



## **F.S. EDMONDS SCHOOL (GRADES K-6)**



MAYOR'S OFFICE  
OF EDUCATION



A City of Philadelphia  
Designated Community School

COMMUNITY  
SCHOOL PLAN  
MARCH 2017

## LETTER FROM THE MAYOR



This past July, the City of Philadelphia, in partnership with the School District of Philadelphia, proudly announced the first cohort of Community Schools. The Community Schools initiative is a key piece of our shared vision to improve the educational landscape of our city. This effort marks a new approach for how the City supports students and families, strengthens schools, and revitalizes neighborhoods.

By providing services like food pantries or access to dental care we remove barriers that prevent our students from learning. Ultimately, Community Schools and the services they provide allow our students to focus on learning and our teachers to focus on teaching.

I am happy to share that over the past six months the Mayor's Office of Education has conducted a thorough analysis of each of our nine community schools. Our dedicated team has surveyed more than 2,000 community members, students, school staff, and parents to get a comprehensive understanding of the unique needs within each school community. More than 500 additional people participated in 1 of 50 in-person focus groups, providing feedback that informed this report.

This report highlights the ways the City will expand services to meet the specific needs of our schools. Our Community School Coordinators will continue to work closely with their Community School Committees over the next year and we invite you to join them in this shared effort to strengthen our schools and neighborhoods.

Together, we will help our children reach their full potential.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James F. Kenney". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

James F. Kenney  
Mayor of Philadelphia

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### **SUPPORTING STUDENTS AND FAMILIES, STRENGTHENING SCHOOLS, REVITALIZING NEIGHBORHOODS**

The City of Philadelphia's Mayor's Office of Education (MOE) launched the Community Schools initiative, in partnership with the School District of Philadelphia, to strengthen school communities by improving access to programs, services, and supports for the children and families of Philadelphia. Funded by the Philadelphia Beverage Tax, nine community schools were established during FY17.

Community schools are public schools where a full-time coordinator works with the entire school community—students, families, teachers, administrators, service providers, and neighbors—to identify student and community needs, such as expanded health services, after-school programming, and job training. The coordinator then works with service providers and City agencies to bring these resources directly into the school, enabling community schools to become thriving neighborhood centers.

Successful community schools leverage public, private, and philanthropic resources to address non-academic barriers and challenges that too often keep our students from learning. Through this strategy, the City strengthens schools and the School District by sharing the responsibility for meeting the needs of the whole child, and thereby helping hardworking educators focus on teaching.

#### **Community School Coordinators**

A key tenet of a community school is a dedicated Community School Coordinator who works directly in the school and with the entire school community. Philadelphia's Community School Coordinators are city employees reporting to MOE, and working in partnership with the school principal. MOE also provides technical and programmatic assistance to support principals, coordinators, and community partners to secure resources and create opportunities that benefit students, families, and neighbors. Examples of this centralized support include systems strategies around resources such as social and emotional wellness, health services, training and professional development, identifying new resources and partners, and working with local and national coalitions.

#### **A Focus on Health**

Because the physical, social, and emotional health of children is critical, MOE is also working closely with the School District of Philadelphia, various city departments, community organizations, and service providers to develop strategies to increase these services. One highlight is a new collaboration between MOE and the Philadelphia Department of Public Health (PDPH) to develop expanded health services and access in school communities, including dental and vision, asthma care and other strategies to support the district's school nurses. Through this partnership, MOE also hired Healthy Schools Coordinators to provide additional support to community schools. Grounded in the understanding that healthy, active, well-nourished children learn better, they are working to improve access to healthy foods, physical activity and drinking water habits that students need to thrive in and out of the classroom.

#### **Community School Committee**

Each school has organized an advisory committee to review information and provide guidance on priorities for the community school plans. The Community School Committee (CSC) is comprised of school staff, parents/caregivers and community members. The CSC works with the Community School Coordinator and school leadership to develop and implement this plan based on the unique set of needs of their community school. The CSC sets priorities, and advises in the implementation of the community school plan.



## IDENTIFYING SCHOOL NEEDS

Once a school receives designation as a community school, the first step is to conduct a needs assessment in order to discover the strengths of the school and its neighborhood assets, as well as what the school community identifies as priorities for the community school to address.

### What MOE did at every school:

MOE utilized a variety of tools to obtain feedback from community school stakeholders. Staff engaged five stakeholder groups: students, parents, teachers/staff, organizations providing services in the school, and representatives from the community. Methods included:

- ✓ Surveys (paper and digital)
- ✓ Focus groups
- ✓ One-on-one interviews
- ✓ Participation in school activities to hear from as many stakeholders as possible

MOE also analyzed community datasets including information from the American Community Survey, the School District of Philadelphia's annual student, family, and staff surveys, Public Health Management Corporation's Household Health Survey, the Community Health Assessment, and other data sources. This data review process helped provide context for understanding neighborhoods, and was used in conjunction with information from surveys and focus groups. Using this data, MOE created maps and presented detailed data presentations on neighborhood resources, health and census information to each community school committee for their specific neighborhood.<sup>1</sup>



### What MOE learned across schools:

During citywide community outreach there were some consistent themes across all nine of our community schools:

- Job training and access to job opportunities
- Food insecurity and access to healthy foods
- Access to physical, social and emotional health services, including the need for a "trauma informed" approach to serving students
- Access to clothing and uniforms
- Cultural and social opportunities

For example, students who are hungry are not ready to learn, and in many of the neighborhoods where community schools are located people identified food insecurity as a need. To address this broader need, the Mayor's Office of Education is working with SDP and key partners including philanthropic and community organizations to implement food access programs at all the community schools. These programs may include a food "backpack" pilot where

<sup>1</sup> A detailed methodology description is available in Appendix A

## IDENTIFYING SCHOOL NEEDS

students take home food monthly, establishing food pantries and/or fresh produce stands to bring healthy and affordable foods directly to community schools, working with partners like Philabundance, the SHARE Food Program, the Food Trust and Common Market. Some programs will take time to develop and some are advancing already.

As Mayor Kenney has said, every City department has a shared responsibility to improve the ways the City of Philadelphia supports students, families and local schools. MOE is working closely with numerous departments and agencies to create opportunities that can build upon existing good work and align the City's many programs and services. For example, the Community Schools initiative is partnering with the Health Department to place Healthy School Coordinators in schools to support programs to increase physical activity; promote access to healthy food and drinking water, physical activity, and family engagement in wellness. In addition to working closely with the Health Department, the Community Schools team is working with the REBUILD initiative, PHLpreK, the Department of Human Services, and the Managing Director's office to align strategies to serve families and neighborhoods. The Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services (DBHIDS) is working with MOE to help identify schools' ongoing needs and barriers to services, with the goal of strengthening connections to behavioral health services for students and families. Technical assistance staff work closely with the Office of Community Empowerment and Opportunity to refer families to programs that will connect them to public benefits, and with the Commerce department to expand workforce development efforts. The Office of Adult Education is working to help bring their extensive portfolio of adult education to schools. Other examples include working with the Office of Arts, Culture and the Creative Economy and Mural Arts to bring arts and cultural opportunities to schools. MOE is also partnering with the Office of Immigrant Affairs to respond to the critical challenges our immigrant and refugee families are facing.

From this work, MOE created a profile of each school, including an assessment of community resources, demographic information, and information about the neighborhood and specific school community.



***“We cannot expect our children to succeed academically if they come to school hungry, sick or too traumatized to learn. Expanding the community schools approach is one way that we will strategically align City services and other resources to better address the needs of students and families. I’m excited to expand this proven strategy in Philadelphia and look forward to working with these school communities.”*** - Mayor Jim Kenney

## ABOUT F.S. EDMONDS SCHOOL

**F.S. Edmonds School** is located at the intersection of East Gorgas Lane and Thouron Avenue in the Cedarbrook neighborhood of Northwest Philadelphia. The school serves students in Pre-K to 6th grade; it is in the process of becoming an elementary/middle school, adding a grade a year until it includes an 8th grade. Most teachers have worked at F.S. Edmonds for more than 10 years. The school has an active Home & School Association and is currently working to form a School Advisory Council.

### Current Offerings:

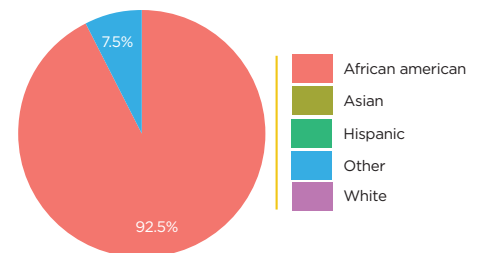
- An afterschool program that serves 25 students
- Children's Literacy Initiative school and receive additional literacy support from the School District of Philadelphia

### Partners:

- The school has formed a partnership with the SHARE Food Program

Total students <sup>2</sup>	522
English Language Learners	N/A
Special Education	19.3%
Economically Disadvantaged	100%

### F.S. Edmonds School Demographics



Percentage of adults who have never been told by the doctor they have high blood pressure or hypertension, F.S. Edmonds<sup>3</sup>:

**43% +/-6%** 76th percentile in the city

City average: **38%**

Percentage of adults who report there's a park nearby they are comfortable visiting during the day, F.S. Edmonds<sup>4</sup>:

**74% +/-7%** 63th percentile in the city

City average: **72%**

<b>Recreation Centers</b>	There are two recreation facilities near the school that are used by families; each is a 20-minute walk from the school. Dorothy Emmanuel Playground is located at Bayard and Provident streets, and Simons Recreation Center is 1.2 miles away on Woolston Avenue.
<b>Libraries</b>	The Wadsworth Avenue Library located at Michener and Wadsworth streets is a 14-minute walk.
<b>Green Space</b>	Finley Playground is about a 15-minute walk from the school, located at Mansfield and Hortter streets.
<b>Health Resources</b>	There is a community health center nearby (The Health and Literacy Center at Broad and Morris)
<b>Grocery Stores</b>	Chestnut Hill and Abington Hospitals are each a 10-minute drive away, and Mt. Pleasant Medical Center, the closest city health center, is less than a mile from the school.
<b>Hospital/Medical</b>	There is an Aldi on Ogontz Avenue and a Fresh Grocer on Wyncote Avenue.

<sup>2</sup> Data in this table is taken from the School Profiles on The School District of Philadelphia website, [https://webapps1.philasd.org/school\\_profile/](https://webapps1.philasd.org/school_profile/)

<sup>3</sup> PHMC Household Health Survey, 2010, 2012 and 2014

<sup>4</sup> PHMC Household Health Survey, 2012 and 2014



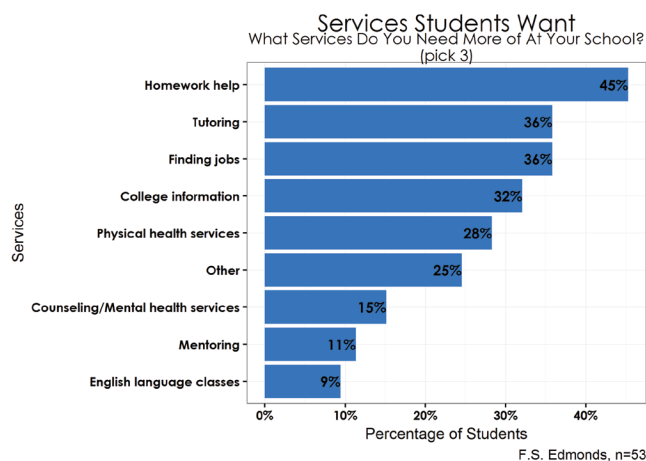
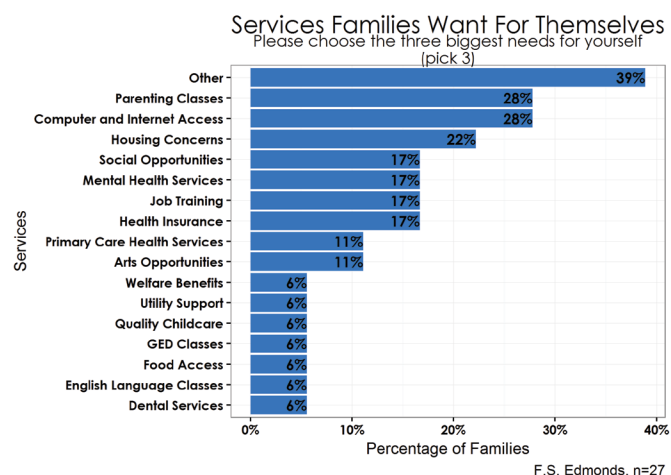
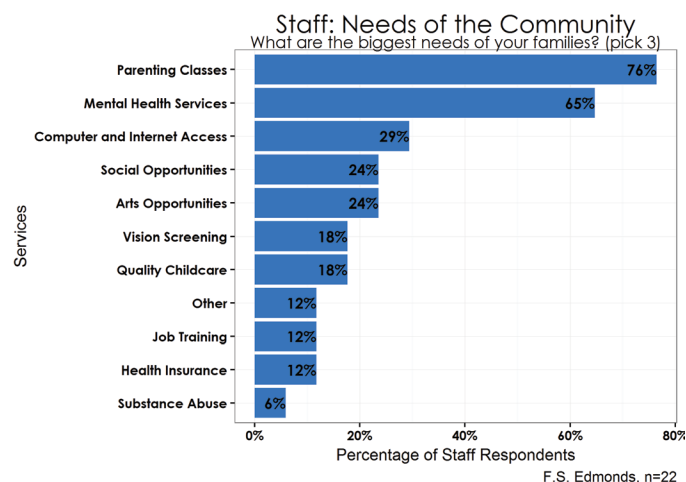
# ABOUT F.S. EDMONDS SCHOOL

## What MOE Learned at F.S. Edmonds School

At F.S. Edmonds, more than 190 students, staff, families, community members and school partners completed surveys, participated in focus groups or interviews.

- ✓ Students, staff, families, and service providers agree that students need more extra-curricular activities including homework help and tutoring
- ✓ Supports for families are needed; specifically, increasing access to internet, help with housing challenges, help accessing health insurance, and classes for parents
- ✓ When asked what activities students wanted more of, students requested more physical activity programs including yoga and soccer

F.S. Edmonds' community school committee (CSC) consists of families, teachers, staff, community members, school partners, the assistant principal and both the community school and healthy school coordinators. (A list of CSC members is available on page 13.)



# F.S. EDMONDS' COMMUNITY SCHOOL FOCUS AREAS

## PRIMARY PRIORITIES

- Establish partnerships to increase extra-curricular activities
- Support a welcoming and inclusive environment
- Increase the number of resources and opportunities for families and community members
- Increase the physical activity of students

### Establish Partnerships to Increase Extra-Curricular Activities

Students, families, and staff members shared that they want more extra-curricular activities for students; existing programs have capacity to serve 25 students. The CSC expressed interest in building partnerships with organizations that can offer opportunities for student engagement that supplement and support student learning.

#### *Initial action steps (3 months)*

- Generate a list of potential extracurricular partner organizations
- Host a partner fair and information session for groups interested in working at F.S. Edmonds

#### *Short-term goals (6-12 months)*

- Research grant opportunities to support extra-curricular activities at the school
- Identify new extracurricular activities to commence in Fall 2017
- Identify training opportunities (in areas such as classroom management, school norms, etc.) to support partners that provide extra-curricular activities at the school

#### *Long-term goals (2 years)*

- Create a robust environment of extra-curricular opportunities for all interested students (e.g. arts programs, sports etc.)
- Create an array of academic enrichment activities and opportunities for students (e.g. media activities, tutoring, etc.)
- Provide all extra-curricular partners with trainings and information on classroom management and the expectations of the school

### Support a welcoming and inclusive environment

The F.S. Edmonds school community is focused on developing a high-functioning team of staff, families, partners, and neighbors to work together toward a common vision. The goal is to foster a sense of community and inclusion through open, solutions-oriented work.

## F.S. EDMONDS' COMMUNITY SCHOOL FOCUS AREAS

### *Initial action steps completed (3 month):*

- Develop activities to engage parents and community members in the school community, including volunteer activities, parent centered programs and community events
- Identify training topics and/or speakers applicable to the school community (staff, families, neighbors, partners)

### *Short-term goals (6-12 months)*

- Identify ongoing training resources and opportunities to support the school community
- Identify more development opportunities for volunteers to increase the presence of adults who support a positive and inclusive environment

### *Long-term goals (2 year goals)*

- Create an environment where all staff, families, students, and community members feel welcomed and supported
- Ensure that there are resources in place for ongoing training to support a positive school climate
- Ensure that there are programs and services in place that support a diverse and inclusive environment
- Train family volunteers in the school's climate plan and values

## **Increase the number of resources and opportunities for families and community members**

The Community School Committee combined two areas of need – more opportunities for family engagement and more resources for families – into one priority area. Through focus groups, parents identified the need for more family engagement in their school. They talked about wanting to help the principal and teachers with school climate, recess, and classroom activities. On surveys, families requested more access to services such as internet and computers, rental assistance, and classes for parents.

### *Initial action steps (3 months):*

- Survey parents on specific topics of interest and the specific needs of the parents to generate a list of speakers and classes
- Recruit family and community members to volunteer in the school
- Identify space to create a family resource center with computer access
- Identify organizations that will train families on how to manage the own resource center

### *Short-term goals (6-12 months):*

- Create a family resource center with computer access
- Train family and community members to volunteer at the school

### *Long-term goals (2 year goals):*

- Enable families to lead and manage the resource center and train others to do so as well

## **Increase the physical activity of students**

When asked what activities students wanted more of, 47% of students said physical activity including sports and yoga. Younger students drew pictures of students playing on a playground and playing soccer when asked what would make school better. Additionally, the Principal and other school staff expressed a need for structured recess, to increase physical activity, decrease injury, and promote conflict resolution skills.



## F.S. EDMONDS' COMMUNITY SCHOOL FOCUS AREAS

### *Initial action steps (3 months):*

- Evaluate and identify opportunities for physical activities during the school day including movement breaks and sports
- Provide tools for supporting structured and socialized recess
- Identify potential partners who can provide physical activity programming to students

### *Short-term goals (6-12 months):*

- Work with the school to adopt a socialized recess plan
- Establish 2-3 new physical activity partnerships at the school

### *Long-term goals (2 year goals):*

- Increase opportunities for physical activity that engage the school community (i.e. staff vs students sporting events, parent/guardian & child dances, game day assemblies)
- Identify and connect physical activity partners to opportunities for training and support

## SECONDARY PRIORITIES

Identify resources and opportunities that support social emotional health. Mental health came up with each stakeholder group during the needs assessment, and teachers identified this as their highest priority. Parents talked about how families with private insurance need help accessing mental health services. The Community School Coordinator will work with all stakeholder groups to identify resources and opportunities that support social emotional health.

Identify volunteers and resources to help with school beautification. There is strong interest in school beautification projects at F.S. Edmonds. Members of the school community have requested updates to the paint within the building. Students requested more playground equipment, and there is available space in the school yard. The coordinator will work to identify volunteers and resources to help with school beautification.



## GET INVOLVED

### What's Next

As the name implies, Community Schools are not the work of one person, but of all the people in the school and in the neighborhood. Already, partners are coming together every month to share resources and identify new ways to help the school families and staff are meeting regularly at Community School Committee meetings, and new strategies are being developed to achieve the community school's goals. The principal, staff, and Community School and Healthy School Coordinators will continue to work together with existing community partners to expand services and opportunities that meet the needs of students, families, and community members.

### Get Involved

There are many ways to support your neighborhood community schools:

- **Volunteer** - Community schools offer events throughout the year that require volunteers. Volunteering can include one-time opportunities, such as presenting during career days, special event support, or ongoing opportunities with the school or one of the many partners who work there. *Volunteers in community schools will need to follow the SDP volunteer guidelines and complete all required background checks.*
- **Partner** - Philadelphia is a city with many strong neighborhood, community and citywide organizations that are working, or would like to work with schools to bring additional resources and opportunities to children and families. *Please be aware that if your organization is interested in working in a school there are School District of Philadelphia requirements you may have to meet.*
- **Contribute** - Community schools are often looking for donations, including in-kind items such as winter coats or uniforms for clothing closets, as well as for funding for specific initiatives or programs.

To learn more about how to volunteer, partner or contribute, contact our office at **Community.Schools@phila.gov**

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To find out more about the Community School Committee or specific opportunities at this community school contact the F.S. Edmonds Community School Coordinator, Ashley Session. **Email: Ashley.Session@phila.gov**



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**The Mayor's Office of Education would like to thank the following individuals, organizations, and city departments for their valuable support in producing this plan.**

The School District of Philadelphia  
Franklin S. Edmonds School Principal Kristina Lamia

The members of Franklin S. Edmonds'

Community School Committee:

Tracy Joslyn, *Teacher and Parent*

Jenna Zorn, *Teacher*

Kristen Heifet, *School Counselor*

Sandra Brown, *Teacher*

Brittany Mitchell, *Community Partner*

Tonyella Cook-Artis, *Community Member*

Jasmine Sessoms, *Community Member*

Jenaye Mumford, *Community Member*

Mack Duncan, *Community Member*

Germaine Pritchett, *Parent*

Loretta Lear, *Parent*

Kyasha Tyson, *Government*

Meghan Buggy, *Teacher*

Thank you to the many educators and administrators of the School District of Philadelphia and the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers who have worked with MOE to develop this strategy to support our schools.

Many City Departments and City Council Offices have offered their partnerships, and shared their knowledge, ideas, and resources to support this initiative.



## METHODOLOGY

### Survey Development

To develop the community school surveys, the Mayor's Office of Education worked with local and national partners, reviewed surveys used by other community school initiatives and cities, and worked with coordinators and students to ensure that the data collected was useful and the questions meaningful. In total, nine surveys were reviewed by two national and seven local partners including the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers, Community Legal Services, and more. Initially, surveys were created for each key stakeholder group: students, families, school staff, community members, and service providers. An additional survey for younger students (grades Kindergarten – 2nd) was also used. Themes incorporated into the surveys included questions about needs and services, and stakeholders' perspectives on the school and community.

### Focus Groups

Focus groups provided community school coordinators the opportunity to have deeper discussions with stakeholders about their concerns and priorities. Each focus group was facilitated by either the community school coordinator or healthy school coordinator. Staff from the Mayor's Office of Education supported the process as note takers when necessary. Training on facilitation was provided to community school and healthy school coordinators in August, and sample focus group scripts were shared with all coordinators. Questions focused on the needs of the school and community. Focus group notes were reviewed, themes were identified for each discussion and entered into a summary table for comparison across stakeholder groups.

### Interviews

In order to collect as much information as possible, some coordinators chose to do additional outreach to stakeholders in the form of 1:1 interviews. Interviews were between 20 and 60 minutes long and notes were collected and reviewed similar to focus groups.

### Community Data

The community information section presents findings from an analysis of data from the American Community Survey (ACS), Philadelphia Health Management Corporation's (PHMC) Household Health Survey, the Philadelphia Police Department, and Get Healthy Philly.

- Key measures asked in the 2009-2014 ACS were measured in all census tracts that overlap the area within 1000 feet of the school.
- The PHMC survey data was calculated for 2010, 2012, and 2014 by measuring respondents within 4000 feet of a school (the larger buffer was chosen due to the survey's relatively low sample size.)
- Drug crimes were measured using public data released by the Philadelphia Police Department's part II narcotics offenses, and calculated by adding up the number of events within 1000 feet of each residence in the city. The average number of crimes per residence is then calculated within ½ mile of the school.
- Estimates from Get Healthy Philly (Philadelphia Department of Public Health) are used for areas of the city that have both high poverty (greater than 20% of the block is below the poverty line) and there is low or no access to healthy food within walking distance (half a mile).



***“F.S. Edmonds is excited to work with the Mayor's Office to move the vision of Mayor Kenney and Mr. Hackney forward. We have already seen an increase in community involvement and interest from potential partners. The students, families, and community of F.S. Edmonds will greatly benefit from this initiative and can't thank the Mayor's Office enough for this opportunity.”*** – Kristina Lamia, Principal



MAYOR'S OFFICE  
OF EDUCATION

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF  
**PHILADELPHIA**

**Otis Hackney**

Chief Education Officer  
City of Philadelphia

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**Susan Gobreski**

Director for Community Schools  
Mayor's Office of Education

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**Dr. William R. Hite**

Superintendent of the School  
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