TURNING EVIDENCE-BASED IDEAS FOR COMMUNITY SCHOOLS INTO PROMISING IMPLEMENTATION PRACTICES IN MARYLAND

Community schools, which aim to strengthen connections between schools, families, and communities by providing wrap-around services to address a range of health and academic needs, are a key component of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. Under this comprehensive education reform, schools with a four-year average of students living in poverty above a certain threshold will automatically be designated as community schools and become eligible for additional state funding to expand access to the services community schools offer. This infographic outlines the most promising strategies districts reported using to develop and maintain a community school model.

Six Phases of Strategies for Implementing Community Schools

1. Developing a shared vision for community schools across stakeholders
2. Practicing shared leadership, including creating a leadership structure that engages multiple stakeholders
3. Assessing the needs of communities schools serve
4. Building capacity for implementation, including through institutional structures and staff training opportunities
5. Addressing community needs by identifying and instituting aligned resources and services
6. Monitoring progress toward addressing community needs, including through data collection and evaluation

Most districts reported engaging in all of the strategies outlined above, but rarely included detail about *how* they did so, making it difficult to assess implementation of community schools model across Maryland. Below we highlight promising examples from district implementation plans that included details of their strategies.

Developing a shared vision for community schools in Frederick County. FCPS described establishing a shared vision for community schools that incorporated input from district staff, families, students, community partners, and the FCPS Community School Workgroup.

Practicing shared leadership of community schools in Harford County. HCPS established a collaborative comprised of community partners, district and school staff, and families, which meets bimonthly to discuss implementation progress.

Assessing community needs in Baltimore City. In City Schools, each community school conducted a needs assessment that included information from students, families, staff, community partners, and community members.

Building capacity for community schools in Montgomery County. MCPS created new staff roles specific to community school implementation and offered professional development around the acquisition and delivery of resources provided by community schools.

Addressing community needs in districts across the state. Districts used range of needs assessments to identify and meet community needs. This included asset mapping to identify resources and services available in schools' local communities and developing partnerships with community organizations.

Monitoring progress of community school implementation in Kent County. Community school coordinators in KCPS engage with community partners to monitor progress towards target outcomes and revise programs as necessary to meet community needs.

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