Wraparound Services and Closing the Achievement Gap

Every child and every school is capable of excellence given the right conditions for learning.

Wraparound Services are Collaborative Partnerships

Schools cannot do it alone. In order to achieve maximum success in their education reform efforts, schools need to engage a set of partnerships between the school and other community resources. These partnerships develop a unified focus on academics, services, supports and opportunities that leads to improved student learning, stronger families and healthier communities. Schools become hubs of the community, accessible to children and families, including evenings and weekends, as needed.

Key Elements of Wraparound Services

In order to achieve school reform, a core instructional program is delivered by qualified teachers and instruction is organized around a challenging curriculum anchored by high standards and expectations for students. Wraparound services, such as those in community school models, are provided in a manner that coordinates school and community programs for children, including but not limited to:

- Family engagement, parent leadership and adult education
- Extended learning opportunities and youth development
- Physical, dental and mental health programs and social services
- Afterschool, mentoring and tutoring programs
- Early childhood development
- Full utilization of federal and state child nutrition programs (breakfast, lunch, supper, snack, and Healthy Food Certification)

Key Elements of a Successful Plan

Comprehensive school reform plans must include coordination with school and community initiatives to ensure students receive adequate support and services necessary to be successful in school. Key elements of a successful plan include:

- **Coordination:** Coordinate, negotiate, mediate, and make connections among nonprofits, schools and other partners (note: it is key to have a high level district coordinator).

- **Needs Assessment/Planning:** Identify service needs, gaps and existing programs; examine and share relevant research; develop plans; provide training and support to build local capacity.

- **Communication:** Engage wide range of stakeholders; communicate among families, school staff, external service providers and the wider community.

- **Accountability:** Collect, maintain, analyze and disseminate data on programs and participants. Integrate with existing school data system.

- **Resource Development:** Seek financial support for services through grant writing and other fundraising activities.

Research supports that community partnerships make a positive difference in student achievement, behavior and attendance, family involvement, and community engagement with public schools.

Connecticut's Foundation for Building Partnerships

Connecticut has a number of programs that are foundational to creating community partnerships in schools. This includes the Connecticut **Family Resource Center** (FRC) program. Each FRC provides a practical foundation to assist both school and community in the evolution to become a full-service school

School Based Health Centers (SBHC) are another foundational program existing in many Connecticut schools. SBHCs provide *medical care and preventive and behavioral health services* by a team of licensed interdisciplinary professionals with particular expertise in child/adolescent health. The SBHC team addresses and coordinates a broad spectrum of students' physical, mental and behavioral health needs and medical needs. Optional preventive and restorative dental services may also be provided.

In addition, districts are encouraged to build upon already existing community/school partnerships such as Coordinated School Health, Graustein Fund Discovery Communities, Community Transformation Grants, Pioneering Healthier Communities and others.

Suggested Resources

- Children's Aid Society, www.childrensaidsociety.org
- Coalition for Community Schools at the Institute for Educational Leadership, www.communityschools.org
- Communities in Schools, www.communitiesinschools.org
- Connecticut State Department of Education:
    Comprehensive Student Support Systems Framework, Secondary School Reform
    http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/ssreform/csss_essential_practices_framework.pdf
    Guidelines for a Coordinated Approach to School Health
    http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2678&q=322666#Guidelines
    SRBI Topical Brief 3 - *Scientific Research Based Interventions (SRBI) Addressing the Needs of the Whole Child: Social, Emotional, Behavioral, and Physical Health, as well as Academic Achievement in Connecticut's SRBI Process*
    http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/curriculum/cali/topical_brief_3.pdf
- Harvard Family Research Project, http://www.hfrp.org
- Healthy ConneCTions, Connecticut State Department of Education, www.ct.gov/sde/healthyconneCTions
- National Association for Family and Community Education, http://nafce.org/Page.aspx/17/home-overview.html
- Schools of the 21st Century, Yale University, http://www.yale.edu/21C/index2.html
- State Board of Education Position Statements:
    Coordinated Approach to School Health
    http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/LIB/sde/pdf/board/csh_position_statement.pdf
    Creating a Healthy Learning Environment that is Physically, Emotionally and Intellectually Safe
    http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/LIB/sde/pdf/board/Creating_Learning_Environment.pdf
    Nutrition and Physical Activity
    http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/LIB/sde/pdf/board/nutrition_phys_activity.pdf
    School-Family-Community Partnerships
    http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/LIB/sde/pdf/board/SFCP.pdf
- Youth Development Institute, Beacons and Out of School Time, http://ydinstitute.org/initiatives/beacons/index.html

For more information contact the Wraparound Team:

Bonnie J. Edmondson, Ed.D.
(860) 713-6936 or bonnie.edmondson@ct.gov

Katina Grays
(860) 713-6594 or katina.grays@ct.gov

Kari Sullivan
(860) 807-2041 or kari.sullivan@ct.gov