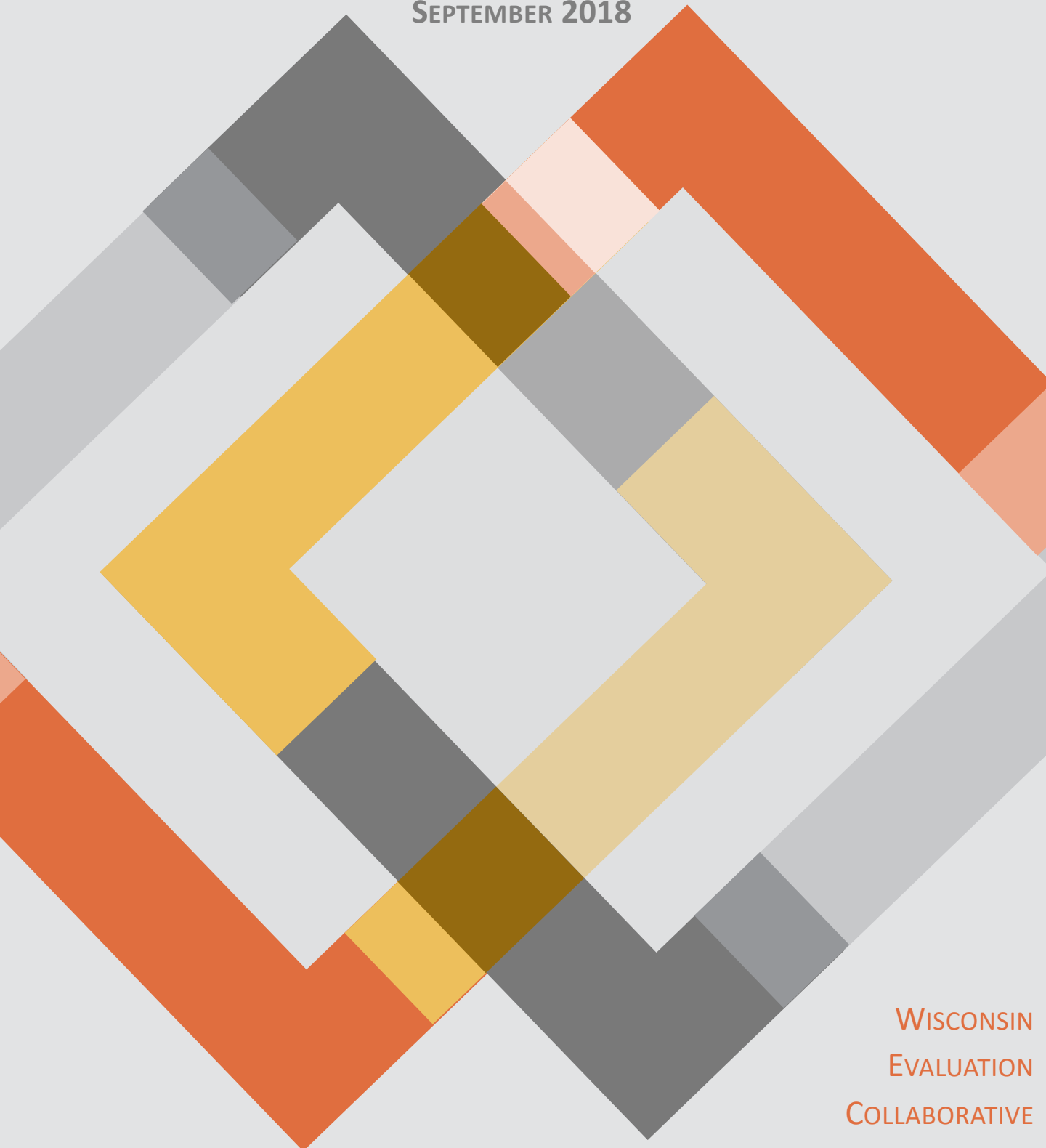


MADISON COMMUNITY SCHOOLS: YEAR TWO PROCESS EVALUATION

SEPTEMBER 2018



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Madison Community Schools: Year Two Process Evaluation
Prepared for the Madison Metropolitan School District

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MMSD Community Schools - Year Two Process Evaluation

Executive Summary

Evaluation Design and Purpose

In partnership with the Research and Program Evaluation Office (RPEO) and Office of Family, Youth, and Community Engagement (FYCE) at MMSD, the Wisconsin Evaluation Collaborative (WEC) at the Wisconsin Center for Educational Research conducted an ongoing, formative and qualitative evaluation of the Madison Community Schools pilot (2017-2018). We combined two conceptual frameworks to guide both data collection and analysis:

- [National Coalition for Community School's Standards](#)
- [Culturally Responsive Evaluation](#)

The formative evaluation is based on extensive qualitative data collection (observations, focus groups, interviews, surveys, and key documents) and analysis will inform implementation and program improvement of Madison's Community Schools initiative.

Key Findings

- **District leadership:** The role of community school manager at central office has been integral to providing increased assistance to schools. However, participants expressed that more support, infrastructure and resources from the district would benefit school-level implementation.
- **School staff leadership:** The role of the *principal* is critical to implementation, but challenging given competing school priorities alongside community school processes. *Resource coordinators* at the school-level are central to implementation and sustainability. Turnover in this position may be motivated by feelings of isolation, being overwhelmed and lack of full support.
- **Data use and systems:** Systematic processes to link data across programs and resources remain an area of further exploration and investment at central office and school sites.
- **Shared vision:** The level of a shared vision or definition of community schools was varied across the two schools, with one site having a more unified definition of the school as a "hub" of resources.

Key Findings

- **Collaborative leadership:** School committee members overall felt their voices were respected and heard, but they would like more communication about the “inner workings” of decision making in the initiative. Latinx and Black caregivers and community partners are persistently underrepresented on the school committees.
- **Community partner role:** Community partners have become more intentional in their role with the school since the pilot began, and provide consistency to implementation, even with changes in school staff.
- **Teacher role:** Teachers expressed a need for more clarity on their specific roles in implementing community schools, but tend to see themselves as “messengers” of information about resources to families. Teachers involved in community schools efforts perceived stronger relationships with families as a result of the initiative.
- **Youth and family engagement:** Youth and family relationships with schools varied, with Black families reporting more negative experiences with teachers and staff than families of other racial identities. With a couple exceptions, youth and families across both schools were satisfied with out of school time programming, but felt there are important barriers to participation (e.g. awareness, conflicting schedules, perceived cost, etc.).

District Recommendations

- Strengthen district processes and systems to support site-level efforts (i.e., communication systems, onboarding processes, collaboration and coordination across district departments, community school data systems and protocols, etc.).
- Create long-term action plan to solidify the sustainability of initiative.
- Provide increased capacity at site-levels, including additional staff to support resource coordinator and staff professional development.

School Recommendations

- Clarify vision, mission and school-level long-term action plans.
- Strengthen and diversify school-level committees.
- Strengthen communication processes to ensure all stakeholders are aware of community school vision, their expected roles, priority areas and community school resources.
- Increase professional development opportunities for new and returning school staff and community partners (i.e., overview of community school approach, training on race, AntiBlack racism and bias, etc.).

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Introduction

The Research and Program Evaluation Office (RPEO), Office of Family, Youth, and Community Engagement (FYCE) are partnered with the Wisconsin Evaluation Collaborative (WEC) at the Wisconsin Center for Educational Research for an ongoing and formative evaluation of the Madison Community School pilot. The formative evaluation informs implementation and program improvement of Madison's two community schools: Aldo Leopold Elementary School and Mendota Elementary School. The purpose of this report is to present the main findings and themes that have emerged from WEC's extensive qualitative data collection and analysis, in the 2017-2018 school year, which will then be shared with key stakeholders at the district and schools. Below, we discuss the setting and context of this formative evaluation, our evaluation questions, our data collection and analysis process, and our findings.

Setting and Context

In the 2015-2016 school year, Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD) set out to create community schools that were “welcoming and inclusive places” and “[built] on the assets of the community to help serve the identified needs of the students, families and community through well integrated and coordinated, strategic partnerships” (Madison Community School Framework, 2015). The growing need for such schools was evidenced by: persistent racial opportunity gaps between students of color and white students; the need for improved engagement with families and community partners; and inequitable access to programs and services for children (Madison Community School Framework, 2015). These patterns in MMSD are consistent with those in Dane county, where Black youth and communities continue to experience some of the most severe, persistent racial and structural inequities within and outside of school spaces while other racial groups thrive -- even when taking into accounting for socioeconomic conditions. After a competitive application process, MMSD selected Aldo Leopold Elementary School (Leopold) and Mendota Elementary School (Mendota) to be the first two community schools in the district. Both schools began implementing the community school model during the 2016-2017 school year, following a year of pre-planning at the district. 2017-2018 marked the second year of both schools designated as community schools. While continuing the implementation of these existing schools, MMSD has also selected and onboarded two additional schools in the 2018-2019 school year.

What We Did

To understand the implementation processes taking place at both community schools, we sought to address the following evaluation questions:

How has the Community Schools strategy been adopted and implemented on the district and site levels?

How does the Community Schools strategy impact the engagement *conditions* necessary for college, career, and community readiness in youth?

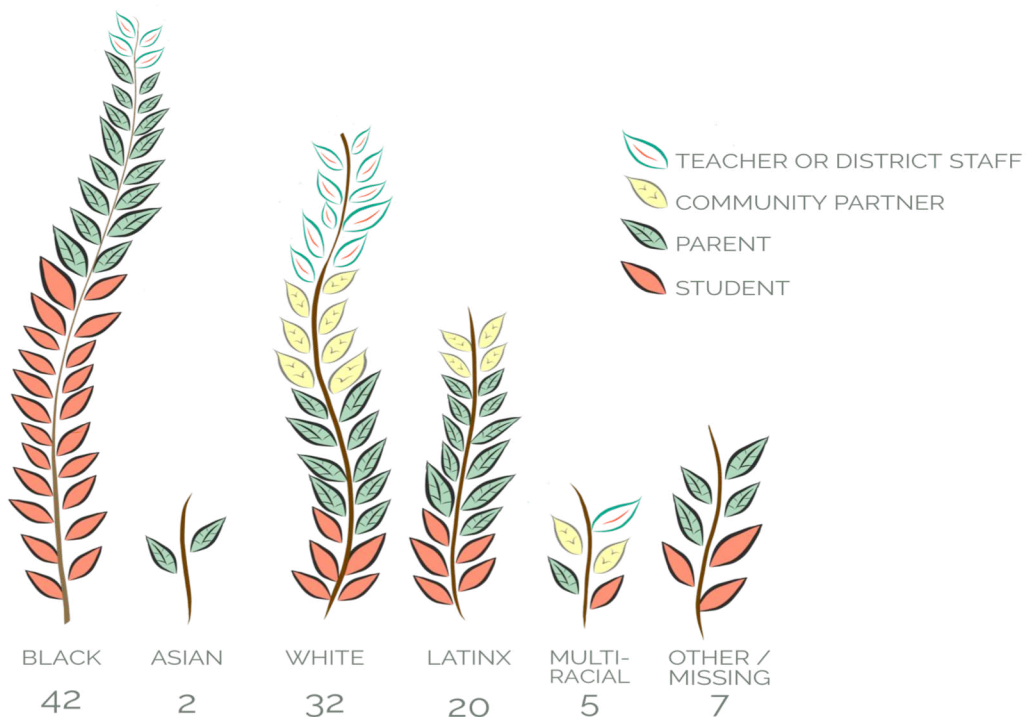
To address the first evaluation question, we drew primarily on conversations (semi-structured interviews, focus groups and surveys) with school and community stakeholders. We also drew on observations at key school events and meetings (i.e., committee meetings, open school house, block party, etc.) and collected relevant school and district literature. Figures on page 6 highlight the stakeholders we had conversations with. We collected data over the course of an 8-month period (February 2018 - September 2018).

To analyze data once collected, we leveraged an iterative approach to qualitative data analysis that combined inductive and deductive approaches (Maxwell, 2005). Qualitative data was imported into NVivo coding software, where the evaluation team gathered patterns along the themes in the code tree, based on the evaluation questions above.

We combined two conceptual frameworks to guide data collection and analysis: The [National Coalition for Community School's Standards](#) and [Culturally Responsive Evaluation](#) (CRE). The National Community School Standards provided a framework that helped us analyze key processes and practices central to community school implementation. A culturally responsive lens served to ground our analysis in the [sociocultural context of the sites and power dynamics among people and systems](#) in which the community school initiative is operating. It also helped us to uplift the voice of minoritized groups within school contexts as well as reflect on our positionalities and roles as evaluators navigating within both school spaces.

Who We Interviewed

STUDY PARTICIPANTS BY ETHNICITY AND ROLE



STUDENT PARTICIPANTS BY GRADE



What We Found:

Leadership and Infrastructures

District Leadership

In late spring of the 2016-2017 school year, the district hired a new full service community school manager. During the 2017-2018 school year, the community school manager provided additional capacity and support to the existing and two new community schools, such as approving expenses of community school programming, problem-solving and check-in conversations with resource coordinators, etc. **The manager was particularly instrumental in maintaining aspects of community school functions during the transition of community school leaders and staff at one school** (i.e., facilitating district-level and school-level community school committee meetings, facilitating hiring of new coordinators, etc.). District personnel also worked to sustain funding for the community school initiative, including a \$1.1 million dollar grant from Madison Community Foundation and a \$500,000 grant from CUNA mutual Group.

While capacity increased at the district level, **stakeholders described that the community school initiative could benefit from increased support and enhanced infrastructures from central office.** Such infrastructures and supports include:

- A detailed long-term action plan to set a vision for community schools at the district and schools
- Timeliness of budgets provided to schools
- Frequent and clear communication processes at the school and district to spread awareness about community school endeavors and needs
- Increased infrastructure, tools and plans to collect and monitor disaggregated school and program-level data
- Revamping school improvement plan to reflect community school priority areas
- Clearer expectations and training for school staff and leaders regarding their roles and fit within the community school initiative
- Increased collaboration from key staff from additional district departments to assist in integrating the community school philosophy into other aspects of schooling and change necessary policies

Principal Leadership

Alongside the resource coordinator, school leaders play an important role in implementing the community school initiative. School staff described the integral role of the school leader in communicating the vision of the initiative and setting school-level expectations for school staff. School stakeholders **describe the challenges of the principal managing the competing priorities alongside community school obligations.** One particular challenge is that overall school effectiveness is primarily assessed by the School Improvement Plan, which may differ from the community school coordination plan and priority areas.

What We Found:

Leadership and Infrastructures

Resource Coordinator Leadership

Resource coordinators played an integral role in sustaining school programming, committees and coordination. School and community stakeholders described that the coordinators were strong at building relationships, getting momentum and enthusiasm for community school programming and being responsive to the needs of families, youth and educators. Stakeholders described that the resource coordinator was able to distill large and abstract challenges into practical and actionable priorities that they put into practice – meeting the needs of youth, families and educators.

While there were numerous successes of resources coordinator, there were challenges as well. The original resource coordinators at both schools resigned from their positions (one during the summer of 2017 and another during the spring of the 2017-2018 school year). According to school and community stakeholders, perceived **reasons for coordinator resignation from schools included lack of support from district and school staff, feeling of isolation from other school efforts, and burn out from being tasked to do a multiple-person job in one role.**

“The person who was the coordinator was really good...I don’t know if she was supported as she needed to be maybe, but she had a really amazing ability to listen to everybody.. Had a really amazing ability to synthesize what other people were saying and to try to get little projects moving.”

- School Staff

“It was a lot for one person to coordinate. [The resource coordinator] felt like it was always five, ten things going on at once. [The coordinator] had to jump from thing to thing...The structure is the biggest [obstacle]. [The coordinator] felt like [she] was creating structures for everything rather than just doing the work.”

- School Staff

Data Use and Systems

Systematic processes to link data across programs and resources remain an area of further exploration and investment at central office and school sites. While a number of school partners and school personnel may collect program-level information on participants (i.e., attendance, etc.), district -level infrastructures (Madison Out-of-School-Time information sharing system) to gather, monitor and reflect on the disaggregated programmatic data across schools, including the community school initiative, is still in development.

What We Found: Leopold Community School

Shared Vision

Staff, community partners, and parents at Leopold characterized the vision of community schooling in three primary ways: a neighborhood community center, holistic service provider meeting family basic needs and space to uplift parent and youth voice. While these three conceptions of community schooling were most common, some **stakeholders were unclear regarding the specific purpose of the initiative and whom the community school should serve.** Characterized as an “identity crisis,” one stakeholder was concerned that there was not a shared vision for community schooling among even key community school decision-makers at Leopold.

“If you went around the table and asked committee member[s] what they thought a community school could be, what they would want it to be for the neighborhood, you might get 20 different answers or maybe variations on a theme.”

-Committee Member

Collaborative Leadership

School and community stakeholders describe numerous successes of the community school committee. **Committee members reported that their perspectives were welcomed and valued.** Committee input on key community school decisions, such as the hiring of the new resource coordinator and selection of new programming.

However, observation at committee meetings also highlight that members are not representative of the students enrolled at the school. While key (primarily white) community partners have continued their participation in committee meetings, **Latinx parent participation has diminished and Black parent participation remains stagnant, as documented in prior evaluations. Community partners of color are also not present at meetings.** Intentional efforts have been made to sustain the participation of Latinx parents (i.e., hosting meetings specifically with Latinx parents to clarify misunderstandings and ensure their continued participation in committee meetings; personal phone calls to Latinx families). While most Black parents interviewed described being unaware of the committee, one Black parent who was involved in the prior year described that she didn’t attend this year because she didn’t receive any information about the committee although still interested in being involved. Committee members also expressed **the need for increased transparency regarding issues such as decision making and their role within the initiative, community school budget and resource allocation. They also expressed need for a feedback loop with updates regarding actions taken with input they provide during committee meetings.**

What We Found: Leopold Community School

Community Partner Role

In addition to its adopt-a-school partners, the school continued its cornerstone programming with existing partners. Working with the resource coordinator, some partners expanded their programming to enroll more students and adults in order to reach more families. The school has also added new partners and programming based on priority areas, including a Spanish class for parents, GED class and a youth dance club. **With the turnover of the resource coordinator, dedicated community partner staff have been vital in sustaining programs.** “I think the partners are the ones who are holding this together,” one stakeholder reported. Most notably, Fitchburg library has been highlighted as an essential partner that is “single-handedly keeping community schools going.”

There were a number of barriers to strong partnerships, including: lack of key contact person after coordinator resignation, unclear community school vision and action plan, underutilization of partners, and loss of funding. For example, partners described having the interest and capacity to offer services or resources at the school but lacking clarity regarding reserving school space or not receiving requests for funds.

Teacher Role

There were a number of avenues through which school staff were involved within the community school efforts, including participation in community school committee meetings and afterschool programming. Such experiences led one staff member, for example, to be a conduit to connect youth and parents with community partner resources, services and news. While teachers receive community school updates through emails and during school-based leadership team meetings, **most teachers respondents discussed uncertainty regarding their role within the community school.** This uncertainty was caused by lack of clarity regarding the vision of the community school, work environments in which educators were already “under a lot of stress” and that there were numerous “competing priorities” in which “the community school initiatives gets push down because of behaviors were really high or focus core academics or MAP scores.”

“If it's going to be a community school, I believe there should be conversations happening in terms of, this wing or these classrooms, or the library, the gym, the cafeteria and this, are going to be game, fair game for programming to come in and then start the meetings with, what programming are we going to bring in, or what's necessary...It's like, is it or is it not available?”

-Community Partner

“We did a teaming map yesterday looking at all the teams we have and [how] they all intersect. I would say almost in everyone's map is the teams we have in Leopold and off to the side is the community school. It's kind of living on an island...we kind of need to figure out how to lift it up so it's kind of work that we need to acknowledge that we need to different and better.” -School Staff

What We Found: Leopold Community School

Youth and Parent Engagement

Relationships: **Youth and parents described varying relationships with teachers and school staff, along racial lines.** A number of Latinx and white parents described positive experiences with school staff and teachers, including engaging learning environments for their children as well as strong ties with teachers and school staff. However, some Latinx and most Black parents described mixed and negative experiences with school staff, particularly parents whose children faced frequent penalization at the school. With patterns of severely negative and volatile relationships between Black families and school staff, a few Black parents expressed a desire to withdraw their children from the school. Some staff also noted these racial dynamics and that Anti-Black practices and rhetoric were reasons for leaving. “At the end of the day, I really, really got sick of seeing primarily Black kids being treated so terribly,” one staff member explained. These racial dynamics and relationships are exacerbated by the racial segregation and unequal access to resources that occur within the school. For example, enrollment patterns in two academic tracks are along racial lines: Dual Language Immersion courses (DLI), which currently enrolls primarily White and Latinx students, and English-Only courses (ELI) courses, which primarily enroll mostly Black and some Latinx students. According to stakeholders, such segregation contradicts the inclusive and welcoming ideals of community schooling. Such segregation also affects relationships between teachers, youth and parents, according to school stakeholders.

Programs Attended: Parents and youth in interviews and focus groups described attending a number of school events and out of school time programming. **Most youth and parents describe satisfying experiences with all of the afterschool programs attended.** Youth described the programming as fun and enjoyed being able to play with friends and with teachers. Parents also described afterschool programming as being a safe space for them and their children to learn, youth to be able to connect with friends, and to work on activities together as a family. **However, there were numerous parents that described negative experiences with one after school childcare provider (AACE).** Parents described their children weren’t being challenged intellectually.

Barriers to Attendance: Parents noted a number of barriers to participating in school events and efforts: lack of awareness or appropriate communication about programming, waitlists for programming, childcare and work schedule conflicts, perceived costs of programming, and feelings of exclusion. Some parents, particularly Black and Latinx parents, described feeling intentionally not invited to and unwelcome at select school programs, activities or meetings because of interpersonal dynamics at the school with school and community personnel. Parents also described not feeling welcomed in programming that were perceived as not geared toward them. For example, a (Black) parent described attending an afterschool programming that was advertised for all adults learners, but perceived that the program was tailored toward families that were more familiar with the Spanish language.

What We Found:

Mendota Community School

Shared Vision

Staff and community partners at Mendota characterized the vision of community schooling in two primary ways: a neighborhood community center and holistic service provider meeting family basic needs. While one partner was unsure of the specific vision of the community school, **there was consistency across most participants in characterizing the school as “one-stop shop” and “hub” of resources.** Most stakeholders described that Mendota community school targeted families enrolled at the school, although there was interest from stakeholders in expanding outreach to the families in the neighborhood. Compared to in the prior year, stakeholders expressed a more unified understanding of the initiative.

Collaborative Leadership

Committee members perceived that their perspectives were heard and valued in committee meetings.

Committee members described the wealth of knowledge and expertise of those that attended committee meetings, ranging from workforce development to Latino Education Council. Committee members were also invited to participate in school events, which provided them with an opportunity to see their ideas in practice. However, there were a number of challenges this school year according to committee members. Most notably, there were not regularly scheduled meetings or communication with all committee members. Depending on the role of the committee member (i.e., parent, community partner, etc.), this led to **committee members feeling less connected to the inner workings of the community school compared to last year.** While committee members received updates during meetings, committee members expressed an interest in playing more of an active role in decision-making and clarifying the committee’s role each year. While key (primarily white) community partners have continued their participation in committee meetings, **Latinx and Black parent participation remains stagnant, as documented in prior evaluations.**

“This year we really wanted them to see the impact on what ... the impact on what we were doing as far as the needs assessment.... I think that was a really, really great opportunity for the committee to see that, one we worked really hard on the out-of-school time and we really established a lot of resources for our kids and our families.”

–Committee Member

“I just think I have less of an idea of what was going on. At least at the meetings, usually there was some kind of informational thing about what was going on, and we just didn't get that much of that this year, didn't get as many emails. I appreciated that [the resource coordinator] had that one meeting with the drum thing, because I wouldn't have known about that otherwise, necessarily.”

–Committee Member

What We Found:

Mendota Community School

Community Partner Role

Mendota created new school partnerships and strengthened existing partnerships. In addition to continuing adopt-a-school partnerships, the school has also added new partners and programming based on priority areas. The school strived to increase the number of opportunities available for youth in grades K-3 as well as opportunities for families. Stakeholders lauded the efforts to meet basic needs of families by providing a food pantry (supported through Food for Thought and Seva Circle), free clothes and continued youth musical plays (supported through Joyful Future).

School stakeholders and staff perceived that community partnerships have been more intentional with the transition to the community school model. Whereas individual teachers and staff sought to meet student needs through siloed efforts in the past, the resource coordinator and the priority areas have helped to “unite” and coordinate efforts compared to prior years. Partners perceived that there was a sense of “community” between partners, staff and parents that facilitated and sustained partnership and also felt welcomed to connect with the resource coordinator when questions or requests arise. One challenge to sustaining partnerships included unexpected departures of community partners for external reasons, such as organizational change in leadership and management.

Teacher Role

Compared to the first year, teachers expressed there was increased communication regarding the events, programs and expectations of the community school. Teachers also expressed a clearer understanding of their role within the community school initiative. Teachers described various ways they participated in the community school initiative. For a couple teachers this included direct involvement in running or participating in community school meetings, programs and events. **Most teachers understand their role as being the “the messenger”:** relaying information to families about the events, services and programs available as well as working with key staff within the community school (parent liaison and resource coordinator) to build strong connections to youth and families. A number of teachers also ran a number of afterschool programs, including youth leadership clubs, music clubs and coding clubs. **Through these connections, teachers expressed they had stronger relationships, increased positive perceptions of youth and families and served as “informal bridge between the classroom and real life.”** Both new and veteran teachers at the school understood that there would be increased expectations of them as school staff members of a community school, including extended time at the school and potentially running after school programs until late evening. To facilitate their participation, the resource coordinator provided a yearly sign up to see which staff members were interested in participating in community school endeavors.

With these increased expectations, **teachers expressed concern regarding “burnout,” teachers as already “tired,” childcare conflicts and work-life balance.** One staff member suggested increased incentives to ensure teacher participation, including additional compensation and release days. Some teachers described that these increased expectations for staff can be further fleshed out.

What We Found:

Mendota Community School

Youth and Parent Engagement

Relationships: Youth and parents across racial groups described positive relationships with teachers and staff at the school. While some Black youth reported that they do not feel like they are always listened to by their teacher, all youth described being cared for and supported at the school by teachers and staff. Most parents described the staff and teachers as welcoming, knowing them by name, and keeping them informed regarding school events and their child's educational experience. There were a few parents that reported that communication could be better between home and school, particularly regarding how students are progressing and areas where they can improve in their education. While some stakeholders were concerned about the slight disconnect caused by the primarily white staff and youth and families of color, both staff and families perceived staff as invested and dedicated.

"The teachers are fabulous...the teachers are fantastic. They really are. It's a hard job to put on top of it all the way. I think they're all really dedicated. I haven't run into the ones that don't seem to mean it more than the average teacher. [The resource coordinator] having the position of a community school liaison. Those are just some luxuries in public schools"

-Parent

Programs Attended: Parents and youth described participating in Safe Haven, Peers Uplifting Peers (PUPs), Food Pantry English Classes, Soccer, family camp, Karate, MSCR, Aladdin, Open School House, among other activities. Overall, parents and youth described positive experiences with the programs and services at the school. **They reported that programming provides children the ability to extend their learning, connect with new and old peers, have fun, develop social and leadership skills, and keep children occupied when the school day ends.** Parents also described enjoying having one central location for programming and activities for youth. Parents described the school as being welcome and non-judgmental, particularly when accessing resources such as the food pantry.

Barriers to Attendance: School staff perceived that barriers to attendance included a lack of awareness of all of the opportunities available or conflicting work schedules. School staff also described thinking about new ways to conceive "engagement" that go beyond attending school-based events.

Recommendations

Comprehensive and collective initiatives such as community schools are complex to implement and take considerable time to mature and develop. As aligned with the National Coalition of Community School Standards, we recommend the following steps below are to ensure the continued sustainability of the MMSD community school initiative.

District-Specific Recommendations	Standard
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a long-term district community school action plan to solidify the sustainability of initiative. In particular, set a long-term action plan and vision regarding the direction of community schools at the district and district-level steps needed to achieve this vision. 	3.1, 8.1, 8.4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify and ensure a shared vision among district staff and relevant partners. 	1.4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate efforts across departmental offices (Family, Youth and Community Engagement, Curriculum and Instruction, Elementary Education, etc.) to ensure a whole-school transformation at school sites and fidelity of long-term action plans. 	3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 4.6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify expectations about the role of district staff on the district steering committee. Ensure regularly scheduled district steering committee meetings to inform systems-level community school efforts. 	1.1, 1.2, 2.2, 1.5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate with school leaders and relevant district departments to solidify community school onboarding and training processes for new and returning school staff and community partners. 	4.4, 5.5, 5.6, 5.7, 9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure stronger communication infrastructures that raise the visibility and understanding of the community school strategy across district departments and to the broader community. 	10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with school leaders and relevant district departments to integrate and center priority areas within School Improvement Plans. 	3.4, 3.5, 4.6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of site-level staff to support the work of the community school, including additional support staff for resource coordinator. Ensure resource coordinator is integrated and provides relevant updates and input in school decision-making bodies (i.e., SBLT, etc.). 	5.4, 5.5, 5.6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potentially acquire lead partner to provide increased staffing at the site-level, resources and sustainable funding for schools. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen infrastructure to collect, monitor and analyze community school data. 	6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and refine the MMSD logic model (esp. outputs and outcomes) and use that to focus future evaluation work analysis and report. 	6

Recommendations

School-Specific Recommendations	Standard
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarify and ensure shared vision among school staff, partners and families. 	2.1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a long-term community school action plan that incorporates priority areas to ensure community school sustainability. 	2, 6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate and center priority areas in School Improvement Plans. 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase transparency regarding community school budget and clarify role of community school committee within the community school initiative. 	1.2, 2.7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure community school committee is representative of student body and families served. In particular, increase representation and input from parents, especially Black and Latinx parents on committee. 	1.2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure community school committee has regularly scheduled meetings to inform community school processes. 	1.2, 2.7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess and communicate school space and equipment availability to community partners to ensure the school can accommodate community partners resources. 	3.6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarify expectations regarding teacher, school staff, and community partner role within the community school initiative. Provide professional development and regularly scheduled working groups as needed to facilitate this process. 	2, 5.3, 6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate and center the perspective of the resource coordinator in school decision-making bodies (i.e., SBLT, etc.). 	3.2, 3.3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide ongoing professional development regarding family-school engagement as well as notions of race, racism, Anti-Blackness and bias to foster critical reflection and strengthen relationships between school staff and minoritized parents. 	5.3 , 9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure stronger communication infrastructures to ensure school staff, parents and families are knowledgeable about all school offerings (programs, events, services, Dual Language Immersion, etc.). 	3, 8.1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide increased programming that is non-cost-prohibitive as well as for youth in grades 4K-3. 	8.3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen infrastructure to collect, monitor and analyze community school data. 	4

Appendix:

Research Design

We address the following evaluation questions:

1. How has the Community Schools strategy been adopted and implemented on the district and site levels?
2. How does the Community Schools strategy impact the engagement *conditions* necessary for college, career, and community readiness in youth?

To address the first evaluation question during the 2017-2018 school year, we drew on the following sources of data: 1) semi-structured interviews, focus groups and surveys with parents, youth, teachers, school staff, district staff, and community-partners; 2) participant observation in key school meetings and events, documented through detailed field notes; and 3) collection of key school documents. We collected data over the course of a 8-month period (February 2018 - September 2018).

Interviews, Focus Groups and Surveys: We spoke to students and parents/caregivers that participated in programs and services offered at the community school (open school house, student organizations, parent groups, etc.) in both interview and focus group settings. We targeted this population to get a sense of their experiences attending school programming and general experiences during the school day with teachers and staff. When possible, we conducted more in-depth follow-up interviews with parents at locations that were most convenient for them (i.e., home, library, etc.). We also spoke with school staff that represented a variety of grade levels and positions within the school. Finally, we also spoke with community partners that worked closely with the schools, ranging from partners that provided financial support to partners that offered services through the school. All of the interviews and focus groups represented a range of ethnic and racial backgrounds. All interviews and focus groups were semi-structured. Interviews and focus groups questions differed based on the participant role with the school, but generally captured perceptions regarding community school vision and mission, relationships between school staff and families, school programs and services, and school practices. We engaged in conversation with 108 participants, in total.

Participant Observations: We conducted participant observations at Mendota and Leopold monthly community school committee meetings. We also conducted participant observations at key community school events, such as open school house nights and an annual block party. We conducted participant observations at these events to gain a deeper understanding of community school implementation at both the school level, as well as to triangulate our findings from other data sources. We conducted 9 participant observations in total.

Collection of School Literature: Finally, we collected key documents and artifacts from the schools, including community school coordination plans, school improvement plans, event flyers, calendars, committee meeting agendas, and attendance sheets. We collected this documents in order to provide additional insight into our evaluation questions and to gain an additional data source for triangulation.

Appendix:

Research Design (cont.)

Data Analysis: We used two conceptual frameworks to guide this study: The National Community School Standards and Culturally Responsive Evaluation. The National Community School Standards provided a framework that helped us analyze the patterns that were emerging from the data. A culturally responsive evaluation framework served to ground our analysis in the culture and context in which the community school initiative is operating.

We leveraged an iterative approach to qualitative data analysis that combined inductive and deductive approaches (Maxwell, 2005). We created a set of seven parent codes based on the evaluation question, as well as 28 subcodes. We then coded all data using these parent and subcodes. After coding, we re-analyzed all data using the conceptual frameworks described above as a lens and wrote extensive analytic notes.

Reliability and Validity Checks: In order to ensure inter-rater reliability, evaluators coded the same transcript of data. We then discussed and resolved any coding discrepancies in these data. Each evaluator also reviewed all data for a parent code in order to ensure that data were aligned with that parent code. In addition, multiple evaluators/researchers reviewed findings from this report. WEC also received feedback on findings this report from district-level staff, each school's community school committee and one of the school-based leadership team in Fall 2018.

Limitations: A number of youth and parent respondents were attendees of school events and programs. Given that we spoke mostly with participants engaged in school events, youth and parent data is not generalizable to all youth and parents at school. Youth and parent data may be skewed to reflect the perspectives of youth and parents that have more positive experiences with the school and, as result, attend school events.

