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**Community  
Partnership Schools  
Developing Innovative  
Practice Through  
University-Community  
Partnerships**

*Edited by*  
**Jarrad D. Plante · Amy Ellis**

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# Rethinking University-Community Policy Connections

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**Rethinking University-Community Policy Connections** will publish works by scholars, practitioners, and ‘prac-acemics’ across a range of countries to explore substantive policy or management issues in the bringing together of higher education institutions and community-based organizations, nongovernmental organizations, governments, and businesses. Such partnerships afford unique opportunities to transform practice, develop innovation, incubate entrepreneurship, strengthen communities, and transform lives. Yet such potential is often not realized due to bureaucratic, cultural, or legal barriers erected between higher education institutions and the wider community. The global experience is common, though the precise mechanisms that prevent university-community collaboration or that enable successful and sustainable partnership vary within and across countries. Books in the series will facilitate dialogue across country experiences, help identify cross-cutting best practices, and to enhance the theory of university-community relations.

Jarrad D. Plante · Amy Ellis  
Editors

# Community Partnership Schools

Developing Innovative Practice Through  
University-Community Partnerships

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*The editors dedicate this book to the students, families, schools, community members, and leaders with whom we have the pleasure of serving alongside to realize potential and strengthen communities.*

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The editors acknowledge Dr. Thomas Bryer and the university–community book series committee for this opportunity to share the story and impact that the Community Partnership Schools™ model has had on students, families, and communities. We thank all participating authors, endorsers, and our reviewer, Judy Creel, for their contributions to the literature on community schools. It is with sincere enthusiasm that we thank our founders: Dr. Michael Frumkin, Dr. Nancy Ellis, and David Bundy, along with the founding agency partners: Children’s Home Society of Florida, Orange County Public Schools, and the University of Central Florida (UCF) for the establishment of the Community Partnership Schools™ model. We truly stand on the shoulders of giants.

We also want to recognize Florida’s legislators, the Florida Department of Education, and a long list of community school champions for your instrumental role in driving Florida’s community schools forward, and helping expand the benefits to underserved communities across Florida. Finally, we are grateful to UCF leadership and the College of Community Innovation and Education for providing a home aligned in vision and mission to work together empowering students and families to realize their greatest potential.

# INTRODUCTION

“If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.” This African proverb is at the heart and soul of the UCF Center for Community Schools and the Community Partnership Schools™ model, a quote enshrined at the University of Central Florida’s downtown campus for all to read and ponder.

The Coalition for Community Schools defines the term *community schools* as “both a place and set of partnerships between a school and other community resources. It’s integrated focus on academics, services, and supports leads to improved student learning, stronger families, and healthier communities.” The characteristics of a community school differ from traditional school models. Some features include (a) a comprehensive array of services—before/after school options, expanded learning opportunities, parent engagement classes, and health services; (b) coordinating of services—integrating student and family services into core instruction; (c) community and family involvement—meeting the needs of children by working closely with families and community members; and (d) whole school change—creating an environment of wellness, and school-community interventions to promote a culture of good attendance and achievement (Martinez, Hayes, & Silloway, 2013). Although community schools incorporate similar characteristics, they can have varying models, including the Community Partnership Schools™ model.

The Community Partnership Schools™ model includes four (or more) core partners that are essential to the success of each CPS. Partners work together to secure resources to address student, family, and community needs. The four core partnerships include: (a) school district, (b)



nonprofit community-based provider, (c) college or university, and (d) healthcare provider. Partners work together to address student needs and contribute institutional and social resources. Some content was previously disseminated as web-based resources.

This anthology, *The Community Partnership Schools: An Innovative Model of Practice for Community Schools through University–Community Partnerships*, was authored by academics and practitioners alike. The chapters establish Community Partnership Schools as an educational equity solution that lifts the ground floor for students, families, and communities. By showcasing this model of community school from inception through the first full cycle of K-12 students, authors capture the CPS as a prime example of how university–community partnerships work together—illustrating several university–community partnerships throughout the state of Florida. The scope of the project is to (a) introduce and describe the Community Partnership Schools™ (CPS) model in the context of the broader scope of community schools’ framework of wraparound support services for students, families, and larger communities; (b) demonstrate the importance of the university–community connection within the framework; (c) highlight the power of partnership; (d) provide historical context and case studies of the model; (e) illustrate the comprehensive structure and accountability of the CPS model; and (6) show impact through data.

Chapter 1, *The Community Schools Concepts*, defines the term community schools and provides a high-level historical context for the development of community schools. Chapter 2, *The Roles Universities Play in K-12 Education: University-Assisted Community Schools and Community Partnership Schools*, provides a literature review on the role colleges and universities play in primary and secondary schools, narrowing the focus through the lens of a community school setting; and demonstrates how the Center for Community Schools was developed at the University of Central Florida while highlighting the university-assisted model. Chapter 3, *The Community Partnership Schools™ Model*, illustrates the comprehensive structure through the lens of the four community school pillars of collaborative leadership, expanded learning, family and community engagement, and comprehensive wellness; describes the memorandum of understanding among the four core partners of the model: school district health care partner, lead nonprofit organization, and college or university; discusses its funding model; and provides a snapshot of the impact of Community Partnership Schools across the state of Florida.

Chapter 4, *The UCF-Certified Community Partnership Schools™ Standards and Certification Process: An Asset-based Approach to Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement*, invites discussion of the development and implementation of the 12-standard readiness assessment; the results from certification; trends in the field; implications for funding and accountability; and UCF-Certified Community Partnership School recognition. Chapter 5, *Evans High School, A UCF-Certified Community Partnership School: A Case Study of the Comprehensive Community School Model*, illustrates how the Community Partnership Schools™ model is implemented by using Evans High School as a case study to inform the audience of the process, partnership, and impact the school and the model has had on students, school, families, and community. Finally, in Chapter 6, *Lessons Learned*, Children’s Home Society of Florida, founding partner and lead nonprofit organizational partner in 21 Community Partnership Schools as of 2022, reflects on its experience of best practices and the evolution of the model. The author describes the strategies for developing, replicating, and sustaining the Community Partnership Schools™ model as a strong, evidence-based equity strategy in our educational ecosystems.

Partnership is the cornerstone of community schools, augmented in the Community Partnership Schools™ model with its four-core-partner framework. Partnership is the key to Florida’s community school model that transforms the lives of students, families, schools, and communities. It takes time to develop and steward relationships that truly become great partnerships, and collectively we know that aiming not to go fast alone, we can go far...together.

In 2017, the UCF Center for Community Schools was named the first International Hub for Community Schools by the International Center for Excellence of Community Schools (ICECS) in Coventry, England. ICECS has strong ties to community school development throughout Europe, Central Asia, Africa, and North America, working on strategic planning to advance community school development through demonstration projects, research, consultation, networking, and conferencing.

Jarrad D. Plante  
Amy Ellis

# PRAISE FOR *COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP* *SCHOOLS*

“This anthology skillfully and comprehensively captures the history, conceptual underpinnings, strategies, structures, and outcomes of the Community Partnership Schools™ model. We at the Children’s Aid National Center for Community Schools are grateful to our friends and colleagues at the University of Central Florida for documenting and sharing these valuable lessons with the broader national movement.”

—Abe Fernandez, *Vice President of Collective Impact & Director of National Center for Community Schools at Children’s Aid*

“A valuable guide for anyone looking to develop a Community Partnership School™ model. The detailed case study and wider reflections on the lessons learned through the process provide practical information which will be of great use to those wanting to develop their practice. Thank you for sharing your experiences and knowledge; we will be drawing on this as we enhance our own Community Schools model in Wales.”

—Dr. Suzanne Sarjeant, *Community Schools Advisor, Welsh Government*

“WOW! Herein, Ellis, Plante, and other authors present an extraordinary overview of the community schools partnering with universities, in particular the Community Partnership Schools™ model, history, and impact. The authors did an excellent job providing a simple recipe for tailoring the implementation of this sustainable model and sharing some

of the many lessons learned throughout the implementation and scale-up of community schools in Florida.”

—F. Eloy Hernandez, *Associate Dean of Research and Innovation, CCIE, UCF*

“The Community Partnership Schools: An Innovative Model of Practice for Community Schools through University–Community Partnerships is a must read for school district leaders, university administrators, and community partners seeking a clear pathway to community school implementation. With its four-core partner framework, The Community Partnership School model presented in this book demonstrates how universities and communities come to build capacity among all stakeholders and respond to local needs. The voices of researchers and practitioners showcased in the chapters make a compelling case for community schools and provide the ingredients for success: sound foundational principles, concrete examples, in-depth case studies, and lessons learned.”

—Dr. JoAnne Ferrara, *Chief Operating Officer, New York State Community Schools Technical Assistance Center, Eastern Region, Rockland 21C, former Associate Dean, Manhattanville College*

“Wales has a strong commitment to developing Community Focused Schools and to involving a range of partners, including Universities, in this process. This book will be of great value in informing this work.”

—Emeritus Professor David Egan FRSA FCCT/*Emeritws Yr Athro David Egan FRSA FCCT, School of Education and Social Policy/Ysgol Addysg a Pholisi Cymdeithasol, Cardiff Metropolitan University/Prifysgol Fetropolitan Caerdydd*

“This new book provides a rich description and analysis of an innovative model of community schools called Community Partnership Schools— an equity solution that builds on and contributes to the best available knowledge about how to organize school and community resources around student success. I have no doubt that this addition to the professional literature will become a valuable tool for leaders and practitioners, especially those with international partners.”

—Jane Quinn, *Former Director (2000–2018), Children’s Aid National Center for Community Schools*

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