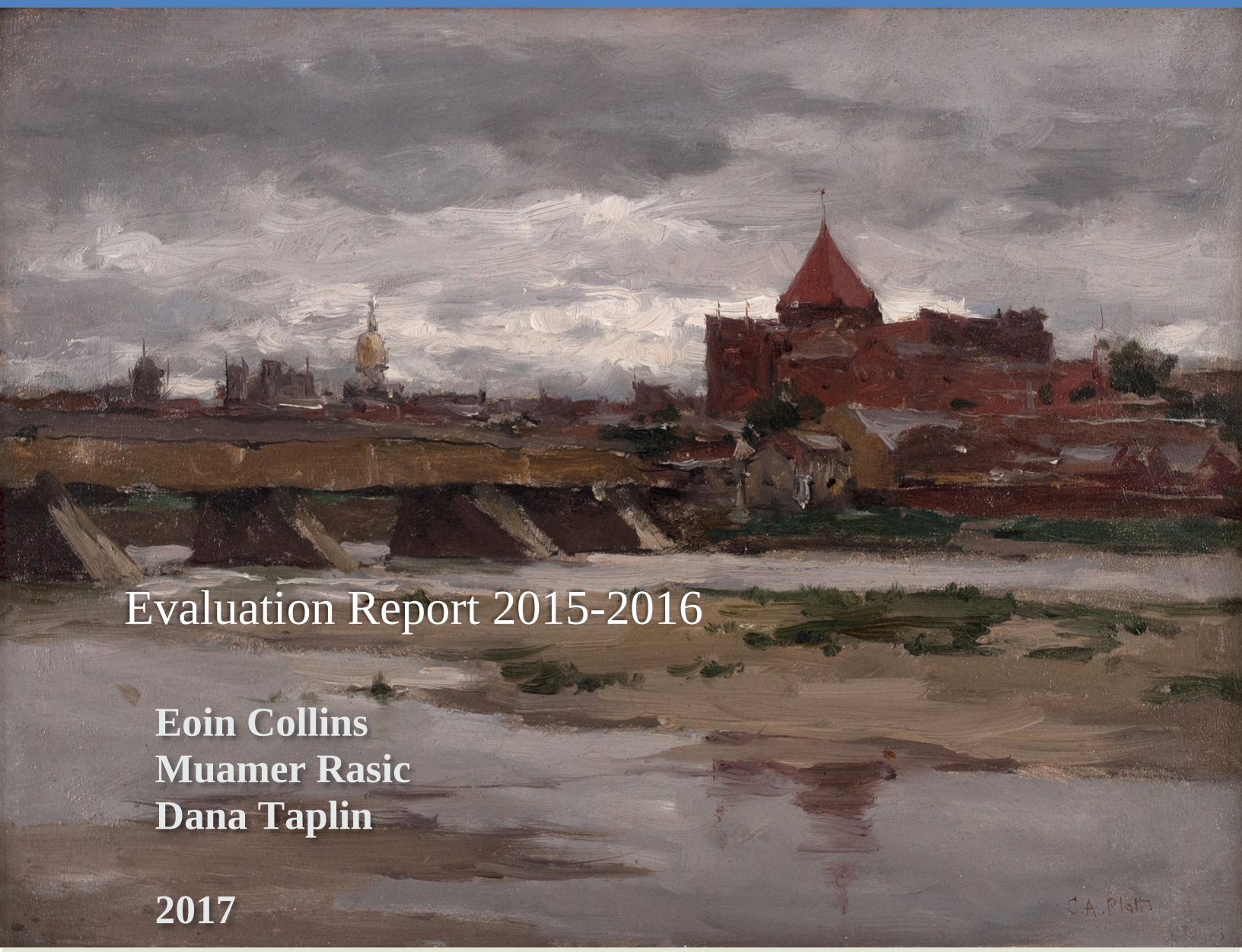
Hartford Community Schools



Evaluation Report 2015-2016

Eoin Collins
Muamer Rasic
Dana Taplin

2017

ActKnowledge
Theory to Results

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Cover: "Hartford, Connecticut." Charles A. Platt, 1885, Oil. Connecticut Digital Archive; Collection of the Florence Griswold Museum.

Executive Summary

Introduction

Hartford Community Schools (HCS) has developed and implemented a community school model that encompasses a broad array of services and interventions for students and parents/families including the provision of afterschool programs. Each school in the initiative is partnered with a lead agency to plan, implement, and sustain the components of the model. This is based on the inclusive model adopted by the initiative and is outlined in the HCS Theory of Change, one of the most comprehensive Theories of Change yet developed by a community schools' initiative.

In accordance with the model, the community schools have continued to focus on aligning afterschool programs with daytime learning, on building a stronger academic element into afterschool programs, and developing activities specifically targeting students falling behind academically and facing attendance and behavior problems. Schools have also worked on activities designed to support other key preconditions for student success including developing a welcoming school climate and promoting parent/family engagement.

In doing this work, the community schools have been guided and supported by Hartford Partnership for Student Success (HPSS), a multi-sectoral partnership involving the four main investors in HCS: Hartford Public Schools (HPS), the City of Hartford, the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving and the United Way of Central and Northeastern Connecticut. This year, HPSS has been expanded to include two new private sector organizations: Aetna, and The Hartford, the latter providing resources to HCS and West Middle School in particular. The inclusion of new sectoral partners is in line with the inclusive and comprehensive vision of the community school model envisioned for the initiative.

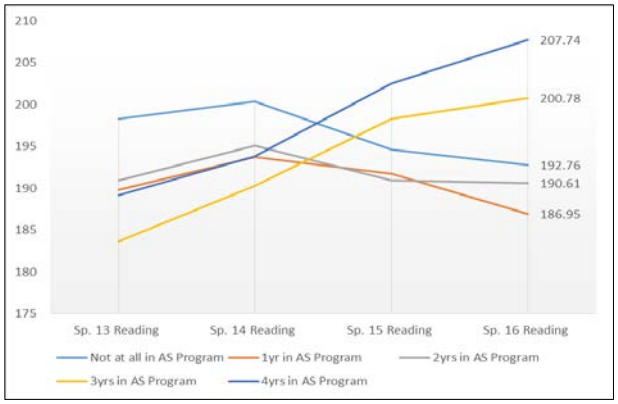
The strategic work of HPSS and the HCS network has yielded successful outcomes in developing and aligning systemic supports with the needs of the schools. Much progress has been made, despite the seven-month vacancy in the position of Hartford Community Schools Coordinator (who provides technical assistance and implementation support for the community schools) during the 2015-2016 academic year. The Director of Hartford Partnership for Student Success served in both capacities during this time. With the appointment of a new HCS Coordinator in May 2016, this work should be further enhanced.

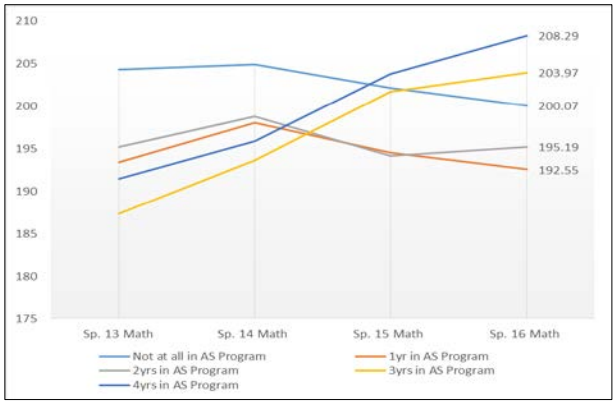
Highlights of Results

Hartford Community Schools (HCS) has made impressive progress in 2016 despite some significant challenges in the broader context in which it is operating. In particular:

Academic Achievement Results

- Participants in the afterschool program (a key component of the community school model) have yet again improved on Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) scores in both reading and math compared to students who did not participate.
- Even more impressive has been the strong academic performance of those who persisted in the afterschool program over time. There was a significantly greater increase in MAP scores in reading and in math for students who participated in the afterschool program for three or four consecutive years compared to those who participated for less than two years.





- The academic impact of the afterschool program is supported by responses to the survey of afterschool students. There were increases in students who reported learning reading, writing and, math skills in their afterschool program in all schools.
- MAP results for cohorts of academically "at-risk" students who were connected to programs or services targeted to their needs also showed strong improvement. Even greater improvement was observed among those students who had participated persistently in these services over time. Examples include very strong improvements for participants in the Travelers Tutoring program (ASA Bellizzi) and ConnectiKids (West Middle).
- MAP results for cohorts of English Language Learners (ELL) who received targeted supports (in Burns LSA, Burr and Clark) improved in both reading and math despite a decrease in MAP scores for ELL students in HCS overall.
- Special Education students (SE) who received targeted supports (in Clark) demonstrated much stronger improvements in MAP results in both reading and math than for SE students in HCS overall.

Attendance/Chronic Absenteeism and Behavior Results

- Rates of chronic absenteeism fell in the five HCS schools (ASA Bellizzi, Burns LSA, Burr, Clark and Milner) where rates have been highest previously.
- Days absent declined for cohorts of students in Burns LSA and Milner who had received mental health supports or where there was intensive engagement with their parents.
- The most successful intervention to address behavioral issues among particular cohorts of students was the mental health supports provided through Milner clinical services. This validates the emphasis in the HCS Theory of Change on the importance of mental health as a precondition for learning.

Several key elements of the community school model have been important in achieving these results.

- The afterschool programs in each school have clearly had a strongly positive impact on achievement. However, sustaining the educational impact of the programs requires a continued focus on effective coordination and alignment of daytime and afterschool program activities.
- The capacity and intentionality of HCS and the community school directors in using data to identify the needs of vulnerable cohorts of students, matching these students with appropriate services and tracking results have been important. City Connects, the student level review process, may have the potential to enhance this capacity to identify needs systematically and comprehensively.

- The inclusive approach of the community school model that involves multi-sectoral partners at each level of the system, from HPSS right down to each school, has provided a means of addressing challenges systemically. This model is in line with best practice identified by the National Center for Community Schools (NCCS). For example, the involvement of senior representatives of Hartford Public Schools (HPS) on HPSS helped in creating conditions in each school that allow for more effective coordination and integration. The more recent involvement of the HPS Chief School Improvement Officer was considered particularly important in building support for the community school model among school principals.
- The National Center for Community Schools (NCCS) has been an important strategic resource to HPSS and HCS on best practice in the field. This has included support at a leadership level as well as the provision of technical assistance to lead agencies and schools.
- HCS has one of the most comprehensive Theories of Change yet developed for a Community School Initiative. Practitioners use the Theory consistently to inform planning and capture learning and best practice. The broad range of community stakeholders encompassed by the Theory is based on a concept of education as a "shared interest and responsibility of the community as a whole".
- The commitment of the main investors in HPSS, including the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, to long-term support of HCS has been critical in providing the needed continuity for the community schools despite challenges and changes in the wider context in which they are operating. The strong impact on students, especially those students who have participated in programs and services developed through the community schools over time, validates this long-term vision.

1103-1150 Main Street, Hartford, ca. 1930

Burns students and staff marching in Puerto Rican Day Parade, Hartford, 2014

Shoppers downtown, Sage-Allen, 1972

Recommendations

- Given the demonstrated importance of the afterschool program to student achievement, it is recommended that HPSS and HCS examine the causes for any decline in afterschool attendance and how this can be addressed at different levels of the system. This includes a focus on how to balance a longer school day with an afterschool program that incorporates an optimal mix of academic and pure enrichment.
- Each school should continue to be supported in developing interventions linked to intermediate outcomes (set out in the bands of the Theory of Change) that are most relevant to their

particular challenges. This should include a continued focus on supporting mental health of students and families, which has been important in improving behavior and attendance.

- Each school should continue to assess the needs of students in a way that facilitates the matching of vulnerable students with services most appropriate to their needs
- HPSS should continue to focus on some of the key systemic level supports that facilitate easier implementation and integration and coordination of the community school model in each school. The move to a common funding application has been a good example of how greater coordination among partners on HPSS has helped streamline implementation. Equally important has been the role of Hartford Public Schools represented at the HPSS level in facilitating school leadership support for the community school model.

1. Introduction

This is a report of the external evaluation of Hartford Community Schools (HCS) for the academic year 2015-2016. This is the fourth year of the evaluation work performed by ActKnowledge; and the evaluation is once again based on the HCS Theory of Change which continues to evolve to reflect demonstrated best practice in promoting the overall goal of student achievement.

The report begins with a brief overview of the community school model in Hartford, including the HCS Theory of Change, how the model has been implemented and the challenges and opportunities identified by key stakeholders at different levels of the initiative. It then outlines the key outcomes in 2016 compared to other years for:

- Students, including academic results and the progress on preconditions for academic and other components of student success such as attendance, positive behavior and safety and belonging in the school.
- Parents/Families, focused in particular on progress made in creating a welcoming environment, respect for and accommodation of diverse families and parent/family involvement in their children's education.

Finally, the report outlines a set of conclusions and recommendations for HCS based on the evaluation findings.

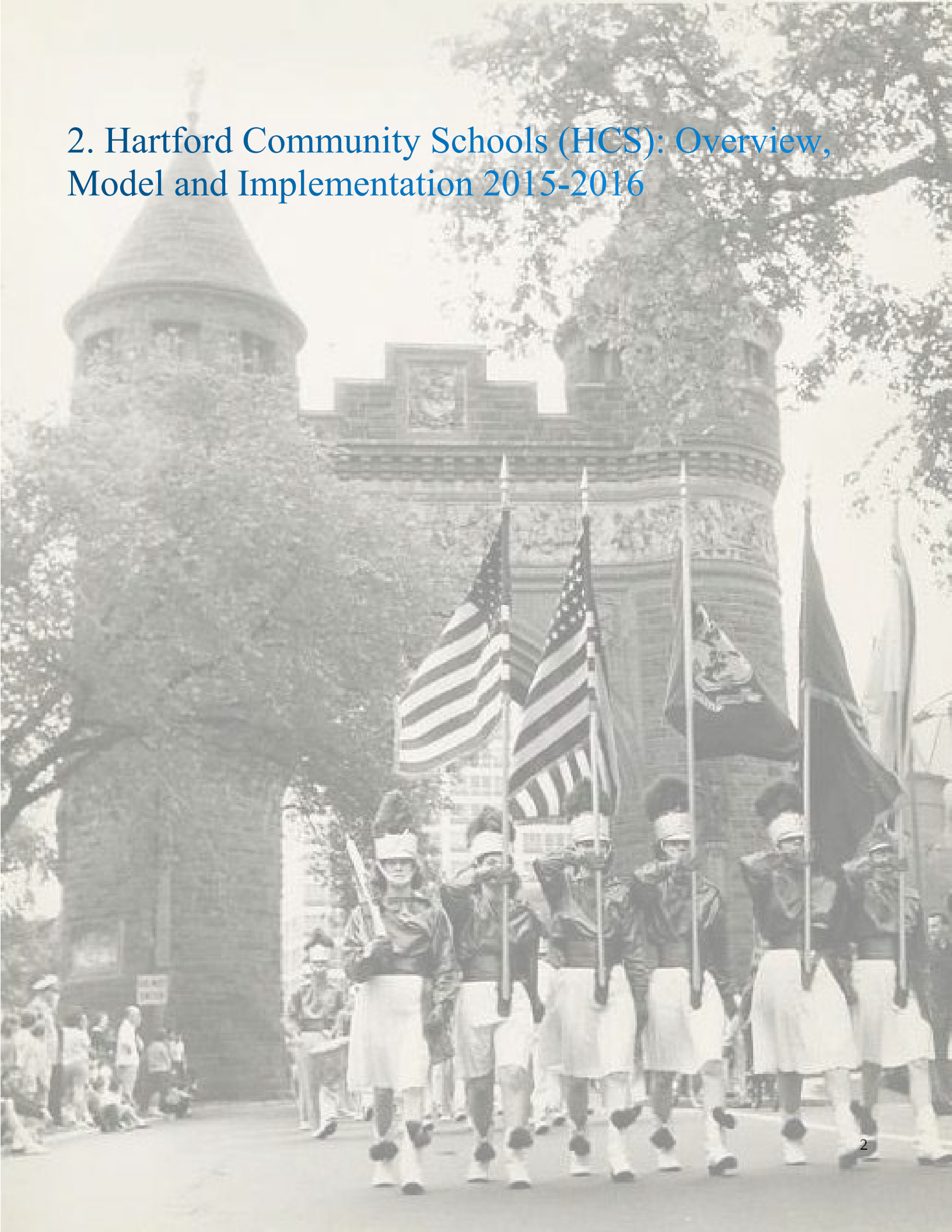
The research methods and stakeholders interviewed in the course of the evaluation are listed in Appendix 2. This includes interviews with some of the senior representatives of the main funding partners on the Hartford Partnership for Student Success.

West Middle School

Colt Armory, Hartford, ca. 1925

Class at Milner School

2. Hartford Community Schools (HCS): Overview, Model and Implementation 2015-2016



2.1 Overview of Hartford Community Schools (HCS)

Hartford Community Schools (HCS) has comprised seven community schools in all, each of which is partnered with a lead agency to plan, implement and sustain services and initiatives centered on the community school model.[1] However, from 2016 John C. Clark Jr. (Clark) Elementary and Middle School, one of the seven community schools, was consolidated with Fred D. Wish Elementary school and since the start of the 2016-17 School year is now referred to as Fred D. Wish School.[2] The consolidated school Fred D. Wish School has not been formally designated as a community school but has retained many of the resources provided through HPSS, including the maintenance of links with its lead Agency (The Village for Families and Children) and the continuation of staff embedded during and after school to support the partnership work.

The following table lists the community schools, associated lead agencies and abbreviations for each school that for brevity are used throughout this evaluation report.

Community School	Grade Level	Lead Agency
Asian Studies Academy at Bellizzi (ASA Bellizzi)	PK-8	Compass
Hartford Magnet Trinity College Academy (HMTCA)	6-11	Compass
Burns Latino Studies Academy (Burns LSA)	PK-8	Compass
Alfred E. Burr Elementary School (Burr)	PK-8	The Village for Families and Children
John C. Clark Jr. Elementary and Middle School (Clark) – Consolidated with and since 2016 referred to as Fred D. Wish School	PK-8	The Village for Families and Children
West Middle Elementary School and Middle Grades Academy (West Middle)	PK-8	Boys and Girls Club of Hartford
Milner School (Milner)	PK-8	Catholic Charities, Inc.

HCS is guided by Hartford Partnership for Student Success (HPSS), which comprises its main investors: Hartford Public Schools, the City of Hartford, the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, and the United Way of Central and Northeastern Connecticut. This year the partnership has expanded with addition of two new partners from the private sector: Aetna and The Hartford. The Hartford has provided resources to HCS and to West Middle school in particular.

The Director of HPSS provides strategic support and guidance to HPSS and HCS. The Director works closely with the Hartford Community Schools Coordinator, who provides technical assistance and implementation support for the community schools. However, from October 2015 to May 2016, the position of Community Schools Coordinator was unfilled and the Director of HPSS had to combine

[1] This model is based on a holistic approach to the well-being and development of children, their families and the wider community.

[2] Clark had been relocated to Wish Elementary in 2015 due to safety concerns about the physical environment Tests carried out in the school building had revealed high levels of PCBs.

the work of supporting the strategic work of HPSS and providing the technical assistance to schools normally provided by the coordinator. This included providing support to the schools and leveraging the expertise of the HCS network to successfully develop a new work plan.

The community schools are serving communities and students facing specific challenges. For example, six of seven Hartford Community Schools are located within High Priority Neighborhoods as identified in the Hartford Public Schools Neighborhood Assessment in 2012. Scores in the assessment are based on levels of poverty, education, housing, crime, health and neighborhood stability.

2.2 Community Schools Model and HCS Theory of Change (ToC)

Community schools expand and enhance the resources available to children and their families around key conditions necessary for student achievement. These encompass health, mental health, parent and family support, academic support and community engagement. However, rather than simply locating social services or 'after-school' programs or services in schools, the community school model has been conceived as a strategy or as an "organizing principle". As one member of HPSS put it:

"A community school is ultimately a place wherein the vision of education as a common good is realized through common action. The school becomes an organizing principle and organizing place for learning within that facility and within the community." Director, Education Investments, Hartford Foundation for Public Giving.

Hartford Community Schools (HCS) has been developed and continues to develop in line with this approach. This is reflected in the inclusive and multi- sectoral structure of HPSS and the provision that is made for the involvement of key stakeholders from each level of the system. This in line with best practice identified by the National Center for Community Schools (NCCS), which has worked with HPSS and with the community schools from the outset of the initiative.

The holistic view of the community school model is also reflected in the HCS Theory of Change, which is one of the most comprehensive Theories of Change yet developed for a community school strategy. It is used consistently to inform planning and to capture learning about best practice.[3] For example, the HPSS Common Funding Application, the work plan for the HCS network and other monthly outcome reports utilized to monitor progress are all aligned to the Theory of Change.

This sets out (in the outcomes map outlined in the following pages) the broad range of conditions through which community schools contribute to the ultimate vision of a "sustainable and thriving community." At the core of this is the central goal of ensuring that "students succeed (academic, social, emotional, and health)"-- in other words, student success is defined holistically to include both academic success along with social, emotional and health attainment.

The Theory then maps out pathways of preconditions or supporting outcomes for students, parents, schools, community and partnership/system level supports necessary for this long-term goal to be achieved. The number of stakeholders encompassed by these preconditions reflects a model that, as one member of HPSS put it, is based on a concept of education as a "shared interest and responsibility of the community as a whole." The involvement of two new private sectors members in HPSS this year (Aetna and The Hartford) was seen by many stakeholders

[3] The Theory of Change was first developed in 2012 by a broad range of stakeholders and amended thereafter.

interviewed to be very much in line with this comprehensive vision.

2.3 Implementation of Interventions Linked to Theory of Change Development Bands

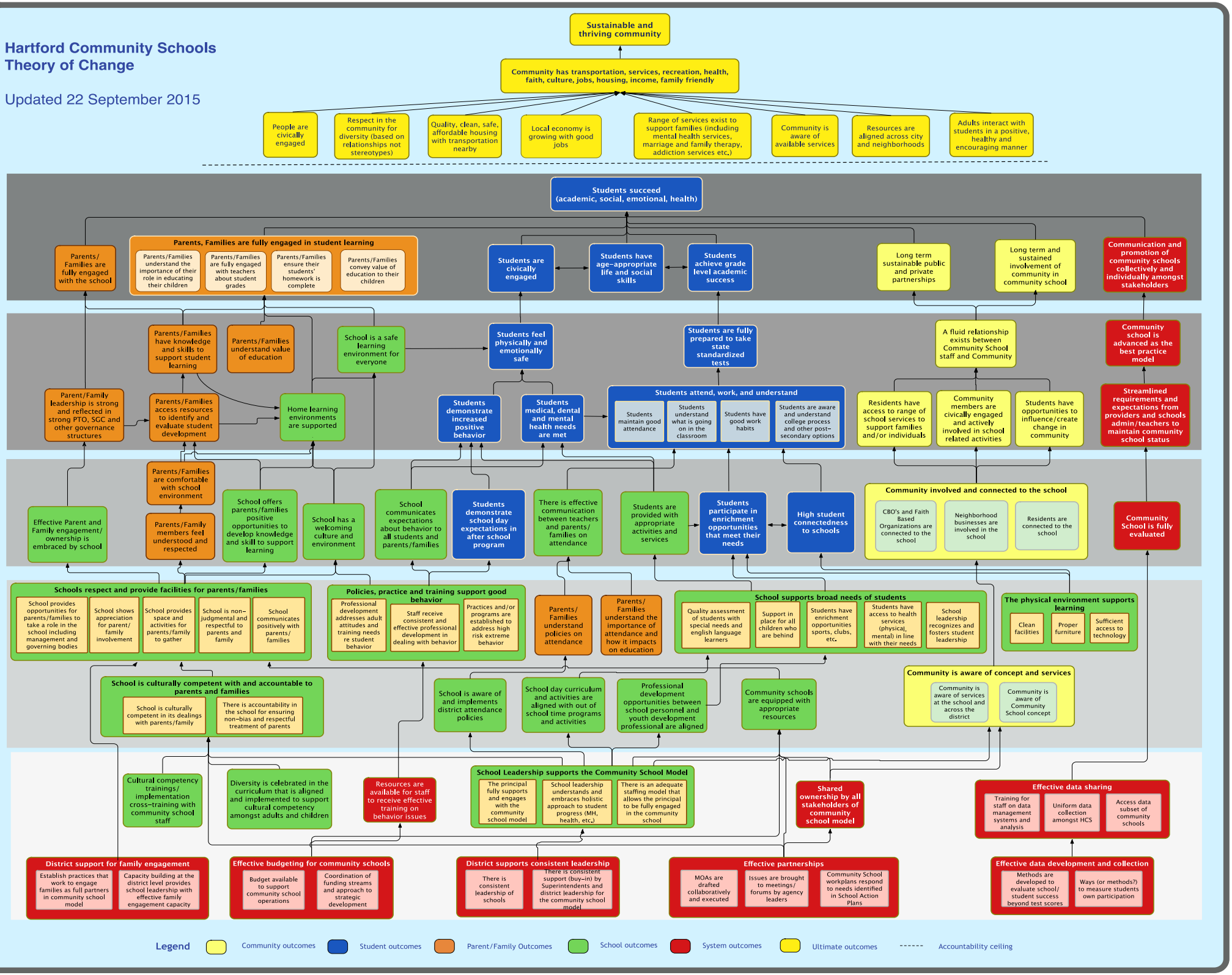
One of the amendments to the Theory of Change in 2015 was to split the Outcomes Map into horizontal "bands," each of which represent different stages of the development trajectory of the community school model. For example, Band 1 at the bottom of the Outcomes Map encompasses "foundational preconditions". In other words, it includes the foundations of the model that need to be in place for it to be implemented effectively. These preconditions include the funding, partnerships and other "systems level" outcomes including data collection and analysis. The bands then proceed upwards, encompassing all the intermediate outcomes necessary to achieve the long-term goal of student success expressed in Band 5.

Progress made in developing and implementing interventions designed to achieve the outcomes across different bands of the Theory of Change are outlined in sections that follow. These include:

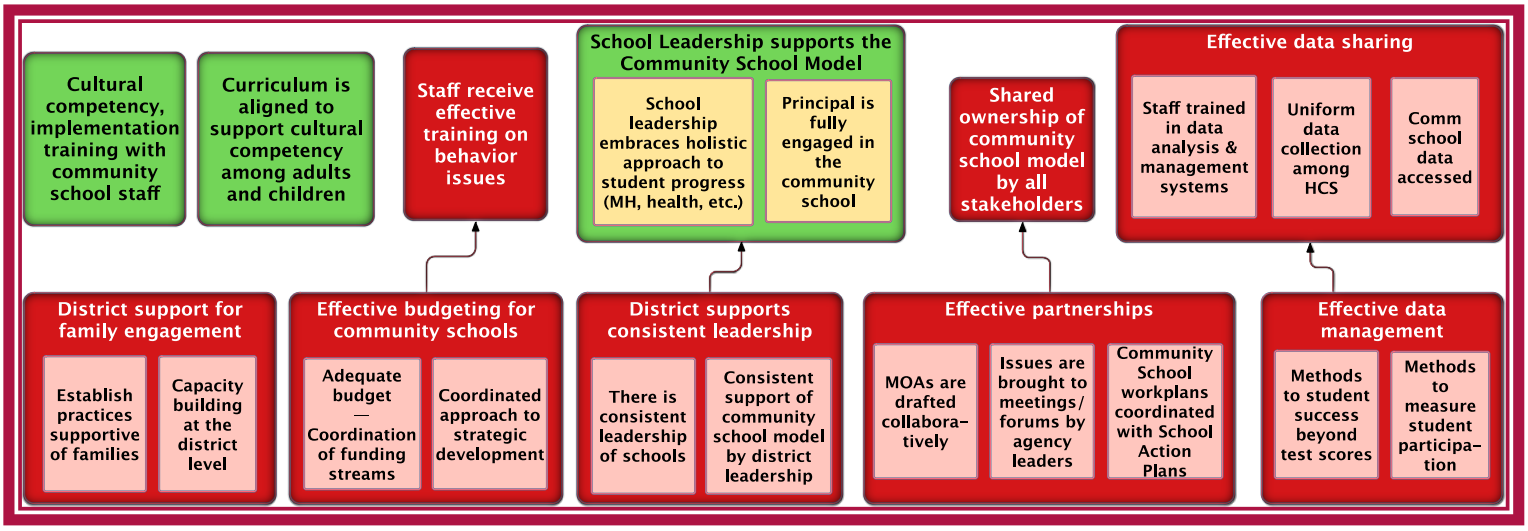
- Band 1: Foundational outcomes: progress made in building systems-level supports.
- Bands 2 and 3: Outline of interventions designed to support school and community level preconditions for student success.
- Bands 4 and 5 primarily relate to results of the community school model to date in achieving key student outcomes relating to academic achievement.

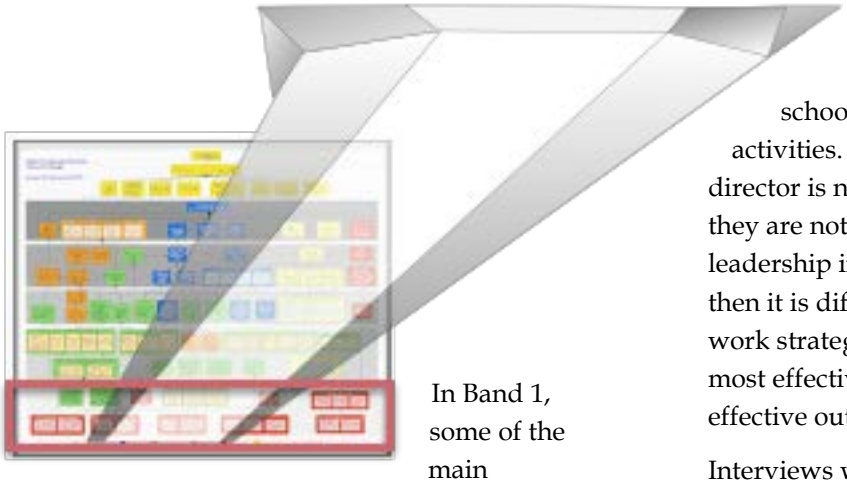
Hartford Community Schools Theory of Change

Updated 22 September 2015



Band 1: Foundational Outcomes: Progress in Building "Systems-Level" Support





In Band 1, some of the main foundational outcomes, or preconditions, for HCS (expressed in the red boxes at the bottom of the map) include support for the community school model by the superintendent and Hartford Public School District leadership and effective budgeting for community schools. These have in turn been identified as preconditions to ensure that school leadership supports the community school model.

Support from principals has consistently been identified by HCS community school directors as essential if they are to fulfill their role. This role however (in line with the community school model), does not just involve leveraging outside resources, but crucially, linking these resources to identified needs and integrating and aligning them with the schools core instructional programs and other activities. Where the HCS community school director is not supported in this role – for example, if they are not included in the work of the school leadership in identifying and prioritizing needs, then it is difficult for them (or the lead agency) to work strategically to ensure they are leveraging the most effective resources or developing the most effective outside partnerships.

Interviews with stakeholders at different levels of HCS and Hartford Partnership for Student Success (HPSS) highlight important progress in deepening systems-level support for the community model in this respect. One development mentioned was the involvement in HPSS of the Chief School Improvement Officer from Hartford Public Schools. This was viewed as an important factor in building support for the community school model among school principals, as the Chief School Improvement Officer oversees the assistant superintendents who in turn oversee the principals in the public schools. His membership on HPSS was also viewed as providing a crucial input into the partnership on the operational issues and challenges faced by school principals on the ground.

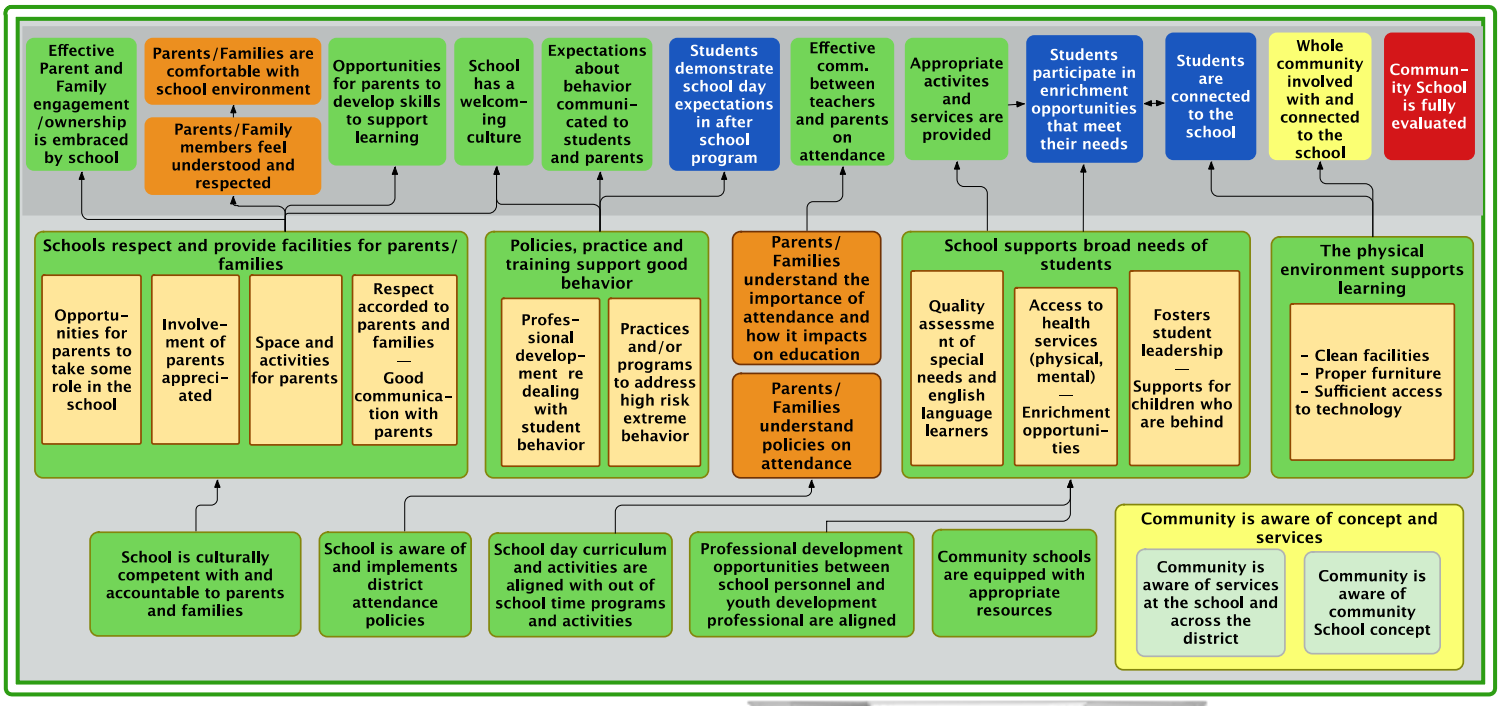
A number of HCS community school directors gave practical examples of how support from HPS helped them to fulfill their role. For example, one director reported that he had felt "very supported" by an assistant superintendent in reaching agreement with the principal about operational issues. And in another school the HCS community school director was included on the interview panel for selecting a new principal. The latter is a good demonstration of inclusion of the community school director in crucial strategic decision making in the school.

Other progress highlighted included measures put in place to streamline budgeting, such as the development of a common funding application process to replace the requirement for lead agencies to submit separate funding applications to each of the main HCS investors. More broadly, the role of HPSS as a partnership of four key investors and the involvement this year of new private sector partners (Aetna and The Hartford) were also identified as crucial supports. These have been particularly important for sustaining the community schools in the context of fiscal challenges faced by Hartford and the State of Connecticut more generally.

Successful outcomes in developing and aligning systemic supports with the needs of the schools have been facilitated by the work of the Director of HPSS and the Hartford Community Schools Coordinator, who have engaged closely with the Superintendent and staff in providing support and addressing any barriers to implementing the community school model effectively. The new HCS coordinator began her position in May 2016 should further enhance this work.

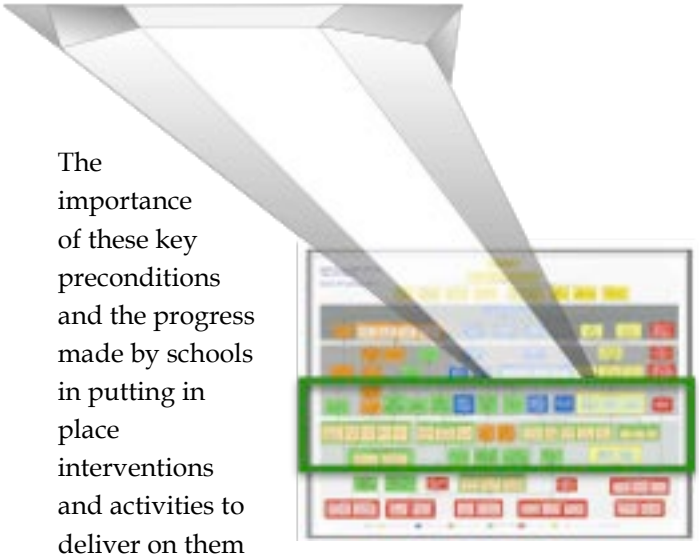
HMTCA Jazz Band performing at City Hall

Bands 2 and 3: Key School Level Preconditions for Student Achievement



Bands 2 and 3 of the Theory of Change outline the "school level" preconditions necessary to promote student achievement. For example:

- The school supports the 'broad' or holistic needs of students which includes: "Quality assessment" of what these needs are, developing services for students left behind academically and developing services that encompass holistic needs (including mental and physical health).
- School day curriculum and activities are aligned with "out of school time" activities, curriculum and staff capacity.
- The physical environment of the school supports learning.
- Policies and practice support good behavior and attendance.
- The school is culturally competent and accountable to parents and creates opportunities for their involvement in the school.
- The whole community is involved with and connected to the school.



The importance of these key preconditions and the progress made by schools in putting in place interventions and activities to deliver on them are further apparent in 2016. These are summarized as follows.

School Supports the 'Broad' or Holistic Needs of Students

Quality assessment of student needs

The capacity to assess student needs is a key function of the community school model and a critical precondition for leveraging resources in the community that are strategically linked to meeting the needs identified. One intervention in 2015-16 to

build the capacity of the schools to undertake quality assessments in this respect, has been the use of City Connects. This is an intervention model designed to complement the community school model by identifying students' strengths and needs in academic, social-emotional, physical, and family domains. The intention is to connect each student to a tailored set of prevention, intervention and enrichment services through the community school model.[4]

City Connects has been used in four of the HCS schools in 2015: Burr, Burns LSA, Wish/Clark and Milner (ASA Bellizzi will have City Connects in the 2016-17 school year). In Burns LSA, for example, a City Connects coordinator worked directly with the community school director to tie in resources with identified needs in the school. A key task of the coordinator was to undertake classroom and individual student reviews. From these individual reviews, students were categorized into three tiers, with tier three having those students with the highest needs. Through this process, sixty-six students in tier three were identified and have been linked into a range of related services, including services focused on social and emotional support. A similar process was evident in Burr where assessments made by the City Connects coordinator led to referrals to mental health and other supports.

In the then Wish/Clark school, the principal of Clark referred to the role of City Connects in identifying needs and in drawing up appropriate recommendations for students. However, she noted that it was essential that this is effectively integrated with the community school as it is the Lead Agency (in this case the Village) that is responsible for obtaining the services to meet the needs identified.

Targeted Academic Supports for students falling behind

In meeting the needs of students falling behind academically, the community schools have developed or leveraged a range of targeted academic interventions. These have continued to grow and include one-to-one and group tutoring programs (such as Travelers Tutoring Programs, United Way Readers, ConnectiKids and University of Saint Joseph Literacy Program). The evaluation this year has specifically focused on tracking academic progress of students participating in these targeted programs (see chapter 3).

Access to health services (including mental health services)

The provision of a health component has been an important feature of the full community school model nationally. In some cases, the community school model has included full clinical services including a general practitioner, dentistry and services relating to mental health on site (one rationale for this is that children can attend health services without missing school). In other cases, the focus has been on developing effective outside referrals and addressing key barriers to health care faced by young people in disadvantaged areas including lack of health insurance.

Most HCS schools do not provide full health services on site. Some schools have sought to facilitate access to mobile clinics, while others, for example Burns LSA, have provided more extensive onsite facilities, including dental services and mental health services targeted at students and families. Milner has continued to develop a licensed child guidance clinic to work with children and families on mental health issues including trauma that affect behavior and educational attainment more generally. The evaluation this year has also focused on tracking expected outcomes from these programs (see for example, chapter 3 of this report, which outlines the impact on academic achievement, behavior and attendance of participants in Milner's clinical services).

[4] At the core of the model is a Whole Class Review, an assessment conducted by classroom teachers and the City Connects Coordinator that assesses the strengths and needs of every student in four key areas: a) academics, b) socio-emotional development, c) health, and d) family stability. http://www.bc.edu/schools/lsoe/cityconnects/our-approach.html

Aligning "Out of School Time" Activities, Curriculum and Staff Capacity

Afterschool programs continue to be a major component of the HCS model and encompass services designed to support student academic performance and broader youth development outcomes.[5] Prior to 2016, the model for afterschool programs comprised a three-hour block, with the first hour centered on homework help and remediation and the second hour focused on academic enrichment and disguised learning. The third hour involved pure enrichment (such as arts, sports and cultural activities) which provided an incentive for students to complete the full three hours.

However, an issue of concern for all schools is that attendance rates in after-school programs have declined in 2016. The reasons for this may include less time for enrichment activities (an important incentive for students) due to the extension of the school day. It may also reflect the broader challenge of continuing to build an academic focus into the afterschool program, while at the same time making the program attractive to young people and allowing them to benefit directly from pure enrichment. Whatever the reasons, addressing the decline in afterschool participation demonstrates the importance of the Theory of Change precondition that there be effective coordination and alignment of daytime and out of school time activities. This requires support at school level (for example, support from school leadership) but also at a systems levels and for HCS overall. The latter includes support for the development and delivery (including training for professional youth development workers) of a curriculum in the afterschool program that draws on youth development and aligns with daytime learning.

The Physical Environment of the School Supports Learning

Recognizing the role of the physical environment in supporting learning, the Theory of Change specifies clean facilities, proper furniture and sufficient access to technology. It is not possible in the context of this evaluation to identify progress across each of these preconditions in a comprehensive way. However, as noted earlier, one major development in 2015-2016 has been the decision to amalgamate Clark with Wish, the school to which Clark was relocated following the closure of the Clark school facility in the 2014-15 school year.[6]

Route 91, Hartford. 1986

HMTCA Jazz Band, rehearsing for a performance at the New England Conservatory, in Boston.

Children playing on slides, 1930

[5] Because of capacity limits not all students can access afterschool programs. Within these capacity constraints access is generally provided on a "first come first served basis." However, schools have tried to accommodate additional students with particular needs, including students referred by teachers or social workers.

[6] Being a community school, according to the principal, had been particularly important in minimizing impact on students and their

On the other hand, West Middle, which had been relocated to other facilities, will move to a new purpose-built community school building in the 2016-17 school year. This building will include health facilities and a Hartford Public Library branch to which students will have access.

Other schools have noted challenges in the physical environment in which they operate. For example, in Burns LSA, the physical space continues to be a challenge as the school was not physically designed for a community school to run so many different components.

Policies, Practice and Training Supports Good Behavior and Attendance

A key precondition in the HCS Theory of Change is that "Students maintain good attendance" in order to succeed academically. In promoting attendance, schools have focused on addressing chronic absenteeism, which has the most profound impact on student learning. A school with high attendance rates can still have "chronic" or "severely chronic" absentee rates – for example, the attendance rate might be 95 percent but when the absences are added together, they can accumulate and the student(s) can miss a month or more of school over the course of the school year.[7] In Hartford Connecticut a student who misses 10 percent or more of school for any reason, including excused and unexcused absences, is deemed chronically absent.

This focus on promoting attendance and addressing chronic absenteeism is in line with the priority attached to this issue by the Hartford Public School (HPS) district. For example, the HPS strategic plan 2015-2020 includes a target for reducing chronic absenteeism by 60 percent over the next five years.

Principals interviewed highlighted the importance of the community school model in helping to address attendance issues. Key activities in this respect included:

- Active leadership of or participation on attendance teams by the community school directors that allowed for the development of strategic approaches to promoting attendance and addressing chronic absenteeism in particular.
- Support for the implementation of strategic approaches by community school directors and program staff that has included active engagement with parents and families and the development of services linked to the needs of those at risk.

The impact on cohorts of students of targeted activities and services to address chronic absenteeism is outlined in chapter 3.

Good behavior has also been identified in the Theory of Change as a key precondition for building the kind of climate and culture in the schools that supports student achievement. In addressing behavior issues, the community school model has provided an additional means through which the needs underpinning good behavior have been identified and can be addressed. For example, school personnel interviewed have consistently noted the link between bad behavior and "toxic stress" which can arise for young people due to poverty and exclusion. Staff members in Milner, for example, have highlighted the importance of new clinical services established through the community school in addressing behavior issues and in building positive school climate.

families of the disruption caused by the closure of their school building and their relocation to other facilities.

[7] For fuller analysis of chronic absenteeism, see for example the resources section of the National Center for Community Schools and the National Center for Children in Poverty Report *Present, Engaged, and Accounted For* (Chang at el, 2008).

School is Culturally Competent and Accountable to Parents and Creates Opportunities for their Involvement in the School.

Family and community engagement is an important feature of the HCS model, the conditions for which (as noted above) have continued to be developed in the Theory of Change. Achieving these conditions has been supported by a range of activities. These include:

- Services developed to meet particular needs such as GED courses, courses relating to budgeting and financial literacy, workshops on parenting and English as a second language (ESL) courses.
- Accessing services relating to basic needs, for example, access to food by families facing hunger.
- Development of family resource centers and provision of physical spaces in some schools that parents can utilize. ASA Bellizzi has established for the first time a resource center for parents/families in 2015-16 school year.
- Outreach to enhance or develop PTOs and outreach to parents whose children face particular challenges in relation to behavior, attendance or other issues.
- Establishment of the role of family/parent coordinator in some schools to coordinate all activities relating to parent involvement.
- Identification and referral of parents to services within the community.

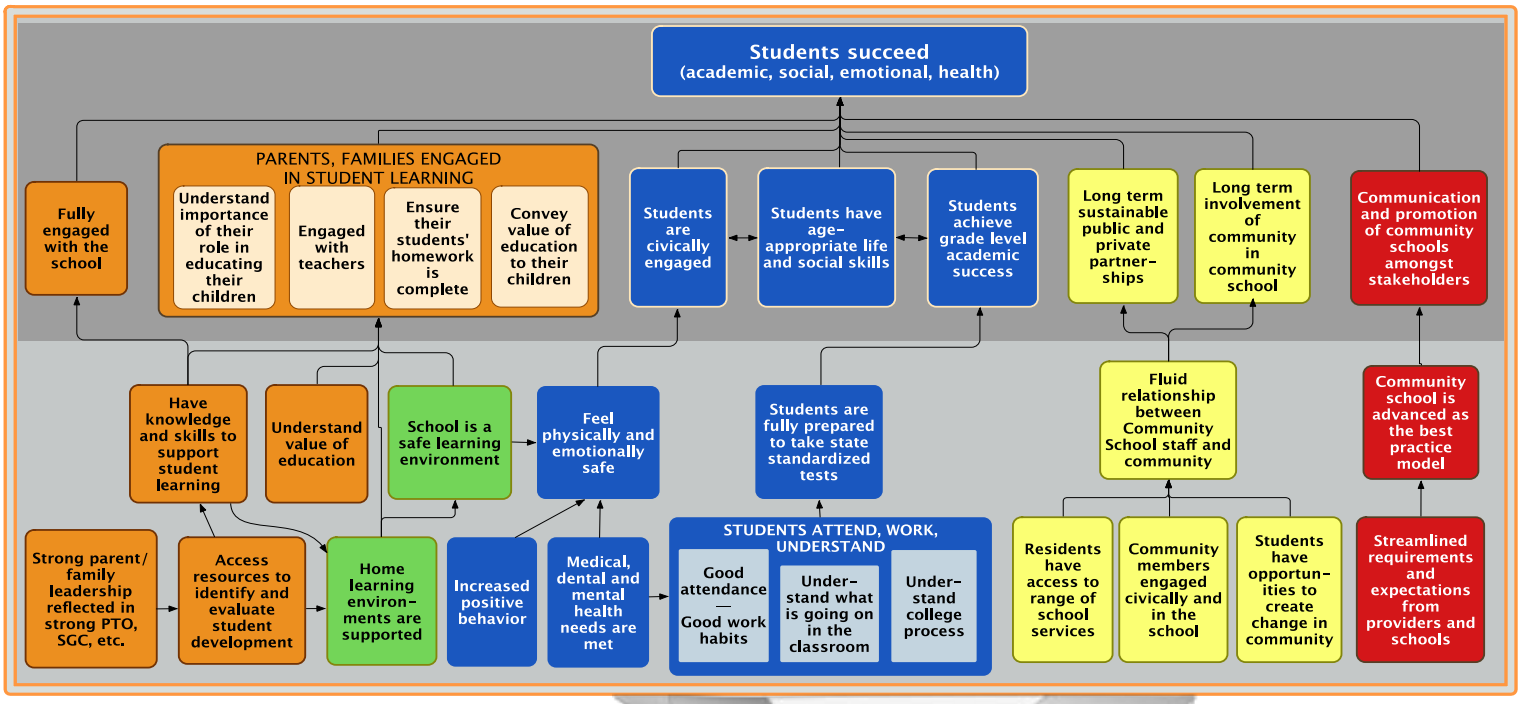
Community School staff and parents interviewed during the course of the evaluation have continued to draw attention to the significant challenges involved in engaging with parents. A particular challenge in this respect is how to extend involvement beyond a core set of parents who tend to be involved with the school consistently.

Family resource coordinators have been an important resource for supporting parent engagement with the school. However, some concern was expressed about the impact of the fiscal challenges faced by Hartford, which has led to staff reductions including reductions in the number of family resource coordinator positions (for example, in Burr).

Stone Bridge and Park River, Hartford. 1848.

Park River, looking west from Main Street, ca. 1900. In the distance, the Hartford Public High School and State Capitol.

Bands 4 and 5: Key Results for Students and Parents



All of the preceding preconditions in the Theory of Change Map lead to results for students, which are set out at the top of the Theory of Change outcomes map.

These include academic achievement and important preconditions for this, including positive behavior; consistent attendance and an end to chronic absenteeism; parent/family engagement with the school; parent/family engagement with student learning; and health, including mental and physical health (which are also linked to attendance and good behavior).

Key results across these outcomes for 2015-16 are outlined in the next chapter.

3. Results: Student and Parent/Family Outcomes, 2015-2016

"Canyons of Hartford," ca. 1935

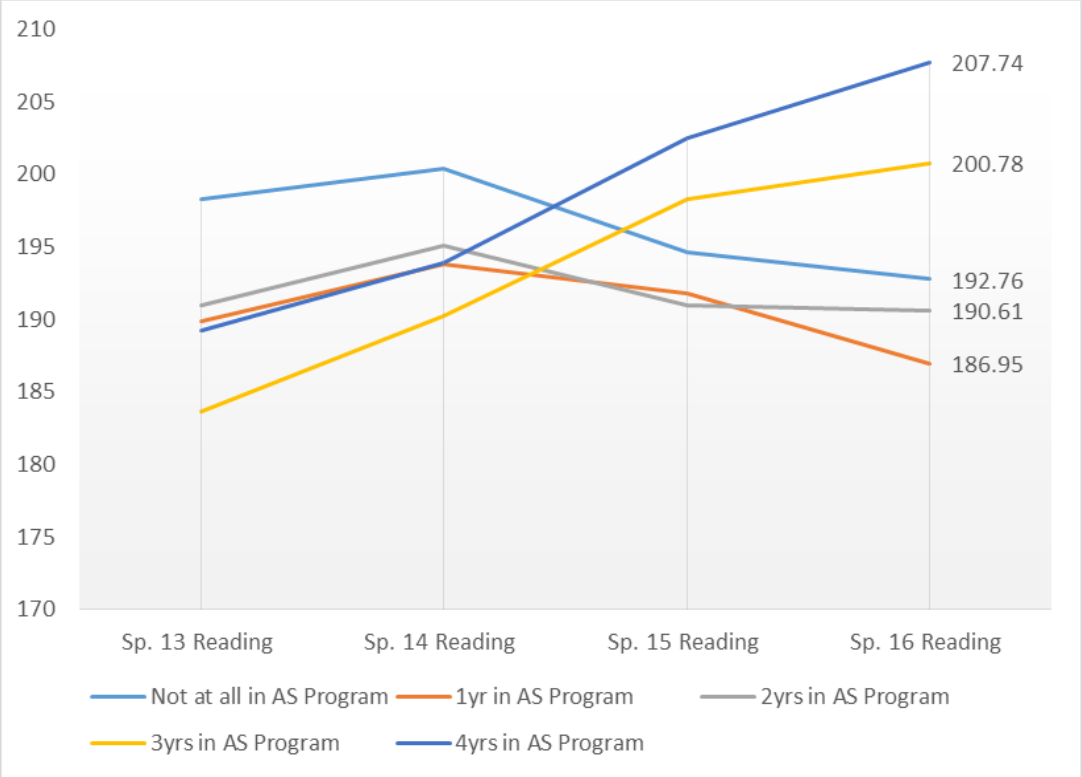
3.1 Academic Results

3.1.1 MAP results for community schools and for participants in the afterschool program

Overall average 'raw' MAP scores for HCS in reading decreased slightly, from 194.72 to 194.3 between spring 2015 and spring 2016 and scores for math stayed the same. Three schools (Burns LSA, Clark and HMTCA) recorded increases in both reading and in math.[8]

However, average raw MAP scores for students who attended afterschool programs, an important component of the community school model, increased in both subject areas. The difference in academic performance is more powerful when the persistence or duration of student participation in afterschool programs is taken into account. This is outlined in figure 1, which shows a significant increase in MAP scores in reading for those who participated in the afterschool program for three or four consecutive years compared to students who participated for less than two years.

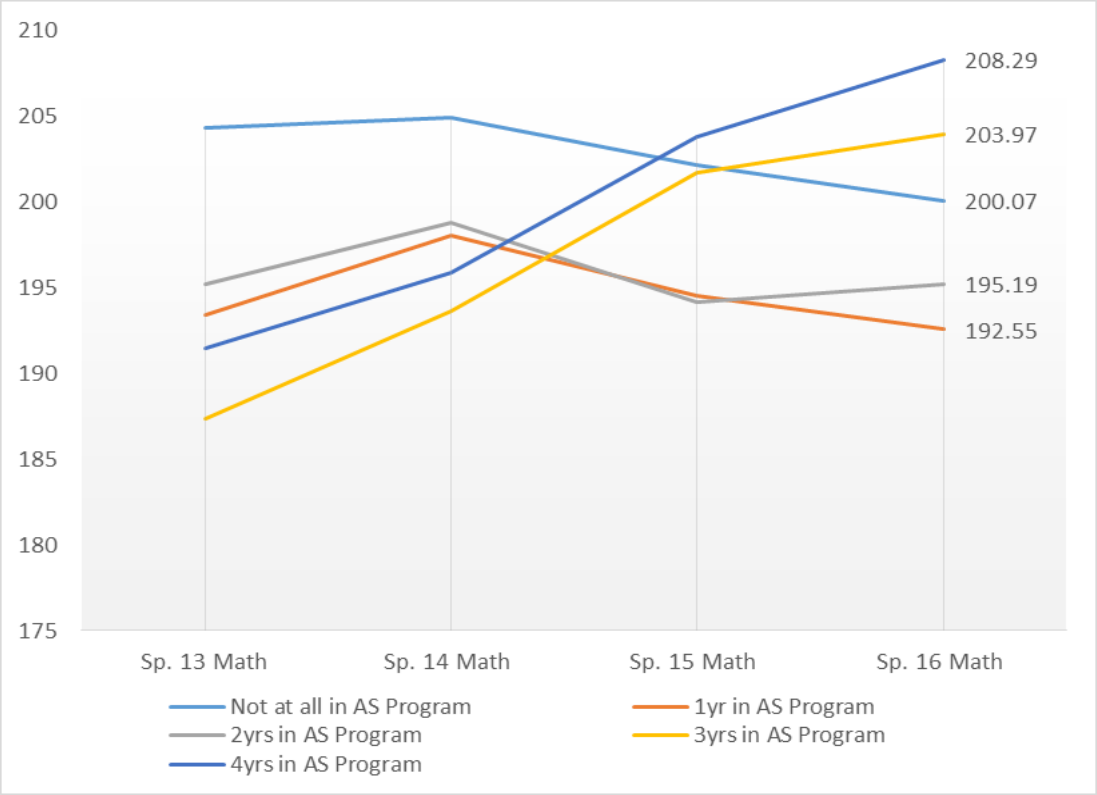
Figure 1: MAP Reading Results Comparison of matched HCS afterschool participants from 2013 to 2016



[8] The decrease in scores in reading was highest for Milner and for ASA Bellizzi in math.

Similar results are evident in math. Figure 2 shows that students who participated in the afterschool program for three or four consecutive years had consistently higher scores in math than students who participated for less than two years.

Figure 2: MAP Math Results Comparison of matched HCS afterschool participants from 2013 to 2016



3.1.2 MAP results for targeted cohorts of "at-risk" students

MAP results were identified for cohorts of academically "at risk" students targeted for supports that have been developed through the community school model. These supports range from academic interventions (for example, Travelers tutoring program) to support for preconditions for student learning which have been identified in the HCS Theory of Change. An example of the latter includes students who have received mental health supports from the clinical services provided in Milner.

The results for each school (outlined in detail in appendix 1) shows increases in MAP scores for students in reading and math in fourteen (out of a total of seventeen) of these targeted programs or services. The results show increases in math scores in five programs that focused on reading and literacy, which may indicate that a focus on one subject area can have a broader academic impact. Improvements in MAP were also evident in Milner among students who had received clinical services to support mental health (although this sample is small). Persistent participation by "at risk" students in interventions targeted to their needs, was an important factor for improving MAP scores. This is evident in longitudinal results from those schools (ASA Bellizzi and West Middle) that have targeted

the same students for interventions over time. For example, in ASA Bellizzi there was an increase in MAP reading scores in 2016 for students who participated in the Travelers tutoring program.[9] However, those students in ASA Bellizzi who participated in Travelers for two or more years demonstrated greater improvement in reading (this is outlined in figure 3).

Persistence in the Travelers tutoring program in ASA Bellizzi was also important for math scores (as outlined in figure 4), with those students who participated in Travelers for two years or more showing greater improvement.

Figure 3: MAP Reading Results of Travelers Tutoring Program participants at ASA Bellizzi, 2013-2016

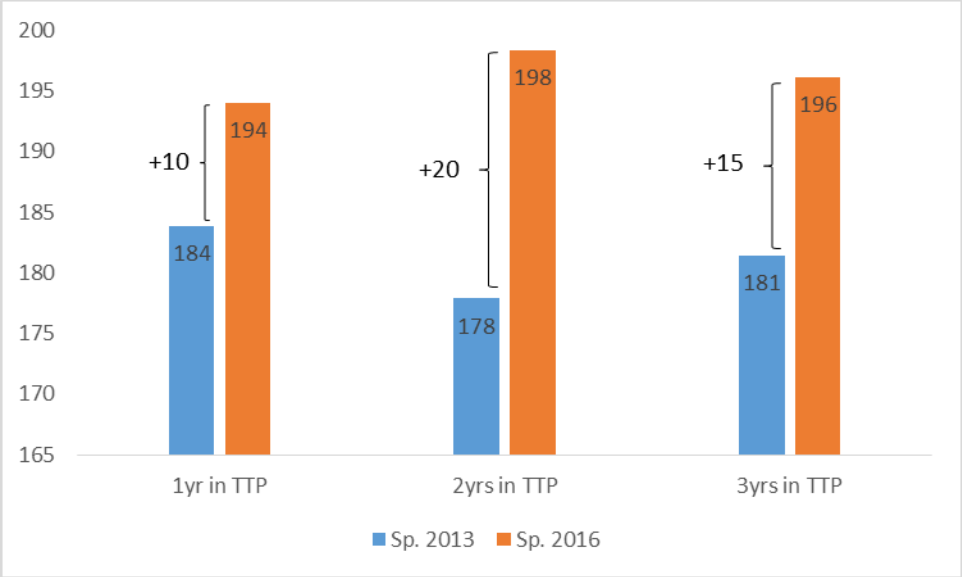
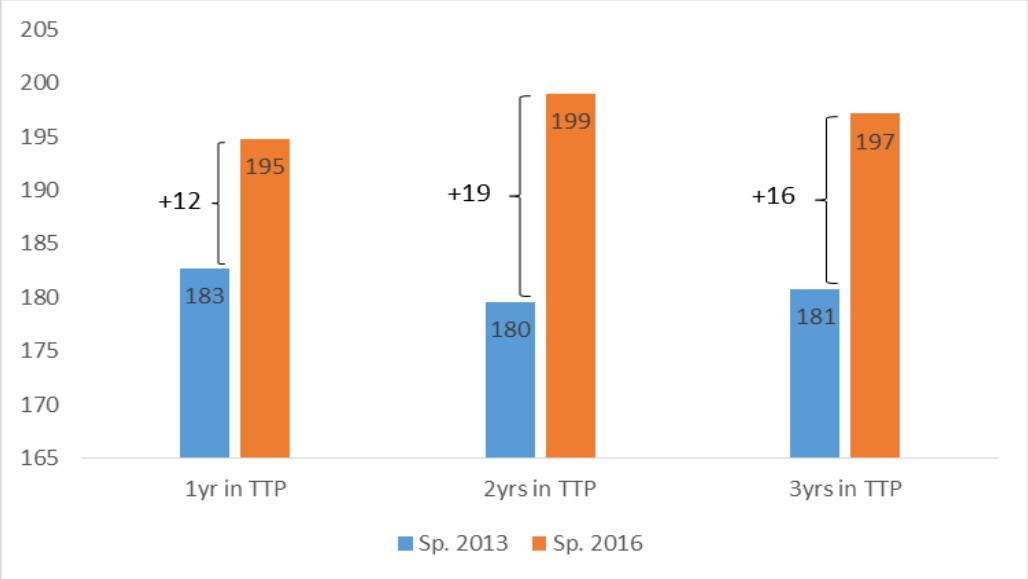


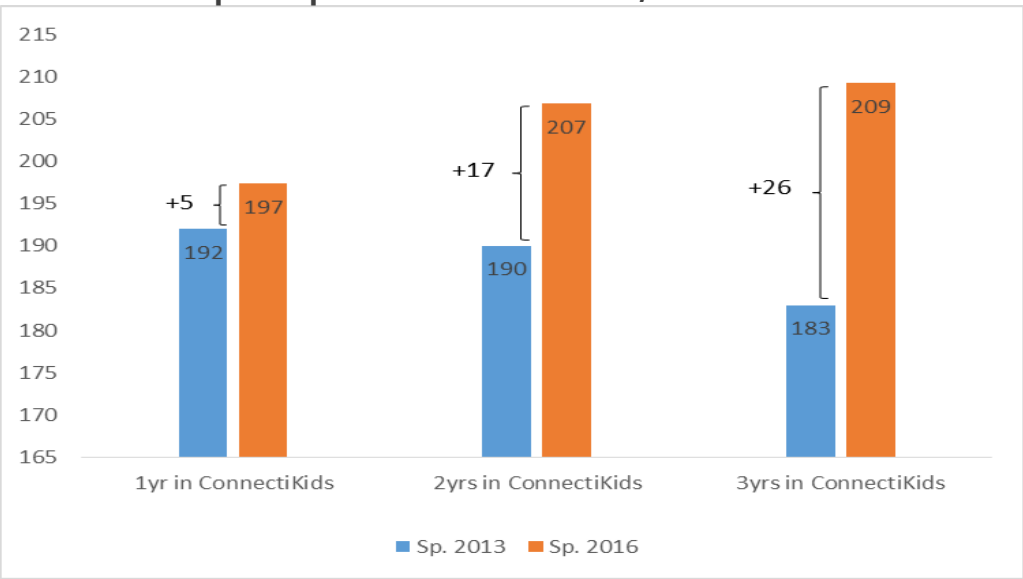
Figure 4: MAP Math Results of Travelers Tutoring Program participants at ASA Bellizzi, 2013-2016



[9] The Travelers tutoring program in ASA Bellizzi includes both reading and math components.

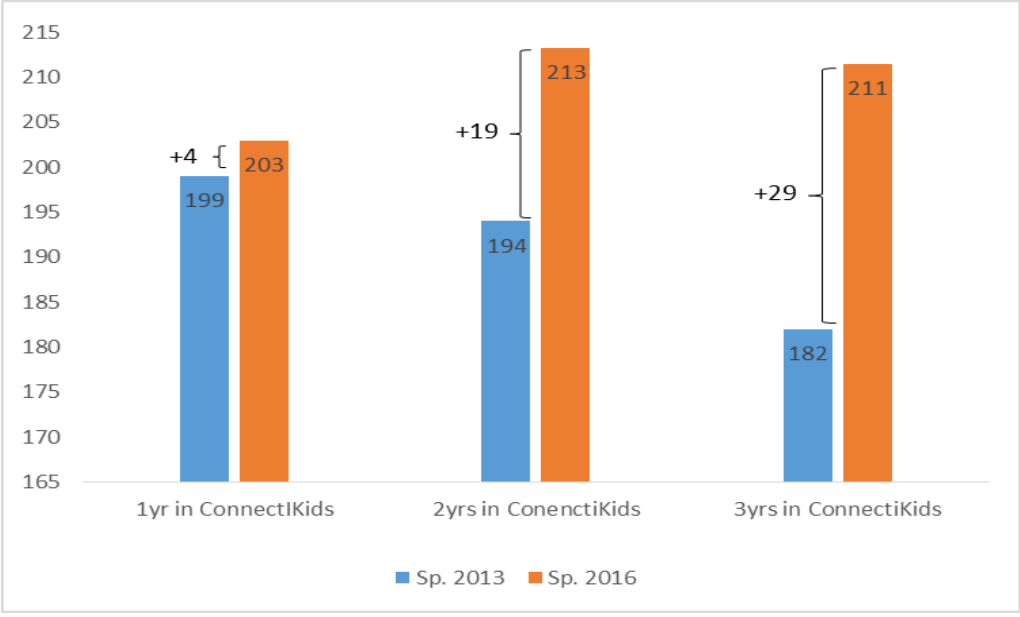
A similar link between persistence in interventions and MAP score improvements was evident in West Middle. Figure 5 shows that cohorts of students who participated in the ConnectiKids tutoring program for two or more years showed greater improvement than students who participated for just one year.

Figure 5: MAP Reading Results of ConnectiKids Program participants at West Middle, 2013-2016



The importance of persistence in the program over time was even more evident with math scores as outlined in figure 6.

Figure 6: MAP Math Results of ConnectiKids Program participants at West Middle, 2013-2016



3.1.3 MAP results for English Language Learners (ELL)

MAP scores in reading and math increased for English Language Learners (ELL) in Burns LSA and Clark schools from 2015 to 2016 but decreased in all the other schools. The results are outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: MAP results for English Language Learners (ELL) students compared to non-ELL students from 2015 to 2016

By School ELL Students		READING		Math	
		Spring 2015	Spring 2016	Spring 2015	Spring 2016
Asian Studies Academy at Bellizzi	ELL Students	178.1	↓ 173.4	187.9	↓ 182.5
	Non-ELL Students	191.5	↓ 188.5	199.1	↓ 194.3
Burns Latino Studies Academy	ELL Students	176.3	↑ 178.2	179.8	↑ 182.0
	Non-ELL Students	191.7	↑ 191.9	191.9	↑ 193.2
Burr School	ELL Students	182.5	↓ 176.5	193.2	↓ 186.4
	Non-ELL Students	193.4	↓ 191.9	201.1	↑ 202.2
Clark School	ELL Students	174.4	↑ 181.1	178.7	↑ 191.2
	Non-ELL Students	187.8	↑ 188.0	189.7	↑ 198.4
Hartford Magnet Trinity College Academy	ELL Students	204.3	↓ 203.6	209.2	↓ 207.8
	Non-ELL Students	219.9	↑ 221.6	225.4	↑ 226.7
Milner School	ELL Students	179.5	↓ 175.1	182.9	↓ 180.8
	Non-ELL Students	185.6	↓ 181.2	185.9	↓ 182.8
West Middle School	ELL Students	184.4	↓ 182.1	196.9	↓ 187.8
	Non-ELL Students	198.6	↓ 198.4	205.3	↓ 202.9

However, scores of ELL students who received targeted supports from the community school demonstrated substantial improvement in MAP scores. This is outlined in table 2 which shows the results for ELL students who received targeted supports in Burns LSA, Burr (United Way Readers and Travelers mentoring program) and Clark (iReady and MyOn computer based literacy program).

Table 2: ELL Target cohort comparison 2015 to 2016 academic year

HCS ELL Target Cohorts - Academics		READING			MATH		
		Spring 2015	Spring 2016	**Change Score**	Spring 2015	Spring 2016	**Change Score**
Burns LSA - ELL Target Cohorts	Participants (N=12)	167.43	181.67	⇧ **14.24**	178.22	190.75	⇧ **12.53**
Burr - United Way Readers	Participants (N=7)	161.33	173.57	⇧ **12.24**	165.00	175.00	⇧ **10.00**
Burr Travelers Mentoring Program	Participation (N=4)	178.33	179.50	⇧ **1.17**	178.00	192.50	⇧ **14.50**
Clark - iReady & MyOn	Participants (N=5)	174.25	180.33	⇧ **6.08**	177.00	193.24	⇧ **16.24**

3.1.4 MAP Results for Special Education (SE) Students

MAP scores in both reading and math improved for special education students in Burns LSA, Burr and Clark. Reading scores for students in West Middle increased and math scores increased for students in HMTCA. This is outlined in Table 3 overleaf.

Table 3: MAP results for Special Education (SE) students compared to non-SE students from 2015 to 2016

By School Sp. Ed Students		READING		MATH	
		Spring 2015	Spring 2016	Spring 2015	Spring 2016
Asian Studies Academy at Bellizzi	Sp.Ed Students	178.7	↓ 176.9	187.0	↓ 180.1
	Non-Sp.Ed Students	188.1	↓ 184.4	196.9	↓ 191.9
Burns Latino Studies Academy	Sp.Ed Students	171.2	↑ 181.7	176.8	↑ 183.6
	Non-Sp.Ed Students	186.6	↑ 186.7	187.6	↑ 189.2
Burr School	Sp.Ed Students	175.4	↑ 176.8	190.8	↑ 193.8
	Non-Sp.Ed Students	193.0	↓ 189.3	200.1	↓ 197.8
Clark School	Sp.Ed Students	173.3	↑ 186.2	179.5	↑ 194.5
	Non-Sp.Ed Students	186.7	↓ 186.0	188.5	↑ 196.7
Hartford Magnet Trinity College Academy	Sp.Ed Students	204.3	↓ 202.3	208.8	↑ 209.3
	Non-Sp.Ed Students	220.4	↑ 222.5	225.9	↑ 227.2
Milner School	Sp.Ed Students	180.4	↓ 171.9	181.8	↓ 175.7
	Non-Sp.Ed Students	185.2	↓ 181.2	185.9	↓ 183.5
West Middle School	Sp.Ed Students	181.5	↑ 182.3	188.5	↓ 187.8
	Non-Sp.Ed Students	196.3	↓ 195.5	205.4	↓ 199.8

While overall results for special education students in Clark improved, there was more substantial improvement among students targeted for specific supports (although the number of students involved is small). These are outlined in table 4.

Table 4: Sp. Ed. Target cohort comparison 2015 to 2016 academic year

HCS Sp.Ed. Target Cohorts - Academics		READING			MATH		
		Spring 2015	Spring 2016	Change Score	Spring 2015	Spring 2016	Change Score
Clark - iReady & MyOn	Participants (N=6)	171.5	187.67	⇧ **16.17**	170.5	190.5	⇧ **20.00**

3.2 Attendance/Chronic Absenteeism

Figure 7 shows that rates of chronic absenteeism went down in the five HCS schools that have the highest rates of the chronic absenteeism (ASA Bellizzi, Burns LSA, Burr, Clark and Milner). This is in line with the priority these schools and HPSS have attached to this issue and the support of the community school model for the students affected. For example, in the case of Clark, where chronic absenteeism fell by ten percentage points, the principal highlighted the work of the community school site director and other program staff in addressing chronic absenteeism, including their participation on and support for the attendance team. This work involved intensive interaction between community school staff and chronically absent students and their parents/guardians.

The principal in Burr also highlighted the importance of the community school director in leading and facilitating a strategic focus of the school attendance team in addressing chronic absenteeism.

The specific impact of the work to promote better attendance is outlined in table 5 which tracks days absent for chronically absent cohorts of students that the community schools have targeted for specific interventions. This shows that the most substantial decreases in days absent were for students in Milner whose parents have been the focus of activities to promote their engagement with the school. Days absent in Milner also fell among students who participated in clinical services that help students with mental health issues. Students who had

Figure 7: Percentage of students who are chronically absent from 2013 to 2016 academic years

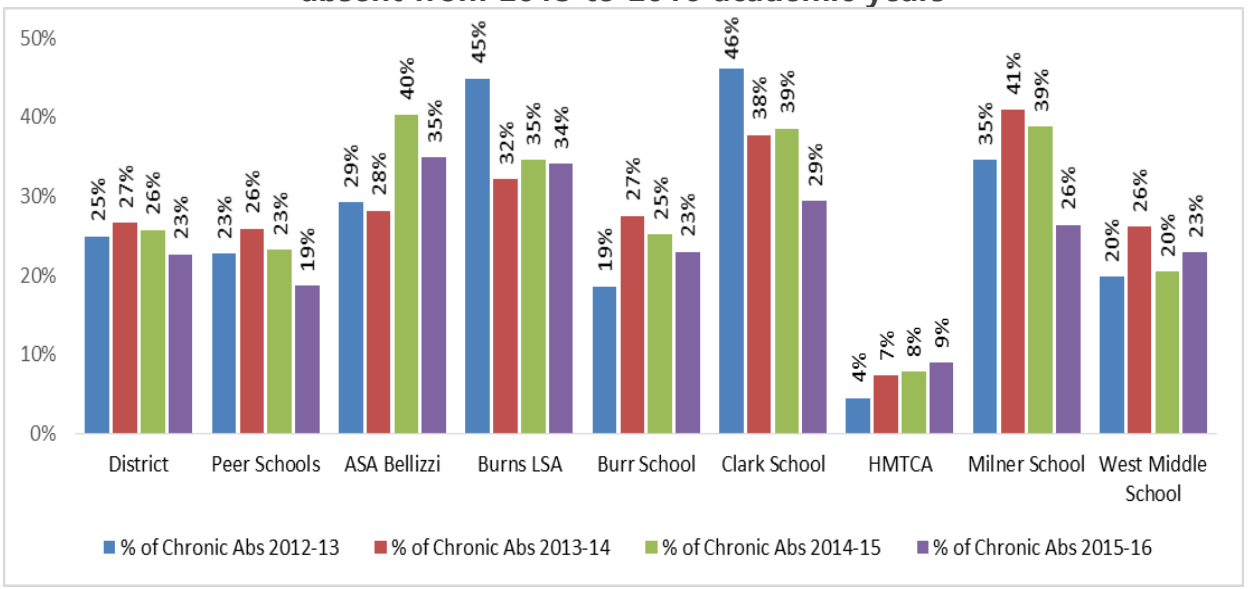


Table 5: Absenteeism cohort comparison

2015 to 2016 academic year

HCS Absenteeism Cohorts		Days Absent		
		2015	2016	Change Score
Burns LSA Chronic Absenteeism/YAA Cohort	Participants (N=13)	13	11	⇩ -2
Burns LSA Chronic Absenteeism Cohort	Participants (N=27)	18	17	⇩ -1
Burr Truancy Prevention Program	Participants (N=14)	20	29	⇧ 9
HMTCA Chronic Absenteeism Cohort	Participants (N=26)	17	20	⇧ 3
Milner Chronic Absenteeism Cohort	Participants (N=46)	26	29	⇧ 3
Milner - Clinic Participants	Participants (N=10)	15	13	⇩ -2
Milner - Students with Parental Engagement	Participants (N=11)	15	7	⇩ -9

received mental health supports through this service had been absent for fewer days in 2016.

3.3 Students' Physical and Emotional Safety

As outlined in Figures 8 and 9 overleaf, data from Hartford Public Schools Climate and Connectedness Surveys show increases in favorable perceptions of peer climate (one of the indicators of climate more generally) among grade 3-4 students in three HCS schools (Burr, Clark and Milner) and increases in positive perceptions of peer climate among grades 5-12 in four schools (ASA Bellizzi, Clark, HMTCA and Milner).

Milner, which has focused a good deal of its interventions in developing a positive school climate, saw the most substantial increases in peer climate among 5-12 (nine percentage point increase) and an increase in positive perceptions among grades 3-4 (four percentage point increase). Burns LSA on the other hand, saw a larger decrease in positive perceptions of peer climate among grades 3-4 students. This may reflect the challenges the school has faced in sustaining a positive climate in the context of a high student mobility rate (which was above 50% in the school year).

Figure 8 : Percentage of grade 3-4 students who responded favorably to questions on peer climate 2013 to 2016.

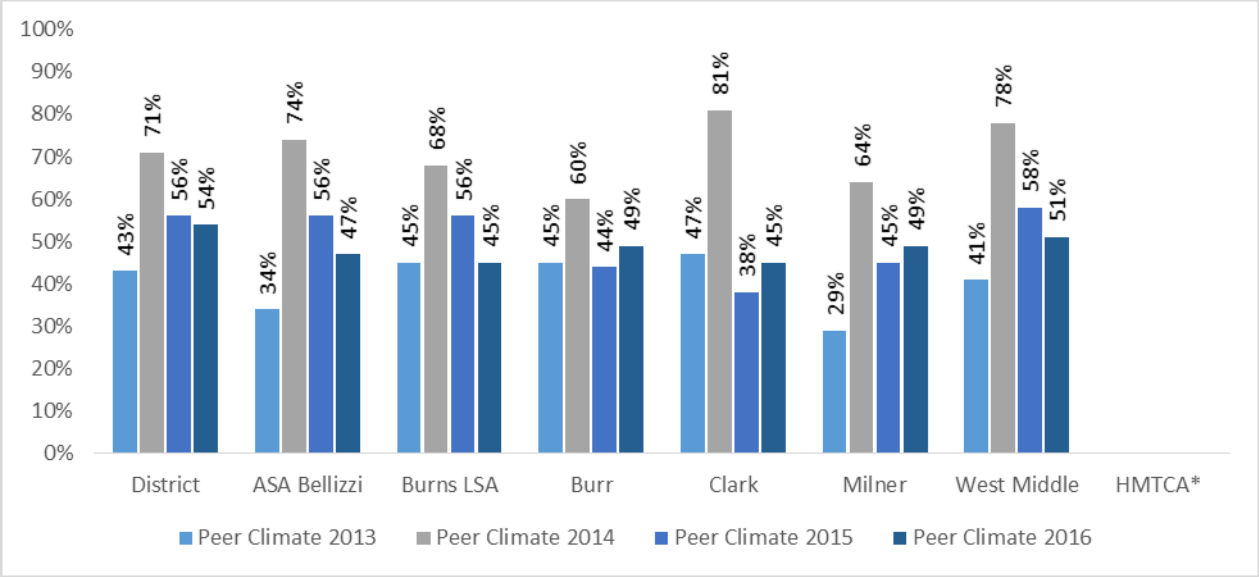
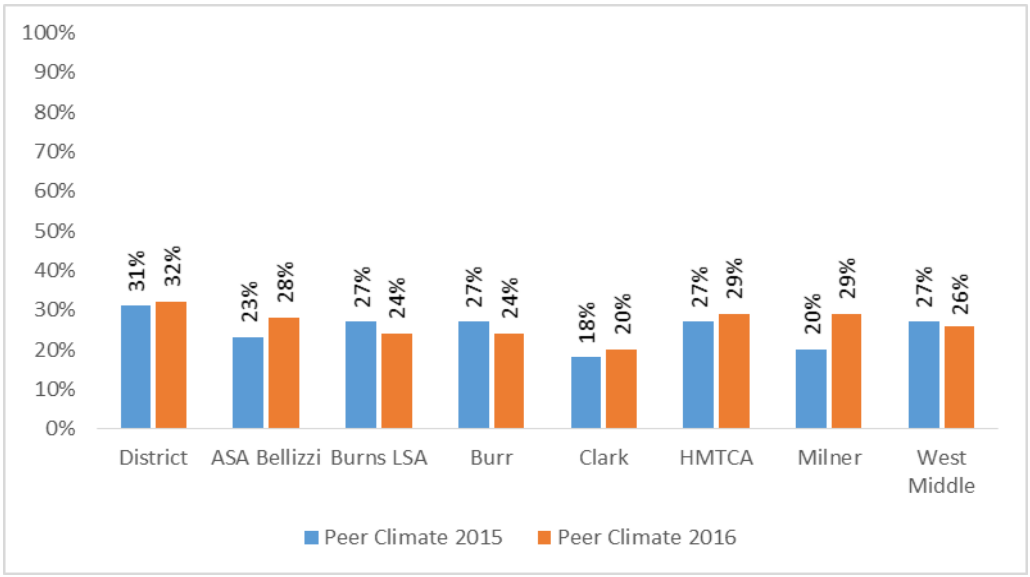
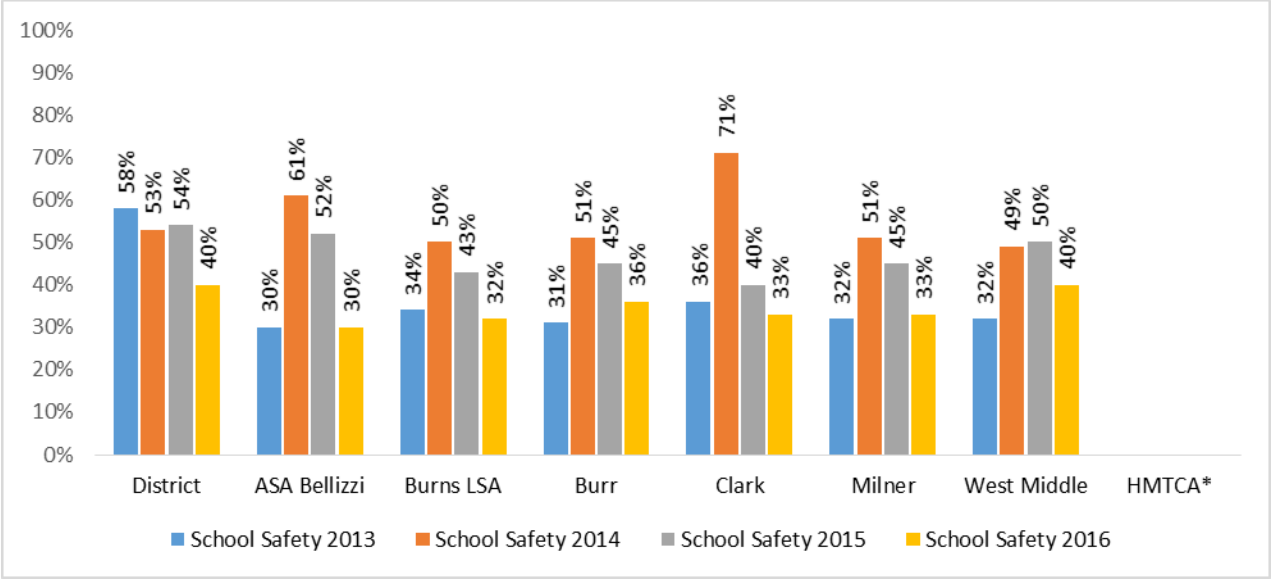


Figure 9 : Percentage of grade 5-12 students who responded favorably to questions on perceptions on peer climate in 2015.



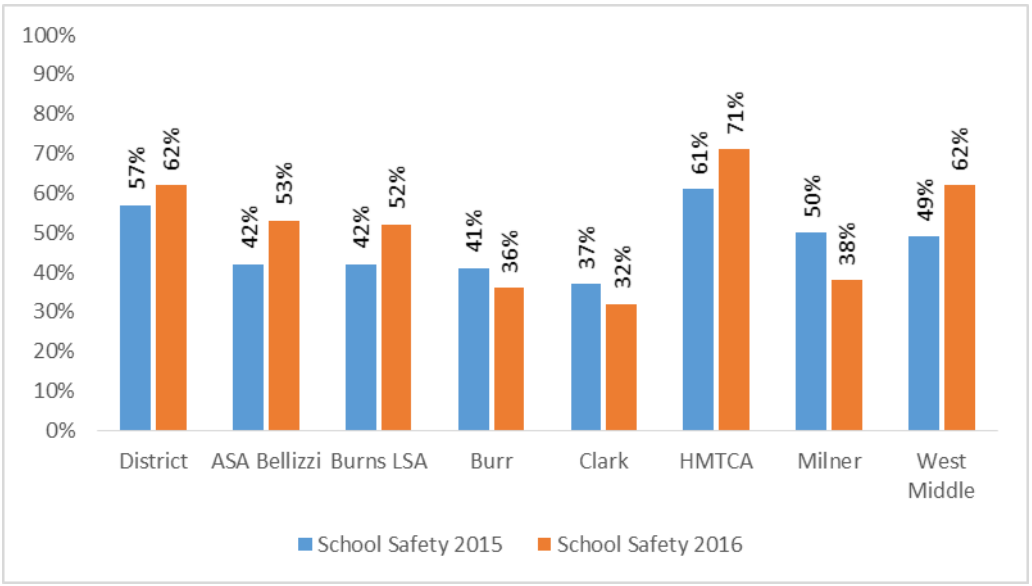
The most discernable difference in student perceptions of school safety (another key indicator of school climate) was between grade 3-4 students and those in grades 5-12. This was apparent for schools in the district as a whole. For example, as noted in figure 10, perceptions of school safety among grades 3-4 decreased in all HCS schools although in five schools these decreases were less than the decrease in the district overall. On the other hand, there were increases in school safety perceptions in grades 5-12 in four out of the seven schools, each of which were greater than for the district as a whole.

Figure 10: Percentage of grade 3-4 students who responded favorably to questions on perceptions on school safety 2013 to 2015.



The difference in reported perceptions of school safety between grades was most apparent for AS Bellizzi. For example, positive perceptions of school safety among graders 3-4 fell by twenty-two percentage points but rose by eleven percentage points for grades 5-12. (as illustrated in figure 11).

Figure 11: Percentage of grade 5-12 students who responded favorably to questions on perceptions on school safety in 2015 to 2016.



3.4 Student Behavior

Milner had the most success in addressing behavioral issues through the provision of clinical services for students facing problems on this issue. Although most schools use suspensions less in dealing with behavior issues, the data in this instance is a good indicator as it relates to aspects of behavior where suspensions are mandated by HPS.

Table 6 show less progress was made in other schools in addressing behavior among cohorts of students targeted for particular behavior interventions.

Table 6: Behavior cohort suspensions comparison 2015 to 2016 academic year

HCS Behavior Cohorts		Suspensions		
		2015	2016	Change Score
Burns LSA AVID Behavior Cohort	Participants (N=7)	4	11	↑ **7**
Burr Check-in/Check-out behavior cohort	Participants (N=6)	6	16	↑ **10**
Clark Teen Outreach Cohort	Participants (N=19)	28	47	↑ **19**
HMTCA Behavior Cohort	Participants (N=10)	16	24	↑ **8**
Milner Clinic Cohort	Participants (N=10)	30	28	↓ -2
West Middle Behavior Cohort	Participants (N=29)	11	58	↑ **47**

3.5 Students' Perceptions of Afterschool Enrichment Opportunities

The inclusion of a greater focus on academic work in afterschool programs is reflected in responses to surveys distributed to afterschool students at the start and at the end of school year (as noted in the methods section surveys from five out of seven schools are included in the analysis). Figure 12 shows that a higher number of students (67%) in all schools reported learning reading, writing and math skills in their afterschool programs (compared to 64% at the beginning of the year)

The focus on the academic support is also reflected in the number of afterschool participants who reported that the program helped them to finish their homework (as outlined in figure 13).

Figure 12: Percentage of student who reported they were learning reading, writing and math skills in afterschool program

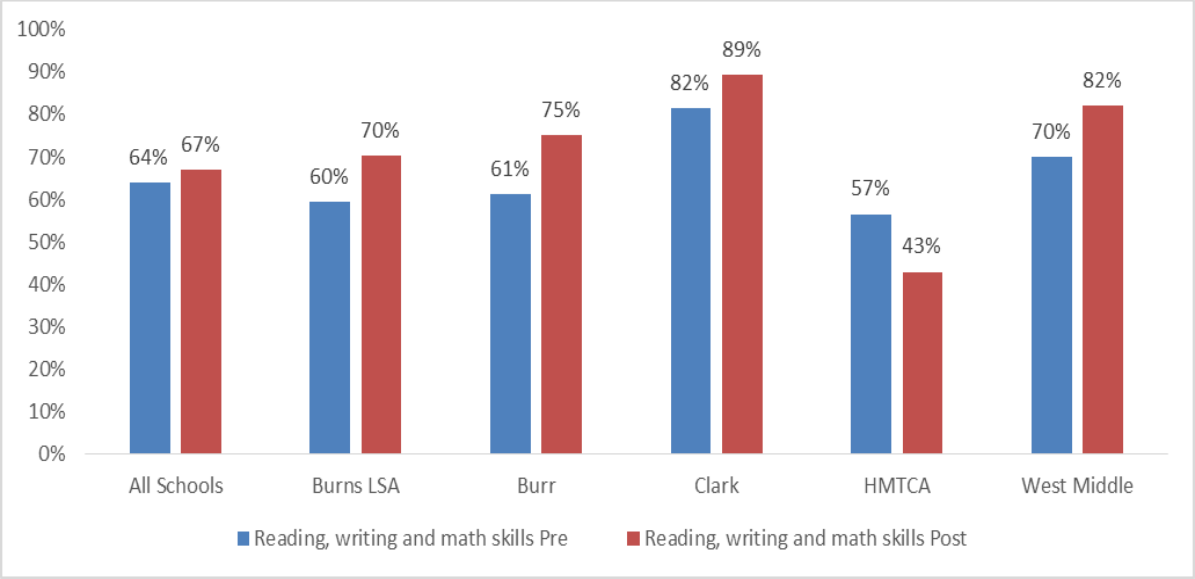
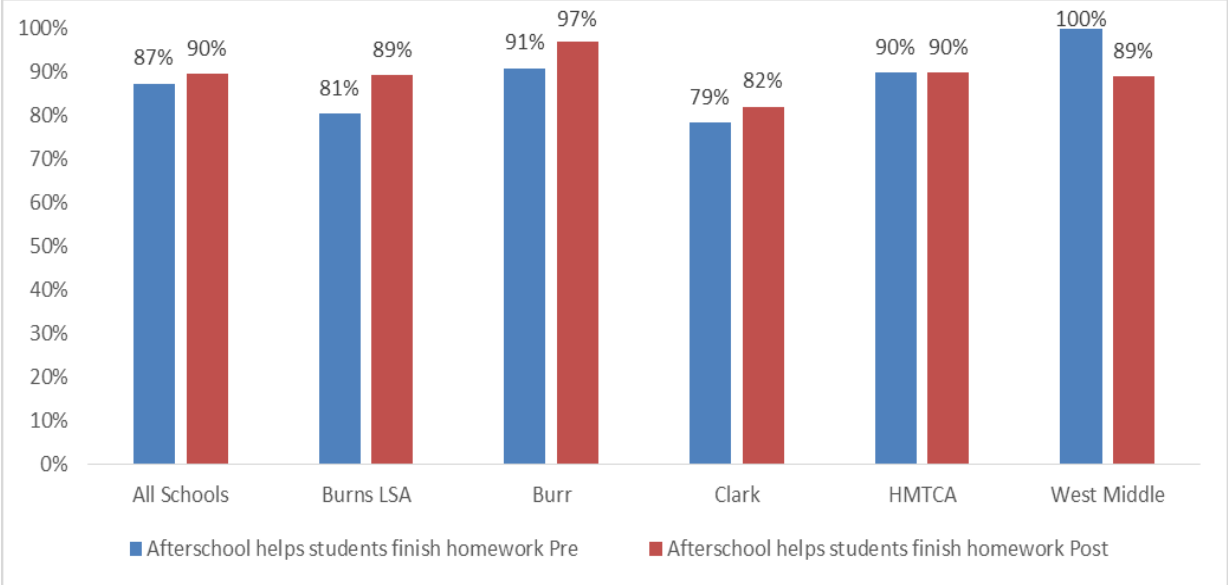
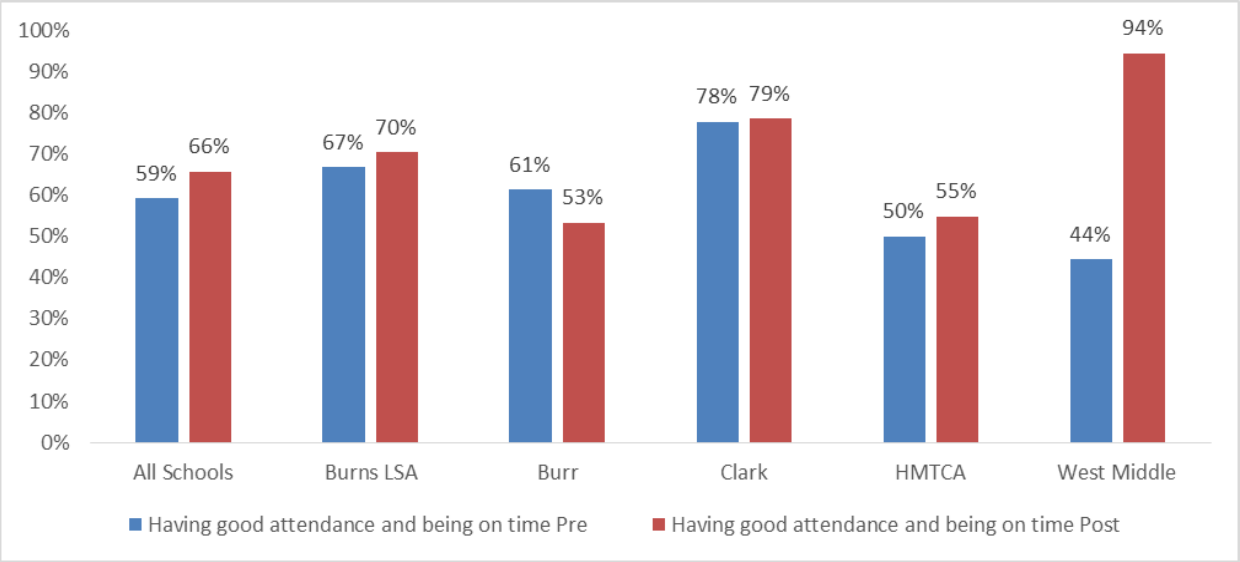


Figure 13: Percentage of students reporting that afterschool helps them finish their homework



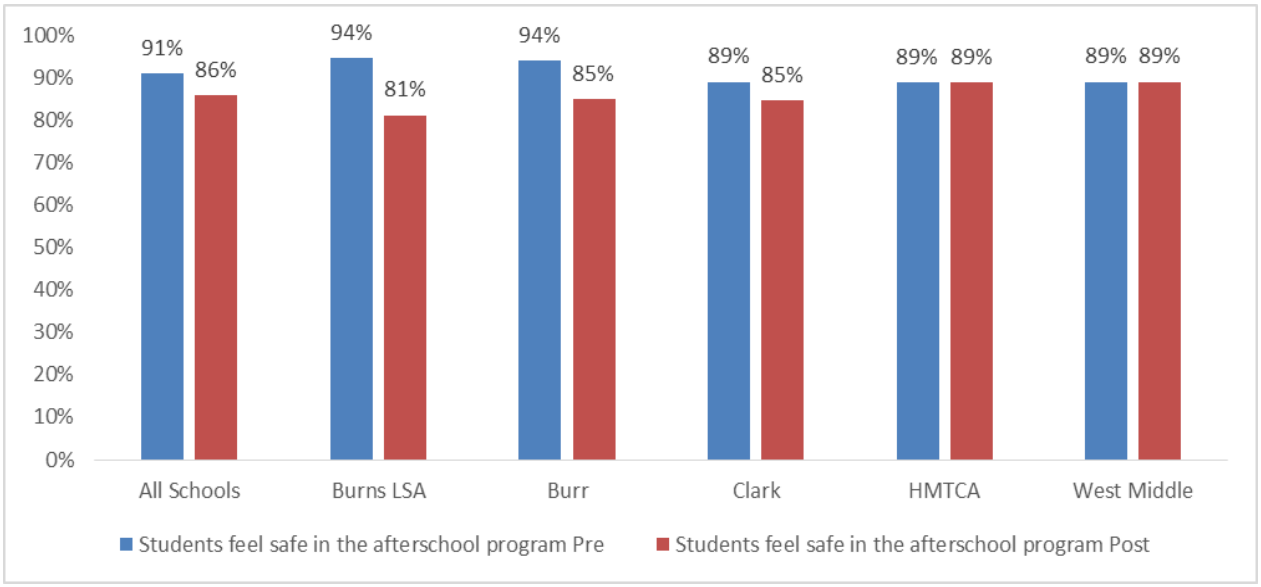
The number of students who reported learning skills relating to attendance and being on time in their afterschool program increased over the year for the schools (in the previous year there have been a reduction in students who reported learning such skills during the year). This is outlined in figure 14 and is an important result given the priority schools have attached to attendance and timeliness.

Figure 14: Percentage of student who reported they were learning skills relating to having good attendance and being on time in afterschool program



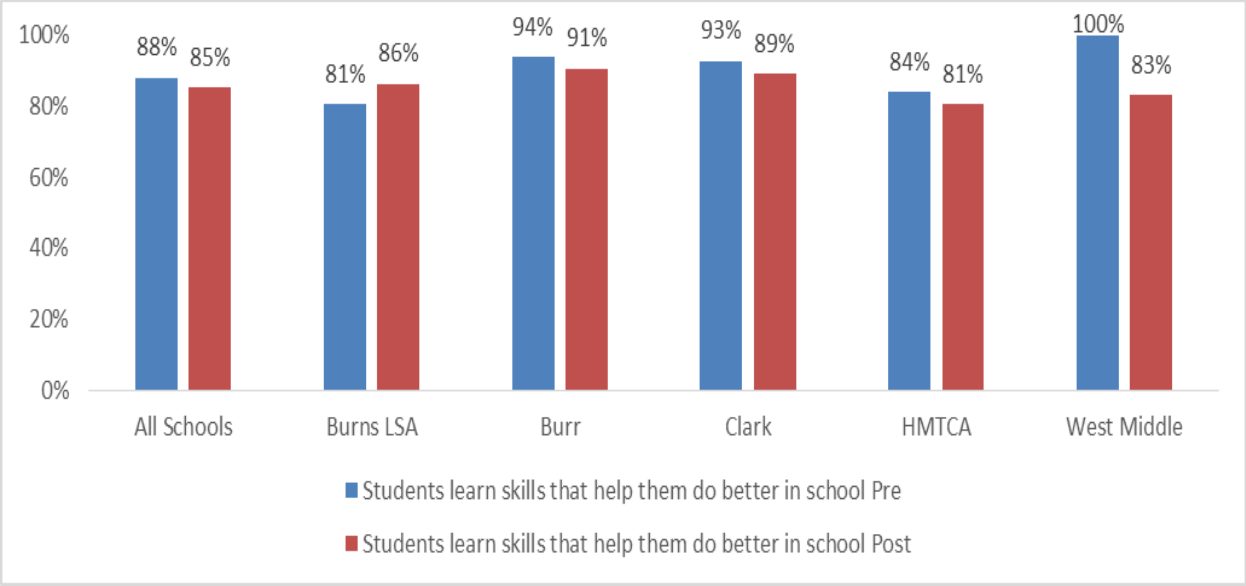
Given the importance of student safety as a precondition for participation and progression in school it is notable that the vast majority of afterschool students felt very safe in the afterschool programs compared to students in the school overall (as outlined in the previous section on school climate). This was the case even though perceptions of safety in afterschool dropped slightly. However, in all cases perceptions of safety were above 80%. (as illustrated in Figure 15.

Figure 15: Percentage of students who reported feeling safe in the afterschool program



Finally, a majority of students reported at the outset of the afterschool program in the academic year 2015-16 that they were learning skills that would help them do better in school (Figure 16). These expectations did not change substantially over the year, although they did decrease somewhat in all schools. As noted earlier, participation in afterschool programs decreased in 2015-16 as compared to that of previous years. The surveys of afterschool participants do not provide much information on why this should be so as students who stopped participating would not have filled in post surveys at the end of the year. However, surveys do show that a majority of students cited homework as the thing they liked least about their afterschool program and a majority highlighted enrichment--particularly dance, music, gym and opportunities to "hang-out" with friends--as the things they liked the most about the program.

Figure 16: Percentage of students who stated that they learn skills in afterschool programs that will help them do better in school



Bridge across the Connecticut River at Hartford, 1908

3.6 Parent/Family Outcomes

The Theory of Change for HCS has identified parental/familial engagement with their child's school, not as an end in itself, but as a critical precondition for building the capacity of parents/families to support student learning. In turn, parent/family support for student learning, including the capacity to support their child's homework and to engage with teachers on student grades have been identified as key preconditions for overall student success.

An important foundational precondition for parents/families engaging with the school is that they feel welcome. Figure 17 shows the results from the HPS School Climate and Connectedness Survey of parent/family perceptions of how welcome they feel in their child's school. Once again, the figures are high across all community schools for 2016 and parent/family perception of feeling welcomed increased in ASA Bellizzi, Clark, HMTCA and Milner. The contribution of the community school to Clark's capacity to build and sustain a welcoming environment for parents/families (which had been affected by the earlier closure of school facility) was highlighted by stakeholders in the school and is reflected in these figures.

The results are also broadly positive when parents were asked whether their child's school is 'supportive and inviting' place for them. ASA Bellizzi, Burns LSA and HMTCA saw a higher percentage increase than other schools on this indicator (Figure 18).

Figure 17: Parent/Family perceptions of 'feeling welcomed' in their child's school 2014 to 2016

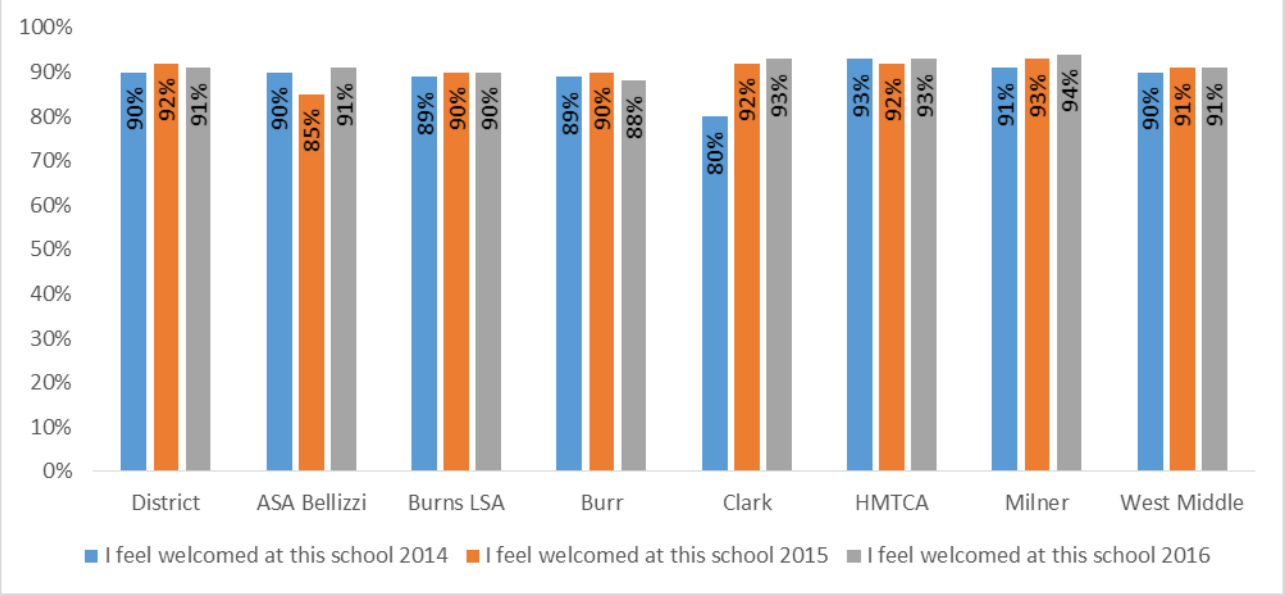
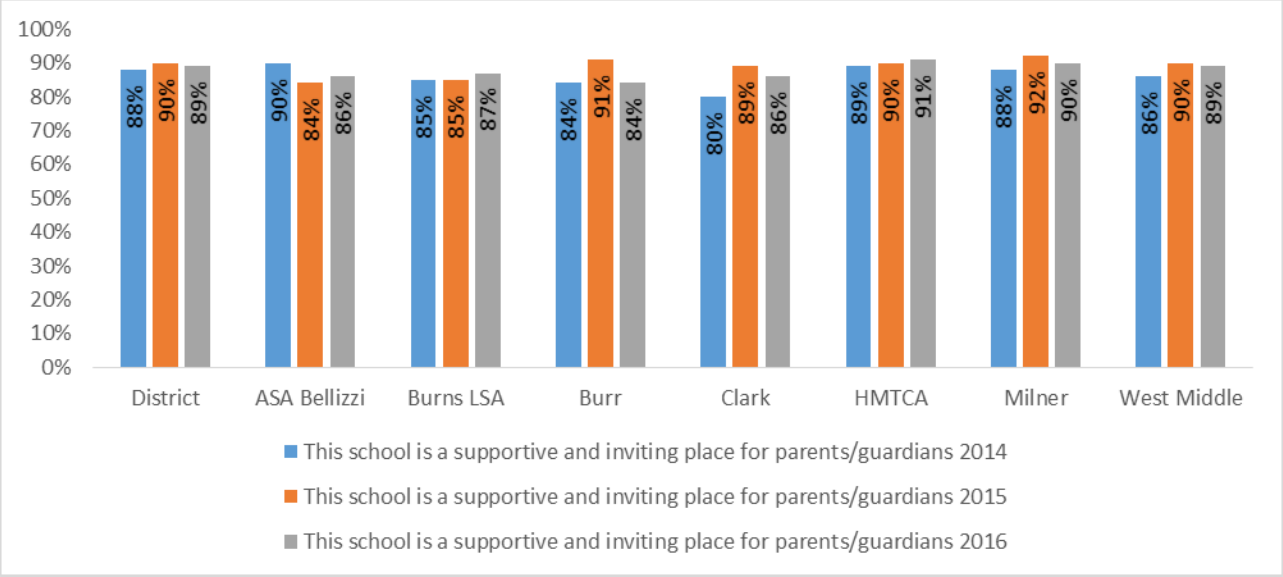
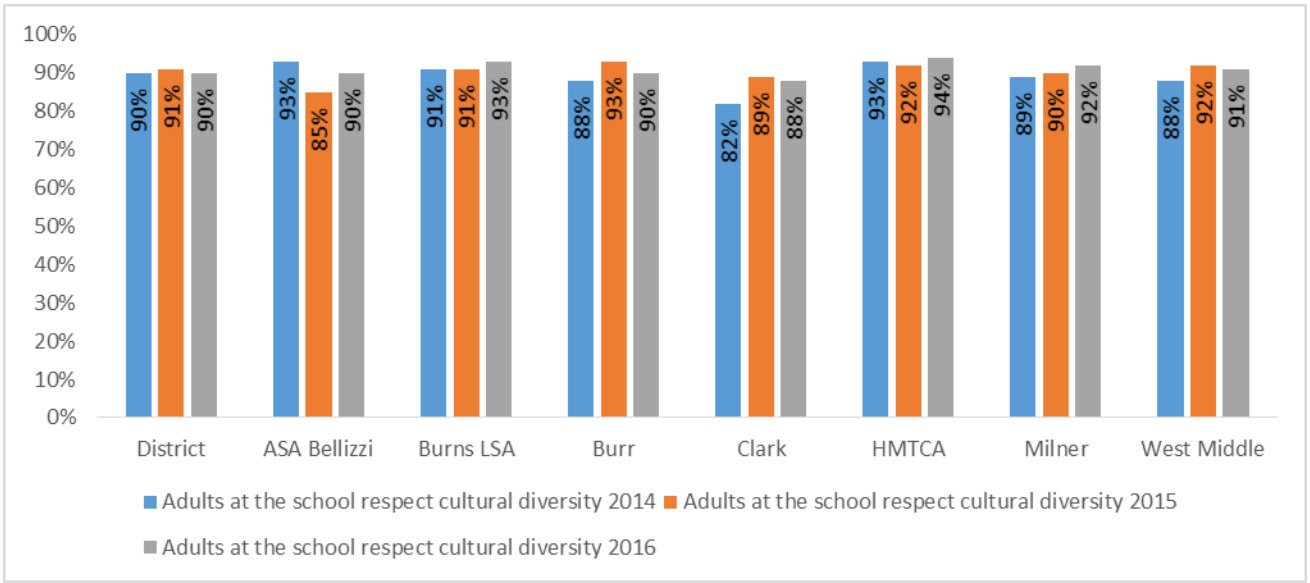


Figure18: Parents perceptions on whether their child's school is a 'supportive and inviting place for parents/guardians' 2014 to 2016



Respect for diversity and the cultural competence of schools in dealing with diverse families has been identified as a key precondition for parental engagement in the HCS Theory of Change. This is especially important given the diversity of the schools and of the communities they serve. The responses to the HPS survey question on whether parents believed "adults at the school respect cultural diversity" (an indicator of cultural competence) is outlined in figure 19. This was positive across all HCS schools and increased in four out of the seven community schools.

Figure 19: Parents perception on whether adults at their child's school 'respect cultural diversity' 2014 to 2016



4. Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

Hartford Community Schools (HCS) has made impressive progress in 2016 despite some significant challenges in the broader context in which it is operating. In particular:

Academic Achievement Results

- Participants in the afterschool program (a key component of the community school model) have yet again done better on Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) scores in both reading and math compared to students who did not participate.
- Even more impressive has been the strong academic performance of those who persisted in afterschool over time. There was a significantly higher increase in MAP scores in reading and in math for students who participated in the afterschool program for three or four consecutive years compared to those who participated for less than two year.
- The academic impact of the afterschool program is supported by responses to the survey of afterschool students. There were increases of students who reported learning reading, writing and math skills in their afterschool program in all schools.
- MAP results for cohorts of academically "at-risk" students connected to programs or services targeted at their needs also showed strong improvement and this improvement was even greater for those students who had participated persistently in these services over time. Examples include very strong improvements for participants in Travelers Tutoring program (ASA Bellizzi) and ConnectiKids (West Middle).
- MAP results for cohorts of English Language Learners (ELL) who received targeted supports (in Burns LSA, Burr and Clark) strongly improved in both reading and math despite a decrease for ELL students in HCS overall.
- Special Education students (SE) who received targeted supports (in Clark) demonstrated much stronger improvements in MAP results in both reading and math than for SE students in HCS overall.

Attendance/Chronic Absenteeism and Behavior Results

- Rates of chronic absenteeism fell in the five HCS schools (ASA Bellizzi, Burns LSA, Burr, Clark and Milner) where rates had been highest.
- Days absent declined for cohorts of students in Burns LSA and Milner who had received mental health supports or where there was intensive engagement with their parents.
- The most successful intervention to address behavioral issues among particular cohorts of students was the mental health supports provided through Milner clinical services. This validates the emphasis in the HCS Theory of Change on the importance of mental health as a precondition for learning.

A number of key elements of the community school model have been particularly important in achieving these results.

- The afterschool programs in each school have clearly had a strongly positive impact on achievement. However, sustaining the educational impact of the programs requires a continued focus on effective coordination and alignment of daytime and afterschool program activities.
- The capacity and intentionality of HCS and the community school directors in using data to identify the needs of vulnerable cohorts of students, matching these students with appropriate services and tracking results have been crucial. City Connects may have the potential to enhance this capacity.
- The inclusive approach of the community school model that involves multi-sectoral partners at each level of the system, from HPSS right down to each school, has provided a means of addressing challenges systemically. This model is in line with best practice identified by the National Center for Community Schools

(NCCS). For example, the involvement of senior representatives of Hartford Public Schools (HPS) on HPSS helped in creating conditions in each school that allow for more effective coordination and integration. The more recent involvement of the HPS Chief School Improvement Officer was considered particularly important in building support for the community school model among school principals.

- The strategic work and support of the Director of HPSS for the initiative has been very important, yielding successful outcomes in developing and aligning systemic supports with the needs of the schools. However, in the 2015-2016 school year, the Director of HPSS had to combine this strategic work with the provision of technical assistance to schools. This work is normally undertaken by the Community Schools Coordinator, but this role was vacant for seven months. With the appointment of a new HCS Coordinator in May 2016, this work should be further enhanced.
- The National Center for Community Schools (NCCS) has been an important strategic resource to HPSS and HCS on best practice in the field. This has included support at a leadership level as well as the provision of technical assistance to lead agencies and schools.
- HCS has one of the most comprehensive Theories of Change yet developed by a community school's initiative. This is used consistently to inform planning and capture learning and best practice. The broad range of community stakeholders encompassed by the Theory is based on a concept of education as a "shared interest and responsibility of the community as a whole".
- The commitment of the main investors in HPSS, including the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, to long-term investment in HCS has been critical and provides much needed continuity for the community schools despite challenges and changes in the wider context in which they are operating. The strong impact on students, especially those students who have participated in programs and services developed through the community schools over time, validates this long-term vision.

4.2 Recommendations

- Given the demonstrated importance of the afterschool program to student achievement, it is recommended that HPSS and HCS examine the reasons for the decline in afterschool attendance and how this can be addressed at different levels of the system. This includes a focus on how to balance a longer school day with an afterschool program that incorporates an optimal mix of academic and pure enrichment.
- Each school should continue to be supported in developing interventions linked to intermediate outcomes (set out in the bands of the Theory of Change) that are most relevant to their particular challenges. This should include a continued focus on supporting mental health of students and families, which has been important in supporting better behavior and attendance.
- Each school should continue to assess the needs of students in a way that facilitates the matching of vulnerable students to services most appropriate to their needs.
- HPSS should continue to focus on some of the key systemic levels supports that facilitate easier implementation and integration and coordination of the community school model in each school. The move to a common funding application has been a good example of how greater coordination among partners on HPSS has helped streamline implementation. Equally important has been the role of Hartford Public Schools represented at HPSS level in facilitating school leadership support for the community school model.

The Charter Oak
Frederick Edwin Church, 1848

Appendix 1: Detailed Results for Each HCS School

MAP Results for Target cohorts for 2015-2016 academic year

HCS Target Cohorts - Academics		READING			MATH		
		Spring 2015	Spring 2016	Change Score	Spring 2015	Spring 2016	Change Score
ASA Bellizzi - Travelers Tutorial Program	Participants (N=40)	188.61	190.20	⇧ **1.59**	189.71	191.30	⇧ **1.59**
ASA Bellizzi - iReady Academic Intervention	Participants (N=73)	193.00	197.60	⇧ **4.60**	201.30	198.23	⇩ **-3.07**
ASA Bellizzi - University of Saint Joseph Literacy Program (Fall)	Participants (N=12)	184.50	190.25	⇧ **5.75**	186.00	191.42	⇧ **5.42**
ASA Bellizzi - University of Saint Joseph Literacy Program (Spring)	Participants (N=7)	191.43	188.14	⇩ **-3.29**	190.43	192.57	⇧ **2.14**
Burns LSA - CK3LI Target Cohorts	Participants (N=15)	166.73	174.33	⇧ **7.60**	165.53	178.13	⇧ **12.60**
Burns LSA - CK3Li/Lit Art Target Cohorts	Participants (N=30)	167.69	174.93	⇧ **7.24**	165.35	176.97	⇧ **11.62**
Burns LSA - United Way Readers	Participants (N=23)	159.43	163.09	⇧ **3.66**	156.07	167.09	⇧ **11.02**
Clark - United Way Readers Winter Day Session	Participants (N=13)	163.83	160.15	⇩ **-3.68**	159.33	169.30	⇧ **9.97**
Clark - United Way Readers Spring Day Session	Participants (N=24)	167.42	175.50	⇧ **8.08**	170.45	181.60	⇧ **11.15**
Clark - United Way Readers Afterschool Winter Session	Participants (N=7)	169.25	182.29	⇧ **13.04**	163.75	177.29	⇧ **13.54**
Clark - United Way Readers Afterschool Spring Session	Participants (N=10)	161.20	169.50	⇧ **8.30**	155.00	177.88	⇧ **22.88**
Clark - FRC Groups	Participants (N=30)	179.21	194.03	⇧ **14.82**	180.62	194.80	⇧ **14.18**
HMTCA - Academic Intervention	Participants (N=8)	204.60	207.38	⇧ **2.78**	206.60	210.25	⇧ **3.65**
Milner - Clinic participants	Participants (N=10)	180.67	182.20	⇧ **1.53**	180.00	185.00	⇧ **5.00**
Milner - Students with Parental Engagement	Participants (N=11)	172.50	166.42	⇩ **-6.08**	174.43	166.09	⇩ **-8.34**
West Middle - Academic Tutoring	Participants (N=9)	206.00	207.33	⇧ **1.33**	201.13	208.33	⇧ **7.20**
West Middle - ConnectiKids Tutoring Program	Participants (N=25)	198.77	200.64	⇧ **1.87**	206.65	200.95	⇩ **-5.70**

MAP Results in Reading for afterschool students 2013-2016

By School Afterschool Students		READING							
		Fall 2012	Spring 2013	Fall 2013	Spring 2014	Fall 2014	Spring 2015	Fall 2015	Spring 2016
Asian Studies Academy at Bellizzi	Afterschool Students	193.4	↑ 199.0	194.6	↑ 200.4	193.4	↑ 202.0	188.0	↑ 194.4
	Non-Afterschool Students	185.8	↑ 194.6	179.1	↑ 190.2	176.6	↑ 181.4	179.9	↑ 178.7
Burns Latino Studies Academy	Afterschool Students	184.0	↑ 193.4	184.6	↑ 191.7	178.8	↑ 184.6	182.3	↑ 189.1
	Non-Afterschool Students	179.0	↑ 187.9	181.1	↑ 188.6	181.8	↑ 184.4	182.1	↑ 184.8
Burr School	Afterschool Students	182.6	↑ 187.1	184.6	↑ 191.8	181.8	↑ 193.2	186.3	↑ 193.2
	Non-Afterschool Students	184.9	↑ 187.3	185.4	↑ 194.4	184.1	↑ 189.7	186.9	↓ 186.1
Clark School	Afterschool Students	191.6	↑ 197.0	175.1	↑ 184.6	178.8	↑ 187.6	182.2	↑ 185.3
	Non-Afterschool Students	181.6	↑ 189.8	184.6	↑ 191.8	180.4	↑ 182.8	185.4	↑ 186.7
Hartford Magnet Trinity College Academy	Afterschool Students	213.4	↑ 213.0	213.0	↑ 214.0	207.4	↑ 213.9	208.9	↑ 213.6
	Non-Afterschool Students	217.2	↑ 217.7	216.1	↑ 217.5	212.9	↑ 219.4	218.1	↑ 221.4
Milner School	Afterschool Students	182.0	↑ 186.4	181.4	↑ 187.2	178.8	↑ 182.9	175.2	↑ 179.3
	Non-Afterschool Students	172.6	↑ 178.7	179.8	↑ 186.2	177.4	↑ 186.0	175.6	↑ 180.7
West Middle School	Afterschool Students	N/A	N/A	185.7	↑ 194.9	187.3	↑ 198.1	192.8	↑ 199.6
	Non-Afterschool Students	181.6	↑ 193.5	188.1	↑ 198.4	182.7	↑ 191.0	187.2	↑ 189.3

MAP Results in Math for afterschool students 2013-2016

By School Afterschool Students		MATH							
		Fall 2012	Spring 2013	Fall 2013	Spring 2014	Fall 2014	Spring 2015	Fall 2015	Spring 2016
Asian Studies Academy at Bellizzi	Afterschool Students	198.6	↑ 201.4	194.0	↑ 201.6	192.8	↑ 204.6	190.9	↑ 196.2
	Non-Afterschool Students	187.8	↑ 195.8	178.9	↑ 190.4	176.0	↑ 191.4	181.2	↑ 186.9
Burns Latino Studies Academy	Afterschool Students	189.9	↑ 198.1	188.8	↑ 197.3	179.7	↑ 185.8	186.1	↑ 192.0
	Non-Afterschool Students	183.2	↑ 192.2	184.3	↑ 192.1	183.9	↑ 186.1	184.5	↑ 186.9
Burr School	Afterschool Students	185.7	↑ 190.5	186.1	↑ 196.5	183.3	↑ 199.0	187.6	↑ 197.0
	Non-Afterschool Students	187.3	↑ 193.3	188.2	↑ 198.7	185.3	↑ 198.7	189.4	↑ 197.3
Clark School	Afterschool Students	193.0	↑ 199.4	177.1	↑ 186.3	181.6	↑ 191.3	183.9	↑ 195.4
	Non-Afterschool Students	184.0	↑ 191.5	188.2	↑ 194.5	180.9	↑ 184.4	185.9	↑ 197.1
Hartford Magnet Trinity College Academy	Afterschool Students	218.0	↑ 221.6	221.7	↑ 220.0	209.3	↑ 216.6	212.9	↑ 218.2
	Non-Afterschool Students	223.4	↑ 225.6	224.2	↑ 224.7	218.9	↑ 225.4	222.5	↑ 226.6
Milner School	Afterschool Students	184.7	↑ 192.5	185.2	↑ 190.6	178.8	↑ 183.2	175.7	↑ 181.5
	Non-Afterschool Students	174.6	↑ 185.2	181.5	↑ 187.9	180.2	↑ 187.3	177.8	↑ 183.3
West Middle School	Afterschool Students	N/A	N/A	186.1	↑ 198.8	188.3	↑ 206.0	195.5	↑ 205.5
	Non-Afterschool Students	186.1	↑ 197.8	190.4	↑ 201.3	181.9	↑ 200.2	189.6	↑ 192.9

Appendix 2: Evaluation Methods

In keeping with previous years, the evaluation has encompassed a number of interrelated components. These include:

A. Site Visits

The ActKnowledge evaluation team undertook comprehensive visits to all of the Hartford Community Schools in 2016 using a set of interview schedules/questionnaires designed to elicit the views of stakeholders on how the community school was developing, what changes had occurred since the previous year, what was achieved and the factors facilitating or hindering progress. This involved:

- Interviews with all Community School Directors and HCS program staff.
- Interviews with five principals (Burns LSA, Burr, Clark, HMTCA and West Middle) and one assistant principal (Milner).
- Focus groups/interviews with parents in six schools (Burns LSA, Milner, Burr, West Middle, HMTCA and ASA Belizzi).
- Focus groups with students participating in after-school programs in all seven schools.
- Interviews with the Dean of Students in ASA Belizzi and with program staff in all schools.

These are set forth in more detail in the table below.

	Persons Interviewed
HPSS	Director, Education Investments, Hartford Foundation for Public Giving Director, Community Investment, United Way of Central and Northeastern Connecticut Chief Communications and Partnership and Public Policy Officer, Hartford Public Schools. Vice President for Community Schools, National Center for Community Schools, The Children's Aid Society
ASA Belizzi	Community School Director, Family Resource Coordinator, Dean of Students, Family Resource Center staff, Focus groups with Students
Burns LSA	Principal, Community School Director, Program staff (4), Education Coordinator, Parents, Focus group with Students
Burr	Principal (by phone), Community School Director, Program staff, Focus group with Students, Parent/family coordinators (2), Parents (2)
Clark	Principal, Community School Director, Assistant Principal, Focus group with Students, Program staff (3)
HMTCA	Principal, Community School Director, Focus groups with Students, Parents (4), Program Coordinator
Milner	Lead Agency Manager (Acting Community School Director), Former Community School Director (moving to take up new position in HCS), Assistant Principal, Parents, Students
West Middle	Principal, Site Director, Parents (2), Program Coordinator, Program Assistant, Education Coordinator, Focus group with Students

B. Interviews with "Systems-Level" stakeholders

The evaluators interviewed a number of stakeholders involved in leadership structures of HCS and on the HPSS in particular. These interviews focused on the partnerships between stakeholders that have sustained HCS to date and provided an opportunity to identify success, challenges and opportunities for building on the progress that has been made by HCS to date.

C. Identification and Analysis of Quantitative Data

As before, a key focus of the evaluation has been working with HCS to identify, source and analyze quantitative data relating to a whole set of preconditions for student achievement. These include academic results, attendance, behavior and measures of school climate which have been disaggregated to allow for comparisons between participants in afterschool and non-participants, targeted cohort of students, ELL and Special Ed. students.

Once again targeted cohorts of students have been included in the disaggregated analysis because prior to this the full impact of HCS programs was being somewhat lost in data that was disaggregated for only certain groups of students. However, the community school model encompasses a wider set of programs and services than just afterschool programs.

The "target cohorts" have been selected by each school (working closely with ActKnowledge) and represent students who have received different interventions developed through the community school model and who were expected to progress as a *result of these particular intervention(s)*. These cohorts include students that have been targeted for supports because they are academically "at risk" or because they face other challenges such as attendance/behavior problems, or issues arising for English Language Learners (ELL) or Special Education (SE) students.

The focus on "target cohorts" is particularly important in the context of community schools where the resources do not exist for every student to receive all services; so the efficacy of the model can only be expected to be fully seen where it is most fully implemented.

Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)

The academic results are based on 'raw' scores from Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), which were analyzed for each academic year from 2013 to 2016. There was a number of components and levels of analysis of MAP scores in this respect. In particular:

- MAP scores for students who participated in afterschool programs were analyzed longitudinally to examine the impact on those who have consistently participated in afterschool programs across a number of years. This was done by matching students across four years from 2013 to 2016 (i.e. students who had participated for 4years, 3years, 2years, 1 year and students who have not participated at all using Spring to Spring results for each year).
- MAP scores for target cohorts of students were also analyzed longitudinally to examine the academic impact of persistent participation in interventions over time.
- Analysis was undertaken of MAP scores for English Language Learners (ELL) and Special education (SE) students between Spring 2015 and Spring 2016. The figures were further disaggregated to examine the impact of interventions targeted at particular cohorts of ELL or SE students.

Attendance/Chronic Absenteeism

In looking at attendance the evaluation focused on rates of chronic absenteeism as opposed to attendance figures overall.[10]In Hartford

[10] A school with high attendance rates can have high "chronic" or "severely chronic" absentee rates – for example, the attendance rate might be 95 percent but when the absences are added together, they can accumulate and the student(s) can miss a month or more of school over the course of the school year. For a fuller analysis of this topic, see for example the resources section of the National Center for

Connecticut, a student is chronically absent if he/she misses 10 percent or more of school for any reason including excused and unexcused absences.

Chronic absenteeism data was also disaggregated to examine the impact of interventions targeted at cohort of students who are (or at-risk of being) chronically absent.

Behavior

The evaluation focused on the impact of interventions targeted at students with behavior issues using suspensions as an indicator. Although schools tend to use suspensions less in dealing with behavior issues, the use of suspensions as an indicator in this instance was reliable as it related to behaviors mandated for suspension by HPS.

School Climate.

To obtain a picture of changes in school climate, the results of the School Climate and Student Connectedness Survey conducted by Harford Public Schools (HPS) were analyzed. These include responses from students to questions relating to safety and peer climate and responses by parents to questions about whether the school made them feel welcomed or respected cultural diversity.

Student Surveys

The survey questionnaire developed by ActKnowledge in 2012 was again used to elicit the views and perceptions of students (focusing on grades 3 and up) who participated in the afterschool programs on key outcomes (identified through the Theory of Change and though the education research literature) relating to student achievement. The youth survey is a validated and replicated instrument used in other community school initiatives that is based on:

1. The concept of "assets" needed by youth to succeed (developed by Search Institute);
2. The questions of interest in 21st Century Community Learning Centers programs to capture after-school activities and benefits; and
3. The Theory of Change for Hartford which identifies outcomes for youth – although these should be further developed and elaborated as the Theory of Change evolves.

A "pre" survey was administered to afterschool participants in the seven schools in November 2015 and a "post" survey to measure changes in perceptions over the school year was administered in May 2016. A student tracking form was used by the community school directors to ensure that students had completed both "pre" and "post" surveys and that the responses were matched for individual students.

Table 1: Responses by School to "Pre" and "Post" Student Surveys

	# Pre-Survey	# Post-Survey	# Pre-Post Survey Matched
ASA Bellizzi	94	108*	N/A
Burns	70	41	37
Burr	54	49	33
Clark	40	57	28
HMTCA	83	82	63
Milner	N/A*	37	N/A
West Middle	28	72	18
Total	**369**	**446**	**179**

Community Schools and the National Center for Children in Poverty Report *Present, Engaged, and Accounted For* (Chang at el, 2008).

The responses to the student surveys are illustrated in Table 1. The number of students who responded to both surveys were lower than responses to either "pre" or "post" surveys. Those who could not be matched across "pre" and "post" surveys were excluded from the analysis. In the school year 2015-2016, all responses from Milner and ASA Bellizzi were excluded due to logistical difficulties that arose during the year. A smaller number was excluded from other schools, where the discrepancy in responses may reflect difficulties in retaining the same students in afterschool programs throughout the school year.

Old and New: Grove Street tenement with Phoenix building in the background, 1963

Asylum Street, Hartford, 1911

Royal Typewriter Company, Hartford, 1911