

Alain Locke
Elementary School
(Grades K-8)



MAYOR'S OFFICE
OF EDUCATION



A City of Philadelphia
Designated Community School
Cohort II

COMMUNITY
SCHOOL PRIORITIES
MARCH 2018

LETTER FROM THE MAYOR



In September 2017, the City of Philadelphia and The School District of Philadelphia welcomed three more Philadelphia public schools into the Community Schools initiative. Community Schools are one of the key ways that the City and the School District are working together to strengthen schools and Philadelphia communities. We are proud to continue expanding this initiative into more neighborhoods across the city.

With the addition of new schools, Community Schools now serve over 6,500 students, their families, as well as thousands of neighbors living near each school. By providing services like job training, benefits access, and farmer's markets, we can remove barriers to student learning and improve economic opportunities for Philadelphians.

An important feature of this initiative is that it is community-led — from the initial application from schools interested in becoming a Community School, to the final set of priorities and strategies established for each school.

Building on lessons learned from the first cohort of nine schools, the Mayor's Office of Education conducted a needs analysis at each of the three new schools. Our dedicated team surveyed more than 1,800 community members, students, school staff, parents, and families to get a comprehensive understanding of the unique needs facing each school community.

We are committed to expanding the Community Schools initiative to 20 schools over the next five years. Litigation against the Philadelphia Beverage Tax constrained our expansion this year, but did not limit the impact we have had in each of the communities served. We look forward to building on our early success in the coming years.

This report dives into the strengths and challenges facing the new Community Schools as well as the City's plan to address those needs moving forward. We are grateful to the Community School Committees, Principals, and Community School Coordinators who have worked hard to support this process, and we invite you to join them as they implement the strategies and solutions outlined in this document.

Together, we will ensure that every student and every neighborhood can thrive.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James F. Kenney". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "James" being particularly prominent.

James F. Kenney
Mayor
City of Philadelphia

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ABOUT COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

What are Community Schools?

Community Schools are School District of Philadelphia neighborhood schools designated by the City of Philadelphia to serve as community centers, improving access to resources and supports for students, families, and the neighborhood. Each school offers a unique set of services and programs based on feedback from the community. A City-employed Community School Coordinator manages the process at each school while working closely with the principal, community members, and service providers.

Community Schools Support:

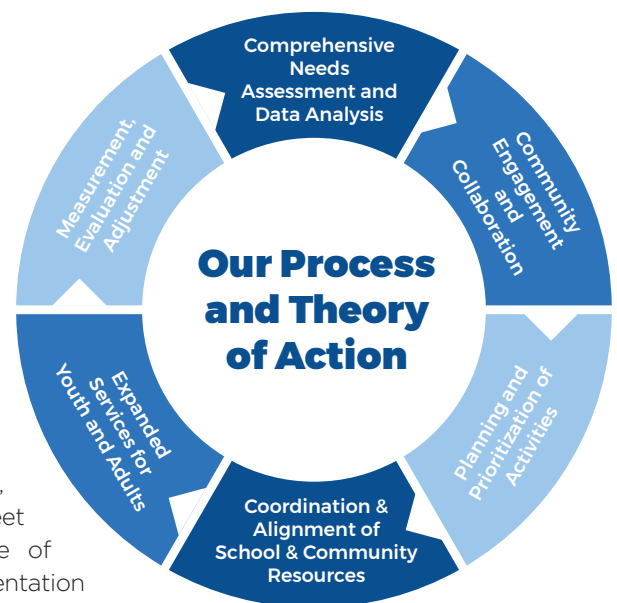


Providing Capacity & Coordination

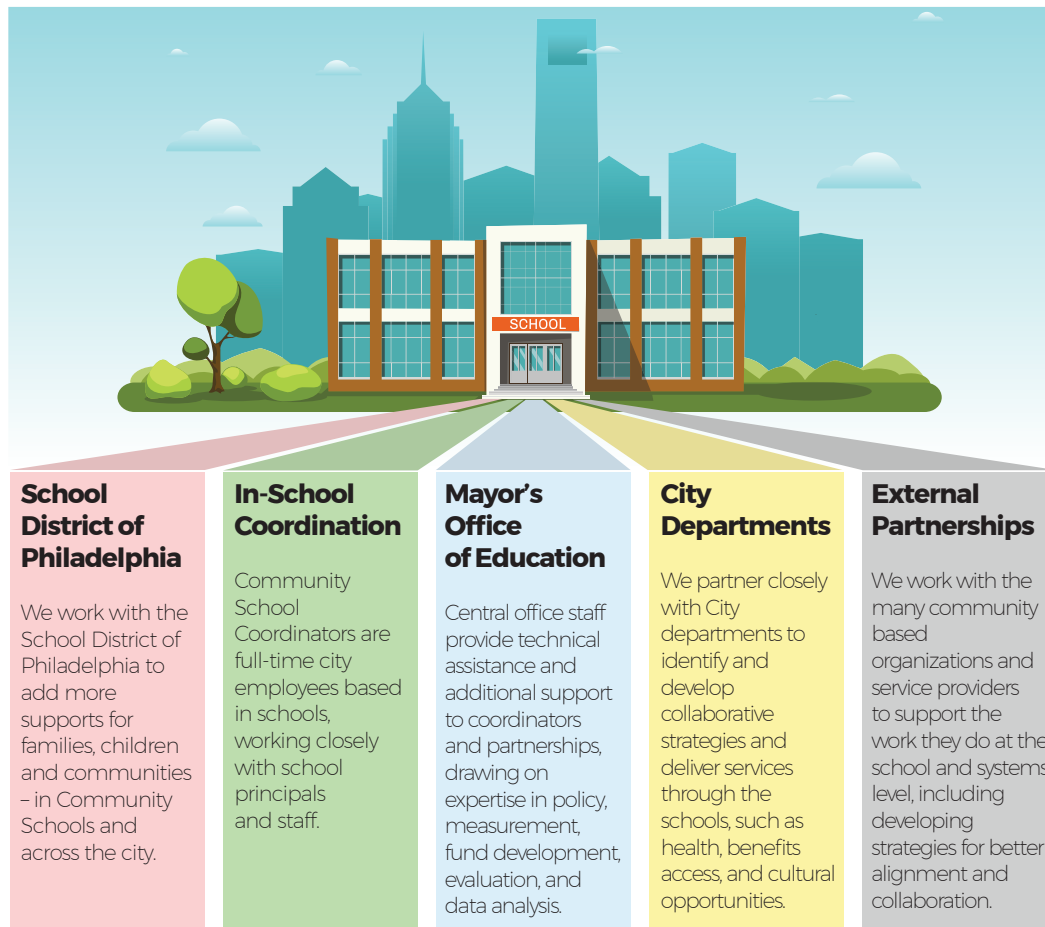
Community School Coordinators provide added capacity to neighborhood schools, allowing educators to focus primarily on academics. Coordinators organize community programs, connect and collaborate with community and service partners, conduct community outreach, and oversee new initiatives from planning through evaluation. Community input and regular program evaluation play important roles in process.

Aligning partners and resources

Community Schools are a product of collaboration between The School District of Philadelphia, the City, and community partners, who work together on intentional alignment of resources to meet pressing community needs. The work of the Mayor's Office of Education (MOE) is to facilitate collaboration and support implementation of community-driven plans.



ABOUT COMMUNITY SCHOOLS



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, students, partners, 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.

Program highlights and successes from Year 1:

- In 2016-2017 The Mayor's Office of Education completed a data-informed needs assessment in nine schools, created a stress index, a tool that aggregates information from multiple data points including, but not limited to, rate of poverty, obesity, asthma, and diabetes to help provide community context, and developed community school plans to meet school and community needs.
- Community Schools have provided thousands of pounds of nutritious food to hundreds of students and their families through food backpack programs, pantries, and farmers' markets.
- Community Schools have hosted events and trainings for adults in the community.
- Community Schools have also hosted workforce development events, including a hospitality and food service training program that offered guaranteed employment.
- Community resource rooms in schools have provided free laundry and/or clothing and basic necessities to students and community members.

ABOUT COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

- Coordinators have facilitated over 120 internships, work experiences, and career exploration opportunities for students.
- The Mayor's Office of Education selected three new schools from a pool of applicants to join the initiative in Year 2.
- The City and School District announced a partnership to create 22 new social worker positions in schools, including eight Community Schools.
- The Mayor's Office of Education partnered with education research firm Research for Action (RFA) to develop a Progress Report template, which tracks early implementation of the Community Schools model based on best practices.
- To assess implementation quality, short-term outcomes, and long-term outcomes, the Mayor's Office of Education hired RFA to conduct an independent evaluation. Now in the first year of the evaluation, RFA is measuring participation in and satisfaction of community school programming by conducting surveys, focus groups, and interviews. MOE also hired an independent researcher to study the social return on investment associated with Community Schools.

About our Community School Priorities

The Mayor's Office of Education staff work with each new school through the needs assessment and priority-setting process to ensure that the Community Schools' work reflects real community needs, has buy-in from stakeholders based in the school and surrounding neighborhood, and aligns with the school's academic goals. As no two schools are alike; neither are the plans.

These plans help to frame the work ahead in each school by establishing a set of priorities for new projects and services. Rather than spread resources too thin trying to address every possible issue, our approach seeks to target the highest-priority, non-academic issues facing a community, and identified by the community itself. After the implemented solutions have had some time to take effect, we will reassess community needs and adjust our plans as needed.



“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 ALAIN LOCKE SCHOOL

Alain Locke Elementary is home to 447 students, 75% of whom live within the school's catchment area, which includes the Mill Creek and West Powelton sections of the city. While the students are primarily African American, the school serves a growing number of Bengali immigrants. Among the school's English Language Learner students, more than half come from Bengali speaking households; other primary home languages include Spanish, French, and Arabic, though in much smaller numbers. The school was also selected to be one of seven schools in Drexel University's Promise Neighborhood grant application. Through a grant from the Department of Education, Drexel is funding the Community Schools model at Alain Locke School, in conjunction with MOE and SDP implementation, in order to fulfill deliverables set by the Promise Neighborhood grant.



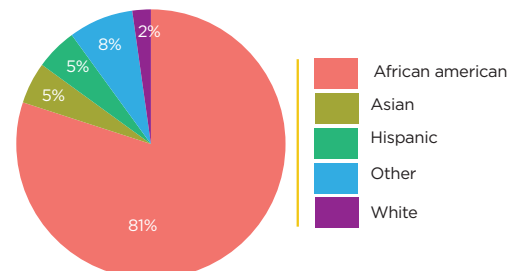
Current Offerings

- Programs funded by Drexel's ProSPER (Promise of Strong Partnership for Education Reform (Promise Neighborhood Grant))
- Recent K-2 classroom renovations designed to promote early literacy (one of eight District schools to receive this funding).



Total students ¹	447
English Language Learners	10% (District Average: 11%)
Special Education	15% (District Average: 14%)
Economically Disadvantaged	100% (District CEP rate: 100%)
Attendance (percentage of students attending at least 95% of school days)	41% (K-12 average: 46.2%)

Alain Locke School Demographics



Partners

- Drexel University Lindy Scholars Program
- EAT.RIGHT.NOW. (provided by Drexel University)
- Mayor's Commission on Aging
- Foster Grandparent Program
- Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) Reading and Literacy Program

Community Data

Percentage of population over 25 years of age who do not have a high school diploma ² :	27%	Percentage of households below the poverty line ³ :	42%
74th percentile in city City average: 21.1%		77th percentile in city City average: 30.3%	

¹ Data in this table is from the 2016-2017 School Profiles on The School District of Philadelphia website, <https://dashboards.philasd.org/extensions/philadelphia/index.html>.

² American Community Survey 2010-2014.

³ American Community Survey 2010-2014.

ABOUT ALAIN LOCKE SCHOOL

What MOE Learned through the Needs Assessment at Alain Locke School

At Alain Locke School, over 320 students, staff, families, community members and school partners completed surveys, participated in focus groups, or were interviewed.

✓ In focus groups, students, parents, and staff all mentioned the need for afterschool programming for youth. Students mentioned sports, dance, cheer, drama clubs, and homework help as being a part of their ideal after-school activities.

✓ Community members identified job training as the top need for adults in the community. In focus groups, parents and community members discussed the need for basic education and job training, including reading, writing, computer training, and resume workshops.

✓ Staff identified social and emotional well-being supports as a key need for youth. Providers and community members expanded during focus groups that barriers to services include transportation and lack of a primary care physician.

While 11 Community Schools are funded by the Philadelphia Beverage Tax, implementation at Alain Locke School is funded by a federal grant managed by Drexel University:

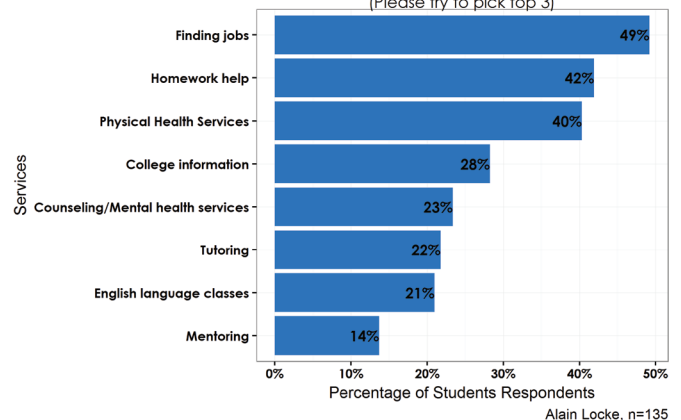
In 2016, Drexel University received a 5-year Department of Education Promise Neighborhood grant to implement strategies to support schools and strengthen systems of family and community support in Mantua, Belmont, Mill Creek, Powelton Village and West Powelton.

The grant includes supports for education, public safety, housing, and economic opportunity. Part of Drexel's strategy is to create at least one Community School among the Promise Neighborhood schools.

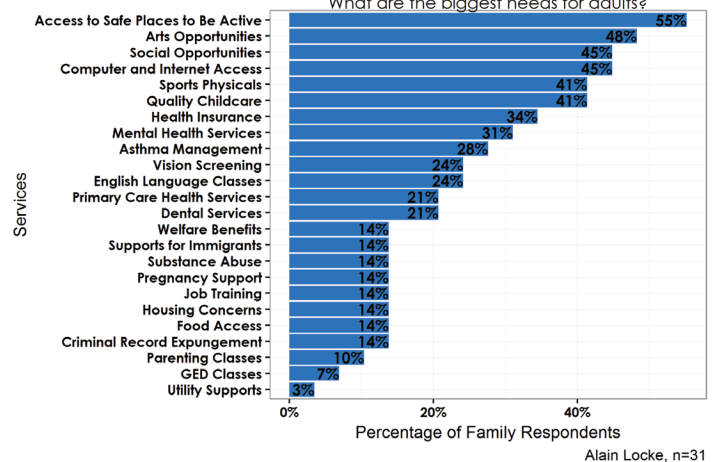
After an application process that mimicked the City's general process but was limited to the six School District of Philadelphia schools in the Promise Neighborhood, Alain Locke School, a K - 8 school was selected to be the Promise Neighborhood's first Community School.

In addition to the support of the Mayor's Office of Education, Locke has the support of the Promise Neighborhood network and resources in its local community.

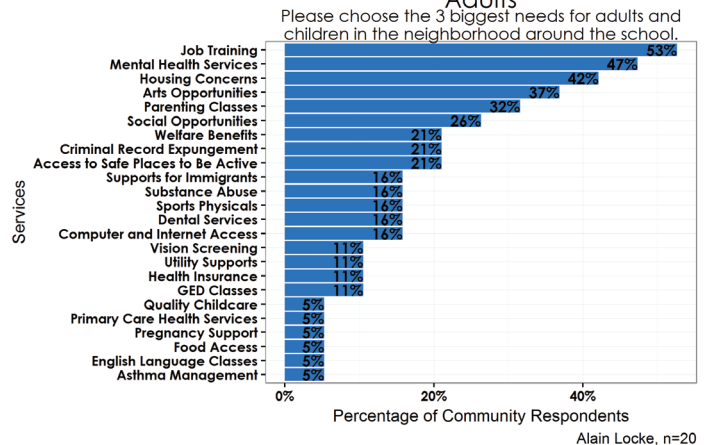
Students: Needs of Youth
What services do you need more of at your school?
(Please try to pick top 3)



Family: Needs of Adults
What are the biggest needs for adults?



Community: Needs of Youth and Adults
Please choose the 3 biggest needs for adults and children in the neighborhood around the school.



LOCKE ELEMENTARY COMMUNITY SCHOOL PRIORITIES

Social and Emotional Well-being

Vision: Youth and adults are mentally healthy

Community members, school staff, and families at Locke stated that services supporting social and emotional well-being were a priority. The Community School Committee agreed that work in this area should focus on both youth and adults since many of the stresses adults in the community face impact their children as well. In focus groups, community members and partners both talked about the trauma parents are dealing with and the effect it has on students. Strategies to support the community around mental health should include both individual needs and increasing protective factors at the community level. As part of the Philadelphia Support Team for Education Partnership (STEP initiative), Locke School is expected to receive a clinical coordinator, a behavioral health consultant, a case manager and a family peer specialist, which will offer support to students soon.

Increase access to mental health services – In partnership with SDP, we will increase access to mental health services at Locke and in the neighborhood by helping to improve awareness of services and reducing barriers to receiving services. To start, we will develop a comprehensive list of mental health providers which will include the services they provide along with the insurances they accept. We will also seek to provide access to on-site mental health services for students and families. This will be accomplished by developing partnerships with mobile mental health providers. Additionally, we will develop a list of providers to whom existing partners refer and ensure participants have someone to whom they can connect. Improving the direct connection between providers will support parents and community members as they navigate complex service systems.

Support training with school staff – To encourage a positive mental health climate at Locke, we will support training for staff on trauma-informed care and mental health first aid. We will do this by working with the School District of Philadelphia's Office of School Climate and Safety and the Office of Prevention and Intervention to facilitate trainings during professional development meetings. Additionally, we will provide wellness activities for staff which may include yoga or other supports to encourage social and emotional wellness.

Extended Day Programming

Vision: More youth and adults have access to extended day programming at the school

Students, families, and community members all agreed that quality after-school programming is a priority. Parents especially expressed a need for safe and academically supportive programming where students can receive homework help, educational enrichment and cultural experiences that will allow them to grow socially and academically. Programming should include a variety of options and could include cultural, arts, sports, and academic enrichment. We will identify programming that supports students of all grades to ensure they meet childcare needs of families when necessary.

Support programming that improves academic success – We will identify potential partners who can provide after-school programs that support students academically. Currently, only Drexel's Lindy Scholars program provides tutoring after school. We will work to expand or supplement existing opportunities by identifying and connecting with partners who meet the needs of the students and the school.

LOCKE ELEMENTARY COMMUNITY SCHOOL PRIORITIES

Adults have access to programs during non-school hours – We will support a variety of after-school programs by identifying programs that best match the interests and needs of the school community. In addition to programs for students, the school can offer opportunities for adults that includes a variety of options including parenting classes, adult education, and social and cultural opportunities. Since fees are a significant barrier to families, we will select programs that are free or very low cost to participants.

Identify programming that supports a healthy school – We will seek programming that will support the goals of the Healthy Schools Initiative, which includes access to healthy foods, increased physical activity, and improved water access in the school. We will accomplish this by including after-school sports, dance, nutrition, and fitness programs that will address the interests of the surrounding community. Doing this will provide a safe place for youth before and after school, as well as expose them to physical activity and healthy food experiences they might not otherwise be exposed to. Additionally, adults will be able to take advantage of evening exercise and cooking classes. We will also seek to partner with adult athletic leagues to initiate monthly adult sport nights.



Employment Supports

Vision: More adults and youth are employed

Families and students stated that job training was a priority in response to surveys. With a significant population of students and families who are living in homeless shelters and PHA housing, financial stability is a barrier for many in the Locke community. To better support economic stability in the community, increased support for employment is vital. Students, partners, and community members agreed that adult education and viable job training are essential for this community.

Provide training and classes for adults – We will provide adult education courses to participants who have not obtained their high school diploma or equivalency. This will help expand community members' eligibility for long-term employment that improves financial well-being. In addition, we will connect families with training opportunities that will help secure employment. Additionally, we will seek partners and resources that have documented success in helping participants secure and retain employment.

Provide help and resources to job seekers – We will open our computer lab for adults and youth to help them complete employment applications. This will include helping youth complete applications for youth summer employment. Improving access to a computer and broadband Internet will help alleviate a common barrier for families to find employment. It will also support students who are eligible for and are seeking early work experiences and programs.

Increase awareness of available jobs – We will create job board and or publicly shared jobs list of current job openings that match the skill set of our community. Doing this will allow families to become more aware of employment opportunities and increase financial stability. We will also host education nights for families to hear from variety of education and job training institutions.

LOCKE ELEMENTARY COMMUNITY SCHOOL PRIORITIES

Social and Cultural Opportunities

Vision: Students are exposed to new social and cultural opportunities

We will identify a variety of social opportunities for both youth and adults. We will do this by developing a social committee who can identify appropriate activities as well as work on effective communication tools that will reach potential participants. We will create opportunities for families to gather by hosting activities such as community dinners, parent cafes, and community workshops.

Food Access and Nutrition

Vision: Families and children are healthier and have access to healthier foods

Access to healthy food and ability of community members to afford healthy options are both challenges in the Locke community. To increase support in these areas, we will identify partners that offer nutrition education programs. We will also host workshops on how to select affordable healthy food options, which may include nutritional cooking, meal planning, and budgeting.

Basic Needs

Vision: Families in the community have access to basic necessities

Many members of the Locke community live in shelters or PHA housing and supports with utilities, Internet access, and household items came up frequently in surveys. We will create a Community Shop where community members can receive needed household and personal care items to support basic needs. We will work with partners and the community to maintain supplies and offer open hours for families and community members to shop.

Mentoring

Vision: More students have a supportive, caring relationship with a trusted adult outside of their family

We will identify mentoring programs to give more students an opportunity to connect to trusted adults in their community. We will identify mentoring opportunities that take place as assembly programs, after-school programs, and official one-on-one mentoring opportunities. Providing mentoring to students will be beneficial to students' self-esteem, decision-making, life skills, and soft skills. Opportunities will be vetted by the coordinator, committee members, and school staff.



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 schools' goals. The principal, staff, and Community School Coordinator will continue to work together with existing community partners to expand services and opportunities that meet the needs of students, families, and community members.

Additionally, the Mayor's Office of Education will continue its evaluation process with Research for Action to define and measure key outcomes across the initiative over the coming years.

Get Involved

There are many ways to support your neighborhood Community Schools:

- 1. 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 School District of Philadelphia's volunteer guidelines and complete all required background checks.*
- 2. Partner** – Philadelphia is a city with many strong neighborhood, community and citywide organizations that are working with – 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.*
- 3. Contribute** – Community Schools are often looking for donations, including in-kind items such as winter coats or uniforms for clothing closets, as well as funding for specific initiatives or programs.

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

To find out more about the Community School Committee or specific opportunities at this community school contact the Locke Elementary School Community School Coordinator, Pamela Evans.
Email: **Pamela.Evans@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.

School District of Philadelphia
Locke Principal Katherine Carter

Community School Committee:

Bianca Waters, *Teacher*

Pamela Evans, *Mayor's Office of Education*

Edward Ford, *Philadelphia Technical Institute*

Carmen Campbell, *Parent*

Joanne Ferroni, *Drexel University Promise Neighborhood*

Pamela Blanding-Godbolt, *Community Member*

Cass Green, *People's Emergency Center*

Syreeta Stanley, *UESF*

Fred Waters, *Parent*

Rev. Phyllis Harris, *Mt. Pisgah A.M.E. Church*

Shante Quartlebaum, *Families Forward*

Alyssa Kalter, *Drexel University EAT.RIGHT.NOW.*

Yolanda Braxton, *Office of State Representative Vanessa*

Lowery-Brown

Tamarra Cannon, *Teacher*

Tiffani Smith, *Teacher and PFT Representative*

Khaliah Robinson, *Mighty Writers*

Gabriel Burlap, *Parent*

Patrick Rushing, *Millcreek Advisory Council*

Waadeah Floyd, *Office of Councilwoman Jannie L. Blackwell*

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. Surveys were created for each key stakeholder group: students, families, school staff, community members, and service providers, and 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 were facilitated by community school coordinators, which provided them the opportunity to have deeper discussions with stakeholders about their concerns and priorities. Staff from the Mayor's Office of Education supported the process as note takers when necessary. Training on facilitation was provided to community school coordinators, 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), Public 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).



Our Locke Families deserve every resource that we can provide. Having support from the City and Drexel helps us meet their needs while we focus on improving reading and math levels - it is this kind of partnership that we need to truly prepare the children and community for success." - Principal Katherine Carter



MAYOR'S OFFICE
OF EDUCATION

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