



SOUTH PHILADELPHIA HIGH SCHOOL (GRADES 9-12)

A City of Philadelphia
Designated Community School

COMMUNITY
SCHOOL PLAN
MARCH 2017



MAYOR'S OFFICE
OF EDUCATION

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF
PHILADELPHIA

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 written in a cursive, flowing style.

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.¹



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 students take home food monthly, establishing food pantries and/or fresh produce stands to bring healthy and

¹ A detailed methodology description is available in Appendix A

IDENTIFYING SCHOOL NEEDS

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 SOUTH PHILADELPHIA HIGH SCHOOL

South Philadelphia High School (SPHS) is located at the intersection of Broad Street and Snyder Avenue. The school has several programs, including the Educational Opportunities Program, the 9th Grade Academy pilot, and strong special education supports for students. It is also a Career and Technical Education (CTE) high school. The neighborhood around the school has a high percentage of foreign-born citizens according to the American Community Survey, and more than 15 languages and dialects are spoken by students at the school.

Current Offerings:

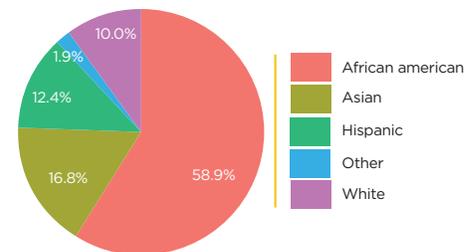
- CTE programs in engineering, health-related technologies, carpentry, computer networking, culinary arts, commercial arts, business technology, and JROTC
- Head Start pre-K program
- Strong special education supports
- A strong Alumni Association

Partners:

- Lower Moyamensing Civic Association
- Warren E. Smith Behavior Health(WES)
- The Future Project
- Sunrise of Philadelphia
- The Mural Arts Program
- Bethanna, and more

Total students ²	615
English Language Learners	20.7%
Special Education	34.8%
Economically Disadvantaged	100%

SPHS Demographics



Percentage of population born outside of the United States, SPHS³:

16.2% 80th percentile

City average: **10.7%**

Recreation Centers Guerin Recreation Center is located less than 10 minutes away when walking, and the Ford PAL center between 7th and 8th on Snyder has a pool and recreation facilities.

Libraries The Health and Literacy Center at Broad & Morris and the South Philadelphia Branch Library at Broad & Porter are both nearby and easily accessible via the Broad Street Line.

Green Space The nearest green spaces are at Guerin Recreation Center and Marconi Plaza, both about a 10-minute walk from the school.

Health Resources Methodist Hospital and the Health & Literacy Center are near the school. Additionally, the Wedge, which offers mental health services and Constitution Health Plaza are nearby.

Grocery Stores There is an Acme at 11th and Reed, a Shoprite on Oregon Avenue, and a Save-a-Lot at 13th and Washington. A lot of people go to the corner stores in the neighborhood, many of which offer fresh meat and produce.

² Data in this table is taken from the School Profiles on The School District of Philadelphia website, https://webapps1.philasd.org/school_profile/

³ American Community Survey 2010-2014

ABOUT SOUTH PHILADELPHIA HIGH SCHOOL

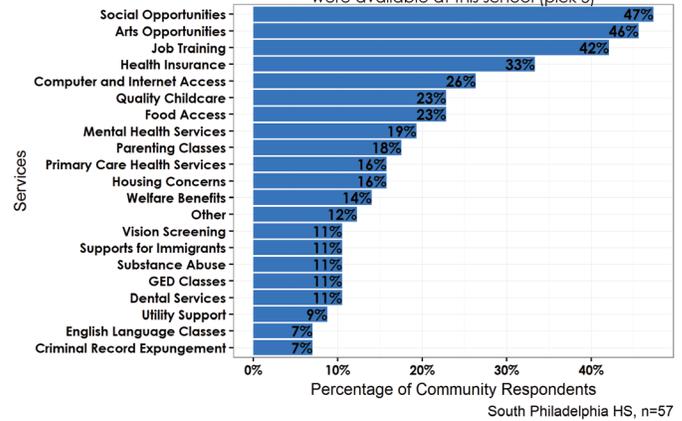
What We Learned at South Philadelphia High School

At South Philadelphia High School, more than 375 students, staff, families, community members and school partners completed surveys and/or participated in focus groups or interviews.

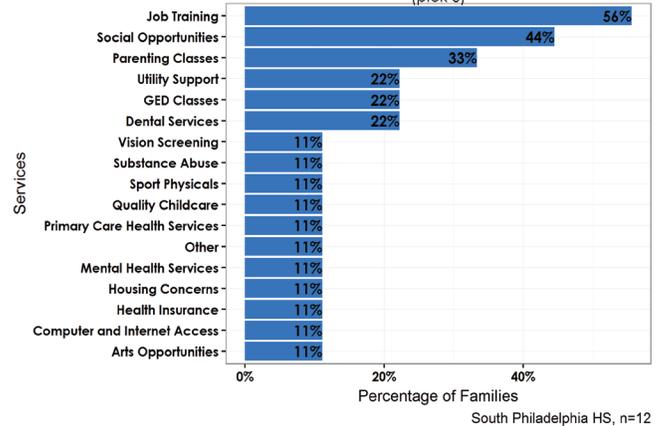
- ✓ Students, staff, families, community members and service providers identified job training as one of their top 3 needs; it was the top need for students
- ✓ Staff and service providers identified mental health services as a need for students, but only a small percentage of students shared this concern on surveys
- ✓ Students requested more services focused on academics including tutoring and homework help

Additionally, students were interested in learning more about college. Also, water access was a concern for students in focus groups, but surveys did not include a question on this topic. Data was reviewed by South Philadelphia High School's community school committee (CSC) which includes families, teachers, staff, community members, school partners, the principal and the community school coordinator. (A list of CSC members is available on page 13.)

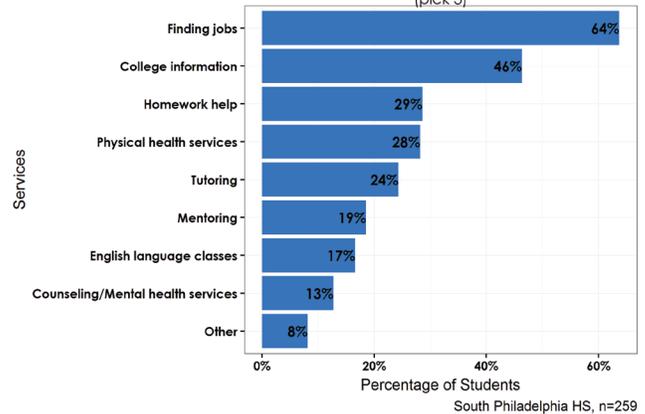
Services The Community Wants
Please choose the services you would participate in if they were available at this school (pick 5)



Services Families Want For Themselves
Please choose the three biggest needs for yourself (pick 3)



Services Students Want
What Services Do You Need More of At Your School? (pick 3)



SPHS' COMMUNITY SCHOOL FOCUS AREAS

PRIMARY PRIORITIES

- Increase access to jobs and job training
- Increase access to services that support social and emotional health
- Align partners to provide academic supports including tutoring and homework help

Increase access to jobs and job training

On surveys, job training and help finding jobs was identified by 64% of students as a need at the school. This was the most common need identified by students at South Philadelphia High School. It was also one of the most common needs identified in the family surveys. Nearly half of community members said job training was a service they would use if it was offered by the community school. During Community School Committee meetings all stakeholder groups identified this as an area of need.

Initial action steps (3 months)

- Identify job training needs with current school partners and local employers
- Partner with job placement groups and individuals in the community to expand services
- Create a job bank for students

Short-term goals (6-12 months)

- Increase number of partners offering student internships
- Increase number of partners offering job placement and supports for adults
- Implement a Dress for Success program to provide interview appropriate clothing to students and community members

Long-term goals (2 years)

- Build strong partnerships with local business associations and employers
- Ensure all 11th and 12th grade students complete an internship
- Create resources for families and community members to receive job training supports

Increase access to services that support social and emotional health

Surveys revealed that more than half of staff members and most partners agree there is a need for more mental health services at South Philadelphia High School. During Community School Committee meetings, individual counseling was brought up as a key need by students. Teachers shared they are aware of mental health services, but feel that the school's current provider should take private insurance. The Community School Committee also identified wellness and self-esteem programs as a support they would like to see for students.

SPHS' COMMUNITY SCHOOL FOCUS AREAS

Initial action steps (3 months)

- Partner with school staff, City agencies, families, current school partners and MOE to identify potential mental health partners
- Meet with students, school staff, and partners to define what types of social and emotional health and wellness supports they want at the school

Short-term goals (6-12 months)

- Establish relationships with mental health providers that accept private insurance and local mental health facilities
- Identify partners to help families and students navigate health insurance requirements

Long-term goals (2 year goals)

- Increase access to mental health services for students regardless of insurer
- Increase number of partners offering mental health and wellness options
- Strengthen partnerships with local college/universities with a social work program to provide health and wellness services

Align partners to provide academic supports including tutoring and homework help

At South Philadelphia High School students identified a need for more academic enrichment activities such as homework help and tutoring services on surveys. Currently the school has one out-of-school time (OST) partner. The Community School Committee discussed ways to both increase the number of OST opportunities, and ways to increase the rigor of the academic components currently being offered, with a focus on literacy activities. They also discussed ways to increase tutoring both during the day and during the Educational Option Program held in the evenings.

Initial action steps (3 months):

- Identify the amount of time spent on academic activities by each OST partner
- Meet with school staff to understand what academic activities they would like students to receive from community partners, and what training topics they would recommend for community partners
- Identify programs near the school that offer tutoring and support literacy

Short-term goals (6-12 months):

- Increase the number of students participating in literacy and writing programs after school
- Increase tutoring opportunities at the school
- Encourage all students to get library cards and inform them of the locations of libraries for help with homework

Long-term goals (2 year goals):

- Ensure availability of tutoring or academic assistance for all students who want it
- Train OST staff to deliver academically rigorous afterschool activities that align with the school's academic goals

SPHS' COMMUNITY SCHOOL FOCUS AREAS

SECONDARY PRIORITIES

Increase opportunities for physical activity. Increasing physical activity during and after school was identified by the Community School Committee as an area of need. Possible strategies include offering intramural sports to students after school, and ensuring that students have access to sports regardless of family income level.

Increase water access throughout the day. Focus groups conducted by the Healthy Schools Coordinator revealed that students were concerned about access to clean water. Since the initial discussion, the school has installed three hydration stations and the community school committee is discussing how they could get an additional hydration station for the lunch room.

Support students who are homeless. Homeless supports were not identified on surveys as a need, and specific questions about students who were homeless were not asked; however, the Community School Committee including staff, students, and partners all identified a need for more knowledge and coordination around services for homeless students. The coordinator and Community School Committee will work with partners and school staff to create a system of resources for students who are homeless.



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

To find out more about the Community School Committee or specific opportunities at this community school contact the South Philadelphia High School Community School Coordinator, Janelle Harper.

Email: janelle.harper@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
South Philadelphia High School
Principal Kimlime Chek-Taylor

The members of South Philadelphia High School's
Community School Committee:

Gary Taylor, <i>School Staff</i>	Keyonis Johnson, <i>OST provider</i>
Kathy Gurbada, <i>School Staff</i>	TJ Dean, <i>Community Partner</i>
KimRenee Patterson, <i>School Staff</i>	Maureen Fratatoni, <i>Parent</i>
Jane Fitzgerald Fitzgerald, <i>School Staff</i>	Tatianna Palmer, <i>Student</i>
Chef Green, <i>School Staff</i>	Alayshia Bridges, <i>Student</i>
Emily Goodman, <i>School Staff</i>	Marty NA, <i>Student</i>
Patti Tahan, <i>Community Partner</i>	Brandon Pace, <i>Community Partner</i>
Rickie Brawer, <i>Community Partner</i>	Charmaine Gibbs, <i>Student</i>
Reberra Wanner, <i>Community Partner</i>	Davia Blair, <i>Student</i>
Tonya Palmer, <i>Parent</i>	Kathleen Hayes, <i>School Staff</i>

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.

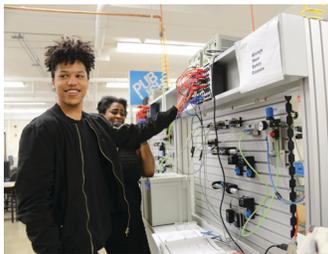
Interviews

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).



“Being a community school allows us to come together, to stay together and to work together for our students, their families and the future.” – Kimlime Chek-Taylor, Principal



MAYOR'S OFFICE
OF EDUCATION

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF
PHILADELPHIA

Otis Hackney

Chief Education Officer
City of Philadelphia

Susan Gobreski

Director for Community Schools
Mayor's Office of Education

Dr. William R. Hite

Superintendent of the School
District of Philadelphia

www.phila.gov/education
Phone : (215) 686-0333