TO: Members of the State Board of Education
FROM: Mohammed Choudhury
DATE: October 26, 2021
SUBJECT: Maryland’s Community Schools and the Concentration of Poverty Grant

PURPOSE:
The purpose of this item is to provide an overview of Maryland’s Community Schools and an explanation of the Concentration of Poverty Grant.

BACKGROUND/HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE:
The Maryland Annotated Code §5-223 defines a community school as a “a public school that identifies a set of strategic partnerships between the school and other community resources that promote student achievement, positive learning outcomes, and the well-being of students by providing wraparound services.” The 2019 Blueprint for Maryland’s Future legislation led to a substantial expansion of the community school strategy by providing Concentration of Poverty grants for personnel and wraparound services, funding a Director of Community Schools at the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), defining allowable wraparound services, and outlining the requirement for a needs assessment. The 2021 Blueprint for Maryland’s Future legislation provides per-pupil grants, further explains the role of the Community School Coordinator, provides more information on needs assessment requirements, and requires an implementation plan.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:
In Fiscal Year (FY) 2020, Maryland had 206 community schools, in FY 2021, there were 262 community schools, and in FY 2022, there are 300 community schools in 17 local school systems funded by the Concentration of Poverty Grant.

ACTION:
For discussion only.

ATTACHMENT:
Community Schools in Maryland: Supporting Success for Students, Families, and Neighborhoods PowerPoint
Community Schools in Maryland: Supporting Success for Students, Families, and Neighborhoods

State Board

October 26, 2021
Defining Community Schools

- MD Code of Education, § 5-223 defines community schools as “a public school that identifies a set of strategic partnerships between the school and other community resources that promote student achievement, positive learning outcomes, and the well-being of students by providing wraparound services.”

- Maryland’s community schools envision themselves as a hub connecting students, families, and communities to the resources and services that they need to thrive.
A History of Community Schools in Maryland

From 1993-2018, community schools established in several local school systems through local initiatives.

The 2019 Blueprint for Maryland’s Future legislation leads to a substantial expansion of the community school strategy.

The 2021 Blueprint for Maryland’s Future legislation expands requirements for community schools and phases in per-pupil grants.
As of Fiscal Year (FY) 2022, Concentration of Poverty grants were provided to 300 schools. These grants:

- establish community schools and support their work
- provide personnel grants:
  - to hire a Community School Coordinator and a full-time professional healthcare practitioner
  - remaining funding used to provide wraparound services
- provide per-pupil grants beginning in FY 2022:
  - awarded to schools with 80 percent or more of students receiving free or reduced meals
  - used to provide wraparound services
## Blueprint: Community Schools and Concentration of Poverty Grants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal Year</th>
<th>Concentration of Poverty Grant Eligibility (% of students receiving free and reduced meals) - Personnel</th>
<th>Concentration of Poverty Grant Eligibility (% of students receiving free and reduced meals) - Per Pupil</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Blueprint: Community Schools by the Numbers – Personnel Grant

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal Year</th>
<th>Eligibility Requirement (% of students receiving FARMS)</th>
<th># of community schools with Concentration of Poverty grant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FY 20</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 21</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 22</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Wraparound Services

The *Blueprint for Maryland’s Future* includes the following wraparound services:

- Extended learning time, including before and after school, weekends, summer school, and extended school year
- Safe transportation to and from school and off-site apprenticeship programs
- Vision and dental care services
- Establishing or expanding school-based health centers
- Additional social workers, mentors, counselors, psychologists, and restorative practice coaches
- Enhancing physical wellness, including providing healthy food for in-school and out-of-school time and linkages to community providers
- Enhancing behavioral health services, including access to mental health practitioners and providing professional development to school staff to provide trauma-informed interventions
Wraparound Services (continued)

- Providing family and community engagement supports, including informing parents of academic course offerings, language classes, workforce development training, opportunities for children, and available social services as well as educating families on how to monitor a child’s learning
- Establishing and enhancing linkages to Judy Centers and other early education programs that feed into the school
- Enhancing student enrichment experiences, including educational field trips, partnerships, and programs with museums, arts organizations, and cultural institutions
- Improving student attendance
- Improving the learning environment at the school
- Any professional development for teachers and school staff to quickly identify students who are in need of these resources
There are currently 300 schools in Maryland supported by the Concentration of Poverty Grant located in 17 local school systems, as well as The SEED School of Maryland.
The Needs Assessment Process

Community schools must complete a needs assessment within one year of receiving a Concentration of Poverty grant or becoming a community school.

- The needs assessment should:
  - Be done in collaboration with the school principal, school healthcare practitioner, and parent teacher organization/school family council.
  - Include an assessment of the physical, behavioral, and emotional health needs of the students, their families, and their communities.

- The Maryland Community Schools Needs Assessment is available for all local school systems and community schools to use.
  - Guidance
  - Surveys (English, Spanish, Haitian Creole)
  - Training
  - Technical assistance

- Data from the needs assessment is used to develop the implementation plan.
MSDE’s Support for the Community School Strategy

MD Code of Education § 9.9-103 provides funding to hire a Director of Community Schools at the MSDE. The MSDE currently:

- Provides support, technical assistance to meet unique needs of each school and school system
- Assists with administration of the needs assessments and development of implementation plans
- Conducts site visits
- Provides professional learning opportunities/coursework
- Works with local school systems to develop documents that can be used by all community schools
  - Maryland Community Schools Toolkit
Case Study: New York City Community Schools Initiative

- New York City Community Schools Initiative (NYC-CS) was established in fall 2014. It now has 267 schools across all five boroughs.
- NYC-CS supports the whole child, families, and learning inside and outside of the classroom.
Case Study: New York City Community Schools Initiative

A 2020 RAND report found that NYC-CS:

- Had a positive impact on student attendance;
- Had positive, significant impacts on on-time grade progression (elementary, middle);
- Led to a reduction of disciplinary incidents (elementary, middle);
- Had a positive impact on math achievement.
Case Study: Cincinnati Community Learning Centers

- Cincinnati Community Learning Centers (CLCs) being expanded to all schools
- Staffed by Resource Coordinators
- More than 600 partnerships across initiative
- Offers health services, counseling, out-of-school time and family engagement programs, career and college access services, mentoring, etc.
An evaluation conducted by Cincinnati Public Schools found that, from 2011-2013:

- Students receiving services improved their reading and math performance on the Ohio Achievement Assessment (OAA) and the Ohio Graduation Test (OGT).
- Students receiving tutoring and other intensive interventions improved math performance rank by 47% on the OTG.
- Students receiving services at CLCs had reduced disciplinary referrals and were less frequently tardy in 2011-2012.
Case Study: Paterson, NJ
Full Service Community School Initiative

The Full-Service Community School Initiative was adopted in Paterson, NJ in 2011.

- Expanded from one school in 2011 to seven schools in 2021
- Guided by Theory of Change, which identifies a series of conditions necessary for student achievement
- Offers out-of-school time programs, mental health services, health services, adult education, family workshops/services, etc.
A 2014 evaluation of the Full Service Community School Initiative by ActKnowldge found:

- 2/3 participating schools saw increase in student growth on state assessments in Language Arts and math relative to non-participating peer schools; All schools showed academic gains relative to peer schools
- Students with limited English proficiency showed greater gains on Language Arts state assessment versus non-Limited English proficient students in the earliest community schools
Current Activities in the Local School Systems

Implementation of wraparound services at each community school is guided by the needs assessment. Examples of the services and programs being offered in community schools in Maryland include:

**Allegany County**
- Partnership with Ecostars at Frostburg State University to offer mentoring and curriculum-aligned STEAM lessons
- Farmers Markets and weekend food backpacks provided at community schools through Western Maryland Food Bank and other partners

**Baltimore City**
- Mental health conference led by students at three high schools addressing grief and challenges of social isolation
- Partnership with Morgan State University to provide after school tutoring and mentorship

**Prince George’s County**
- University of Maryland School of Law and School of Social Work offers legal services to families and address housing needs
- Roberta’s House providing on-site grief counseling and support