

United Way of the Chattahoochee Valley

Community Schools United - Phenix City Elementary School

IMPACT REPORT



Background

Community Schools United (CSU), a strategy housed with United Way of the Chattahoochee Valley (UWCV), seeks to collaboratively transform schools in high poverty neighborhoods into hubs of service. To effectively implement the community schools model, CSU was introduced into Phenix City Elementary School (PCES) during the 2022 - 2023 school year. During this time, UWCV has employed and placed a Community School Coordinator inside the walls of PCES to coordinate a set of evidence-based activities to create lasting improvements in the lives of children, families, and the community ensuring every individual has the opportunity to thrive.

From our CEO

“We are deeply grateful for our partnership with Phenix City Schools, whose unwavering commitment to students and families aligns powerfully with our mission United Way of the Chattahoochee Valley. Together, we are building more than classrooms—we’re creating pathways out of poverty by surrounding students with the support systems they need to thrive through Community Schools United. When schools become hubs for community connection, academic success and family well-being go hand in hand, helping us move closer to a future where every child has the opportunity to succeed, regardless of their zip code.”

- Ben Moser, CEO United Way of the Chattahoochee Valley



SNAPSHOT

3

years of strategy implementation

656

average # of students served annually



Community Schools Pillars

COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP AND PRACTICES

Harness the collective expertise of all stakeholders by establishing a shared vision, setting goals, and implementing participatory practices for responsibilities and strategy implementation.

INTEGRATED STUDENT SUPPORTS

Deliver essential needs and supports through a whole-child, trauma-informed approach to help remove barriers to student success and ease the burden on parents and educators.

ACTIVE FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Address educational inequities by prioritizing trust and respect through fostering family and community engagement, increasing capacity building, and creating systems that ensure families feel supported as key partners in student achievement.

EXPANDED AND ENRICHED LEARNING TIME AND OPPORTUNITIES

Enable environments for learning by expanding before, after, and summer school services that enrich and enhance academics.

22%

Growth in ACAP ELA Proficiency

PCES Impact Data Snapshot

School Year	Student Body Total	ACAP ELA Proficient and Above	Chronic Absenteeism Rate	Discipline Referrals / Incidents
2021 - 2022	695	34.30 %	22.26 %	360
2022 -2023	683	38.40 %	22.54 %	157
2023 -2024	659	43.20 %	20.42 %	90



Impact Statement: Dr. Golden, PCES Principal

Fully implementing the Community Schools United strategy at Phenix City Elementary has transformed outcomes for students, families, and our school community. Student engagement, academic performance, and parental involvement have all seen significant gains. Families feel more connected and supported through improved access to essential resources and creating a nurturing environment where students thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

Having a Community School Coordinator on campus has been vital in connecting students and families with services like healthcare, housing support, and after-school programs. This role strengthens family stability and removes barriers to learning, fostering equity and boosting attendance, academic success, and community connection making Phenix City Elementary a true hub of support.

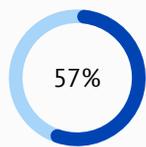
I Make the Difference

Community School Coordinator, Maurice Sanabria, was nominated and received Phenix City School's "I Make The Difference Award" in recognition of his service and accomplishments within Phenix City Elementary School.

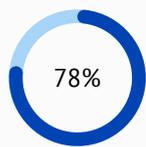


Parent, Student, and Community Voice

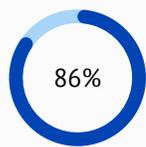
To ensure voices are heard and lifted into practice, Community Schools United conducts stakeholder surveys on a continual basis.



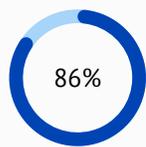
families indicated transportation as a main cause for tardiness and attendance issues



families shared they need better access to higher paying jobs



families recognized PCES as a Community School



families shared they need access to affordable healthy foods

Collaborative Leadership and Practices

Collaborative leadership and practices in community schools enhance school climate, foster stronger relationships, and build trust and a sense of collective capability. Trusting relationships are key to school transformation, as they help create nurturing and respectful environments where caring adults, community members, and students work together toward student success. These supportive relationships extend beyond the school, positively impacting the health and safety of the surrounding neighborhood. With a goal of increasing cross-sector collaborations and system alignment to bring people, organizations, and resources together, CSU increases the number of partners providing services, introduces parents to leadership roles within the school building, and garners parent and youth voice to guide strategy implementation.



Integrated Student Supports

In high poverty communities, families frequently face on-going struggles to meet basic needs such as food, clothing, healthcare, and housing. These difficulties have a significant impact on students' ability to perform well both in and outside of school. To achieve better outcomes in both areas, CSU ensures students and families have greater access to community resources in order to thrive. CSU provides referral services around basic needs, conducts Social Emotional Learning (SEL) interventions, and offers a variety of nutritional services to students and families.



Referrals

99 Referrals addressing basic needs, housing / utilities, employment, etc.



Nutritional Insecurity

2,441 services provided to address food and nutritional insecurity



Social Emotional Learning

339 SEL interventions conducted to build student's coping skills toolbox

◆ Student Impact Story

Matson is a kindergartener I first met through Community Schools United's Calm Corner initiative. Early on, I learned he was having difficulty adjusting to the rhythms of school. On a particularly hard day, his teacher reached out for extra support, hoping to help Matson regulate and reintegrate into the classroom.

Through ongoing interaction, I created a personalized, welcoming space for him to decompress and return to learning at his own pace. It quickly became his place of comfort. That's where I discovered his love for Sonic the Hedgehog, a small but powerful connection. Drawing Sonic became part of his self-regulation routine.

One day, when he was especially overwhelmed, we made a full Sonic costume out of paper: shoes, gloves, and his iconic spikes. When he walked back into class wearing it, his pride and smile said it all. He felt seen, understood, and celebrated.

Moments like this remind us that when we meet children with compassion, creativity, and patience, we help them thrive. When students feel safe and supported, they can show us the very best of who they are.

- Maurice Sanabria, PCES Community School Coordinator

◆ Resource Room

CSU established and continues to strengthen a resource room housed within PCES. This resource room, led by the community school coordinator, is an inviting space for students, parents, educators, and community members, stocked with basic needs supplies, SEL libraries, resource racks, calm corners, electronic stations, and academic support materials to meet the needs of the whole child, their families, the school itself, and the surrounding community.



92

Active & Engaged
Community Partners

660

Volunteer hours
dedicated to
Community
Schools United

1432

participation
touchpoints
through 20+
workshops

◆ Mobile Market

CSU fostered a strong relationship with strategy partner, The Food Mill, to bring their Mobile Market to PCES for families to shop from during dismissal time. The Mobile Market is a Farmers Market on wheels that sells local produce at a discounted price. The goal is to remove any existing barriers to purchasing nourishing fresh produce by bringing it to the community and making it affordable.

◆ Collaborative Partnerships

Partnerships between schools and community organizations are key to a supportive, well-rounded education. They offer students extra resources, real-world learning, and support beyond the classroom. CSU has spearheaded and bolstered 92 community partnerships.



Davis Broadcasting

3 year, annual
partnership totalling 825+
Thanksgiving meals and
resources distributed



PCHA

Student referrals to
housing based Girls Inc.
and Cub Scout
afterschool programs.

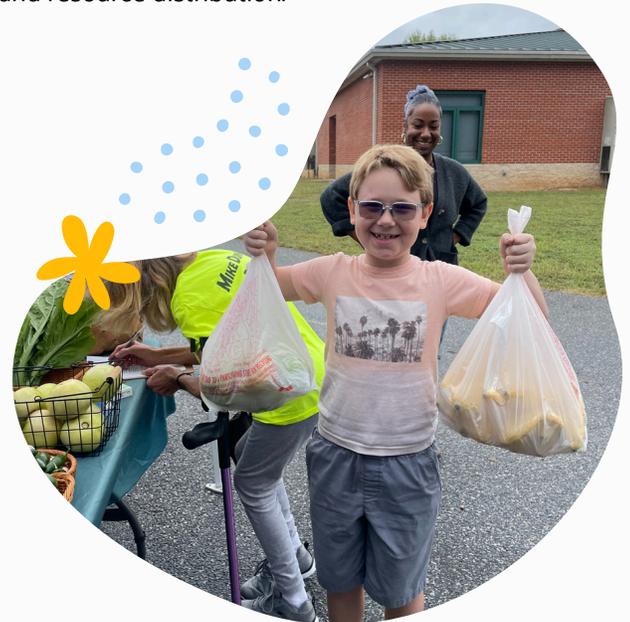


Alabama Power

Active Volunteer
Engagement; Academic
Enrichment; East Alabama
Leadership Raised Garden
Bed Project

◆ Engagement Workshops

Family engagement workshops in schools expand educational opportunities by exposing families to new resources and strategies that support student success. They help build trust between families and education systems, creating a shared sense of purpose. When caregivers, educators, and communities work together, students experience stronger support networks and improved learning outcomes. Community Schools United has conducted 20+ Family Engagement Workshops covering topics such as nutrition, mental wellness, family development, financial literacy, and resource distribution.



Active Family and Community Engagement

Active family and community engagement is essential for supporting children's learning and development. Historically, parent engagement has been low and even worsened by the challenges of the pandemic. Educational leaders and CSU recognize that engaging parents is crucial for the success of the strategy and to achieve positive outcomes for all students and our community. To effectively engage parents, CSU effectively builds relationships, creates trust, develops intentional engagement opportunities, and encourages purposeful involvement in the educational journey for families both in tandem and independent of their students.

Expanded and Enriched Learning Time

Low-income communities often have limited access to valuable supplementary learning opportunities, leading to significant achievement gaps between students from high- and low-income families. CSU addresses this challenge by working closely with our schools and partners to provide additional learning time for students, seeking to fulfill our goal of students succeeding academically. To achieve this goal, CSU enriches on-site after-school programming, expands access to off-site care and creates community connected classrooms.



Hawks in Action!



★ National Conference: Greenpower

Georgia proudly hosted the 2024 National Community Schools and Family Engagement Conference—the largest to date, with over 5,000 attendees from all 50 states and several countries. It marked the first time the conference was held in the South, spotlighting our region’s commitment to equity and whole-child education.

Ahead of the announcement, leaders from the Institute for Educational Leadership and the Coalition for Community Schools visited the Chattahoochee Valley, engaging with local stakeholders and touring key sites, including PCES. Impressed by our student-centered and innovative partnerships, they invited our community to host official site visits during the conference.

One featured visit highlighted CSU, PCES, and Greenpower—an Expanded Learning Time STEM initiative—held in front of Mercedes-Benz Stadium with a speaker panel including CSU and PCES leadership, students, and families.

★ Career Day

CSU’s commitment to community involvement at PCES is evident in its support of the annual Career Day, engaging all students. This event allows students to learn about various careers through sessions led by professionals from diverse fields. CSU plays a key role in recruiting 30+ professionals each year, ranging from dentistry and law enforcement to small business owners and symphony musicians. A standout moment was when a CTV Beam technician demonstrated a bucket truck, sparking excitement. Beyond career exposure, the event often inspires professionals to become long-term volunteers, enriching future school events and supporting students year-round.



★ Teddy Bear Clinic

Clinical students from Mercer School of Medicine, in partnership with CSU, led a community project called The Teddy Bear Clinic to help ease children’s common fears and anxieties about visiting the doctor. Through hands-on activities using teddy bears and real medical tools, students were able to explore healthcare procedures in a safe, playful environment. This initiative not only promoted more positive healthcare experiences for our students, but also provided Mercer students with meaningful community engagement. Additionally, it introduced young learners to the medical field, fostering early exposure to health careers, mentorship opportunities, and future college and career pathways.