

Action Item - 26

Board of Education Meeting Date: 1/30/2025

Title: Ratification of Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Philadelphia for the Community Schools Initiative (\$15,000,000)

Action Under Consideration

The Administration recommends that the Board of Education ratify and authorize The School District of Philadelphia, through the Superintendent or their designee, to execute and perform a Memorandum of Understanding, as follows:

With: The City of Philadelphia, through the Mayor's Office of Education

Purpose: Continuation of the Community Schools Initiative

Start date: 7/1/2024

End Date: 6/30/2029

Value of Services not to exceed: \$15,000,000 over 5 years

Location(s):

1. William Cramp School
2. Hamilton Disston School
3. Murrell Dobbins Career and Technical Education High School
4. Franklin S. Edmonds School
5. Edward Gideon School
6. Samuel Gompers School
7. Kensington Health Sciences Academy
8. Alain Locke School
9. James Logan School
10. Alexander K. McClure School
11. Overbrook Educational Center
12. Southwark School
13. South Philadelphia High School
14. William T. Tilden Middle School
15. George Washington High School
16. John H. Webster School
17. Richard R. Wright School
18. Add B. Anderson School
19. Paul L. Dunbar
20. Frankford High School

and any additional School District schools to be determined in accordance with a process between the School District and the Mayor's Office of Education over the next 5 years.

Description:

Why is this contract needed?

The School District and the City originally entered into a Community Schools Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") in 2017. By means of the Community Schools Initiative, the Mayor of the City of Philadelphia, through focusing on School District schools, has sought to align services from the City and community service providers to increase community engagement in an effort to address the needs of children and their families in Philadelphia. These efforts aim to enhance the health, well-being, and learning readiness of children, families, and community members by offering additional support to school staff and fostering collaboration among key City departments and organizations that deliver community programs and services in schools. Key initiatives include attendance support, Extended Day/Extended Year programs, Career Connected Learning, and the Civil Service initiative. The goals of these programs are: 1) positively impacting community engagement; 2) encouraging the utilization of services, with the intention of improving quality of life indicators such as increasing attendance at school, participation in school functions, and availability and access to programs for students, families, and community members; and 3) addressing family and community well-being to enhance learning.

This action item seeks to ratify and authorize the continuation of these services and support from July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2029. Ratification is necessary because the previous authorization ended on June 30, 2024. This lapse occurred due to a transition in office leadership.

How is this work connected to the District's plan to achieve Goals and Guardrails?

The Community Schools MOU aligns with Guardrail 1: Every school will be a safe, welcoming, and healthy environment where students, staff, and community members thrive daily; and Guardrail 3: Every parent and guardian will be welcomed and encouraged to partner with their child's school community. Through collaboration with the City, Community Schools programs aim to enhance the health, well-being, and learning readiness of children, families, and community members. The City provides additional staff and services to support school staff and students. Each Community School is supported by a dedicated community school coordinator and two case managers who focus on improving attendance by identifying barriers and implementing targeted interventions.

Beyond attendance, Community Schools also implements programs such as extended day/extended year, career-connected learning, and the civil service initiative. These initiatives foster greater collaboration among City departments and organizations, enhancing the range of programs and services available to the community within schools.

How will the success of this contract be measured?

For consistency and alignment with district-wide measures of success, the measure used to determine success is student attendance, and specifically, the percentage of students attending 90% or more of instructional days at each community school, the student wellbeing survey, and graduation rate.

When applicable, is this an evidence-based strategy?

If so, what evidence exists to support this approach? Research has found that well-implemented community schools lead to improvement in student and school outcomes. A synthesis of research conducted by Maier, A, Daniel, J., & Oakes, J. (2017) finds that sufficient evidence research exists to meet the ESSA standard for an evidence-based intervention. (Maier, A, Daniel, J., & Oakes, J. (2017). Community schools as an effective school improvement strategy: A review of the evidence (research brief). Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute.)

When applicable, was a larger community of District community members and/or stakeholders involved in this selection process? If so, what groups and how?

Since the inception of the Community Schools Initiative in 2017, the selection of Community Schools has been a cooperative process between the School District and the City with specific timelines for the proposal of new Community Schools and the hiring of Community School Coordinators and other staff intended to be based in specific Community Schools. Approval and consent of the Superintendent or their designee is required before any new Community Schools may be announced.

Related resolution(s)/action item(s):

March 28, 2019 #39

December 9, 2021 # 32

Office Originating Request:

Student Support Services