



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **Paterson Public Schools Is Awarded Fifth Full Service Community Schools Grant**

*The award will be shared with its partner district, Passaic public schools*

Paterson Public Schools has recently received a grant to fund a total of six Full Service Community Schools (FSCS) programs. The grant will fund four schools in the District and also two schools of its partner district, Passaic Public Schools. These programs provide vital services to students that come from low-income families such as after-school and summer programs, school-based health clinics, behavior and mental health counseling, mentoring and anti-bullying programs, chronic absenteeism support, and other services. The grant will provide \$2,097,165.00 for the first year of five, in all totaling \$11,349,752, and is part of the nearly \$74 million of five-year FSCS funding provided by U.S. Department of Education's this year.

This is the District's fifth grant in thirteen years; the only city in the nation ever to have received as many. Partnering with Passaic Public Schools allowed the District to apply to the next level of funding, which requires the application of more than one school District. Passaic Public Schools was interested in opening FSCS programs of their own and saw the benefit of joining Paterson in the grant because of the District's extensive experience in such projects.

"We are beyond excited to have been selected for the Full Service Community Schools grants," Superintendent of Passaic Public Schools Sandra M. Diodonet said. "This grant represents more than just funding; it is an extraordinary opportunity to empower communities, nurture holistic education, and foster comprehensive support systems that elevate every aspect of a child's growth and success. As a former principal of a FSCS, I personally experienced the impact this grant has on schools, students, staff, families, and community. We look forward to the great work that Paterson and Passaic Public Schools will do together!"

In Paterson, the new FSCS programs will be established or supplementing programs in School No. 10, Joseph A. Taub Middle School, Eastside High School (EHS), and International High School. In Passaic, there will be programs established in School 6 and Passaic High School. Community organizations specific to the schools will provide assistance in establishing and operating programs related to the grant funding. The partner organizations are the Boys and Girls Club of Paterson and Passaic, New Jersey Community Development Corporation, Montclair State University (MSU), and New Destiny Family Success Center, Health N Wellness, Mindful Schools, and William Paterson University.

"I am very excited that we won this FSCS grant, so we can continue to service the physical and mental health of our students during the school day," said Denise Hajjar, Founder and President of Health N Wellness Services, an organization that is partnering at every new FSCS school. "This grant now expands our Full Service Community Schools to 13! I am also extremely pleased with this over-the-top opportunity to expand into the Passaic School District! We at FSCS are so fortunate to be working with incredible partners, as we look forward to growing and nurturing these partnerships, especially now during such trying times."

# PATERSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Currently, there is an existing FSCS program operating at EHS in partnership with MSU's One Square Mile initiative, which was designed to aid in the City of Paterson's community development efforts, through a grant from the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation. The additional funding will complement the work that is going on at EHS, allowing for more programs that could not be covered before.

Bryan Murdock, Associate Vice President for Community Partnerships at MSU said, "As lead partner of the newly created university assisted community school at Eastside High School, Montclair State University is elated by the news of the FSCS grant award. The funding will provide much needed stability to our new endeavor. It will enable Montclair State to leverage university assets and offer comprehensive and sustained support to EHS students and their families through the development and implementation of academic and instructional interventions, health and social services, college access programs, college and career readiness workshops, and adult ESL programs, just to name a few."

"Paterson Public Schools is elated to have been awarded the 2023 FSCS Grant, allowing us to grow our community school program while working with our neighbors in Passaic Public Schools to begin their Full Service Initiative," The Paterson school district's Director Of Full Service Community Schools Jenna Goodreau said. "In Paterson, many of our students and families have benefited from the additional programs and services, and we are thankful for the support of the Department of Education and their confidence in Paterson's Full Service Community Schools Initiative."

"I'm excited for the new FSCS programs at School No. 10, Joseph A. Taub, and International High School, as well as the boost to the program at Eastside" said Paterson's Superintendent of Schools Laurie W. Newell. "The communities of those schools will greatly benefit from the much-needed services. I know that such assistance will help our students feel more secure in their health and well-being, which will allow them to better focus on their studies. I'm grateful to our FSCS team in securing these funds to help the children of Paterson, and now Passaic, in receiving services that will meet their basic needs so that they can strive for their greatest potentials."

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Questions:

## **Why did we partner with Passaic?**

Partnering with Passaic Public Schools allowed the District to apply to the next level of funding, which requires the application of more than one school District. Passaic Public Schools was interested in opening FSCS of their own and saw the benefit of joining Paterson in the grant because of the District's experience in such projects.

## **How will the school districts work together/ divide the funds?**

A joint plan was created over the Summer, before the application for the grant.

## **How will this work with MSU's One Square Mile initiative at Eastside?**

The additional funding will complement the work that is going on at Eastside through the One Square Mile initiative. This grant will allow for more programs that could not be covered before.

Quotes:

Jenna Goodreau

Superintendent Newell

Superintendent Dionete

MSU FSCS Program Director (name?)

Notes:

Beginning January 1, 2024, this grant will fund FSCS programs at 4 Paterson schools (School 10, JAT, Eastside, and International) and 2 Passaic schools (School 6 and Passaic HS).

We will receive \$2,097,165 Year 1, and the grant will run for 5 years totaling \$11,349,752.

Paterson

School 10 – Boys and Girls Club of Paterson and Passaic

JAT – NJCDC

Eastside High School – Montclair State University and New Destiny Family Success Center

International High School – NJCDC

Passaic

School 6 – Boys and Girls Club of Paterson and Passaic

Passaic High School – Boys and Girls Club of Paterson and Passaic

Other partnerships:

Health N Wellness – school-based health centers for all schools

Mindful Schools

Cultural Adjustment with William Paterson University

The U.S. Department of Education today announced nearly \$74 million in new, five-year Full-Service Community Schools (FSCS) grants.

According to the USDOE, Research indicates that positive learning environments where students receive key services—including nutritional, dental, vision, and mental health services—are critical for accelerating academic recovery. Students learn better, have increased attendance, and are more engaged in their learning environment when their whole needs are met.

The new grantees are committed to implementing the four pillars of evidence-based community schools that improve achievement and other outcomes for students: 1) integrated student supports that address out-of-school barriers to learning through partnerships with social and health service agencies and providers; 2) expanded and enriched learning time and opportunities; 3) active family and community engagement; and 4) collaborative leadership and practices.