

# Full-Service Community Schools Empower Students to Succeed

*This week, the House is considering appropriations legislation to fund the government for Fiscal Year 2022. Included in the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education bill is a substantial increase for full-service community schools, which play a vital role in closing the education achievement gap by providing comprehensive social services and programs to children and their families. The funding increase from \$30 million to \$443 million is a major investment for America's children, and with this funding, states across the country will be able to launch and expand full-service community schools to ensure children come to school ready to learn and succeed.*

## **FULL-SERVICE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PROVIDE ESSENTIAL RESOURCES FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**

When children are hungry or sick or have parents who are out of work, they have trouble learning and performing well in school. That's why taking a holistic approach to the well-being of our students is critical to improving their performance in school and beyond.

Full-service community schools work to ensure students come to school ready to learn and succeed by locating educational and social service programs in one place, facilitated through partnerships with school districts and community organizations. They are especially critical for children attending high-poverty schools who face greater barriers to learning.

Specifically, these schools provide:

- Support programs for early childhood education and development;
- Primary care, dental care, and mental health services;
- High-quality early learning programs;
- Academic support for student's pre-K through 12<sup>th</sup> grade;
- Youth development and mentoring programs;
- Services that help support parents and promote family engagement, family literacy, and parental involvement;
- Nutrition services to combat hunger insecurity;
- Community service and service learning opportunities;
- Job training and career counseling;
- Financial stability; and
- Access to social service programs for families.

Investments in closing the achievement gap yield tremendous dividends for our economy as today's students are given the resources and education necessary to become tomorrow's innovators and job creators.

## **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF FULL-SERVICE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS**

Leader Hoyer has long advocated for full-service community schools to build on the success of Maryland's Judith P. Hoyer Early Learning Hubs, or 'Judy Centers', in promoting educational outcomes and narrowing the achievement gap.

*Office of the House Majority Leader Steny H. Hoyer, 07/29/21*

After overseeing the initial funding of \$5 million in grants during Fiscal Year 2008, Leader Hoyer continued to champion the program, which quickly expanded thanks to support from state and local education officials and the Department of Education, and was fully authorized by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015.

Take a look at what education advocates in Maryland and around the country are saying about the House acting to increase funding for Full-Service Community Schools:

**National Education Association President, Rebecca S. Pringle:**

“Ten years ago the National Education Association was working with only a dozen or so local school districts to standup community schools. **This week, our friend Representative Steny Hoyer and his colleagues secured a historic \$413 million increase for Full-Service Community Schools in the House funding bill. Champions for education like Rep. Hoyer understand that every student in America – Black or white, rich or poor, toddler or teenager - face problems that do not stay at home once in school, and directly affect their ability to learn and thrive.** Whether it’s free meals, laundry services or tutoring - community schools provide tremendous opportunities for learning and success for students, as well as hope, opportunity, and transformation to entire communities. Our nation has a promise to keep – a great public school for every single student that helps them reach their potential and fulfill their dreams – **Our friends in the House stepped up. Now it’s time for the Senate to follow suit and make good on that promise.”**

**American Federation of Teachers President, Randi Weingarten:**

“Community schools build trust and help kids and families access the support and services they need socially, academically and emotionally. They help answer a problem educators have long encountered even before the pandemic – that a student who is hungry or cannot see the board will struggle to learn, and help address the needs of the whole child so they can access opportunities to learn and thrive. **As we continue to prioritize full-time in-person schooling for every child, this historic investment is critical to ensure our public schools are safe and welcoming places for all.”**

**Maryland State Education Association President, Cheryl Bost:**

“We are thrilled that the House of Representatives has included a \$413 million increase in funding for Full-Service Community Schools for our children and families in the package of appropriations bills on the House Floor this week. **We are grateful for the work of Congressman Hoyer, who has been a tireless advocate on behalf of the full-service community schooling model for decades.** We join in urging Congress to send this legislation to President Biden’s desk.”

**Coalition for Community Schools Director, Jose Munoz:**

“On behalf of the Coalition’s hundreds of national, state, and local partners, **we are thrilled that the House is approving a record increase for the Full-Service Community Schools program for FY 2022. We are thankful for Majority Leader Hoyer’s longstanding championing of this program that has undoubtedly helped us get here.** The success of Community Schools historically and most recently during the pandemic offers us as a country a roadmap for public education to continue to invest in Community Schools at all levels and to foster the strong collaboration between school and community and the democratic practices including the centering of student, family, and community voice that Community Schools demonstrate so well. **We look forward to working with Congress to secure this historic funding for FY 2022 and to sustain it for years to come.”**

**Strong Future Maryland Executive Director, Alice Wilkerson:**

“We are thrilled to see this level of investment in community schools and applaud Congressman Hoyer's leadership to ensure our students have wrap-around services and the support they need to be successful. This funding will help Maryland implement the community schools provisions of the Blueprint for Maryland's future, prioritizing young people in underserved communities.”