated on a Social Return on Investment (SROI) study that demonstrated a \$1 investment in a Community School in NYC can deliver between \$10.30 and \$14.80 in return on investment.⁸ This is largely due to the model’s ability to build capacity among schools and their community partnerships to leverage additional public and private dollars.

Well-trained and experienced Community School Directors effectively secure and integrate additional human and financial resources into the school to help address student needs, whether these relate to health, hunger, or even homelessness. They partner with principals to identify priority areas, and then efficiently and creatively blend funding streams to support the most impactful services. This strategic division of labor between the two leaders allows the principal to focus on instruction and supporting teachers in the classroom.

Equity

The Community Schools approach is rooted in increasing equity across our schools. Removing barriers to education and creating more learning opportunities for disadvantaged youth is at the heart of addressing inequality in the school system and in the City more broadly. Research shows that low-income youth are more likely to enter Kindergarten less prepared than their classmates.⁹ By the time they reach middle school, these students have spent 6,000 fewer hours learning than their middle-class peers.¹⁰

The programs and interventions provided in Community Schools are evidence-based strategies to close these gaps and equalize opportunity for young people. They prepare students - and families - to enter school on the right foot. They increase student time in the classroom, as well as in the local museum, on the playing field, and in the chess club, helping to prepare students to be college and career ready.

8 Measuring Social Return on Investment for Community Schools. (2013) The Children’s Aid Society & The Finance Project. Retrieved October 1, 2014 from http://www.childrensaidsociety.org/files/GUIDE_final_0.pdf

9 Karoly, L., Kilburn, M., Cannon, J. (2005) *Early Childhood Interventions: Proven Results, Future Promises*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation. http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2005/RAND_MG341.pdf

10 The 6,000 Hour Learning Gap. (2013). ExpandED Schools by TASC. Retrieved October 1, 2014, from http://www.expandedschools.org/sites/default/files/tasc_6000-hours-infographic.pdf

Defining a New York City Community School

The NYC Approach

The Community Schools that are established across the City will be as diverse and varied as the communities they serve. An elementary school in Far Rockaway may have a strong focus on early childhood and family engagement, while a middle school in East Harlem might choose to invest in mentoring and summer programs. A high school in Staten Island may identify adolescent health and drop-out prevention as top priorities, while a charter high school in the West Village might partner with City agencies to support its population of teens who are homeless or in foster care.

The development of each Community School will be unique and will occur over a continuum, as schools identify and prioritize their needs and secure programs and services over time. Across all schools, there will be a certain set of services and programs that will be standard, while others will be driven by the strengths, needs, and choices of students, families, and the broader school community. To do so, each school-CBO partnership will need to:

- Identify and develop responses to the strengths and needs of their students and community;
- Access various financial, community, and City government resources; and
- Develop a sustainable strategy to access and pay for needed programs and services.

The City – from City Hall to the DOE and other government agencies – will support schools and CBOs in these on-going efforts to leverage both resources and local expertise.

In addition, the de Blasio administration will provide a clear set of Core Elements for what defines a NYC Community School in terms of program and services, structures, and outcomes and results. These elements were informed by national research, as well as local input from NYC principals, CBO providers, community partners and members of the NYC Community Schools Advisory Board. They aim to balance the need for consistency and accountability across Community Schools with each school's needs for innovation, customization, and creativity.

All of these Core Elements are expected to be implemented within the context of the common values that underpin all Community Schools: strong instruction, robust engagement, and continuous improvement.

Core Programs and Services

- **Expanded Learning Time:** Students' academic success and youth development are central to the mission of Community Schools. As such, additional learning time—through extending the traditional school day or offering afterschool and/or summer enrichment programs—is core to the NYC Community Schools model.
- **Early Childhood Education:** Community Schools at the elementary level will provide universal pre-K-Kindergarten programming wherever possible. If there are space constraints, schools will establish partnerships with local Early Education Centers, which would focus on easing the student transition between organizations.
- **Health Services:** Health services will vary from school to school depending on the needs of the students and the partnerships established by the school. They may include physical health, dental, and vision. Some services may be located on-site, while others are provided through referral partnerships established by the schools.
- **Mental Health:** Of equal importance to physical health is mental health, which will be prioritized and supported by NYC Community Schools. Clinical services, as well as more preventive services, should be provided on-site whenever possible in order to ensure student and family participation, where appropriate.
- **Parent and Family Engagement:** Successful parent engagement should ensure that parents are enlisted as partners in their child's education and in developing and implementing the Community School vision. They should be recognized as valued members of the school community.
- **Community Engagement:** Engagement should extend beyond families and include the broader community – local businesses, senior groups, and neighboring schools – to build relationships and expand support and resources for the school. The intent is to transform the school building into a natural hub of local activity, vitality, culture, support, and education for the broader community.

An elementary school in Far Rockaway may have a strong focus on early childhood and family engagement, while a middle school in East Harlem might choose to invest in mentoring and summer programs.

- **Guidance and Social Services:** School and CBO staff will collaborate on key efforts such as attendance improvement, school transition planning, and college preparation. Guidance and social services should be fully engaged in promoting a positive school culture and addressing instances of bullying and harassment.
- **Adult and Family Services:** Housing assistance, immigration services, legal assistance, job training, and adult educational programs are examples of adult services Community Schools will provide based on local needs. Family services may include supports for young people with special challenges, whether related to health, foster care, homelessness, or some other high barrier to learning and wellness.

Core Structures Needed To Provide Services

- **Dedicated Community School Director:** The school has at least one dedicated staff role focused on assessing school and student need, securing resources, and coordinating services across students, families and the school community. The Director is typically employed by the lead CBO partner and serves as key partner to the principal and other senior leaders at the school.
- **Ongoing Needs Assessment:** The school (and CBO partner) conducts an annual needs assessment of all enrolled students to determine their academic, health, social, and emotional needs. Every three years, the school also conducts a community-level needs assessment, which should engage all relevant local stakeholders.
- **Defined Community Partnerships:** A fully-developed Community School not only has established partnerships, but those partnerships are formalized in Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) and linkage agreements. Schools and partners also have regular dialogues about their mutual goals with students. The lead CBO partner and Community School Director should manage these efforts.
- **Intentional Coordination of Services:** A successful Community School has a clearly defined strategy for properly identifying the needs of their students and school community, and a plan for securing the resources and services to meet those identified needs. Specifically, that means connecting individual students to tailored resources based on their needs. It also means sharing relevant data on student needs with partner organizations in order to improve service delivery.
- **Strategic Data Collection & Analysis:** Data will inform program decisions and clearly aligned outcomes should flow directly from the school's needs. School and student goals, and the school's progress towards achieving those goals, should be regularly shared among all school partners through data inquiry and collaborative data review. (Goal Setting → Needs Assessment Data → Decisions on Services Offered → Outcomes Data → Evaluation → Course Corrections).
- **Authentic School-Based Governance:** This governance may take the form of an existing School Leadership Team or a new body, as determined by the school. Regardless of the structure, site-based planning should be driven by collaboration between the principal, Community School Director, school staff, parents and CBO leadership.

Core Outcomes and Results

In order to track progress and demonstrate success, it is imperative that all Community Schools, as varied as they will be, share a common set of outcomes and results. In order to establish a clear framework for measuring progress towards those results, the DOE, City Hall and the Community Schools Advisory Board have initiated a process to develop both a logic model and a set of corresponding indicators for the Community Schools Initiative.

This process, which will occur over the next year, recognizes that a number factors influence and mobilize the resources and assets of a school and community to improve educational, health, social, and related results. Moreover, the effort will account for the fact that Community Schools are focused on influencing a variety of related objectives: supporting student achievement, creating more opportunities for children and ensuring that schools are safe, healthy and supporting places to nurture learning and engagement.

As such, the framework will include student-level as well as school-level results. Together, the school-CBO partnerships will align their contributions and efforts and will hold themselves and each other accountable for progress toward:

Student-Level Results:

- Increased attendance and student engagement
- Greater connectedness to adults and classmates in their schools
- Development of social and emotional skills necessary for success
- Improved academic performance

School-Level Outcomes:

- Improved school culture and climate
- Families are more actively engaged in children's education
- More seamless service delivery through increased collaboration between schools and partners

In addition to these results and outcomes, there are also process and capacity building indicators, such as hiring a Community Schools Director and establishing school-based governance, that will be developed to measure a school's progress toward fidelity to the Community Schools framework.

Strategic Growth Plan

Expanding the Community School Footprint

The de Blasio administration has developed a comprehensive approach to establishing over 100 fully-developed Community Schools over the course of the next three years. This strategy builds on best practices in NYC and other cities. It reflects the diverse nature of the schools that will be involved in the initiative and maximizes the potential of various funding streams. It is important to highlight a few key points:

- **Planning Time:** In reviewing “lessons learned” from developing Community Schools in NYC and other U.S. cities, it is clear that there is a need for extensive planning at both the system and school level. Schools do not transform into fully-developed Community Schools with one grant award, nor do they do it over the course of one school year. There is a continuum of development and a great deal of school-wide analysis, planning, and implementation that needs to occur at the school level.
- **Varying School Needs and Assets:** The NYC Community Schools Initiative will involve a variety of schools, ranging from traditional district schools to charter schools to transfer high schools. Some of these schools will be in “stand-alone” buildings, while others will be on shared campuses, which also present unique challenges and opportunities. Moreover, schools will be entering the process at different stages of development and growth, all with different academic, programmatic, and structural needs and assets.
- **Funding Landscape:** Finally, each of the schools across this spectrum has access to a diverse set of city, state, and federal funding streams, as well as private funding. As is often the case, different schools will be eligible for different funding sources as part of this initiative. While this patchwork of funding presents some challenges, it also presents opportunities to empower schools and their partner organizations to secure specific funding that meets their individual needs. (This will be explained in the **Funding Strategy** section.)

Given these factors, the de Blasio administration is developing several unique processes for selecting, supporting, and developing Community Schools over the course of the next three years. The City’s strategy to establish over 100 fully developed Community Schools will encompass new and existing schools, cover all grade levels from pre-K - 12, and will target high-need communities that have a demonstrated need for these school models.¹¹

1. Launch Community Schools with Attendance Improvement and Drop-Out Prevention (AIDP) Grant

In June of 2014, Mayor Bill de Blasio announced that the NYC Community Schools Initiative would launch with a \$52 million grant to support the development of 45 Community Schools. This four-year grant leverages the Attendance Improvement and Drop-out Prevention (AIDP) funding provided by the New York State Department of Education. The NYC DOE is managing the grant in partnership with the United Way of New York City (United Way) and The Children’s Aid Society’s National Center for Community Schools, organizations which were selected to help lead this effort through a competitive bid process.

This \$52 million in funding is allowing 45 schools to partner with a dedicated CBO provider to render direct services. Partner CBOs receive on average \$300,000 in AIDP funds per year over the course of the four years. Specifically, the grant is focused on improving attendance rates, preventing drop-outs, and serving students and families with high needs. Services may include counseling, mentoring, health, academic tutoring, and arts and sports education. The DOE has contracted with United Way to support CBOs to deliver these services. The National Center for Community Schools will provide technical assistance and professional development for CBOs and school staff.

As part of their strategy to become fully developed Community Schools, the selected schools and their CBO partners are expected to implement:

- Tiered interventions that impact large numbers of students and families;
- Aligned program supports and services that promote student proficiency in Common Core standards;
- Processes for on-going review of student data; and

¹¹ A Community School designation (via AIDP or the Renewal Schools process) does not necessarily require additional space in a school building. Co-located Community Schools with existing space-sharing plans will need to work with the DOE Office of Space Planning if they anticipate requesting additional space for programming. The DOE is in the process of developing a footprint that reflects CBO office space, private space for social workers, and school-based health clinic services where applicable and feasible.

The City’s strategy to establish over 100 fully developed Community Schools will encompass new and existing schools, cover all grade levels from pre-K - 12, and will target high-need communities that have a demonstrated need for these school models.

- Established performance improvement metrics and processes.

Some of the expected outcomes include:

- Increased sense of school connectedness among students;
- Improved student attendance and increased credit attainment; and
- Reduction in chronic absenteeism.

Schools were eligible for this award based on *higher than average rates of chronic absenteeism and lower than average rates of attendance*, as compared to other schools with the same grade configuration. Based on the criteria, approximately 700 district and charter schools across all grade configurations were eligible to apply. Of those 700, approximately 400 schools applied for the initiative and 45 were selected to partner with approved CBO providers.¹² The number of schools that applied is a strong indication of the high level of interest and excitement among principals and school leaders looking to embrace a Community Schools model.¹³

2. Integrate the Community Schools Model into all Renewal Schools

In October of 2014, Mayor de Blasio announced that the Community Schools model would be central to the City’s ambitious effort to support 94 Renewal Schools which have struggled with academic performance for several years. Chancellor Carmen Fariña, the DOE and City Hall researched and developed the plan to intervene in schools with academic challenges. As part of that research process, the administration determined that these schools stood to benefit greatly from the supports provided by the Community School model.

The DOE named Renewal Schools based on the following criteria:

- Schools identified as Priority or Focus schools by the State Department of Education
- Demonstrated low academic achievement for each of the three prior years (2012-2014):
 - *Elementary and middle schools in the bottom 25% in Math and ELA scores*
 - *High schools in the bottom 25% in four-year graduation rate*
- Scored “Proficient” or below on their most recent quality review

Four additional schools were designated as Renewal Schools at the Chancellor’s discretion.

The DOE will work intensively with each of these school communities over the next three years, setting clear goals and holding each school community accountable for rapid improvement. The school and CBO will work together to provide deepened support for families and community partners, and offer tailored supports, including mental health services and expanded learning programs. Schools will select their lead partner through a City procurement process organized by the DOE, in partnership with the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) and the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH). There are 11 AIDP schools that were also identified as Renewal Schools.

In addition to the Community School supports, the Renewal Schools will benefit from additional interventions focused on improving classroom instruction and boosting academic achievement. These efforts will include:

- Creating extended learning time by adding an extra instructional hour to the school day;
- Supplying resources and supports to ensure effective school leadership and rigorous instruction and collaboration by teachers;

¹² The DOE administered a comprehensive written application process to ensure that winning schools understood the Community Schools model and the school community was committed to embarking on this effort. Final school selection was based on the following criteria :

- Understanding the needs of the entire school population; current school policies, programs, and culture that address absenteeism; and a demonstrated commitment to a community school strategy;
- Demonstrated plan for communicating with and including School Leadership Team members, parents, and staff in the development and ongoing work of the community school;
- Demonstrated ability to create internal structures that will ensure the long-term sustainability of the community school strategy in the school; and
- Proven commitment to sharing experiences that will create a Community School with the purpose of improving attendance, and/or bolstering school climate and culture with other educators, parents, business leaders, cultural institutions, and policy makers.

¹³ For more information on the Renewal Schools, refer to: <http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/schools/RenewalSchool>

- Performing school needs assessments across all six elements of the DOE’s Framework for Great Schools¹⁴ (Rigorous Instruction, Collaborative Teachers, Supportive Environment, Effective School Leadership, Strong Family-Community Ties, and Trust) to identify key areas for additional resources; and
- Bringing increased oversight and accountability, including strict goals and clear consequences for schools that do not meet those accountability measures.

3. Enhance Existing Community School Models

A core component of the NYC Community Schools Initiative will be to establish a high degree of alignment, equity, and collaboration between Community Schools, regardless of which funding streams they are receiving. As discussed in the **Overview** section, there are dozens of NYC schools that already identify as Community Schools and operate according to a variety of models. Their exact support structures, student services and community partnerships vary widely, and they are supported by funds independently secured by the school and/or their CBO partner organization. Some of these schools have also recently been designated AIDP and/or Renewal Schools.

In addition to embodying different Community School models, these schools are also at different junctures along a Community Schools development continuum. Some of them were original pioneers of this work since the 1990s, while others have only recently entered into the first year of a process to become a community school based on support from a specific grant. Many of the “newer” Community Schools have received planning grants from the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) and/or New York State Education Department (SED). Some of the schools have dedicated flexible dollars in their schools’ budgets to support core programming. They have also collaborated with their CBO partner to pull in various city, state, and federal contracts, and secured private funding and in-kind donations.

This group of schools that currently identify as “Community Schools” - but are not receiving additional AIDP or Renewal School funds - will have the opportunity to be included in the citywide initiative. In fact, they are central to the City’s overall strategy. This cadre of schools presents an invaluable resource given their 20 years of best practices.

At the same time, many of these schools would not be considered fully developed Community Schools and may not currently fulfill all of the Core Elements. Other schools may be facing sustainability challenges or are struggling with aligning their Community School model with changes in the educational landscape (Common Core, campus co-locations, etc.).

To address these challenges, and to ensure alignment and parity among all Community Schools, the City will work with and assist all eligible schools over the next three years to become fully developed Community Schools. For example, if an existing Community School does not currently have afterschool programming, the City will work with the school to identify the most appropriate and timely grant opportunity. If a school doesn’t have a dedicated Community Schools Director, that school’s leadership will receive guidance to determine a sustainable funding strategy to support this core element.

This process will be developed over the course of the next two years, with input from principals, CBO providers, and the Community Schools Advisory Board, which includes the UFT and Council of School Supervisors & Administrators (CSA). Below is a high-level outline of the proposed approach:

- Schools (principals with support from SLTs) will apply to participate in this effort. In doing so, they will commit to fulfilling the NYC Community Schools Core Elements.
- By opting into this process, schools would first under-go a “development review” and needs assessment aligned with the Community Schools Core Elements. The outcome of this process will determine the exact support, services, and opportunities the school would receive going forward.

¹⁴ The DOE administered a comprehensive written application process to ensure that winning schools understood the Community Schools model and the school community was committed to embarking on this effort. Final school selection was based on the following criteria :

- Understanding the needs of the entire school population; current school policies, programs, and culture that address absenteeism; and a demonstrated commitment to a community school strategy;
- Demonstrated plan for communicating with and including School Leadership Team members, parents, and staff in the development and on-going work of the community school;
- Demonstrated ability to create internal structures that will ensure the long-term sustainability of the community school strategy in the school; and
- Proven commitment to sharing experiences that will create a Community School with the purpose of improving attendance, and/or bolstering school climate and culture with other educators, parents, business leaders, cultural institutions, and policy makers.

- c. Selected schools will have access to new funding, potentially including City funding from the DOE and/or other City agencies, including mini-grants which would be dedicated to very specific assistance.
- d. Schools will have access to a menu of capacity building resources, as they may need to expand the services/programs they provide and re-organize as a Community School. This capacity building will be similar to what is provided to AIDP and Renewal Schools, possibly including, but not limited to:

Capacity Building

- Training and support for school and CBO staff
- Focus areas may include: Community Schools Director training, needs assessment, data dashboard development, and program development and alignment

Resource Development

- Guidance on how to invest school-based discretionary funding (Title I, School Improvement Grants) to support a Community Schools strategy
- Priority for grants based on high-need criteria

Partnership Development

- CBO partnerships
- Mental health providers
- Business and philanthropic partnerships

Data Collection and Analysis

- Priority for pilot programs on accessing data across programs
- Data dashboard development

4. Establish Brand New Schools In The Community School Model

As mentioned in the **Overview** of this report, one of the goals of the NYC Community Schools Initiative is to integrate the principles of the Community Schools model across the City’s system of schools. One of the ways the City will do this is to work with the DOE’s Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships (OSDCP) to ensure that new district schools are planned with the goal of becoming fully-developed Community Schools. Additionally, OSDCP will seek to engage with interested Charter schools around this effort.

For the 2015-2016 school year, OSDCP will open 9 brand new district schools across elementary and middle school levels. Planning is already underway to ensure that a number of these new schools reflect the Community School model where appropriate.

To support and inform that effort, the DOE Office of Community Schools and the Mayor’s Office are partnering with OSDCP for the 2014-2015 school year to pilot this work with four new schools, including two campuses. Each school – as well as the campus - is working to establish a range of services and programs they provide to students and families by initiating collaborations with CBOs, institutions, and other local resources. They will also receive guidance around establishing a number of the systems and processes aligned with the Core Elements of Community Schools. These include: developing collaborative governing structures, implementing community mapping and needs assessment processes, and enhancing the collection and use of data to monitor and assess student and family assets, needs and progress. For the most part, these strategies will be developed at little or no cost and the lessons learned will inform similar strategies across new schools opening over the next several years.

In addition, two of the schools that opened in 2014, as well the schools that will open in 2015, are located in newly constructed buildings. This provides the administration with an opportunity to explore how the use and organization of space, specifically in new facilities, can further enhance and support community partnerships. The School Construction Authority (SCA) is already studying ways that future school designs can reflect the principles of Community Schools. These possibilities include establishing dedicated CBO office space, expanding parent rooms, and providing more flexibility around medical suite exam space and private counseling rooms. The SCA is also considering how all of these spaces can be best “clustered” to provide for ease of usage and collaboration.

5. Consider Future Grant Opportunities

Finally, while the City will have surpassed its initial commitment of 100 fully developed Community Schools, City Hall and the DOE will continue to assess the feasibility of using new or repurposed dollars to fund core services at additional schools in future years.

The implementation of the AIDP and Renewal Schools processes, as well as the development of the support systems for existing schools, will allow the City to determine what system and schools needs remain. Additionally, both of those processes will generate key information and guide future work. In particular, there will be more available information on gaps in services and schools that should be integrated into the initiative.

Finally, the City will have conducted a full accounting of available funding streams and be in a better position to determine how to invest limited dollars more efficiently. This will be addressed further in the **Funding Strategy** section.

Across all of these strategies, the City will establish systematic structures to support all Community Schools regardless of their development status or funding stream. For example, the new DOE Office of Community Schools will assist schools in conducting thorough needs assessments and develop multi-year plans. DYCD will make schools aware of available resources such as summer youth employment opportunities. ACS will provide connections to its Community Partnership Program to all approved Community Schools.

Strategic Growth - Summary and Timetable

| Strategy | Timeline: Year 1 (2014-2015) Year 2 (2015-2016) Year 3 (2016-2017) | Estimated Number of Schools |
|--|---|-----------------------------|
| Attendance Improvement and Drop-Out Prevention (AIDP) Funding | Funding begins in Year 1; full implementation will happen over the course of Year 1 - Year 3 | 45 |
| Renewal Schools (non-AIDP) | Funding begins at the end of Year 1; full implementation will start at schools in September 2015 | 83 |
| Enhancing Existing Schools | Schools will be able to apply at the end of Year 2; services and supports are expected to start in Year 3 | 40 |
| New School Development Process | Pilot program in Year 1; inclusion of new schools opening in Years 2 and 3 | 16 |
| New Grant Process | Potential to start in Year 3 | TBD |
| TOTAL | | 200+ |

Additionally, the City will employ a clustering strategy across all categories of Community Schools, an approach which has the potential to create educational, operational, and financial efficiencies. Experience shows that Community Schools that collaborate create tangible benefits for students, staff and community members. With the support of superintendents and coordination from newly created Field Support Centers, these clusters of Community Schools will be empowered to share resources and services. For example, schools can share access to health clinics, create professional communities of practice among staff including teachers and Community School Directors, and build social capital across their school communities.

As the initiative progresses, the administration will constantly evaluate progress, establish best practices, and make necessary course corrections, both at the school and system-level.

Funding Strategy

A Funding Approach to Support Community Schools

At its core, the Community Schools Initiative is a strategic approach to efficiently organize public, private, school, and community resources to support student success. Given the variety of services and programs operating at Community Schools, there is no single programmatic funding stream similar to initiatives like UPK or SONYC afterschool. Across the country, Community School models are often funded through a variety of local, state, and federal funding streams.¹⁵ One recent report by The New School and the Children’s Aid Society identified over 60 different city, state, and federal funding streams available to support NYC Community Schools.¹⁶

This braiding of funding at both the system and school level achieves two key objectives: it leverages available resources from various funding pools and it supports the implementation of a customized set of programs to meet the unique needs of each school community. On the downside, the volume of funding streams, along with their individual application processes and reporting requirements, can become overwhelming for both schools and their CBO partners.

As part of the expansion of Community Schools in NYC, the administration is committed to working with all stakeholders—schools, City agencies, federal and state partners, provider organizations, and private funders—to establish a coherent and sustainable funding strategy that provides consistency and clarity for schools and CBO providers. All of this will require on-going financial analysis, citywide coordination, and school-level communication. To start this work, the administration is focused on these initial funding priorities:

- Making efficient use of current and new public resources;
- Establishing the framework for the City’s provision of “foundational funding”;
- Helping schools leverage existing and new resources to expand their programs; and
- Engaging private sector organizations in developing partnerships that support sustainability.

Making Efficient Use of Public Resources

The Community Schools Initiative presents an ideal opportunity for the City to analyze how it can invest public resources in a more coordinated and efficient manner to produce a greater impact in schools and their surrounding communities. That approach starts by assessing how the City currently allocates public funds for education, as well as a broad array of social services, followed by the identification of opportunities to repurpose funding in support of Community Schools.

The City implemented this strategy in a highly impactful way when the DOE repurposed AIDP funding to launch the first 45 Community Schools. For years, AIDP funds had been used to support focused interventions on small groups of students with low attendance, producing varying degrees of success. While counseling and mentoring had significant effects on individual student performance, there were limits to the positive impact on the entire school community. City officials recognized that reducing school-wide chronic absenteeism could be supported to a greater degree through the transformative “whole school change” approach embodied in the Community Schools model. This decision led to the release of a solicitation outlining the new approach, a process through which the United Way of NYC was selected to partner with the City on implementing the new funding strategy.

The City will also draw from a variety of existing funding streams to support the Renewal Schools becoming Community Schools. For the current fiscal year, these include federal School Improvement Grants (SIG) and School Innovation Funds (SIF), as well as Title I Priority and Focus School set-aside allocations and School Success Grant (SSG) funds.

Going forward, the City will continue to consider what additional federal, state, and local funding might be available and/or repurposed to support Community Schools. Additionally, the administration will consider how existing City programs and services can be leveraged, including Pre-Kindergarten, COMPASS (Comprehensive After School System of New York City), and the Beacon school-based community centers, all of which have existing infrastructure and share key program elements with Community Schools.

As part of the expansion of Community Schools in NYC, the administration is committed to working with all stakeholders to establish a coherent and sustainable funding strategy that provides consistency and clarity for schools and CBO providers.

15 Blank, M, Jacobson, R, Melaville, A, and Pearson, S. (2010). Financing Community Schools: Leveraging Resources To Support Student Success. Washington, DC: Coalition for Community Schools, Institute for Educational Leadership. <http://www.communityschools.org/assets/1/AssetManager/finance-paper.pdf>

16 Belay, K., Mader, N., Miller, L. (2014) Scaling the Community School Strategy in New York City: A System Building Guide. (2014) Center for New York City Affairs and The Children’s Aid Society.

Establishing the Framework for Foundational Funding

The costs associated with Community Schools can be divided into two categories: programmatic and coordination. Programmatic costs are associated with the specific set of activities that a Community School offers to support students and their families: e.g. early childhood education, expanded learning, and health services. The coordination costs support the planning, organizing, and linking of these programs. Those costs are typically associated with funding the Community Schools Director, conducting the needs and assets assessment, developing and implementing data collection and analysis, as well as supporting on-going professional development. A recent analysis estimated these costs averaged \$193,000 per school.¹⁷

Through both the AIDP and Renewal School processes, the City is funding the coordination costs, as well as some programming costs for the selected schools. For example, beyond the coordination costs, the AIDP schools received funding to support programs to improve attendance and reduce drop-out rates, while the Renewal Schools will receive discreet amounts of funding to support expanded learning and mental health programming.

For example, through AIDP, \$12.1 million was allocated to 45 schools to develop their Community School strategy for the 2014-2015 school year. Each allocation is based on a formula that incorporates the elements of the DOE's Fair Student Funding, namely a "foundation base" combined with "needs weights." The methodology used to determine each school-CBO partnership allocation can be summarized as following:

- Start with a foundation base of \$225,000 to each school or campus.
- Apply the Fair Student Funding grade weight based on school type (e.g. grade levels served).
- Apply weight for "campus model" to provide enhanced funding.
- Apply "need weight" based on chronic absenteeism percentage from 2013-2014 school year.

In summary, the average amount allocated was approximately \$310,000, with a range extending from \$274,886 (serving a school with less than 200 students) to \$646,323 (serving a school with over 500 students).

The formula for the Renewal Schools will follow a similar methodology, with some adjustments made for a greater focus on academic interventions, as well as the provision of mental health and expanded learning programming. In all cases, there is a clear recognition that funding needs to be as flexible as possible, providing schools and their partners with various options and avenues to achieve their collective goals, as well as the necessary foundational support.

Lastly, NYC Community Schools are expected to collaborate with their lead partner organization to pull in additional programmatic resources and services, either through government grants and contracts or through private fundraising.

Supporting Schools and Providers to Leverage Programmatic Resources

The City will assist Community Schools in this effort through a variety of ways. City Hall and the DOE will:

- Share opportunities and timelines for schools to access related City funding (e.g. early childhood education, afterschool, and youth development), as well as state and federal grants.
- Develop aligned City policies that support Community Schools' efforts to secure resources, as well as advocate for similarly supportive state and federal policies. The City is already working with the state on the upcoming Medicaid changes that will impact the School-Based Health Clinics, many of which are located in Community Schools.
- Integrate "resource development" into the capacity building and technical assistance being provided to Community Schools' staff and their partner staff. For example, Community School Directors and their lead agencies could benefit from guidance and support around complicated financing procedures like Medicaid reimbursement, learn how to best maximize their current funding streams, and have access to "best practices" in fundraising and grant management.
- Cluster and organize Community Schools in a way that allows them to share resources, expertise, and best practices at little or no cost. As a starting point, this strategy will be employed at the geographic level, where neighboring and/or feeder schools will be encouraged to establish supportive relationships that can and should lead to cost savings at the school and system level.
- Recognize "hidden" costs, primarily facilities costs, and develop supportive policies to address them.

¹⁷ Belay, K., Mader, N., Miller, L. (2014) Scaling the Community School Strategy in New York City: A System Building Guide. (2014) Center for New York City Affairs and The Children's Aid Society.

Securing Private Sector Partners

The business and philanthropic communities have a large role to play in building and launching the Community Schools system. The City has already been actively engaging both constituencies around the launch of the Community Schools Initiative and will intensify this work now that a large initial group of schools and partners has been identified. Specifically, City Hall and the DOE will serve as central “brokers” of relationships and partnerships between Community Schools and private sector organizations. These may take the form of citywide partnerships covering a large number of Community Schools, while others may be smaller, on a school-by-school basis depending on both parties’ needs and interests.

The Mayor’s Office of Strategic Partnerships, which oversees the Mayor’s Fund to Advance NYC, the Fund for Public Schools and the Fund for Public Health, has prioritized Community Schools as a key Mayoral Initiative for public-private partnerships. Staff from these offices will work with the DOE and the Deputy Mayor for Strategic Policy Initiatives (SPI) to secure key business and philanthropic partners.

System- Building

Data Framework

Data collection and analysis are at the heart of developing and sustaining Community Schools. Data tells a Community School Director which students have attendance problems and need targeted support. Data allows a teacher to monitor the progress of her class and steer struggling students towards the right tutoring. Data empowers a principal and her SLT to see where they've had success engaging parents, and where they might need to redeploy some resources. Finally, data is the key to the City's ability to assess progress, identify successes, and surface opportunities for course corrections. In all of these cases, data needs to be collected, shared, and analyzed by a variety of individuals and organizations at the school and system level.

The expansion of Community Schools in NYC presents an opportunity to focus resources on developing new data procedures, ensuring that data is collected and analyzed in one place and made available in an easy-to-understand format.

The NYC Data Framework

With the input of principals, providers, and school communities, the City is developing a strategy for supporting data sharing while respecting student privacy. The NYC Data Framework for Community Schools addresses four key areas:

- Asset mapping and needs assessment that paint a portrait of the strengths and needs of school populations and neighborhoods;
- A data collection platform that allows all relevant parties to view student and school data to inform decision making at the school and system-level;
- Data sharing agreements that provide school and non-profit partners with access to key student information to inform programming and gauge progress; and
- Metrics and evaluations that assess the impact of the Community Schools strategy on student outcomes.

Asset Mapping and Needs Assessments

Every community has a set of assets around which its Community School should be built. These include local neighborhood organizations, health and recreation offerings, businesses and community events. The asset mapping process identifies these institutions, offerings, and events; providing a starting point for building on the community's strengths. Similarly, every school will conduct a community-level needs assessment to determine gaps that the Community School model may fill. This assessment often focuses on parent and community needs around language challenges, job training, health, and wellness issues.¹⁸

Each school and CBO will also assess all enrolled students to determine their academic, health, social, and emotional needs. The first step in the student needs assessment process will be to identify the data that is currently being collected at the school level, as well as the missing data that is relevant to the Community Schools model. The student needs assessments will focus on:

- Academic progress;
- Enrollment and absenteeism;
- Extracurricular program participation;
- Access to healthcare and enrichments; and
- Individual challenges and needs of the particular students.

Experience in this work shows that the highest quality asset mapping and needs assessments involve all Community School partners and stakeholders in their development.¹⁹ NYC will promote an approach that includes school leadership as well as teachers, non-profit partners, caregivers/parents, and students as stakeholders. By engaging everyone at the start of the process, schools can create an important dynamic of shared ownership and accountability across all participating individuals and organizations.

Data tells a Community School Director which students have attendance problems and need targeted support. Data allows a teacher to monitor the progress of her class and steer struggling students towards the right tutoring.

¹⁸ Identified by the Illinois Federation for Community Schools, the Coalition for Community Schools, and Child Trends

¹⁹ Identified by the Illinois Federation for Community Schools, the Coalition for Community Schools, and Child Trends

Data Collection Platform

Within the Community Schools Initiative, on-going data collection will inform practice, track progress, and connect data with targeted outcomes. Data collection will include both qualitative and quantitative data, both of which will allow City government leadership and researchers the opportunity to track Community Schools' outcomes.

Currently, various school-based data systems (e.g. ATS, SESIS, Stars, Scholars, Aris, DYCD Online, and YouthServices) maintain demographic information, student transcript data, attendance data, state test scores (eighth-grade ELA and math scores), and Regents exam scores.²⁰ However, these data sources are captured in separate systems, which present a variety of impediments to robust analysis both at the school level and system-wide. Moreover, schools cannot easily or consistently access student-level attendance data or academic outcomes from various supplemental programs during the school day, before or after school and on the weekend. For example, a principal rarely has the ability to know if, how, or when students are benefiting from math tutoring provided by a community partner during an expanded learning program.

The City is currently evaluating options for developing a data platform that will help support consistent data entry and greater integration, as well as facilitate data sharing among the appropriate parties (CBO, schools, city partners, etc.). As part of this effort, the City would establish a clear accountability framework to ensure that the data is gathered, analyzed, and shared back with the necessary parties.

Data Sharing Agreements

As part of that framework, the administration will seek to empower the City's partners in the non-profit sector to have access to certain types of student-level data. Access to this data – such as attendance or academic progress – can dramatically improve the ability of CBO providers to serve students they work with every day of the week. For years, non-profit leaders have advocated for establishing more consistent and secure processes around data sharing to better serve students. The City recognizes that it is critical to fully explore how to help CBO partners to access the right data to ensure the right interventions are in place and are having a positive impact.

At the same time, principals and school staff have signaled that they would also benefit from student information housed with other City agencies providing services to those same populations. The Mayor's Office of Operations has already partnered with the DOE to pilot a program this year at two schools in which designated staff will have access to the Worker Connect program. Worker Connect provides real-time access to select client data from City agencies, including the Administration for Children Services (ACS), the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA), Department of Homeless Services (DHS), and Human Resources Administration (HRA). Within the program, all data is shared in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations and is tightly limited to pre-approved staff. In this case, principals and some identified staff will be provided access to the relevant data according to their role. The expectation is that this data has the potential to provide principals and their staff with valuable insight on particular student challenges and successes.

The City will evaluate the pilot over the course of this year, assessing its ability to better inform school staff and identifying which data are most useful. This evaluation will inform whether Worker Connect could be offered to more schools, with a particular focus on Community Schools. Given their approach to serving students' various needs, Community Schools could particularly benefit from this sort of data-driven approach to developing student interventions.

Securing access to certain types of student-level information will be an on-going process involving the participation of various City agencies and offices, covering legal, technical, and programmatic issues. Their goal will be to find the right balance between the important privacy laws intended to keep student information safe and the needs of educators to fully understand the needs of their students, particularly those who are facing multiple barriers to academic progress. Developing the right set of formal controls and codified data-sharing agreements will be informed by best practices across the country. Many cities, including Cincinnati, have been working on these issues for years and have had success in expanding data sharing to CBO providers supporting Community Schools. NYC will look to these examples while determining what best meets the needs of our schools and students.

Metrics and Evaluation

The NYC Community Schools Initiative will prioritize monitoring and assessing the academic outcomes of participating students. Yet, the City's ability to accurately assess progress and success is complicated by the variety of

²⁰ Data Collaboration in New York City. *The Challenges of Linking High School and Post-Secondary Data*. Prepared by the Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University. http://annenberginstitute.org/sites/default/files/CRIS_Brief2_0.pdf

interventions offered across different Community Schools. Hence, there is a need for uniform metrics to regularly inform programming, track progress, and highlight opportunities for system-level improvements. The City will use a “shared outcomes” approach to develop the initiatives’ relevant metrics, which will be gathered and routinely shared back with stakeholders throughout the implementation. Specifically, the NYC Community Schools Initiative will collect metrics — including grades, attendance, and parental engagement — that demonstrate the strategy’s impact on student academic progress, school climate, and success in promoting positive changes in the school community. In the spring of 2015, a new Family and Community Outreach Team will train Community School Directors, DOE Parent Coordinators, parent leaders and other appropriate school administrators and staff on effective outreach and engagement methods. This training will be provided as schools begin the transformation to a Community School approach to assist with the development of collaborative governance structures and to teach schools how to ensure robust participation of families, students and communities in the Community School planning process

For students, the City will collect metrics that track:

- Student academic progress;
- Student attendance;
- Community, social, and civic engagement (afterschool, sports, music, and art);
- Health status (mental, physical, vision, and dental); and
- Activities supporting future planning (continued education and/or job placement).

For families and caregivers, the City will seek to collect data reflecting the strategy’s impact on the parents’ engagement in their child’s education, as well as indicators tied to family well-being, such as physical and mental health and economic stability. From the community perspective, the City will collect key data that demonstrates the broader impact that programs and services are having within the neighborhood, such as participation by community members in school events and opportunities.

Given the volume and complexity of this work, the City will partner with a third party evaluator to assist in the refinement of selected metrics and the development of a robust evaluation focused on student outcomes.

The next steps in this effort will include:

- Developing an agreed upon logic model to identify inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes of this work. Data collection will include qualitative and quantitative data, both of which will allow City leadership and researchers the opportunity to track Community Schools’ outcomes.
- Creating observation instruments, metrics for formative assessment, and conducting an independent summative evaluation.

The first year of this effort is focusing on evaluating system-building and implementation, while the subsequent years will be focused on students’ academic, attendance, and behavioral outcomes.

Parent and Community Engagement

Actively engaged parents, caregivers, and community members are an essential ingredient in the NYC Community Schools model. Community Schools are most successful when these groups see themselves as true partners with the school's leadership, teachers, staff, and CBO partner organization. This type of robust and active engagement needs to be deliberately cultivated, supported, and integrated into the culture of each school. The NYC Community Schools Initiative seeks to build the systems and capacity that allow school staff and families to establish collaborative partnerships that support students' academic success. In the spring of 2015, a new Family and Community Outreach Team will train Community School Directors, DOE Parent Coordinators, parent leaders and other appropriate school administrators and staff on effective outreach and engagement methods. This training will be provided as schools begin the transformation to a Community School approach to assist with the development of collaborative governance structures and to teach schools how to ensure robust participation of families, students and communities in the Community School planning process.

Planning for Transformative Parent Engagement

As part of the process of becoming a NYC Community School, participating schools will develop and implement a family and community engagement plan. This plan will be supported by the newly hired Community Schools Director and the school's Parent Coordinator. The CBO staff will partner with the Parent Coordinator, PTAs/Pas, and their elected leadership to create an environment that encourages and drives full participation from families and communities.

Establishing a Positive School Climate

Across NYC Community Schools, there will be a focus on establishing a school climate that is a reflection of the culture and values of the community. In short, schools should be a welcoming place for parents, caregivers, families, and communities. This work may include:

- Using school-wide activities to attract parents and to convey a welcoming environment;
- Addressing the language barriers of parents with limited English proficiency;
- Promoting high expectations for students across all times of day and with all partners;
- Working to ensure the needs of physically disabled community members are met;
- Extending the hours of use of the building for student, parent, and community activity after school and on weekends, where possible;
- Creating a dedicated space within the school for parents; and
- Collaborating with School Safety Officers and local police leadership to carry out these approaches.

Fostering Collaborative Decision-Making

Successful Community Schools actively engage parents as members of the school community, and focus on ensuring that their participation is authentic and impactful. To that end, the NYC Community School Initiative will draw on Dr. Karen Mapp's *Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships*, which was developed for the U.S. Department of Education.²¹ The framework maintains that creating conditions for successful parent engagement requires school staff and parents to develop skills and capacities to communicate. Once they have those skills, they are able to collaborate with each other with the shared goal of supporting children and schools. Using the framework as a guide, staff and parents will start this effort by collaboratively developing the Community School vision and plan.

In order to support the collaborative decision making, School Leadership Teams—which include the principal, parents, teachers, CBOs, school staff, and community leaders—will be asked to lead the Community School work. As part of that effort, SLTs should sponsor monthly “Community School Team” meetings that are focused on the development of the Community School vision and plan, and that incorporate a broader set of stakeholders in the planning process as the work develops.

Establishing “Ladders of Engagement” for Parents

Parent engagement can and should take many different forms in schools. Often, parents are only engaged through such activities as “open house nights” and parent-teacher conferences. A smaller group of particularly

Community Schools are most successful when parents, caregivers, and community members see themselves as true partners with the school's leadership, teachers, staff, and CBO partner organization.

²¹ <http://www.ed.gov/blog/2014/04/departments-of-education-releases-new-parent-and-community-engagement-framework/>

active parents may volunteer in the school or run for a leadership position on the PTA. While these types of parent engagement will continue to be encouraged and supported, Community Schools will also focus on creating transformational parent engagement using the “ladders of engagement” approach. This strategy is intended to maximize the number of parents who are strong advocates for their children’s education and are active, trained, and informed participants in decision-making at the school level.

Within this approach, parents can access multiple pathways and opportunities to become actively engaged in the community school, starting with smaller efforts that require a lesser degree of investment. Based on interest and capacity, they can take advantage of additional opportunities with increased levels of investment and leadership. The DOE will provide Community School Directors, Parent Coordinators, and Community School Teams with training on how to effectively implement the “ladders of engagement”.

Increasing Family Participation

In the NYC Community Schools Initiative, family participation will be encouraged in three distinct categories: the *Community School Visioning, Development and Implementation*, *Building Family-School Partnerships on Student Learning* and *Creating a Family and Community Hub*. Within their work plans, schools will outline their strategy to achieve engagement in these three critical areas. Additionally, the DOE will provide centralized support around the school-wide events in each category as a means of providing uniform trainings across schools. Specific suggested actions include:

| Visioning, Development and Implementation | Building Family-School Partnerships on Student Learning | Creating a Family and Community Hub |
|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create effective collaborative school governance structures for Community School work • Conduct thorough Asset and Needs-Assessments reaching all school & community populations, including those with special needs and challenges • Build attendance at monthly Community School team meetings and provide opportunities for participation and development of leadership skills • Hold Community School Forums to engage families, students and communities during the year | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create strong communication systems around student learning • Provide training for parents and staff on how to build home/school learning partnerships for children at different developmental stages • Maximize impact and participation in all four parent-teacher conferences • Implement model family engagement programs like home visits and student led parent-teacher conferences | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish welcoming environment and protocols • Provide student, adult, and community services and programming as identified in the Asset and Needs Assessment • Provide volunteer opportunities in the school • Hold leadership development trainings • Engage local businesses in providing mentors or internships opportunities for older students |

Engaging with the Broader Community

Full integration of the broader community and culture into the school is a critical goal of NYC Community Schools. Community School Teams and Community School Directors will be trained on how to fully engage the community in the development of the community school vision and plan, as well as in how to bring communities into the fold of the school itself. Schools will undertake three key activities designed to familiarize the school community with local assets, organizations, and individuals who could serve as allies and provide resources to support the development of a Community Schools model.

At the beginning of each school year, schools will be asked to participate in Community Tours organized by their Community School Director. All school leaders, staff, and parent and student leaders will be invited to participate. Visits will be arranged with local community and religious leaders, CBOs, service organizations, businesses, and others. Also schools and/or clusters of schools will be asked to hold “CBO and Service Provider Fairs” to educate the school population about available resources. Finally, the Asset Mapping and Needs Assessment process should include broad participation of members of the school community. These activities will serve to educate school communities about the resources at their disposal and begin to build critical school/community relationships.

Capacity Building

Many effective Community Schools across the country and in NYC can trace their success to how well the various school staff, CBO staff, parents, and volunteers collaborate and execute around an agreed upon strategy. These individuals' willingness and ability to consciously shift how they work together, problem solve, and organize resources is central to a school's ability to successfully adopt a Community Schools model. NYC schools and CBO providers will need assistance and guidance in building their own internal capacity to successfully carry out their pivotal roles within this newly structured system of Community Schools.

A Systemic Approach to Capacity Building

The City will develop a systemic approach to building school and CBO capacity to implement Community Schools that will be focused on:

- Creating a shared understanding of the Community Schools strategy among all stakeholders: students, parents, school staff, community members;
- Developing necessary skills among relevant stakeholders, including planning, goal-setting, problem-solving, data analysis, and shared leadership;
- Developing role-specific knowledge and skills among key players, including District Superintendents, principals, teachers, Community School Directors, other community partners, parents and students;
- Facilitating continuous improvement and ensuring fidelity to the Community School vision; and
- Creating forums for ongoing learning and joint problem-solving.

The City's capacity building strategy starts by harnessing the expertise and knowledge that already exists with NYC's experienced Community School partner organizations. Prior to the recent expansion under the de Blasio administration, several large citywide organizations had already been partnering with dozens of Community Schools in NYC, many for the better part of two decades. NYC is also home to several nationally recognized intermediary organizations that provide capacity building services around Community Schools. The City's Community Schools capacity building strategy will draw on this expertise and channel it into trainings, consultations, study visits, written materials, and school-based coaching.

This strategy is already being implemented with the AIDP schools and their newly selected partner organizations. As part of the City's contract with the United Way of New York City, The Children's Aid Society's National Center for Community Schools has been commissioned to assist the AIDP schools with their planning and implementation of the new grants. Over the course of the next several years, the administration envisions expanding this approach to all Community Schools and to a larger number of stakeholders connected to these schools. To do so and to be successful at this scale, the capacity building initiative will need to be: Multi-Pronged, Developmental and Long-Term focused.

Multi-Pronged

Given the variety of Community School stakeholders who could benefit from capacity building, the City's approach will be multi-pronged. This approach will be executed through a system of "tracks" for the different stakeholder groups (e.g. principals, Community School Directors, District Superintendents, school staff) that draws on and disseminates a consistent body of knowledge, and that recognizes the complementary roles played by all of the partners.

Community Schools go through well-documented stages of development as they become more responsive and comprehensive.²² As such, part of the strategy will be to help each school assess its current work on several implementation dimensions (e.g. programs and services, management, and staffing) and tailor the necessary coaching and consultation accordingly.

Long-Term

While the initial focus of capacity building will be on consultation and coaching, the City has already begun to consider more systematic efforts. For example, administration officials are investigating options to partner with higher education institutions to develop programs that prepare stakeholders - principals, teachers, social workers, and other professionals - to collaborate using the comprehensive, integrated methodologies of Community Schools.

²² For example, in *Building Community Schools: A Guide for Action*, the National Center for Community Schools defines these four stages as: Exploring, Emerging, Maturing and Excelling. https://www.metlife.com/assets/cao/foundation/NCCS_BuildingCommunitySchools.pdf

The City's capacity building strategy starts by harnessing the expertise and knowledge that already exists with NYC's experienced Community School partner organizations.

To do so, the City will look to national examples such as the University of Chicago's School of Social Service Administration which has over a decade of experience preparing masters-level social workers to become Community School Directors. The Loyola University-Maryland School of Education, through its Alliance for Community Teachers and Schools, identifies innovative best practices to support the work of teachers and other partners in Community Schools. In NYC, there are countless examples of local colleges and universities developing professional programs to support specific educational and youth development initiatives, from afterschool directors to UPK instructors.

City Agency Collaboration, Policy Alignment and Governance

Individual Community Schools are complicated and intricate organizations. Each one employs its own collaborative leadership structure which secures and coordinates a variety of tailored programs and services to a diverse array of students, families, and communities. The involvement and participation of so many organizations and individuals represents a complex, innovative, and silo-breaking effort to improve educational outcomes for young people. For the de Blasio administration to successfully implement the Community Schools Initiative at scale, it will need to employ similarly complex, innovative, and silo-breaking ways of thinking, partnering, and executing plans. This strategic plan outlines a vast system-building effort that is dependent upon countless partners working with and across various types of resources and infrastructures to ensure a successful launch and implementation. Long-term success will also be dependent on the administration's ability to establish aligned City policies that support the growth and development of Community Schools.

City Hall Leadership

Mayor de Blasio has made it clear that the City is committed to leveraging all existing government assets, structures, and policies to support scaling up high-quality, full-service Community Schools. Through coordination from Deputy Mayor Richard Buery's Office of Strategic Policy Initiatives (SPI), City Hall will ensure that a host of City agencies' resources, partnerships, and policy development efforts will be brought to bear on this project. The cross-agency effort will build upon the success of the UPK and SONYC program launches. SPI implemented the UPK initiative with the support of dozens of City agencies, from the Fire Department to the Parks Department to the Buildings Department and the DOE. Similarly, the expansion of afterschool programming to middle school students was implemented through a close collaboration between City Hall, DYCD, and the DOE.

Additionally, the Community Schools Initiative is a top priority of the Mayor's Office of Strategic Partnerships, which oversees all public-private partnerships via the Mayor's Fund to Advance NYC, the Fund for Public Schools out of the DOE, and the Fund for Public Health out of DOHMH. SPI will coordinate with the leadership of these teams around securing private investments in and partnerships with the Community Schools Initiative, both at the school and systems level. As outlined in the **Funding Strategy** section of this document, there are a variety of successful models for these types of public-private partnership around system-building in NYC.

DOE Coordination

In January 2015, Chancellor Carmen Fariña announced the creation of a new DOE Office of Community Schools (OCS), which is responsible for the policy and operations around all Community Schools. Housed within the Division of School Support, the new office will serve as the central DOE entity on Community Schools, including schools funded through AIDP and Renewal Schools, as well as current Community Schools operating independent of those funding streams. Among other things, the office will lead the work with the United Way of New York City around AIDP schools and directly manage all of the Renewal School contracts with CBOs that begin in May 2015. OCS will also coordinate with schools and outside partners around the implementation of both the data framework and the capacity building efforts that are outlined in this document.

Throughout the launch and implementation of the initial set of Community Schools, OCS will play a strong role in ensuring that there is clear alignment across all DOE offices around policy and operations supporting Community Schools. This internal alignment began with the AIDP grant work, but will become even more crucial with the introduction of the Renewal Schools. The new office's placement in the Division of School Support is advantageous in that it establishes a natural synergy with school support structures and staff who already have strong relationships with all 128 schools. Similarly, the broader School Renewal effort, encompassing instructional supports, guidance services, and professional development, will be part of the same Division, allowing for easier coordination.

OCS will consult and collaborate with a variety of DOE offices including, but not limited to, the following:

- Office of School Health
- Office of District Planning
- Office of Space Planning
- School Construction Authority
- Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships
- Office of Safety and Youth Development
- Family and Community Engagement
- Research and Policy Support Group
- Division of Teaching and Learning

Mayor de Blasio has made it clear that the City is committed to leveraging all existing government assets, structures, and policies to support scaling up high-quality, full-service Community Schools.

OCS will pro-actively and regularly engage the leadership of these offices to ensure the Community Schools Initiative is incorporated across the DOE in a variety of ways. For example, OCS is already working with the DOE's Progressive Redesign Opportunity for Schools of Excellence (PROSE) program, which enables schools to implement innovative practices outside of existing rules by leveraging flexibilities in the UFT and/or CSA contracts. Currently, nine Community Schools are also PROSE Schools. OCS and PROSE will combine efforts to support these schools so that they are able to implement innovative structural approaches around use of time, staff, and partners that can inform practice across the system. Broadly speaking, OCS will position Community Schools as potential sites for new and innovative pilots that are related to the program model (e.g. data sharing, community and family engagement, and student health). As OCS collaborates with DOE colleagues to embed the values and principles of the Community School model across the system, every effort will be made to work within existing tools and structures, rather than adding additional processes and administrative layers.

City Agency Collaboration

Similar to the way the Community Schools model asks schools and their stakeholders to work differently, the administration is also asking City agencies and their leaders to work differently as well in order to implement this project. The NYC Children's Cabinet represents the primary mechanism through which the de Blasio administration will coordinate City agency collaboration within the Community Schools Initiative. The Mayor formed the Cabinet to foster collaboration, communication, and data sharing across 24 City agencies and Mayoral offices that touch the lives of children and families. Given the Cabinet's focus on fostering holistic and coordinated approaches to serving high-need youth and their families, there is a natural fit between the Cabinet and the Community Schools initiative.

Cabinet agencies will be engaged with Community Schools in three distinct ways: planning, policy alignment, and integration of services.

Planning

DYCD has already played a significant role in taking the lead in developing the Community Schools RFP for Renewal Schools in partnership with DOE and DOHMH. Given the agency's capacity and experience in procuring these types of contracted services with CBOs, DYCD will release the RFP, manage the evaluation process, and register the contracts before transferring them to DOE for implementation and management. DOHMH has played a key role in ensuring that the mental health component is properly integrated into the RFP and will work closely with the DOE around the implementation of these new programs through the Office of School Health. Other agencies, including ACS and the Department of Probation (DOP) have also provided input that has shaped the RFP. Lastly, various agencies will participate in the evaluation process to rate and score applications as part of the procurement process. This level of inter-agency involvement in the planning process is a testament to how these agencies will be involved throughout the growth of the Community Schools Initiative.

Policy Alignment

City Hall will build off of this inter-agency planning effort with a sustained focus on fostering long-term policy alignment across Cabinet agencies. This sort of policy alignment will take a similar form as the intra-agency effort that will occur with the DOE across its various offices. Again, the approach will be to identify how other Cabinet agencies' policies (funding, programmatic, communications, etc.) can be shaped to be supportive of Community Schools' long-term sustainability. Feedback from schools and CBO providers will be crucial in identifying policy disconnects for investigation by the Cabinet.

Integration of Services

As neighborhood hubs in high-need communities, Community Schools will be serving hundreds of students whose family members could likely benefit from a variety of public programs and services. Given this access and interaction with families and community members, these schools present prime opportunities for City agencies and public entities to partner with schools and their CBOs. Together they can develop ways to reach families in need and offer appropriate services. Already, a number of City agencies have stepped forward to propose ideas around specific partnerships. Some of these include the following:

- **Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD)** has already played a significant role in helping to shape the development of the Community Schools RFP for partner organizations to the Renewal Schools. DYCD will continue to support the initiative by tapping its network of providers and sharing its expertise in developing and monitoring out-of-school time and community-based programs throughout NYC. To create synergies at the neighborhood level and support Community Schools, DYCD will work with DOE and other

City agencies to encourage collaborations among those serving these localities, such as referral exchanges and joint activities that can empower and engage youth, adults and families.

- **Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH)**'s Division of Family and Child Mental Health already partners with the DOE to administer the Office of School Health's (OSH) programs across all City schools. DOHMH will play a lead role in the administration of the expanded mental health services that will be provided in many Community Schools and that could range from more preventive, general skill-building to individual treatment. OSH, in collaboration with the Division of Mental Hygiene, will support schools in assessing their needs, identifying best-matched strategies from a range of evidence-based interventions, and improving their quality and effectiveness.
- **Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs (MOIA)** is looking to partner with legal service providers to co-locate immigration attorneys in targeted Community Schools on a part-time basis, providing free immigration legal consultations and referrals for immigrant students and their families. MOIA would also establish a referral network to help school staff (teachers, guidance counselors, Parent Coordinators, and principals) to connect students and families to high-quality, free or low-cost legal services, health services, and other social services. As part of this referral network plan, MOIA would design and deliver a training curriculum and resource guide to school staff about City and nonprofit services and opportunities available to immigrant students and families.
- **Administration for Children's Services (ACS)** will play an important role in this initiative by working with Community Schools and their partner organizations to support families and remove obstacles associated with poverty and poor student performance. ACS funds dozens of organizations that provide parents and children with direct access to support services including mental health counseling, domestic violence advocacy, substance abuse intervention, case management, child care, homemaking, and other specialized programs. The agency coordinates the city's foster care system as well as its subsidized early education and child care providers and networks, and is a direct link to the human services infrastructure for families, schools, clinics and other local institutions throughout the city. ACS also acts a valuable resource for schools in serving high risk students given the agency's role in supporting foster children as well as young people involved with, or diverted from, the criminal justice system.
- **Department of Homeless Services (DHS)** will support Community Schools through its Prevention Homebase community partners and other homeless prevention organizations. Homebase partners are located in 23 high-need neighborhoods and can coordinate with Community Schools by offering training for DOE staff, CBO staff, parents, and students (age appropriate) on a range of homeless prevention services in the community to avoid shelter. Families referred to Homebase and at risk of homelessness would have access to a continuum of social services and advancement activities including but not limited to: landlord tenant and family mediation, workshops on financial literacy, employment coaching, job search, educational planning, and limited financial support. DHS will also work with targeted Community Schools that have high shelter populations to ensure both agencies are coordinating services and ensuring students in shelters receive very specific educational supports.
- **Police Department (NYPD)** will support Community Schools by engaging school communities of parents, students, teachers, and staff to work collaboratively on local safety and policing issues. The Department will begin a dialogue and facilitated problem-solving process with a targeted number of Community Schools during the 2015-2016 school year, with the potential to expand as the collaborative model is developed.
- **Human Resources Administration (HRA)** is committed to working with different Community Schools to test program models that provide greater access to specific benefits tailored to the needs of local families. For example, HRA provides economic support and social services to families and individuals through the administration of major benefit programs including Cash Assistance, Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program benefits (food stamps), Medicaid, and Child Support Services. HRA also provides homelessness prevention, educational, vocational and employment services, assistance for persons with disabilities, services for immigrants, civil legal aid, and disaster relief. For the most vulnerable, it provides HIV/AIDS Services, Adult Protective Services, Home Care, and programs for survivors of domestic violence.
- **Department of Probation (DOP)** is in the process of planning pilots at a small number of Community Schools to work with school and CBO staff around supporting the students they have in common. DOP wants to work with the schools around proper protocols and how to avoid the stigma clients face when they are identified as being on probation supervision, which can exacerbate their already tenuous engagement with the school.

- **Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence (MOCDV)** specializes in providing trainings and consultations to community organizations and groups of young people, something they will implement with Community Schools and their CBO partners. In addition to providing guidance around the warning signs of domestic violence, MOCDV will also provide information on referral services to their Family Justice Centers in all five boroughs.
- **Mayor’s Office of Criminal Justice (MOCJ)** funds several community based organizations that offer “Cure Violence” programs in Community Schools. “Cure Violence” programs are designed to provide culturally competent programming to at-risk youth to reduce the likelihood of their involvement in violence in their school or community, and increase their engagement at school as measured through attendance, academic progress, and other measures. Additionally, MOCJ and the Leadership Team on School Climate will look to partner with the Community Schools Initiative to analyze discipline-related outcome data and map school climate resources in high-need/high-suspending Community Schools.
- **NYC Service** has already partnered with City Hall and the DOE to successfully submit an application to the federal government for funds to support AmeriCorps members to work in Community Schools, assisting in developing mentoring programs, and enhancing parent engagement. The application was approved in April 2015 and 128 AmeriCorps volunteers will begin working in Community Schools in the fall of 2015.

In addition to these Children’s Cabinet agencies, other Mayoral offices have initiated plans to partner with the Community Schools Initiative, leveraging additional public dollars and City services. For example, the Mayor’s Office of Workforce Development is reviewing plans with the DOE Office of Adult Career Education around improving access for workforce readiness programs offered by the DOE in Community Schools. In schools where adult education is already provided on-site, there will be a focus on collaborating with CBO partners and school staff to ensure coordination and sharing of resources around adult education. Such collaborations can improve the ability of parents or caregivers to support their families through sector-based education options. In cases where programming does not already exist, City officials will explore opportunities to add these types of resources to the Community School.

Guidance and Input from Non-Government Partners

As important as the partnership of government agencies is to the success of this initiative, the active involvement and expertise of outside partners is equally valuable and impactful.

In the summer of 2014, Mayor de Blasio gathered leaders from across the city and asked them to help the administration develop its plan to implement a robust system of Community Schools. The Mayor tasked the 52-member Community Schools Advisory Board with helping to enhance existing programs, raising the bar for Community Schools across the city, increasing parental involvement, and developing new Community Schools that reach families in need. The Advisory Board is composed of stakeholders from various sectors—foundations, businesses, education, research, health, and non-profit providers—all of which play an integral role in Community Schools.²³

At the time, Mayor de Blasio said “We are turning to the people who know how to make these models work best and have decades of experience serving communities across this city. We’re proud to have their support and are going to ensure the practices they help develop are put into action.”

The Board is comprised of some of the most experienced advocates, professionals, and institutions from across the City, all of whom will help to ensure that Community Schools have the tools, resources, and innovations to set a new gold standard in holistically educating and supporting young people. This group was already instrumental in outlining the key issues that should be addressed in this plan, as well as informing early goals and solutions to key strategic questions. Going forward, the administration anticipates using them as a sounding board to inform policy development and potential adjustments needed to support program implementation.

²³ The list of Community Schools Advisory Board members can be found in the Appendix of this document on page 40.

Appendix

DOE's research review included the following sources:

Community Schools Impact on Academic Achievement

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