

POLICY KJJ

Board of Education Las Cruces Public Schools

Related Entries: AD, EB, EB-R, JHB, JHB-R, KB, KB-R, KCB, KF, KF-R

Responsible Office: Associate Superintendent for Equity, Innovation & Social Justice

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

I. PURPOSE

It is the intent of the Las Cruces Board of Education to scale, support and sustain a network of high-quality community schools to promote student achievement, positive conditions for learning, and the well-being of families and communities.

BACKGROUND

- A. The Las Cruces Board of Education is committed to bringing the assets of the Las Cruces community, local businesses, city agencies, and non-profits to bear in the creation and support of Community Schools that build partnerships to expand opportunities, reverse the growing inequality in our society, and help close opportunity gaps that impede the academic performance of our students.
- B. The Las Cruces Board of Education believes that Community Schools are a vehicle for school transformation in improving student attendance, student safety, engagement, behavior and academic performance. Community schools also increase the number of young people who succeed in college and/or careers and civic life.
- C. Community Schools support ESSA, Title I, Title II, Title IV and work in conjunction with the Elevate Las Cruces Plan 2020. As part of the Board's commitment to community schools, the Board entered into a Joint Powers Agreement with the City of Las Cruces and other entities to collaboratively "support, scale, and sustain" community schools in 2018. The Joint Powers Agreement created a Las Cruces Partnership for Community Schools Board, which has representation from the Las Cruces Public Schools Board and District Administration.
- D. In 2019, HB589 "The New Mexico Community Schools Act" was signed into law.
- E. The Board believes that the community school framework and pillars are core to the mission and vision of Las Cruces Public Schools as both a school level strategy and also as part of a districtwide commitment to equity in light of the *Yazzie/Martinez* findings.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. “**Community Schools**” means a place and set of strategic collaborative partnerships between the school and other community resources that promote student achievement, positive conditions for learning, and the well-being of families and communities.
- B. “**Community School Advisory Council**” means a school-site structure that includes parents, community partners, school staff and youth substantively and regularly advising the Principal and school leadership team about all school matters that impact the well-being of the school’s children, including but not limited to the school’s non-academic program components and the use of the school building beyond regular school hours. This structure follows guidelines outlined in the School District’s policy around School Advisory Councils, but is adapted to fit the community school context in which a high emphasis is placed upon shared and collaborative leadership.
- C. “**Community School Coordinator**” is a full-time position at every community school that is responsible for executing the coordination and alignment of resources within a Community School and providing a base for parent and community advocacy on behalf of their children, school, and community.
- D. “**Community School Director**” is a full-time position that oversees the community school initiative across the district and provides guidance and professional development opportunities to community schools. This position also works collaboratively to provide administrative support to the Las Cruces Partnership for Community Schools Board.
- E. The “**Four Pillars of Community Schools**” are:
 - 1. . Integrated Students Supports—Culturally and linguistically responsive school-based or school-linked support services, including health care, case management, family stability supports, etc., which are provided in partnership with community organizations in order to address non-academic and out-of-school barriers to learning.
 - 2. . Expanded and Enriched Learning Time and Opportunities –Before-school, after-school, weekend, summer, and year-round programs that provide academic support, enrichment activities, and other opportunities to develop academic, social, emotional, and life skills, which may be offered on- or off-site in partnership with community-based organizations. This may include a broader use of school facilities, early childhood education, and community-based learning.
 - 3. . Active Family & Community Engagement—The process of empowering stakeholders to be partners in decision-making and student success through enthusiastic engagement and involvement in schools. This includes offering courses, activities, and services for parents or caregivers and community members, as well as fostering the creation of shared leadership structures.
 - 4. . Collaborative Leadership & Practice — The process of building a culture of professional learning, collective trust, and shared responsibility in schools through the collaboration of

all stakeholder groups, the site-based leadership team, and the community school coordinator.

- F. ***“Las Cruces Partnership for Community Schools Board”*** is an inter-agency community-wide leadership structure that provides support and vision for the community schools initiative in Las Cruces. This Board was established by the 2018 Joint Powers Agreement between the Las Cruces Public Schools and City of Las Cruces.
- G. ***“Yazzie/Martinez vs. State of New Mexico”*** is a decision that ruled that New Mexico has violated the state constitution by failing to provide a sufficient education, especially to low-income, Native American, English language learner (ELL) students, and students with disabilities.

III. POSITION

- A. Each Community School must be tailored to the specific needs and assets of its children, families and communities. This includes:
 - 1. School leadership that is committed to the Community School model and sees the model as a strategy, connected to the school’s instructional program, and includes the Community School Coordinator as integral to the school’s Leadership Team.
 - 2. A Community School Advisory Council that includes parents, community partners, school staff and youth substantively and regularly advising the Principal and school leadership team about all school matters that impact the well-being of the school’s children, including but not limited to the school’s non-academic program components and the use of the school building beyond regular school hours.
 - 3. A full-time Community School On-Site Coordinator who partners with the Principal and serves as an essential member of the school’s Leadership Team and whose role it is to develop, coordinate, integrate and align programs and partnerships that serve students, families, and the community.
 - 4. When available, an identified lead partner community-based organization and other partners that are deeply invested in improving student outcomes and integrated into decision-making, coordination and implementation of the Community School programs.
 - 5. Services, supports, and advocacy programs informed by a comprehensive needs and assets assessment in the school and in the community. Outcomes, strategies, location of responsibility, and timelines regarding accomplishments shall be reflected in an (ongoing) Strategic Action Plan.
 - a. The services, supports and advocacy program shall include an afterschool program for a significant number of the students, including those most in need such as those students whose history includes variables related to inequities, e.g. chronic absenteeism, etc.
 - a. An evidence-based systematic school climate and safety program such as Restorative Practices, Trauma-Informed Practices, Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Plan, and other programs that respond to the identified needs of children, families, and the community.
 - 6. Ongoing professional development for school leadership, all staff, parents, and partners designed to improve the outcomes for the Community School’s Strategic Action Plan. Topics of professional development include developing a positive and supportive school climate, effective

partnerships, and transformative parent and community engagement.

7. Dedicated space in the school for the Community School On-Site Coordinator, partners, and parents, as well as office space for the Community School District Coordinator
 8. Systems accessible to the Community School Coordinator to collect, analyze, and respond to real-time data on student and school indicators such as attendance, achievement, and program participation, as well as workflows for scheduling, programming, and other essential functions that support student success.
 9. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the Community School Strategy shall be part of the routine assessment of the school’s effectiveness as a whole.
- B. The Las Cruces Public Schools Administration, including the Community Schools Coordinators, will provide a bi-annual update at School Board and/or Joint City Council/School Board Meetings.
- C. The Superintendent will promulgate a regulation to support this policy.

REVIEW

This policy shall be reviewed in accordance with the Board of Education policy review process.

Approved, Board of Education President

Date

Legal Ref:
History: New Policy