



What is a Community School?

- A community school is a public school that effectively benefits from partnerships with community resources.
- Its integrated focus on academics, health and social services, youth and community development, and community engagement leads to improved student learning, stronger families, and healthier communities.
- Community Schools become centers of the community and are open to all, even outside of standard school hours.

Community Schools in Fairfax County

- Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) and Fairfax County Neighborhood & Community Services (NCS) have been examining opportunities to implement Community Schools for many years.
- In 2016, the Board of Supervisors & School Board formed a work group to work towards pursuing the model.
- United Way came forward as a funder, in a joint effort with NCS, and spurred this pilot project.
- FCPS identified **Walt Whitman MS** and **Mount Vernon Woods ES** as the schools for the pilot project.

Who is involved?

- **UCM** was chosen to be the lead community partner and will employ a Community School Coordinator at each school.
- **FCPS** identified the schools for the pilot project and is participating on a school and system level for possible future expansion.
- **United Way of the National Capital Area** is providing 2 years of funding to UCM to support Walt Whitman MS based on their focus on middle school.
- **Fairfax County NCS** is incorporating the Community School model into Opportunity Neighborhood contracts and will provide ongoing funding to support both schools.
- **The Coalition for Community Schools** is providing technical support for all partners.





Walt Whitman MS

- 7th & 8th graders
- 1,000 students
- 59% free/reduced lunch
- 21% English learners
- 40% military
- Robust afterschool program
- Support staff incl. school social worker, psychologist, counselors, parent liaison, afterschool specialist



Mount Vernon Woods ES

- Pre-K - 6th graders
- 700 students
- 90% free/reduced lunch
- 48% English learners
- Support staff incl. school social worker, psychologist, counselors, parent liaison
- Department of Family Services social worker provides case management

Key Components of a Community School

- The Community School Coordinator works collaboratively with the school principal and other school support staff to design, develop and/or implement community school programming including:
 - Family and student support services
 - Health services
 - Enrichment activities including those that occur during the school day, after school and summer
 - Family and community engagement activities
 - Community sponsorship, partnership, and volunteer infrastructure

First Year Activities of a Community School (2018-19)

- Comprehensive needs assessment
- Identify students & families that need support
- Implement school-wide efforts to create a future-focused culture of achievement
- Increase parent engagement and education opportunities
- Increase community participation and support of the schools
- Establish mentoring program
- Case management and referrals to additional services

