Paterson Public Schools Full Service Community Schools

Evaluation Report 2016 - 2017



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Executive Summary

This is a report of the external evaluation conducted by ActKnowledge of an extended Federal Full Service Community Schools Grant for School 6 and School 15 for the academic years 2016 and 2017. The external evaluation is based on the Paterson Public Schools (PPS) – Full Service Community Schools (FSCS) Theory of Change developed through a participatory approach with key stakeholders and ActKnowledge.

PPS FSCS has developed and implemented a community school model that encompasses a broad array of services and interventions for students and families. They have continued to focus on integrating health services in the school, aligning afterschool programs and daytime provisions, and developing interventions specifically targeting students falling behind academically and facing challenges with attendance and behavior.

Highlights of Results

Academic Achievement Results

Afterschool students in School 15 had a higher mean scale score than non-afterschool students in ELA and Math in 2016 and in 2017. Also, afterschool students in School 6 had a higher mean scale score than non-afterschool students in ELA and Math in 2016. For example:

- School 15 afterschool students had a higher ELA mean scale score of 731.2 compared to non-afterschool students of 720.5 in 2017. Afterschool students in School 15 also had a higher Math mean scale score of 737.9 compared to non-afterschool students of 720.2 in 2017.
- School 15 afterschool students had a higher ELA mean scale score of 723.7 compared to non-afterschool students of 714.2 in 2016. Afterschool students in School 15 also had a slightly higher Math mean scale score of 721.5 compared to non-afterschool students of 721.2 in 2016.
- School 6 afterschool students did not score higher in ELA and in Math in 2017, however, they did score slightly higher than non-afterschool students in ELA and in Math in 2016.

<u>Attendance Results</u>

Attendance (average days present in the school) was better among afterschool students than non-afterschool students in 2016 and 2017. For example:

 Students attending the afterschool programs at School 6 had 163 average days present in the school compared to 157 average days present of non-afterschool students in 2017. Similarly, School 6 afterschool students had 168 average days present in the school compared to 164 average days present of non-afterschool students in 2016. • Students attending the afterschool programs at School 15 had 169 average days present compared to 167 average days present of non-afterschool students in 2017. Also, School 15 students' afterschool students had 171 average days present compared to 170 average days present of non-afterschool students in 2016.

1. Introduction

This is a report of the external evaluation conducted by ActKnowledge of an extended Federal Full Service Community Schools Grant for the academic years 2016 and 2017. The evaluation is based on two Paterson Public Schools (School 6 and School 15), each of which is partnered with a lead community-based organization to plan, implement and sustain services to support the well-being and development of children, their families and the wider community.

Paterson Public Schools	Grade Level	Lead Agency
School 6	PK-08	New Destiny Family Success Centers, Inc.
School 15	PK-05	St. Paul's Community Development Center (CDC)

The report begins with a brief overview of the PPS FSCS model, including the development of the PPS FSCS Theory of Change, and then outlines key outcomes from 2016 and 2017 for:

- Students focusing on academic achievement but also on some of the main preconditions identified in the theory of change as critical to student achievement including attendance, behavior and a set of indicators around youth development.
- Parent/Family Engagement focusing on progress made in engaging parents in the life of the schools, which has been identified as an important element of the full service community school model.

The report also outlines a set of conclusions and recommendations for sustaining the Full Service Community Schools in Paterson.

1.1 Evaluation Methods

This evaluation uses a participatory mixed-methods approach involving collection and analysis of qualitative and quantitative data. The implementation of the community school services at the schools is based on a model that hypothesizes what it takes to reach goals. The evaluation, in turn, tests whether the assumptions of that model were correct or not, and whether the outcomes identified are being achieved.

Theory of Change

As a participatory evaluation, the evaluator and program practitioners ensured that key stakeholders from School 6 and School 15 were involved in setting goals, which they did as participants in a Theory of Change workshop conducted by the ActKnowledge and the National Center for Community Schools in February 2017. Key stakeholders also helped identify and

collect data, collaborated in the logistics of site visits and collection of materials, and participated in feedback meetings with the evaluators.

The Theory of Change developed at this workshop builds on earlier iterations developed by School 6 and School 15 and by School 5, New Roberto Clemente and Napier (The evolution of the Theory of Change for the FSCS in Paterson is outlined in detail in Appendix 1). Stakeholders from these other schools also participated in the 2017 Theory of Change workshop, along with stakeholders from Paterson Public Schools. The newly developed Theory of Change, which incorporates learning on some of the barriers faced by students and the conditions that need to be in place to address them is outlined in detail in Section 2 below.

Site Visits

Comprehensive site visits were made by ActKnowledge each grant year, using a set of interview protocols designed to elicit the views of stakeholders on how the community school was developing, including changes, achievements, challenges, and factors facilitating or hindering progress. This involved:

- Interviewing all community school directors and program staff.
- Interviewing principals and/or assistant principals.
- Focus group interviews with parents and/or parent coordinators.
- Focus group interviews with students.

Identification and Analysis of Quantitative Data

ActKnowledge has analyzed quantitative data relating to key preconditions to student performance and attainment such as attendance, behavior and youth development. This analysis was based on data provided by Paterson Public School District and ActKnowledge's own youth surveys.

Data on Academic Results

The analysis of academic results is based on the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) for the 2016 and 2017 academic school year.

• The data came in the form of raw scores and broken out by school and disaggregated by programs/services such as afterschool program, school based health service and any other targeted intervention.

Data on Attendance/Chronic Absenteeism

Chronic absenteeism rates were analyzed to show the overall results for the two community schools from 2016 to 2017. Total days present in a school year served as a measure for the impact of specific programs/services on attendance, such as afterschool and health services.

Data on Behavior

Suspension rates were analyzed as an indicator of behavior issues for 2016 and 2017.

Student Surveys

ActKnowledge developed a survey questionnaire to elicit the views and perceptions of students (focusing on 3rd grade and up) in the full service community schools (identified through the initiative's Theory of Change and through the education research literature) relating to student achievement. The youth survey is a validated and replicated instrument used in other community school initiatives. It is designed to capture youth attitudes and behaviors, including perceptions of their school, their community and their future.

The community school directors administered the youth surveys in Spring 2017. The analysis is based on survey results from 2017.

District Surveys

Results on the Paterson District surveys were analyzed on responses by parents to questions about feeling welcomed, safe and respected in the school for the 2016 SY.

2. Full Service Community School Model and its Implementation in Paterson

2.1 Full Service Community Schools Model and Theory of Change

The U.S. Department of Education has defined a full service community school as:

"...a public elementary or secondary school that works with its local educational agency and community-based organizations, nonprofit organizations, and other public or private entities to provide a coordinated and integrated set of comprehensive academic, social, and health services that respond to the needs of its students, students' family members, and community members".

The federally funded FSCS is an important recognition of the validity and success of the community school movement across the United States over the past 20 years. The community school model has been seen as an ongoing strategy for marshaling community resources around student success. Through extended hours, services and—crucially—the building of relationships and effective partnerships, the community school model conceives of education as a coordinated, child-centered effort in which schools, families and communities work together to support student's educational success, build stronger families and improve communities.¹

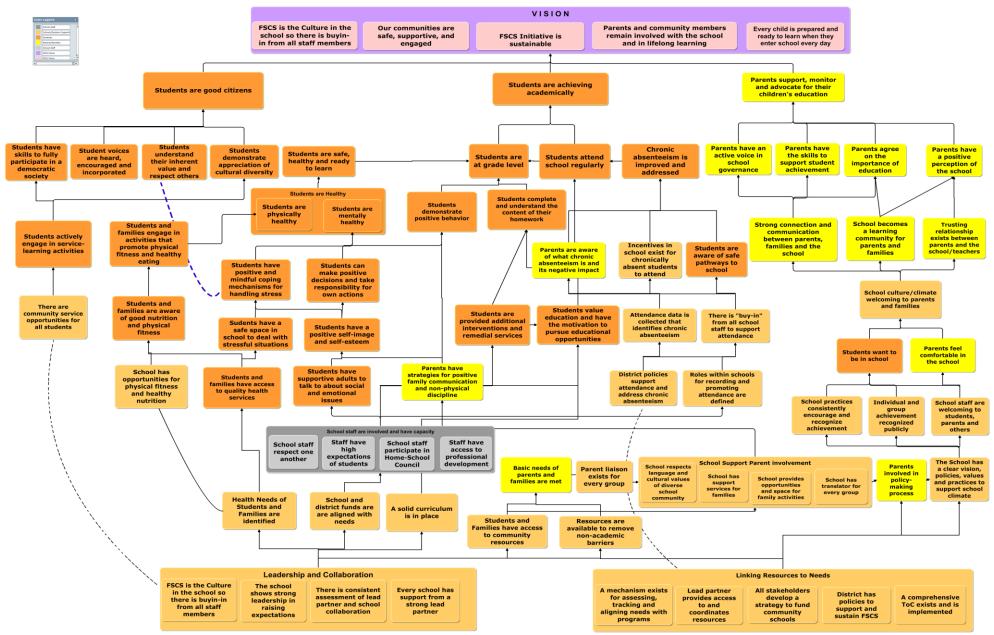
This holistic approach can be particularly important to children living in poverty, who need a variety of family and community resources, including intellectual, social, physical, and emotional supports, to have the opportunity to attain academic success.

A key premise of the full service community school model is that a whole set of 'preconditions' or intermediate outcomes, will need to be met before student success outcomes (that embrace academic progress but also social, emotional and health development) can be achieved.

These preconditions for the Paterson FSCS schools are set out in Figure 1, which illustrates the 2017 Theory of Change Outcomes Map developed through the participatory process described earlier. At the top of the map, key outcomes in the vision statement are that parents and families remain involved with the schools and in 'life-long' learning and every child is prepared and ready to learn.

¹ The National Center for Community Schools provides a very comprehensive conceptual definition and outline of the community school model in its publication *Building Community School: A Guide for Action*, 2011.

Figure 1: Amended Paterson FSCS Theory of Change (2017)

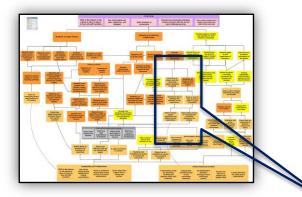


Vision and Additional Outcomes Added to the 2017 Theory of Change

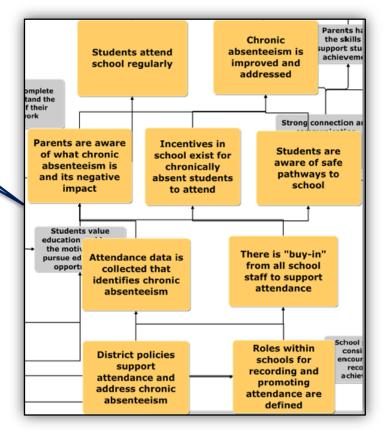
The Theory of Change sets out a detailed vision for PPPs Full Service Community Schools (in the boxes at the top of the Outcomes Map) and then then outlines three main outcomes that need to be achieved to make this vision a reality. These main outcome areas are that: students become good citizens, that they succeed academically and that parents support, mentor and act as advocates for their children's education.

Pathways of preconditions for each of these outcomes are then traced out in the map. The newly articulated Theory in 2017 includes a number of additional preconditions (based on the experiences of the schools over the past few years) that have helped inform the kind of activities and interventions developed by the schools to address the challenges they face. These relate to: I) good attendance and elimination of chronic absenteeism; II) better mental and physical health outcomes; III) increasing parental capacity to support their children's education; and IV) a number of 'foundational' preconditions centered on what needs to be in place as a systems levels to achieved the outcomes set out in the Theory

I. Good Attendance and Ending Chronic Absenteeism



Three preconditions in particular have been identified as necessary for both promoting better attendance in general and addressing chronic absenteeism in particular. These, as outlined in the box, include awareness on the part of parents what about chronic absenteeism is and the negative impact it has on the education and life chances of their children. Participants at the Theory of Change believed this was important in

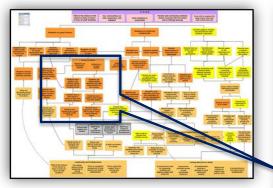


addressing a number of challenges, including the instructional interruptions caused by some parents taking their children out of school for early vacations.

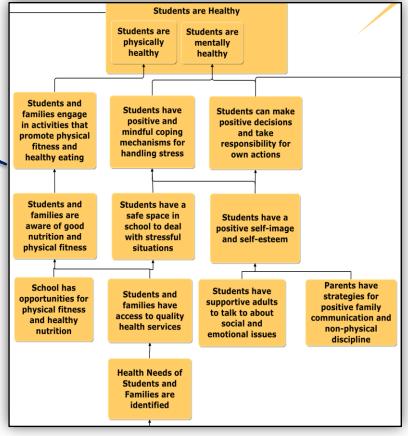
Other preconditions include the existence of incentives in school for chronically absent students to addend and that barriers, such as safety concerns that can impede students from attending school are addressed. One precondition for the latter is that students are aware of safe pathways to school.

These outcomes have in turn a set of preconditions, including the existence of data that allows to schools to identify chronic absenteeism and District policies (i.e. Paterson Public Schools District) that support attendance. Also important are the clear delineation of roles in the schools for recording and promoting attendance.

II. Mental and Physical Health



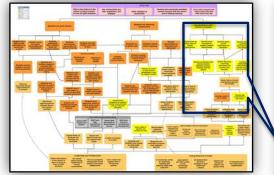
Health promotion is a key goal of the FSCS model and the Theory of Change reflects this with a range of preconditions identified for promoting the health of students. The schools can play and important role here by having opportunities within the school to promote physical health (including healthy but also eating) creating opportunities for building mental health resilience and for addressing



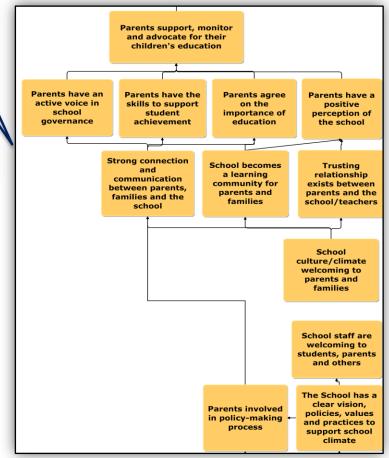
the effects of mental health stressors which include the trauma and "toxic stress" that can arise due to poverty, disadvantage and family breakdown.

Engagement with family provides opportunities to support mental health wellbeing. An important precondition in this respect is that parents are supported in having strategies for positive family communication and non-physical discipline.

III. Parents Capacity to Support and Advocate for their Children's Education



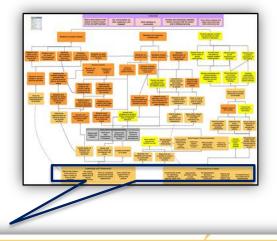
А range of preconditions were identified as necessary so that parents can support and advocate for their children's education. These include the acquisition of skills but also awareness on the part of parents and families on the importance of education for the future life chances of their children. This is turn is engendered by having relationships of trust between the schools and with teachers which in turn requires and schools culture that is welcoming to parents and families.



There needs to be strong intentionality by the school to create such as cultures through a vision, policies and practices that support a positive and welcoming school climate for all.

IV. Foundational Preconditions

Participants at the theory of Change workshop identified a number of "foundational" preconditions that need to be in place to ensure that the elements of the FSCS Theory can be achieved. These have been grouped under "Leadership and Collaboration" (both at the level of the school and at school district level) and under "Linking Resources to needs" (i.e. ensuring strategies are developed that aligned resources with needs.



Leadership and Collaboration

FSCS is the Culture in the school so there is buyin-in from all staff

The school shows strong leadership in raising the school shows trong leadership in raising trong leadership in raising trong leadership trong leadership trong leadership

ent Every school has ead support from a strong lead partner A mechanism exists for assessing, tracking and aligning needs with

Lead partner provides access to and coordinates resources All stakeholders develop a District has strategy to fund policies to

Linking Resources to Needs

schools

community

District has policies to support and implemented

3. Findings

In this section, we present key findings from the evaluation based on a selection of outcomes articulated in the Theory of Change. These include:

- Student Outcomes, which focus on academic achievement but include other preconditions identified in the theory of change as critical to student achievement, such as attendance, behavior, and several indicators around youth development.
- Parent/Family Engagement Outcomes, focusing on progress made in engaging parents in the life of the schools and their childrens' education, which has been identified as an important element of the full service community school model.

3.1 Student Outcomes

3.1.1 Academic Achievement

Academic results were analyzed using the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) for the 2016 and 2017 school year. Scale scores were analyzed and presented by each community school and then disaggregated by programs/services, such as afterschool program, health service and any other targeted interventions.

Overall Mean Scale Results on NJASK for PPS FSCS

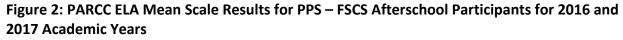
The overall mean raw scores on PARCC for each of the two PPS FSCS are shown in table 1 below. As illustrated, School 15 overall mean raw score in ELA increased by 6.49 points while in Math it increased by 0.41 points from 2016 to 2017. Meanwhile, School 6 overall mean raw score in ELA stayed the same while in Math it decreased from 2016 to 2017.

PPS - FSCS	PARCC ELA Mean PPS - FSCS Scale Scores 2016 2017			ath Mean Scores
			2016	2017
School 6	709.8	709.83	708.9	696.41
School 15	714.9	721.39	721.2	721.61

Mean Scale Results on PARCC for PPS – FSCS Afterschool Participants in 2016 and 2017

Afterschool students in School 15 had a higher mean scale score than non-afterschool students in ELA and Math in 2016 and in 2017. Also, afterschool students in School 6 had a higher mean scale score than non-afterschool students in ELA and Math in 2016. As illustrated in figures 2 and 3 below:

- School 15 afterschool students had a higher ELA mean scale score of 731.2 compared to non-afterschool students of 720.5 in 2017. Afterschool students in School 15 also had a higher Math mean scale score of 737.9 compared to non-afterschool students of 720.2 in 2017.
- School 15 afterschool students had a higher ELA mean scale score of 723.7 compared to non-afterschool students of 714.2 in 2016. Afterschool students in School 15 also had a slightly higher Math mean scale score of 721.5 compared to non-afterschool students of 721.2 in 2016.
- School 6 afterschool students did not score higher in ELA and in Math in 2017, however, they did score slightly higher than non-afterschool students in ELA and in Math in 2016.



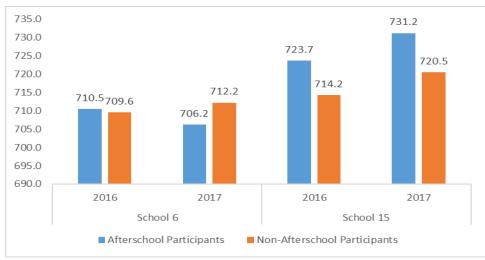
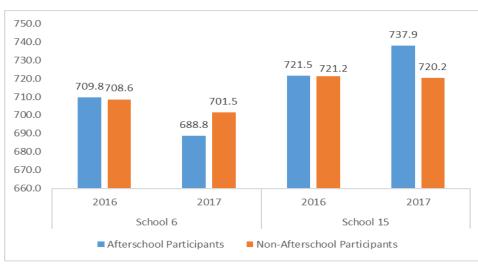


Figure 3: PARCC Math Mean Scale Results for PPS – FSCS Afterschool Participants for 2016 and 2017 Academic Years



Mean Scale Results on PARCC for School Based Health Clinic Participants in 2016

School based health clinic (SBHC) participants in both schools did not score higher than students who didn't use the school based health clinic services in ELA and in Math in 2017. However, School 6 SBHC participants did score higher than students who didn't use the school based health clinic services in Math in 2016.

Table 2: PARCC Results of School Based Health Clinic Participants for 2016 and 2017 Academic
Years

PPS - FSCS SBHC Participants		PARCC ELA Mean Scale Scores		PARCC Math Mean Scale Scores	
		2016	2017	2016	2017
School 6	SBHC Participants	703.53	700.11	709.52	690.64
School 6	Non-SBHC Participants	710.78	712.93	708.81	698.23
School 15	SBHC Participants	702.62	706.64	718.48	715.50
501001 15	Non-SBHC Participants	716.36	724.27	721.53	722.78

3.1.2 Attendance/Chronic Absenteeism

Attendance is a key precondition for student performance and the schools have been particularly focused on addressing chronic absenteeism.

Analysis on attendance was conducted using chronic absenteeism rates to show the overall results for each of the two PPS FSCS for 2016 and 2017. Average day's present in the school was used as a measure to analyze the impact of specific interventions such as afterschool and health services on attendance, an

Chronic Absenteeism rates for School 6 and School 15 increased from 2016 to 2017, as shown in table 3 below.

Table 3: Percentage of students who are chronically absent in 2016.

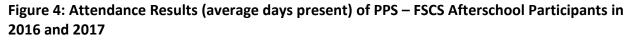
% Chronically Absent				
2016 2017				
School 6	31%	38%		
School 15 14% 19%				

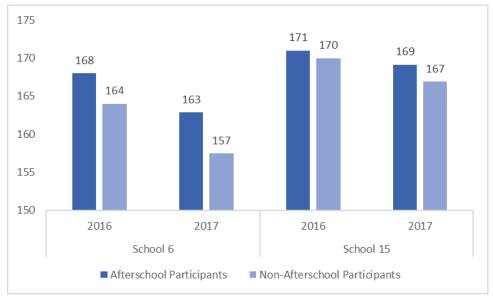
While chronic absenteeism rates were high for both schools, attendance (average days present in the school) was better among afterschool students than non-afterschool students in 2016 and 2017. As illustrated in figure 4 below;

• Students attending the afterschool programs at School 6 had 163 average days present in the school compared to 157 average days present of non-afterschool students in 2017.

Similarly, afterschool students had 168 average days present in the school compared to 164 average days present of non-afterschool students in 2016.

 Students attending the afterschool programs at School 15 had 169 average days present compared to 167 average days present of non-afterschool students in 2017. Also, Students afterschool students had 171 average days present compared to 170 average days present of non-afterschool students in 2016.





School based health clinic (SBHC) participants in both schools did not have higher attendance than students who didn't use the school based health clinic services in 2017. However, students' that received SBHC services at School 15 had 171 average day's present in school compared to 170 average days present of students who did not receive SBHC in 2016.

Table 4: Attendance Results of PPS – FSCS School Based Health Clinic Participants in 2016 and2017

PPS - FSCS SBHC Participants		Average Days	
		2016	2017
School 6	SBHC Participants	161	155
School 6	Non-SBHC Participants	166	162
Sahaal 15	SBHC Participants	171	164
School 15	Non-SBHC Participants	170	169

3.1.3 Behavior

Positive behavior is another important precondition to student participation and attainment. School 6 and 15 have implemented the Positive Behavior Support in Schools (PBSIS) to address behavior challenges. Through PBSIS, staff at each school "received extensive training and technical assistance to help prepare staff to positively and proactively address the individualized behavior support needs of all students." One key measure of behavior is the rate of suspensions within each school.

Suspension rate in 2016 included in-house and out-of-school suspensions, in which, School 6 had 20% and School 15 had 4% in 2016. In 2017, however, the suspension rate only included out-of-school suspensions, and School 6 had 3% and School 15 had 0.2%.

Suspension Rate %			
2016 2017*			
School 6	20%	3%	
School 15	4%	0.2%	

Table 5: Percentage of students suspended in 2016 and 2017.

3.1.4 Youth Development

The Theory of Change for Paterson Public Schools FSCS identifies a range of preconditions around social, emotional and health development thought to be necessary for student achievement.

As noted earlier, ActKnowledge designed a survey questionnaire to elicit these key youth development outcomes. The community school director in School 15 administered the questionnaire in spring 2017. Selected highlights from the surveys across key outcome areas are presented as follows.

Students participate in enrichment opportunities that meet their needs

Figure 5 below shows the percentage of students who report participating in specific activities in school. 'Sports, games or other activities where students get exercise' had the highest rate of self-reported participation at 86%, followed by 'math and science activities for fun' at 76%, and 'read for fun' at 74%. Meanwhile, 64% of students reported participating in 'homework help or tutoring', and 61% reported participating in 'choir/music, drama/theater, or dance/step'.

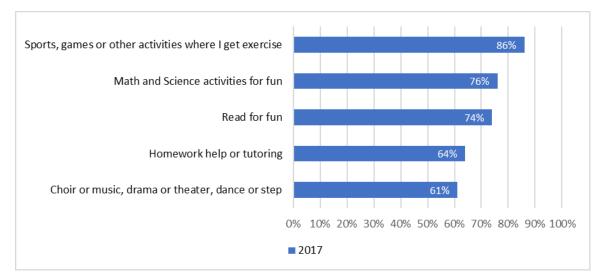
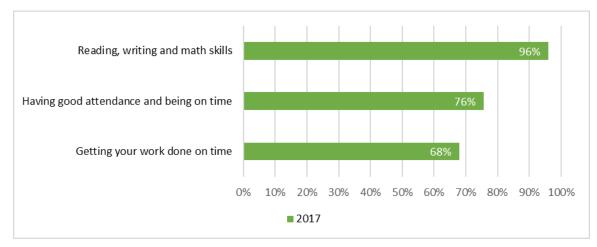


Figure 5: Participation of students in selected activities in schools

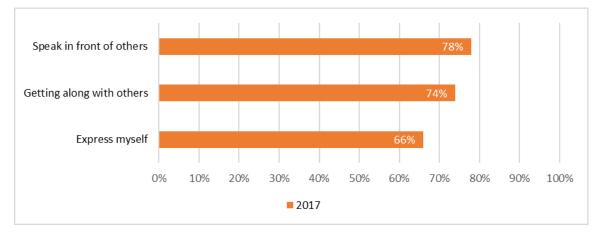
Figure 6, below, shows the rates of self-reported learning of particular skills related to academic achievement. A majority of students reported they are learning 'reading, writing and math skills' (96%). A smaller majority agreed with the statement they were 'learning the importance of getting their work done on time' (76%) and 'having good attendance and being in school on time' (68%).

Figure 6: Selected answers on skills students are learning related to academic achievement



Students also reported learning skills relating to social and emotional development (Figure 7): 78% of students stated that they were learning how to 'speak in front of other' followed by 74% on how to 'get along with others,' and 66% how to 'express themselves'.

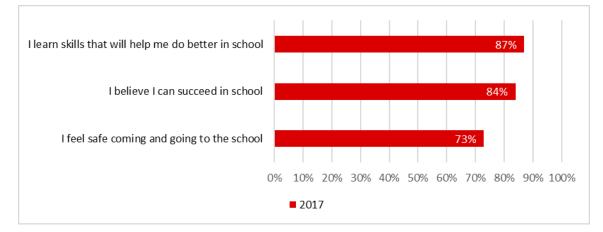
Figure 7: Selected answers on skills students are learning related to social and emotional development



Student perceptions of the Impact of the Full Service Community School

A majority of survey respondents (87%) agreed with the statement that they are 'learning skills that will help me do better in school' and 84% 'believe I can succeed in school,' while 67% agreed that they 'feel safe coming and going to the school'.

Figure 8: Selected answers on impact of being a full service community school



3.2 Parent/Family Outcomes

The Theory of Change for PPS FSCS has identified parental/familial engagement with their child's school as an important precondition for parents/families to support student learning.

Important preconditions for parents/families engaging with the school are that they 'feel welcome', that the 'staff and teachers are helpful and friendly', and that the school is a 'safe place'. Figure 9-11 shows the results from the PPS FSCS Survey in relation to parent's perception on these preconditions. The figures are high across the two FSCS with 'feeling welcomed' at 81% in School 15 and 85% in School 6, 'staff and teachers being helpful and

friendly' at 84% in School 15 and in School 6, and their child's school is a 'safe place' (79% and 76%), respectively.

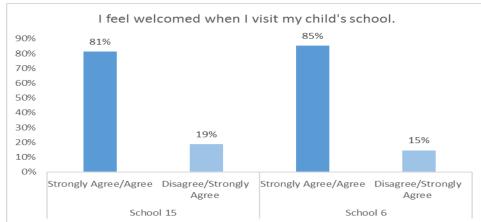


Figure 9: Parent/family perceptions of 'feeling welcomed' in their child's school

Figure 10: Parent/family perception of 'staff and teachers being helpful and friendly'

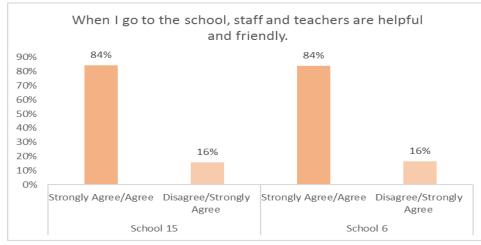
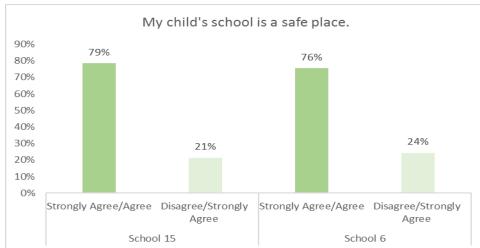


Figure 11: Parent/family perception of their child's school being a 'safe place'



4. Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

Paterson Public Schools (PPS) Full Service Community Schools (FSCS) has made important progress despite challenges. The components of the full service community school model, in particular, afterschool programs, have contributed in student academic achievement and attendance improvements. In particular:

Academic Achievement Results

Afterschool students in School 15 had a higher mean scale score than non-afterschool students in ELA and Math in 2016 and in 2017. Also, afterschool students in School 6 had a higher mean scale score than non-afterschool students in ELA and Math in 2016. For example:

- School 15 afterschool students had a higher ELA mean scale score of 731.2 compared to non-afterschool students of 720.5 in 2017. Afterschool students in School 15 also had a higher Math mean scale score of 737.9 compared to non-afterschool students of 720.2 in 2017.
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- Students attending the afterschool programs at School 6 had 163 average days present in the school compared to 157 average days present of non-afterschool students in 2017. Similarly, School 6 afterschool students had 168 average days present in the school compared to 164 average days present of non-afterschool students in 2016.
- Students attending the afterschool programs at School 15 had 169 average days present compared to 167 average days present of non-afterschool students in 2017. Also, School 15 students' afterschool students had 171 average days present compared to 170 average days present of non-afterschool students in 2016.

This progress was made amid challenges. For example,

- Challenges in turnover of Americorp staff that support the community school directors. This was particularly evident at School 6, where the community school director lost most of her supporting AmeriCorp members.
- Implementing school based health clinic services was challenging in particular families had to change health providers to see a school based health doctor and most of the times that is a hassle and were not willing to do so. Also most often on-site health clinics are created and located in a shared space with a local CBO and the community school director, or with family resource center, and might not be an ideal place to run health services. This also could be a deterrent for families not to sign-up their children to a school-based health center.
- Taking and collecting program attendance continues to be challenging for community school directors and program staff. For example, a program/service implemented under community schools directors supervision isn't so much a problem because they manually take attendance of program participants and record it in an excel spreadsheet. However, if a program/service is not implement under community school director's supervision, but by the school or another CBO, the CSDs has difficulty getting access to the program attendance data.

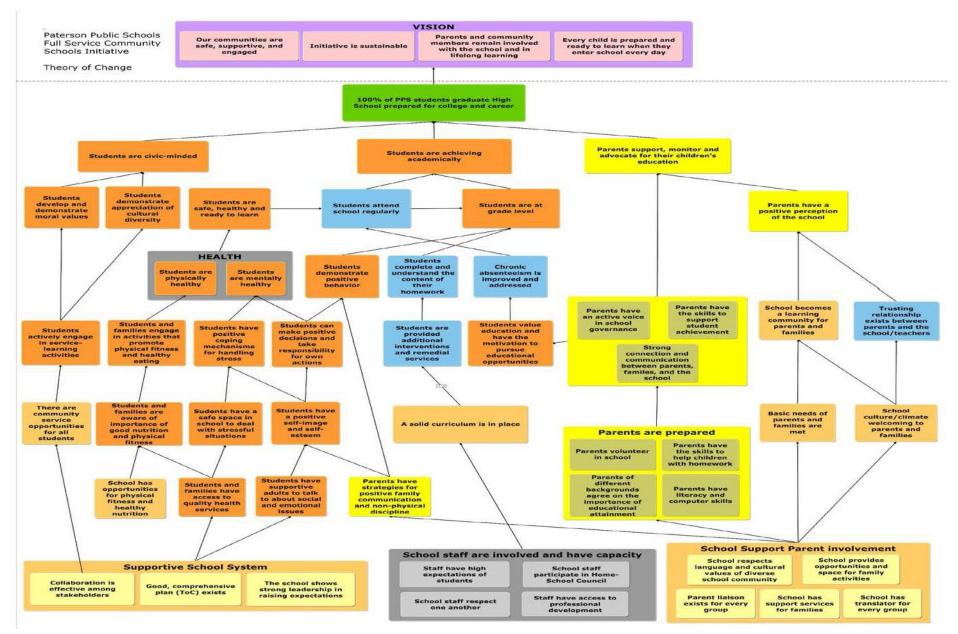
4.2 Recommendations

We recommend, in particular:

- 1. To recognize that a community school, is a whole school strategy, not just a wraparound model, and requires collective approach to identify needs, develop partnerships and align and integrate services in the school, and monitor and track student progress.
- 2. We believe recommendation 1 can be achieved through continuous professional development and learning, during the summer workshops and during the school year such as the coordinators meeting as an example. This would allow schools to learn from each other, report back on their experiences, and improve buy-in of the community school model.
- 3. Continuing and increasing targeting of at-risk students for programs/services and tracking the effectiveness of such outreach and assistance.

Appendix: Evolution of the PPS FSCS Theory of Change 2014-2017

A1: Paterson FSCS Theory of Change (2014-2016)



A2: Amended Paterson FSCS Theory of Change (2017)

