



Five schools added to Community Schools initiative

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Five Philadelphia elementary public schools are now Community Schools and will receive more support for students and their surrounding communities.

The new cohort of Community Schools includes, Hamilton Disston Elementary School in Tacony, Andrew K. McClure Elementary School in Hunting Park, Overbrook Educational Center in Overbrook, John H. Webster School in Kensington and Richard W. Wright School in Strawberry Mansion. The announcement was made Monday afternoon at Richard R. Wright school.

Richard R. Wright Principal Jeannine Payne said becoming a Community School will help to improve the well-being of students and "achievement by bringing in new resources and building a stronger connection between school and our families and neighbors."

Each Community School has a full-time community coordinator who works with the school and its surrounding neighborhood to address specific needs of students and their families.

IN THE NEWS

"Community Schools have provided critical supports to students and families such as adult education, out-of-school programs and behavioral health supports," said SDP Superintendent William Hite in a statement. "These partnerships are valuable assets to our schools, and align closely with the district's work to provide great schools close to where children live by enhancing community engagement and growing supports for school communities."

The five schools will now expand the the Community Schools initiative to 17 schools.

The first cohort of Community Schools kicked off in 2016 with nine schools, adding three more in 2017. Schools were chosen based on need, School Progress Report scores, the percentage of children living in poverty and neighborhood diploma attainment rates. The Mayor's Office of Education said 28 schools applied to become Community Schools during this past selection process.

The Community Schools program is funded through the sweetened beverage tax.

Below is a breakdown of each school:

Disston is a K-8 school with 899 students, all of whom are economically disadvantaged. The school also has partnerships with the Tacony Branch of the Free Library of Philadelphia and Vogt Recreation Center.

McClure is a K-5 school with 651 students, all of whom are economically disadvantaged. The school has several partnerships and works with community partners to address language access and mental health challenges. The school and community seek to add health, mental health and adult education resources.

OEC is a K-8 school with 294 students, 96% of whom are economically disadvantaged. The school meets the needs of students with visual impairments and 28% of its students receive special education services. The school, which serves

children across the city, seeks to add partnerships that can provide social and emotional support for its students.

Webster is a K-5 school with 749 students, all of whom are economically disadvantaged. The school has a family health partnership with Temple University's nursing school. A nearby church recently established a community center and community library next to the school. The school hopes to incorporate more parent resources to support student attendance and achievement. The school also participates with the Philadelphia Resilience Project and the Opioid Impact Task Force.

Richard R. Wright is a K-5 school with 348 students, all of whom are economically disadvantaged. The school has been recognized for its implementation of Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports programs. The school's priorities include out-of-school time, nutrition and trauma informed supports to set the stage for improved academic achievement.