



City-School Partnerships in Richmond, CA

Supporting Full Service Community Schools in West Contra Costa Unified School District

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Client: City of Richmond

ISSUE **The City of Richmond is a key partner in implementing a Full Service Community Schools (FSCS) initiative.**

Nearly half of all West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD) schools are located in the City of Richmond and many Richmond students benefit immensely from the kinds of services offered in a community school. Now is an especially urgent time for high quality community schools implementation given the Richmond Promise, Local Control Funding Formula, and WCCUSD community schools policies. The Richmond Promise² guarantees scholarships to Richmond residents who graduate from a WCCUSD high school to pursue higher education. Richmond youth must be college-ready to take advantage of this incredible opportunity. As of now, youth in Richmond schools graduate from high school at lower rates than the rest of the district, and those who do graduate are less likely to have UC or CSU requirements than the average WCCUSD graduate. The city of Richmond is poised to support WCCUSD in providing the kind of support that can buoy student achievement. Richmond is empowered by its General Plan, a reflection of community will, to “support West Contra Costa Unified School District and other institutions in providing higher quality K-12 learning environments for children and youth.”³ Furthermore, Richmond is prepared to lend expertise given a history of piloting community schools initiatives in local elementary schools.



Richmond ESC coordinates WriterCoach Connection, a writing tutoring program, at Richmond and Kennedy high schools. Source: <http://www.writercoachconnection.org/>

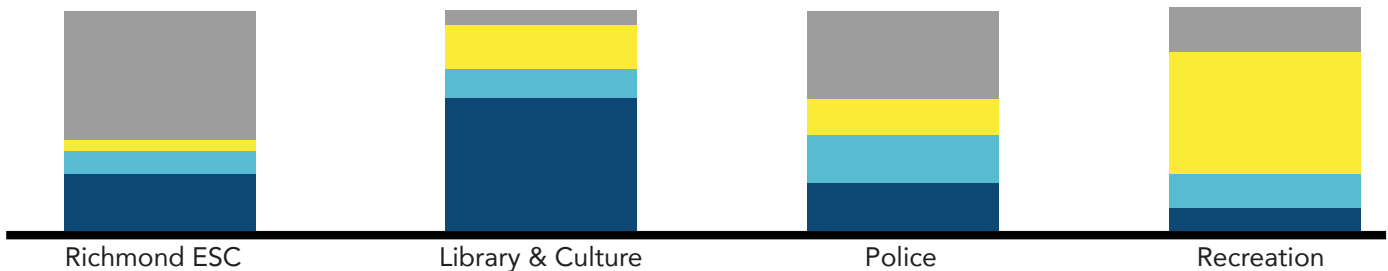
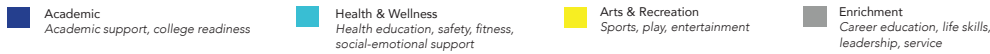
METHODS Qualitative interviews with City of Richmond department staff (City Manager’s Office: Excellence Serving our Communities (ESC), Police, Community Services, and Library & Culture). Interviews with community schools experts. Literature review about community schools, collaborative practices, and Health in All Policies (HiAP).

- FINDINGS**
1. City of Richmond departments offer a wealth of education and/or youth-related programming
 2. Departments prioritize connecting residents with health resources
 3. Building relationships at school sites helps partnerships succeed
 4. Coordinating school-site logistics makes partnerships difficult, especially with staff turnover and no dedicated point person
 5. Partnerships could expand with joint-use agreements: facilities, staffing, and data

¹ Author’s analysis of California Department of Education DataQuest data

² Chevron Modernization Project and Community Agreement, 3B. <http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/DocumentCenter/View/30667>.

³ Richmond General Plan 2030, Element 2: Education and Human Services, Policy EH1.1. <http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/DocumentCenter/Home/View/8808>.



Richmond departments offer a total of over 50 unique youth and/or education-related programs, 32% of which are offered in partnership with WCCUSD. Many programs offer an array of options (i.e., youth sports include swimming, Aikido, cheerleading, basketball, etc.)

RECOMMENDATIONS

Convene FSCS city teams to share promising practices and develop regional strategies for supporting FSCS.

- Convene FSCS staff in Richmond and San Pablo on a regular basis to discuss cross-city support for WCCUSD schools.

Dedicate staff time to a Richmond FSCS team to track programming, expand and sustain school-site relationships, communicate needs across school sites to city departments, and strategize city support plans.

- While city departments currently plan partnerships with the district individually, to engage in a coordinated FSCS effort, the City of Richmond should dedicate staff as a single point of contact for city and district staff and city residents.

Grant FSCS staff discretion to coordinate MOUs, negotiate joint use agreements, and make other strategic plans with WCCUSD and city departments.

- With expertise in FSCS at the site level and leadership level, FSCS staff should have the authority to negotiate agreements with district staff, city department staff, and City Council directly.

JOINT RECOMMENDATIONS: City of Richmond, WCCUSD + Healthy Richmond HUB

Collectively invest financial and staff resources to support planning, service delivery, shared data usage, and joint funding opportunities among WCCUSD, the cities of Richmond and San Pablo, Healthy Richmond, Contra Costa County, and other partner agencies.

Data Support: Investigate options for shared data platforms and analytic support from UC Berkeley or other partners.

Community Engagement: Collectively attend and share training strategies among partner agencies. The City of Richmond and local community based organizations have a long history of community engagement, and this is an exciting area of growth in the district. All three stakeholders would benefit from shared resources.