

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS INITIATIVE

EVANSVILLE VANDERBURGH SCHOOL CORPORATION



A District-wide Initiative (38 schools)

<http://www.evscschools.com>

EVANSVILLE, INDIANA

PARTNERSHIPS

EVSC'S community partnerships are what really bring the full service model to life. Community agencies and organizations, hospitals and businesses, citizens and school staff now comprise the School-Community Council (the "Big Table"). All are doing work to support their community through EVSC's schools.

Three major components connect to make up the infrastructure for full-service community schools in Evansville: Site coordinators and Site Councils in the schools, the district's School-Community Council ("Big Table"), and school district organization.

RESULTS

The EVSC has experienced an increase in the number of students receiving mental health services (school social work and case management). For students receiving school social work services, significant reductions in students' behavioral concerns were observed by students, parents, and teachers. Additionally, students experienced significant gains in school adjustment measures over time.

Evansville's focus on early childhood development has contributed to a 31% increase in the percentage of students meeting early literacy benchmarks. In fall 2006, 38.8% of kindergarten students met DIBELS benchmark instructional recommendations upon entry into school, compared to 50.8% in fall 2010.

In 2010, over 1,500 students participated in afterschool and summer programs. Students participating in 30 days or more had significantly fewer absences compared to students with lower participation. Further, students participating 60 or more days in the program had higher overall grade point averages compared to students attending less than 30 days.

BACKGROUND

Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation (EVSC), a school district in southwest Indiana, has taken the lessons from one community school to scale across the district. Community schools are now a central component of the district's strategy.

EVSC's mission is to establish school sites as places of community to support successful youth and family development and to provide equity and excellence for all students.

Equity is accomplished by providing all students with fulfilling opportunities and experiences regardless of background and requires that educators move all students forward without holding others back.

Excellence involves providing all students with the skills necessary to achieve sustained success and growth.

With student achievement at its core, EVSC focuses on two primary goals:

- ◆ Strengthen bonds between families and children with schools and community by establishing an infrastructure of support that allows and encourages school and agencies to work together to support children and families in school communities
- ◆ The physical, mental, and emotional health of the children and their families in the Evansville community will improve by providing access through schools to programs and services that promote health and wellbeing

LEADERSHIP

Site Councils and Coordinators: School-based Site Councils made up of parents, school staff, and representatives from community agencies meet monthly to discuss needs specific to each school. The Principal and/or facilitator lead a strategic planning process to identify, assess, and determine needs for each school site. Site Coordinators work with the school's Site Councils to create and run appropriate programming for each school's population. Some EVSC schools create teams called Student Services Teams (SST), comprised of principals, counselors, nurses, and teachers. The SST discuss how to grow the community school idea at their school site and bring in community partners.

School-Community Council: The "Big Table," including the school system and 70 community partners, works in three areas: prevention, intervention, and family involvement. It is a central forum for the discussion of issues that reach beyond individual school sites. Members include district staff, community members, parents, businesses, political leaders, universities, civic groups, and representatives from community agencies. Subcommittees focus on communications, evaluation, health and wellness, and afterschool.

District Organization: EVSC, led by an Associate Superintendent for Family, School and Community Partnership and supported by a Director of full service community schools, coordinates the work of the "Big Table" and its teams, keeping the school district connected to the community's needs and resources, braiding together funding streams, and coordinating the work of partners.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

EVSC and community agencies work in partnership to provide quality education and additional supports such as:

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| Comprehensive health education | Social skills training |
| Primary health care | Health screening |
| Immunizations | Dental care |
| Counseling | Mental Health services |
| After school programs | Summer enrichment programs |

