

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS INITIATIVE

UNITED WAY OF THE GREATER LEHIGH VALLEY
COMMUNITY PARTNERS FOR STUDENT SUCCESS



<http://www.unitedwayglv.org/Partners/COMPASS/Overview-of-COMPASS.aspx>

12 Community Schools across 3 Districts

LEHIGH VALLEY, PENNSYLVANIA

PARTNERSHIPS

- ◆ Allentown School District
- ◆ Bethlehem Area School District
- ◆ Bangor Area School District
- ◆ Communities in Schools of the Lehigh Valley
- ◆ Boys and Girls Club of Allentown
- ◆ Northampton Community College
- ◆ Center for Humanistic Change
- ◆ Slater Family Network
- ◆ Lehigh County Children, Youth, and Families
- ◆ Northampton County Department of Human Services
- ◆ Just Born Foundation

RESULTS

Academic Performance

- ◆ Increase in 3rd grade students “proficient” and above on PSSA testing: from 26-54% in reading and from 40-66% in math between 2006 and 2008. (Central and Lincoln)

Attendance

- ◆ 14 of 17 students/families targeted (with personal phone calls, meetings, follow-up, and free alarm clocks) for chronic absenteeism/tardiness improved attendance and on-time arrivals. (Central)

Behavior

- ◆ Number of out-of-school suspensions decreased by 50%, linked to positive behavior supports, increased professional development, and referral of challenged students to after-school programs. (Central)
- ◆ Discipline referrals decreased for second year in a row from 358 to 281 in 2007-08 school year. (Roosevelt)

BACKGROUND

The United Way of the Greater Lehigh Valley’s Community Partners for Student Success (COMPASS) is a collaborative effort committed to helping students graduate from high school ready to lead meaningful and productive lives. COMPASS convenes partners, funds and sustains relationship building, provides the training and technical assistance needed to develop a solid community schools framework and collects data to determine results. COMPASS supports 12 community schools across three districts in the Lehigh Valley. Their goals are:

- ◆ Expand the number of community schools in the Lehigh Valley,
- ◆ Share information about successful community school policies, programs, and practices,
- ◆ Build broader public understanding of and support for community schools,
- ◆ Inform public and private-sector policies to strengthen community schools, and
- ◆ Develop sustainable sources of funding for community schools.

The COMPASS strategy is to mobilize partners, focusing on quality early childhood programs, quality education for all, positive youth development opportunities, basic needs of students and families, mutual respect and effective collaboration of parent and educators, and safe, supportive school environments.

LEADERSHIP

COMPASS pairs urban and rural schools in Northeastern Pennsylvania with a local community based organization or institution of higher education, who takes on a role called Lead Partner. At present, there are four Lead Partners who have dedicated staff, resources, and time including: Communities In Schools of the Lehigh Valley, Boys and Girls Club of Allentown, Northampton Community College and Lehigh University. Lead partners come together once a month to dialogue about resource development, share common challenges and success, and identify strategies for engaging the broader community. At the school level, a site-based leadership team comprised of a community school coordinator, the lead partner, a principal, and other partners guides the work of the community school.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

COMPASS community schools provide:

- ◆ Tutoring and mentoring,
- ◆ After school programs,
- ◆ Parent and adult education programs,
- ◆ Medical, vision, and dental services, and
- ◆ School-wide initiatives that build character, improve the health and safety of students and beautify the surrounding neighborhood.

