

Fact Sheet: Community Partnership Schools

Protect Our Public Schools (POPS) Manasota has been a leader in promoting the creation of Community Partnership Schools in the Sarasota-Manatee region. Here is some information on Community Partnership Schools.

What is a Community Partnership School? A Community Partnership School is one of many models of community schools where schools are turned into community hubs with extensive wraparound services. There are over 7500 community schools in the US, most established over the past 15 years. According to the Center for Community Schools, a community school is a partnership between the school and other community resources with an integrated focus on academics, health and social services, leadership and community engagement. The Community Partnership School (CPS) model, popularized in Florida and funded by the Florida legislature, is unique in that it requires four core partners—a school district, university or college, nonprofit and health care provider—to commit to a 25-year partnership to develop and sustain the Community Partnership Schools. There are 26 established or emerging CPS sites in 16 counties in Florida.

Does the Sarasota-Manatee area have any Community Partnership Schools: Manatee County Public Schools has one CPS at Manatee Elementary School. After attending a POPS educational forum in 2018, the Manatee County School District applied for a grant in 2019. It is currently in its planning/implementation phase at this Title 1 school that is 90% minority, 27% English Language Learners and 100% of students qualify for free and reduced lunch. The core partners at Manatee Elementary School include the Manatee County Rural Health Services, University of South Florida and Children's Home Society of Florida. The CPS director is Renita Houston. Already 3 health clinics have opened including pediatric, family and mental health to serve students, family members and the surrounding community. Afterschool academic remediation programs serve students to 6:15 pm. Parenting programs, a clothing closet and many other services are just getting off the ground with all of this being done in the midst of a pandemic.

What about Sarasota County? Does it have any Community Partnership Schools? In 2019, Sarasota County Public Schools, at POPS urging, applied for a grant to develop a CPS site but due to a sudden loss of the District's superintendent, it decided to pull the application. The newly hired superintendent, Dr. Brennan Asplen, has had direct experience in developing CPS sites in his previous job in St. Johns County Public Schools and may apply this year to establish a CPS in Sarasota. Protect Our Public Schools (POPS) Manasota in 2019 launched an educational campaign on the importance of CPS for Sarasota in closing the achievement gap, particularly at Title 1 schools and for students of color. It held public forums, wrote articles or provided information to the local press, and met with leading nonprofit agencies and foundations. The reception to establishing CPS sites in Sarasota was universally positive. Given the rich cultural amenities of Sarasota and its strong nonprofit sector, POPS believes that Sarasota could create outstanding CPS programs here.

Other Facts about Community Partnership Schools:

- Most CPS schools are at Title 1 schools in low-income areas with diverse student bodies; however, the CPS model is appropriate for any school. The model works at all levels-- elementary, middle or high school.
- CPS utilizes trauma-informed and culturally sensitive approaches in working with students and families and provides training to all staff, including teachers, in these techniques.
- Each CPS has at least 4 dedicated staff positions including a director, after school coordinator, health program coordinator and family/parent coordinator. Other staff can be added as needed.
- CPS services and programs are determined through an extensive community assessment. Parent participation and community leadership involvement is key to its success. School staff are included in the assessment.
- A braided funding model is used with funding coming from public, private and in-kind/volunteer sources.
- Partnership leaders, the school principal and community leaders develop a governing cabinet. There is also a school-based leadership implementation team. Local community involvement in the leadership is key.
- Over time, CPS students show gains in educational and social/emotional outcomes; decreased negative behaviors and improved teacher retention.
- CPS programs have broad bi-partisan support in the FL legislature. In the FL 2019-20 budget, funding for CPS increased significantly over the previous year to \$7.1 million. The State pays for start-up and some on-going costs.

For more information, please contact **Protect Our Public Schools (POPS) Manasota** at popsmanasota@gmail.com.