

ROY CLARK ELEMENTARY

Union Public Schools

Tulsa, Oklahoma

“Roy Clark Elementary gives the students [of this community] equal opportunities with students in more affluent communities. No longer do our students come to school hungry, with clothes and shoes that don't fit, with medical and emotional needs that aren't being met, and without hope for the future. Our students are now physically and emotionally healthy, they know they are loved and that we believe in them, but most of all, they now believe in themselves. The fact that Roy Clark is a community school put the words, “I care” into action and made a difference in the lives of our students and their families.” - Bobbi Whitlock, Counselor, M.Ed., LPC

Roy Clark Elementary was the first school in the Union Public School District in Tulsa, Oklahoma to pilot the community school strategy. Principal Theresa Kiger, began the community school development process in 2005. Kiger was determined to do whatever was necessary to help her students succeed. Thanks to her efforts



and those of the Tulsa Area Community Schools Initiative (TACSI), Roy Clark is now a thriving community school that is at the heart of its neighborhood. The school and its partners are helping to improve student success, grow healthy families, and create strong communities. The successes at Clark, have led to the expansion of community schools in seven of the thirteen elementary schools in Union Public Schools, Independence District #9 are now community schools. (There are 12 additional

“We have both qualitative and quantitative data that show how beneficial this approach has been to our students and their families. As a result, we make our decisions through a community schools lens. It has substantially affected how we plan, who we hire, and the means by which we allocate our resources. The community school philosophy and practices have become an integral part of who we are as a school district.” - Dr. Kathy Dodd, Assistant Superintendent of Union Public Schools

Clark's Academic Success

Clark continues to grow and flourish in its community school initiative. Despite factors that typically indicate decline

in achievement (high poverty, high health risks, low family educational levels, 63% single parent families, 49% ELL learners), the schools data indicate just the opposite!

In 2008, Clark received an Academic Excellence award from the state as “most improved” in Annual Yearly Progress (AYP). Recent research by Dr. Curt Adams of OU-Tulsa indicates that Clark students achieve at levels far exceeding comparable students in non-community schools. Academic achievement according to the State Department of Education is more than 400 points above state averages for reading and math, and all sub-groups have increased over 500 points since the development of community school components.

Meeting the Physical, Social and Emotional Needs of Students

With the goal of nurturing the development of the whole child, the school addresses many physical needs of its students. Clark partners with OU Physicians Community Health Clinic to provide healthcare to all students and families. Regardless of pay source, students and families can utilize the school-based health clinic throughout their school-age years. Site-based counseling services

Roy Clark At-A-Glance

- Grade Level:** PreK-5
- Number of Students:** 600
- Demographics:** 47% Hispanic, 21% African-American, 20% White, 6% Native American, 3% Asian, 3% Other
- ELL Students:** 46%
- Special Education Students:** 14%
- Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch:** 96%
- Student Mobility Rate:** 35%

Who's Who at Roy Clark

- Dr. Cathy Burden**, Superintendent, Union Public Schools
- Dr. Kathy Dodd**, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, Union Public Schools
- Theresa Kiger**, Principal
- Harriet Patterson**, Community School Coordinator

Results (From 2004 to the present)

- Current immunization rate: 98%
- Increase in attending Early Childhood Programs from 15% to 70%
- Increased attendance rate 93% to 95%
- Decrease in chronic absenteeism from 9% to 1%
- Decreased mobility rate 45% to 35%
- Increased overall Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) scores from 799 to 1217 (max score=1500) for subgroup encompassing all students in both reading and math
- State AYP score is 400 points above state average
- Third most improved AYP in 2008 by Oklahoma Department of Education
- Increase in breakfast participation: 25% to 100%
- Increase in fresh fruit/vegetable snacks: 100% in school; 70% after school
- Increase in Parent-Teacher conference participation: 68% to 100%
- Increase in annual community night attendance from 300 to 1,000
- Food for Kids - weekend food assistance for 80 students
- Families connected to support networks and services 10% to 100%
- Increase in health clinic enrollment from 300 to over 8,000 patients

from Family and Children's Services, a community partner, is available at any given time. Other services available to students include interventions provided by the school counselor, behavior coach, on-site therapist, and/or school psychologist.

"When it comes to people who care about a kid's success and go the extra mile to build relationships with their students and their families, Roy Clark Elementary staff goes above and beyond the call of duty!" - Matt Hancock, Executive Director, Dickenson Family YMCA

These efforts led to an increase in clinic patients from 300 in January 2005, to over 8,000 patients currently! Good healthcare has contributed to a 2% increase in daily attendance and a decreased in mobility from 45% to 35%. Families do not want to leave a school where they receive this kind of support.

The social and emotional needs of students and their families represent another key component. The well-being of students is reviewed at monthly Student Assistance Team (SAT) meetings with community partners; wrap-around services are then provided to meet a variety of needs. Improvement is evaluated for each individual student through intervention plans that include progress monitoring of targeted behaviors. Approximately 65 students (>10%) receive site-based counseling services from our community partner, Family and Children's Services, at any given time.

Integrating Community-Based Service Learning to Core Curriculum

Teachers use community-based learning in Clark's classrooms. All classes participate in Junior Achievement (JA), learning from community leaders about business and enterprise. Fifth grade students attend JA BIZ TOWN to run a mock business community. Service learning is integrated into the school's core curriculum. Students participated during and after school in a school-wide service learning project, "Where are the Bees?" The project asks students to find out why the bee population is declining in the community and what



to do about it. Students researched and created posters, videos, art projects, and science activities, and grew a garden to attract bees and feed the resident bunnies. Area businesses made donations; seven community grants funded the effort. The project

"When my oldest daughter entered seventh grade, no after-school or extended daycare was offered. Principal Kiger overheard and offered that my daughter could ride a bus to Clark after school each day, where she could do her homework and wait until I arrived. As a single mother working 25+ miles from the school, I am extremely indebted and grateful for the assistance." - Teresa Burgess, Parent

culminated with student portfolios showcasing all of the activities and curriculum correlations. Portfolios were then submitted to Disney Planet Challenge. Upon completion of this

project students had worked in many curriculum areas: math, science, social studies, reading, writing, art, health, and safety.

Engaging Families and the Community

Clark involves families and community residents in a variety of different ways. Parents and community partners serve on the Site Community Team, with other school staff and partners and are involved in the decision making process for the school.

Prior to the first day of school, staff visits each student's home to meet families and welcome the students back to school. The mother of Clark student, Luis Rodriguez, said "Community schools help children and their families succeed. Assisting mothers in getting jobs, to completing their GED, [the] school just isn't for the child; it helps the entire family and community." Going even a step further to reach families where they are, the school holds enrollment days at local apartment complexes before school begins each year.



Participation in parent-teacher conferences is now 100% (90% in person and 10% by phone conference or mail). This happens because school personnel make every attempt to accommodate parents' busy schedules. Last year, 100% of parents of special needs students participated in their child's Individualized Education Program meetings. Meetings were deliberately scheduled to accommodate parents' schedules. In some cases, home visits were made to ensure their opportunity to participate. Parent participation in early childhood class learning events ranges from 80-100%. Approximately 75% of fifth grade parents attended a Moving Up transition meeting for students matriculating to the 6th Grade Center.



Seasonal community events bring together over 1,000 participants and more than 25 community resource providers. The school's Community School Coordinator attends area apartment managers' meetings. Southwood Baptist Church hosts family events for Clark families and helps to distribute food sacks to over 80 children every week.



Roy Clark's School Partners

- Children's Dental Health Center
- Clark Parent Teacher Association
- Community Action Project Early Learning Center
- Community Service Council
- CREOKS, Family & Children's Services
- Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma
- Hicks Recreation Center, Jr. Achievement
- Northeastern State University
- University of Oklahoma (OU) College of Pharmacy
- OU Physicians Community Health Clinic
- OU Urban Design Studio
- Oxley Family Foundation
- Pa'Lante Dance
- Erwin Photography
- Sam's Club
- Southeast Rotary Club
- Shadow Mountain Behavioral Health
- Southwood Baptist Church
- Tulsa Area Community Schools Initiative (TASCI)
- YMCA, Thomas Academy
- Tulsa Arts Council, Tulsa Children's Museum
- Tulsa City-County Library
- Tulsa Health Department

Site Community Team at Clark

The Site Community Team consisting of parents, the principal, other school staff and partners, meets three times a year using student data to analyze the effectiveness of core program components. The team's goal is to engage the school and surrounding neighborhood in identifying their local needs and priorities and to support the programs, services, and opportunities provided in response. If a program is not working, the team reviews and works with the partner to revise or recreate.

Collective Governance

"One unique aspect of Roy Clark is the absence of a primary partner", says Clark Principal, Theresa Kiger. Rather, community support comes from more than 30 partners working to optimize learning conditions. "Collectively, governance is a shared responsibility between the larger community under the TACSI umbrella, community partners, parents, and school administrative personnel which includes the site principal, assistant principal, and community school coordinator. Partners support core components and serve on the school's Site Community Team. Kiger expresses that, "Serving the whole child defines the culture of Clark, and

"Before joining the Clark team, I had never seen such a school-wide, collaborative effort to literally know and address every single student's academic and social needs. It is simply magical to see Clark staff and community partners provide personal, individualized, effective instruction and services to make certain each child succeeds." - Wendy Johnson, Assistant Principal

our staff exemplifies a learning community invested in success for all of our students." In collaborating with people from so many different sectors, Clark ensures enduring relationships among educators, families, community volunteers, businesses, health and social service agencies, community faith-based and civic groups, youth development agencies, and others that are committed to children. Those relationships are changing the landscape, not only for Clark, but the community and the district as a whole.



"We love being a community partner, serving hundreds of children and their families. Our joint efforts have resulted in better mental health and academics among Clark students." Whitney Downie, Family and Children Services

Educating the Whole Child

"We are passionate that children can learn if given the opportunity. Clark is a hub for educating the whole child, so students and families are offered a variety of programs - health care, counseling, enrichment activities, adult education, early childhood programs and summer camps," says Principal Kiger when asked about her school. "Looking at the accomplishments we have made since becoming a community school five years ago, we see the effective instruction, high expectations, and engaged learning that has led to incredible student success."



"The teachers at Clark will do whatever they can to help us succeed in life. When you have been here since Pre)-K, the hard time is when you have to graduate to middle school." - Chip Pratt, 5th grade student

ABOUT THE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS NATIONAL AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE

To highlight the impact of community schools on student success and their efficient and effective use of school and community resources, the Coalition for Community Schools established a national awards program. This year's program sought individual community schools that have been operating for at least 3 years, are public schools, and have strong results along multiple measures.

The three *2011 Community Schools for Excellence Award* winners, Roy Clark Elementary, Ethel Taylor Academy, and Glencliff High School, are doing just that. The Coalition is proud to recognize these three schools with a \$1,000 prize. These schools are not exceptions; rather they are exemplars in their communities, where a broad school and community partnership is working to create effective community schools across the entire district.

This year's winners show that schools that work together with their communities can create optimal conditions for students...conditions that will not only help them succeed academically but also enable them to become healthy and successful citizens and contributing family members.

What is a Community School?

A community school is both a place and a set of partnerships between the school and other community resources. Its integrated focus on academics, youth development, family support, health and social services and community development, leads to improved student learning, stronger families and healthier communities. Using public schools as hubs, community schools bring together many partners to offer a range of supports and opportunities to children, youth, families and communities - before, during and after school, and on weekends.

ABOUT THE COALITION FOR COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

About the Coalition for Community Schools

The Coalition for Community Schools, housed at the Institute for Educational Leadership, is an alliance of 170 national, state and local organizations in education, K-16, youth development, community planning and development, family support, health and human services, higher education, government and philanthropy as well as national, state and local community school networks. It has been advocating for community schools since 1997.

www.communityschools.org

Mission

The Coalition for Community Schools advances opportunities for the success of children, families and communities by promoting the development of more, and more effective community schools. Our mission is to mobilize the resources and capacity of multiple sectors and institutions to create a united movement for community schools.

Vision

The Coalition for Community Schools believes that strong communities require strong schools, and strong schools require strong communities. We envision a future in which schools are centers of thriving communities where everyone belongs, works together and succeeds.

Core Values

- Foster Strong Partnerships
- Share Accountability for Results
- Set High Expectations for All
- Build on the Community's Strength
- Embrace Diversity

