PITTSBURGH PUBLIC SCHOOLS
COMMUNITY SCHOOLS IMPLEMENTATION EVALUATION

SCHOOL BOARD BRIEFING

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MAKING RESEARCH RELEVANT

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Today's Topics

- Study Overview

- Key Findings

  - Strengths

  - Areas for Growth

  - Benefits of Community Schools

- Focus Areas for 2019-20

- Questions

Study Overview

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Study Goals

- Understand how Community Schools were implemented in Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS) during the 2018–19 school year.

- Gather data about perceptions of impact.

Data Sources

- Extant records (i.e., action plans, monthly reports, monthly service updates, needs assessments)

- Interviews (five site managers, five principals)

- Focus groups (four site teams, staff at five schools)

- Observations of afterschool activities at four schools using the Program Quality Assessment (PQA)

Organization of Findings

Structures and Functions
1. Collaborative leadership
2. Planning
3. Coordinating infrastructure
4. Student-centered data
5. Continuous improvement
6. Sustainability

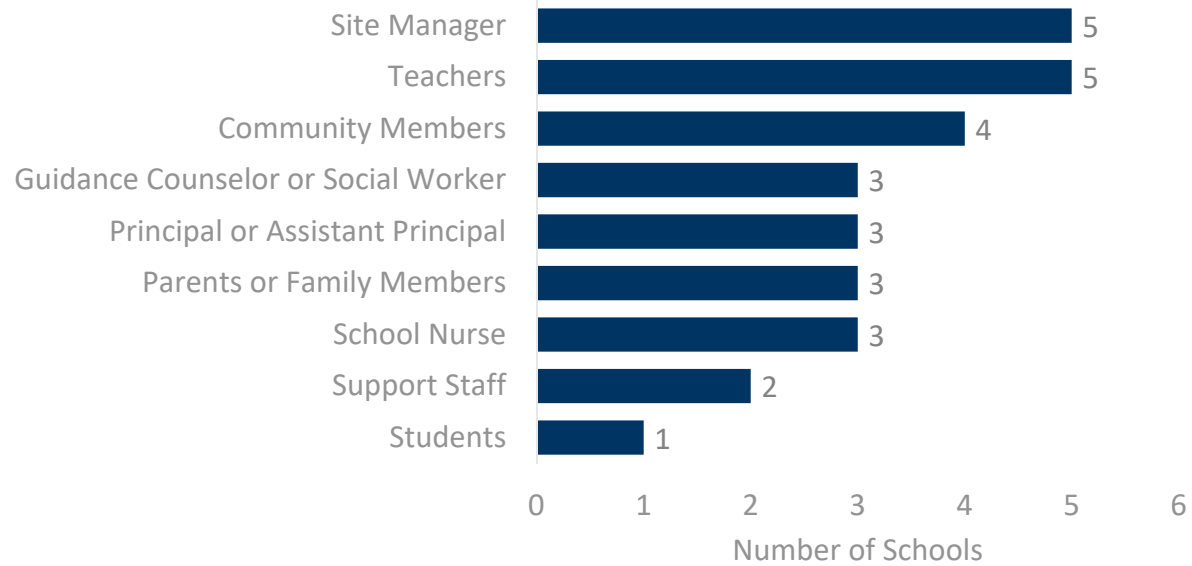| Opportunities |
|---|
| 7. Powerful learning |
| 8. Integrated health and social supports |
| 9. Authentic family engagement |
| 10. Authentic community engagement |

Findings: Strengths

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Site Teams
Collaborative Leadership (Standard 1)

Support Provided for Site Managers
Coordinating Infrastructure (Standard 3)

- Standard operating procedures as a guide

- Support from Community Schools coordinator

- Collaboration with other site managers

Opportunities

Powerful Learning (Standard 7), Integrated Health and Social Supports (Standard 8), Authentic Family and Community Engagement (Standards 9 and 10)

- **136** partners total (mean = 25.2, range = 5–39)

- **77** powerful learning partners (mean = 19.3, range = 16–22)

  – Enrichment; academic support; leadership; character development

- **51** integrated health and social support partners (mean = 12.8, range = 7–20)

  – Social and emotional supports; nutrition or food; restorative practices or discipline; mental health counseling; health or vision

- **17** family and community engagement partners (mean = 4.3, range = 1–8)

  – Community building; family workshops; volunteer opportunities

Findings and Recommendations: Areas for Growth

Shared Vision and Shared Decision Making
Planning (Standard 2)

- Almost all respondents said that they do not believe that there is a shared vision for Community Schools across stakeholders, including staff, community members, and families.

- Many respondents said that there is a shared vision within the site team.

- Some respondents said that there is a vision but that it is not known by school staff or families.

Recommendations for Creating a Shared Vision for Community Schools

- Schools should go through a formal process for establishing a written vision.

- Diverse stakeholders should be involved in establishing the vision.

- Schools should develop a plan for communicating the vision to stakeholders.

- Have active advisory boards.

Essential Components of a Shared Vision

- Create and maintain feedback loops.

- Create opportunities for shared decision making.

- Foster a culture of shared responsibility for positive youth outcomes.

Needs Assessment

Planning (Standard 2)

- All schools conducted a needs assessment and used the reports in developing the action plan.

- Challenges:

  - Low response rates

  - Difficulty interpreting reports

  - Timeliness of reports

  - Findings do not accurately reflect needs of school

  - Findings were vague

Needs Assessment Recommendations

- As part of this evaluation, AIR worked with PPS to revise the needs assessment process to consist of 30 indicators that have been shown to ensure that

  – families are actively involved in their children's education,

  – students are actively involved in learning and their community,

  – students are healthy,

  – students live and learn in stable and supportive environments, and

  – students succeed academically.

Continuous Quality Improvement

Continuous Improvement (Standard 5)

- None of the respondents described a formal process for assessing quality of service providers or programs.

- Common ways that schools determined quality:

  - Examining program attendance records

  - Conducting informal observations of activities to gauge engagement

  - Reviewing monthly service updates

Continuous Quality Improvement Recommendations

- Select tools or processes that allow schools to:

    - Intentionally think about how to improve implementation

    - Improve the quality of programming provided to youth and families (e.g., PQA)

Staff Buy-In
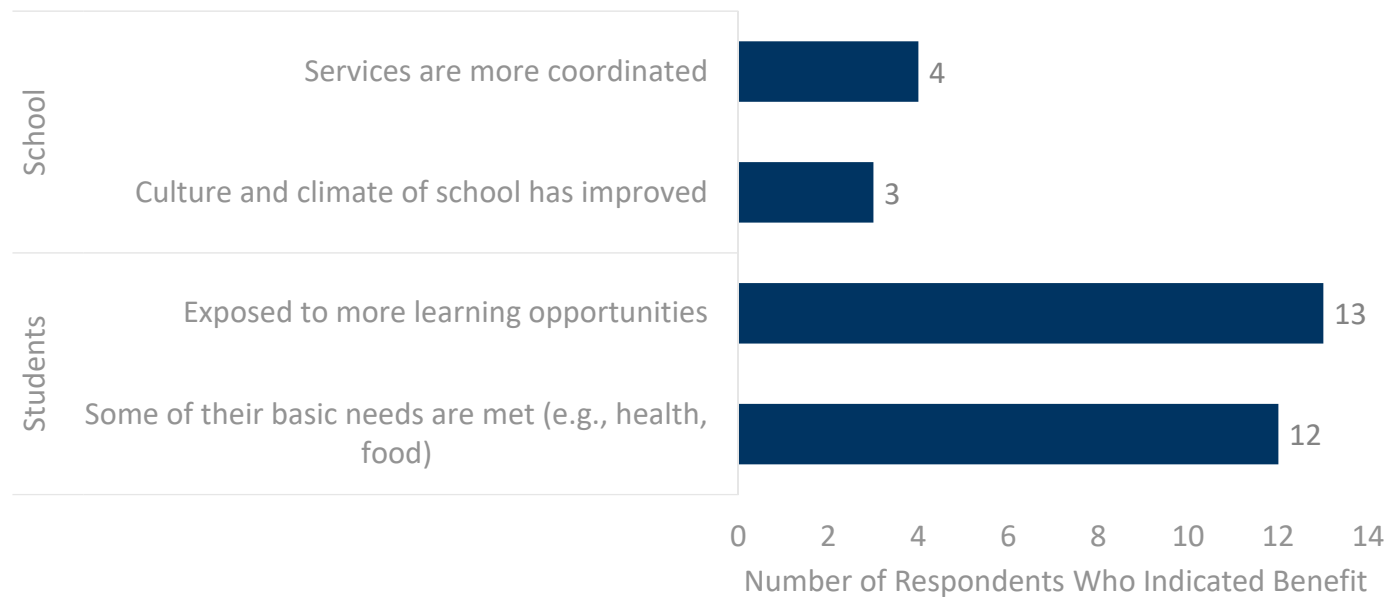
Sustainability (Standard 6)

- Staff understanding of and buy-in for Community Schools varied by school.

- In four schools, all staff received the standard operating procedures.

- Recommendations to improve staff buy-in:

  - Identify "champions" to help garner support from other staff.

  - Hold formal presentations with staff about Community Schools.

  - Develop a Community Schools guide that explains the model and what services are available.
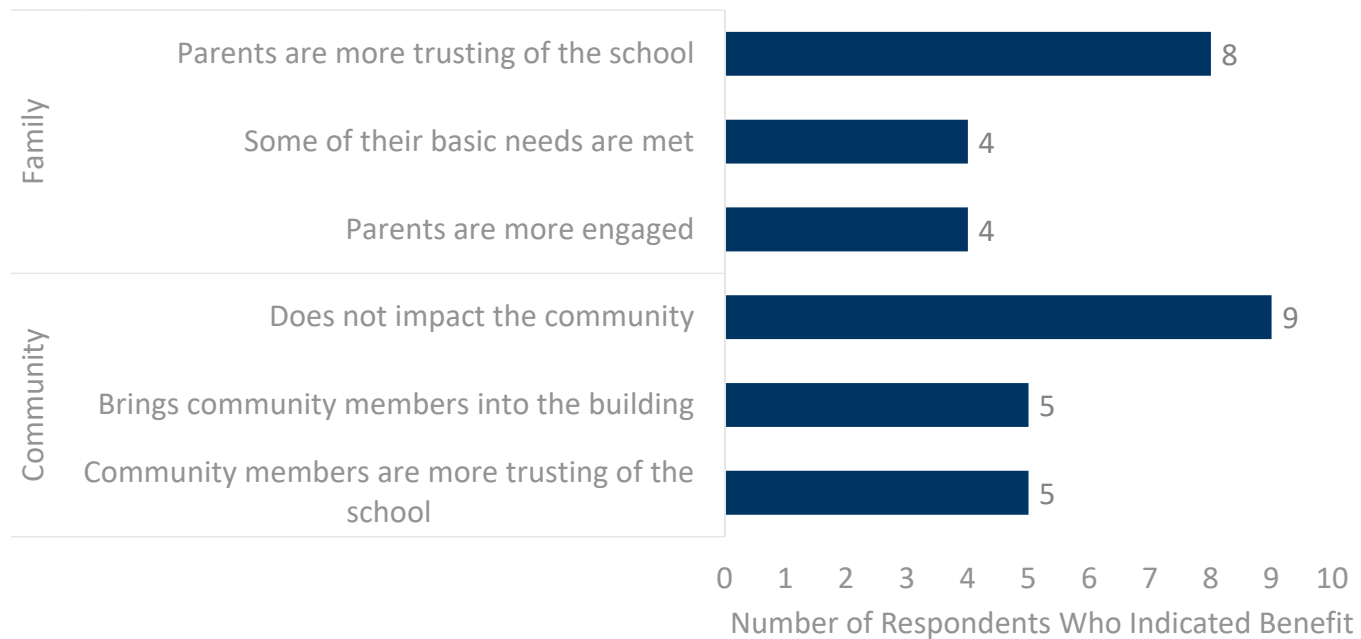
Findings: Benefits of Community Schools

Benefits to School, Students, Families, and the Community

Number of Respondents Who Indicated Benefit

School
- Services are more coordinated: 4
- Culture and climate of school has improved: 3

Students
- Exposed to more learning opportunities: 13
- Some of their basic needs are met (e.g., health, food): 12

Pittsburgh Public Schools | Community Schools Evaluation | School Briefing

6/17/2019

Benefits to School, Students, Families, and the Community

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Focus Areas for 2019-2020

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2019-2020 Community Schools Focus Areas

- Implementation of the Community Schools Comprehensive Plan
- Continuous improvement of the Community Schools strategy
  - Site Team and Site Action Plan Development (Shared Vision)
  - School Staff Engagement and Buy-In Strategies
  - Collective Family and Community Engagement Strategies
  - Site-Based Needs Assessment Plans
  - High Quality Community Partnerships
  - Community Partner Data Management and System
  - Professional Development
- Continuous Implementation of Community Schools national best practices

Questions

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ZJ1   Note that Dominique Bradley is included on the title slide but not here.

Ziebarth, JoAnn, 8/1/2019