



Families, Schools and Communities in Partnership for Success

## **How Your District Can Meet BEP Standards through the Community School Model**

### ***Maximize District Resources, Engage Community Support***

[Examples of how existing Community School Programs in Rhode Island are assisting their district to meet Basic Education Program - Standard G-14-2](#)

**G-14-2. SUPPORTIVE AND NURTURING SCHOOL COMMUNITY.** -- Each LEA shall ensure that schools create a climate of safety, security and belonging for all students and adults, thereby establishing an environment that builds respectful relationships, enhances productive learning and teaching, promotes school engagement, and promotes academic success. Each LEA shall accomplish this goal by ensuring that each school: Is safe, respectful, and free of discrimination; Establishes protocols for on-going student, family, and community engagement; and Provides expanded learning opportunities and academic enrichment.

**G-14-2.1.2. Right to a Safe School.** – (a) Each LEA shall ensure that students who are on school grounds before, during, and after school, during recess, and during other intermissions are appropriately supervised by adults.

- **All students attending after school programs coordinated by the Newport Family and Child Opportunity Zone (NFCOZ) at the elementary schools are greeted by NFCOZ staff who know them by name at school day dismissal and are signed into the program. Low student to staff ratios ensure that students are supervised at all times while in the buildings.**
- **Middletown COZ worked with its District Administration to train parent leaders as well as after school enrichment staff as certified crowd control managers to assist school personnel as trained safety managers for school events conducted out of school time.**

(b) Each LEA shall follow state statute that states that each student and staff member has a right to attend or work at a school that is safe and secure, that is conducive to learning, and that is free from the threat, actual or implied, of physical harm.

- **Earlier this year Bristol Warren Regional Schools (BWRS) COZ Program worked with strong support and direction under Supt. Melinda Thies to ensure a safe environment for all four elementary schools in the BWRS. The COZ Before and After childcare program hired a second acting site coordinator to be stationed at the front door/ main office of each of the four schools from 7-9 am and 4-6 pm providing wrap around security to each building for before and after school activities that may be ongoing. No person has access to the four elementary school buildings because of this.**

**G-14-2.1.3. Prevention of Bullying, Harassment, Hazing, Teen Dating Violence, and Sexual Violence.** -- Each LEA shall:

1. Prevent and respond appropriately to incidents of bullying, hazing, teen dating violence, sexual violence, and related issues;
  2. Promote nonviolent conflict resolution techniques in order to encourage attitudes and behaviors that foster harmonious relations;
  3. Provide professional development, training, resources, and other means to assist students, staff, and other adults in the school building or at school sponsored activities in carrying out these responsibilities; and
  4. Comply with relevant state and federal statutes regarding these issues.
- **Throughout the 2013-2014 BWRS COZ Program has sponsored and facilitated several speaking workshops providing avenues for parents and professionals to receive professional development, training, and resources in the area of child development, behavior management, and stress reduction.**
  - **The Pawtucket COZ works with anti-bullying organizations such as PAVE (Partners to Address Violence through Education) and Project A.W.A.R.E. to provide workshops for children and parents. Both organizations also provide after school programs on topics of bullying, cyber bullying and making good decisions. The design of the program is an intentional approach to foster increased self-esteem, social/emotional competencies, and bonding with peers, all while building relationships with caring adults who serve as role models and mentors.**

**G-14-2.1.4. Positive Behavioral Supports and Discipline.** -- Each LEA shall ensure that schools promote a positive climate with emphasis on mutual respect, self-control, good attendance, order and organization, and proper security. Each LEA shall develop protocols that define a set of discipline strategies and constructs that ensure that students and adults make positive behavioral choices and that are conducive to a safe and nurturing environment that promotes academic success. Each LEA shall ensure that:

- Schools engage in a participatory process (involving students and staff) to assess periodically the school climate and to adopt or develop strategies to improve conditions (see the Board of Regents Policy Statement on Student Rights);
- Students and parents/guardians are notified of district and school rules related to conduct and shall receive regular instruction regarding these rules. In addition, parents/guardians, and students shall be provided with information about early warning signs of harassing and intimidating behaviors, such as bullying, as well as prevention and intervention strategies;
- Schools provide a structure of incentives that adequately reward students for their efforts and achievements. Attention shall be given to rewarding a diversity of accomplishments and to broadening the availability of rewards;
- Schools have a clearly delineated system for ensuring compulsory attendance for children six (6) to sixteen (16) that includes:
  - a. Procedures for noting daily absenteeism and investigating unexcused absences;
  - b. Procedures for noting the required period of attendance of students attending at-home instruction approved by the school committee or at a private day school approved by the Commissioner of Education; and
  - c. The appointment of truant (or attendance) officers whose duties shall include referring truant students to appropriate school support services and procedures for enforcing any given case through civil action filed in Family Court;
- Disciplinary actions are fairly administered for all students and comply with state laws mandating that certain violations be considered on a case by case basis; recognizing that there is no mechanism in Rhode Island law for expulsion of students; and
- Schools shall provide a continuum of interim alternative educational placement options to continue a student's education while suspended that ensure the safety of the student and the school community.
  
- **Newport Family & Child Opportunity Zone utilizes the same positive behavioral support strategies and discipline after school that the schools use during the day and provides training to all community partners coming into the schools to ensure continuity with the school day. A focus on Social and Emotional Learning after school makes the learning environment safer, more caring, better managed, more participatory, and enhances students' social competence and attachment to school.**
  
- **Middletown COZ is an active member on all 4 PBIS committees in the District assisting in providing student incentives for positive behaviors and coordinating community based award ceremonies to celebrate student achievements.**

**G-14-2.2. Student, Family, and Community Engagement.** – (a) Students can offer viable solutions to some of the policy, program, and funding challenges our changing schools face. In addition, it is both possible and desirable to create structures and processes to facilitate student engagement at the district and school levels. Each LEA, therefore, shall:

- Establish policies, processes, and procedures that facilitate regular (i.e., at least quarterly) participation of a representative group of school youth in discussions regarding how to

improve the school environment, curriculum, and instruction to ensure increased access to challenging, hands-on learning experiences and supports and to ensure student success on state and local achievement measures;

- Document the process of selection and orientation of these youth as well as the proposals that they put forth, how these proposals were evaluated, and the extent to which they were incorporated in LEA decision-making; and
- Authorize and support youth led events to solicit input from and provide feedback to the larger school community.
- **The Newport Family & Child Opportunity Zone provides daily opportunities in the after school environment for youth voice, choice and decision-making and provides training to community partners to assist them to provide these opportunities in the context of their programs. Programs such as Team, Sheroes, and Student Council develop leadership skills and self-esteem.**

(b) Each LEA shall provide a broad spectrum of activities, programs, and services that directly involve families in their children's education and personally engage families in the school. Therefore, each LEA shall adopt the national Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) *Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs*, which state:

- Communication: Communication between home and school is regular, two-way, and meaningful;
- **The Cranston Family Center provides information and services to over 3,000 families each year. The FC staff contacts each family multiple times during the year by phone, in person, by email and through flyers sent home. Parent engagement has increased an average of 9% per year.**
- **Middletown COZ coordinates the efforts of each school's PTG, the Circle of Friends Military Parent Groups, liaison to the district's ELL families and the Boosters organizations. This year, MCOZ is supporting the superintendent's efforts to create a Key Communicator board of parent and community leaders to help facilitate a community wide communication plan.**
- Parenting: Parenting skills are promoted and supported;
- **The Cranston Family Center reaches out to preschool families through our Early Learning Success Program and has piloted a support program for struggling kindergarten students at Arlington School.**
- **Full Service Community School (FSCS) at Charles Fortes Elementary School in Providence provides parents with multiple opportunities to increase their parenting**

skills. FSCS recruits professional speakers from both the community and the school to host monthly workshops for parents. Examples of workshops from the 2012-2013 academic year include attendance, report cards, health and wellness, school safety, fire safety, and parental involvement in schools. Attendance for these parent workshops range anywhere from ten to fifty adults.

Full Service Community School also offers weekly Parent Time workshops for parents enrolled in Family Literacy classes. These weekly workshops offer parents information on effective life skills, critical issues affecting their lives, literacy and child development, parenting skills, etc. The school reading coach also participates in Parent Time by teaching parents how to establish reading routine at homes, how to help their children with homework, etc.

Both sets of parent workshops give parents an opportunity to network with one another, and to learn about important resources that are available in the community.

- Student Learning: Parents play an integral role in assisting student learning;
- The Cranston Family Center supports student academics success by working with school staff including the principal, school nurse, teachers and support staff to insure that student's basic needs are met and to support learning and teaching. This is accomplished by: collaborating with school staff to provide emergency help to families; home visits through the Early Learning Success program; distributing books to build home libraries through the BOOKS FUELING FUTURES PROGRAMS; developing and distributing QUICKETS home learning kits; and supporting the RI College Crusade.
- BWRS Parents as Teachers Program (PAT) continues as one of the oldest PAT Programs in the state to provide parents with education in areas of language, gross motor, social emotional well being and development. Home visits are conducted by PAT Educators ten months throughout the year. COZ's PAT Program has recently partnered with Early Intervention and Headstart to host drop in and play programs for parents and children birth to three years old.
- Woonsocket COZ offers the nationally recognized *Parents As Teachers* school-readiness program for families with young children pre-natal to age 5. Certified parent educators conduct home visits to provide child development education, offer parenting support, and to promote literacy so that children will enter school ready to learn.
- Volunteering: Parents are welcome in the school, and their support and assistance are sought;
- During the 2013-2014 the BWRS COZ Program sponsored, organized, and facilitated a program enabling parents to have access to schools and have lunch with their

children. COZ Café operated on eight different Fridays throughout the year. We provided fresh fruit, informational flyers, supervision, and games while parents joined their children for lunch. Attending numbers varied from 40+ to over one hundred parents.

- Middletown COZ coordinates the efforts of over 250 adult volunteers (both parents and community partners) who support both in and out of school time activities and programs. In addition, MCOZ assists in managing over 2000 community service hours for its high school students every year.
- School Decision Making and Advocacy: Parents are full partners in the decisions that affect children and families.
- The North Kingstown COZ operates as the Office of Family Learning within the North Kingstown School Department. As part of this office, we opened Family Centers in two district schools, Quidnessett Elementary School and Davisville Middle School. The Family Centers are welcoming places in the buildings, open each day for students and families to drop in, access information and resources, register for programs, or just connect with staff. Through the Family Centers, we deliver extended day learning opportunities for students in grades K-8, provide meaningful opportunities for parents to be part of their child's school day, support teachers in delivering workshops and interactive training programs for parents, and convene a Family Engagement group (comprised of parents, administrator and staff) to advise us on all aspects of programming.
- The Westerly Parent Academy is: a network of learning opportunities for parents and families in Westerly; a partnership comprised of education, business, community based and faith-based organizations; a resource to further develop areas of personal interest – self, children, family, academics, skills, health and well-being; a vital foundation to helping our students succeed; an initiative that pulls together and promotes already existing community resources in a more systematic and accessible way; a unique opportunity for parents and caring adults to become active partners in the education and success of our youth; a resource that is available and inviting for everyone, offering a wide variety of topics and areas of interest; a concept based on motivation, respect, empowerment, inclusiveness, and community.
- Four parents representing each of the elementary schools participating on the Newport Family and Child Opportunity Zone Governing Council, making programmatic, financial, and policy decisions for the program.

(c) Each LEA shall facilitate partnerships with community organizations and agencies, municipal entities, and businesses to meet the needs of students and families. Therefore, each LEA shall establish communication strategies that will engage community partners, including:

- Ensuring community representation on the school improvement team or other decision-making teams;
- Identifying and recruiting businesses to provide career exploration activities for students;
- Soliciting community organizations or business members to mentor students;
- Facilitating on-site services of local organizations at the school, e.g. counseling, food pantry, tax assistance, legal aid; and
- Recruiting volunteers from community organizations and businesses.

- **Woonsocket COZ runs a weekly food pantry and clothing and household item distribution. Additionally, we have a Center for Finance Success, where families receive financial literacy education, free income tax return preparation, and workforce training opportunities in healthcare, culinary arts, and bookkeeping/accounting. Also, we partner with BigBrothers Big Sisters of the Ocean State who provide our COZ site with 60 Bryant University Student Volunteers who mentor our students weekly throughout the academic year.**

- **Partnerships with the community allow the NFCOZ to have youth volunteers, Americorps members, student teachers, nursing students, social work interns, and Foster Grandparents supporting programs and services offered at the schools.**

- **Middletown COZ partners with over 45 local businesses and agencies throughout the year to provide in-kind services and supports to our students and their families. Programs range from reading support provided by the Newport Gulls FANatic About Reading Program to service projects in conjunction with the Newport Kiwanis Club.**

- **Partnerships are critical to the success our all our programs. The Pawtucket COZ has numerous partners for all aspects of our work. Many work directly with students in our after school, summer, and adult education programs. Partners include local universities, banks and community base organizations, ranging from scouting to dance, theater, and the environment. We are currently partnering with our District's Wellness Committee, our food service provider, and members of the community to establish a weekend backpack program for our highest need children. The pilot began in April and, thus far, we are providing food for 135 children in three schools. This program will be expanded in September.**

**G-14-2.3. Expanded Learning Opportunities, Academic Enrichment and Adult Education.** - Each LEA shall develop a system for the provision of a broad array of high quality expanded learning opportunities that will that strengthen school engagement, support academic success, and expand all students' educational experiences. Academic enrichment opportunities shall

address diverse learning needs and capabilities, individual interests, connections to the community, and engagement in activities beyond what is provided during the regular school day. These opportunities shall include strategies that differ from those in the regular program either in use of material, instructional strategies or concentration of time on skills. Therefore, each LEA shall:

- Develop and implement policies and protocols that allow out-of-school time for activities that meet rigorous criteria to fulfill academic, graduation, or credit requirements;
  - Provide students with opportunities for experiential learning, community service, and skill building;
  - Create and maintain working partnerships to ensure that dropouts and youth at risk of dropping out will achieve a high school credential and be ready for work and/or postsecondary education and training or apprenticeship. These shall include, but not be limited to, partnerships with a Department of Labor and Training approved Youth Center, a RIDE approved adult education program, and a state approved provider of wrap-around support services; and
  - Create and maintain an active partnership with a RIDE approved and high performing adult English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program. The purpose of this partnership is to ensure that older English Language Learners who cannot graduate with their age cohort must have age appropriate opportunities until age twenty-four to complete their secondary education and become proficient in English.
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- **BWRS COZ Program has a large working garden that children from the district plan, plant, maintain, and harvest. Last year the garden provided fresh produce to the COZ Summer Campers for snack, as well as several hundred pounds of fresh vegetables that were donated to St. Michael's Soup Kitchen in Bristol. We were the soup kitchen's only source of fresh produce.**
  - **The priorities of the Central Falls COZ include: supporting children's success in school with an emphasis on literacy; ensuring that families receive needed services; creating partnerships among families, schools and community agencies to fill gaps in services and coordinate existing services; serving as a mechanism to implement state agency programs; increasing parent participation in schools and their child's education; and leveraging additional funds to fill gaps in services and expand services on-site.**
  - **The Office of Family Learning in the North Kingstown School Department delivers extended day learning opportunities and summer programming to students in grades K-8 at two of the district schools, Quidnessett Elementary and Davisville Middle. All classes and programs are connected to a core curriculum area and include specific identified outcomes for students. A high priority is placed on employing school staff, parents, and community artisans/vendors to provide classes. We coordinate with local providers like the North Kingstown Recreation Department, Crossroads RI and the North Kingstown Arts Council to offer the widest variety of classes to students and foster critical community partnerships.**

- **Families Learning Together is the Westerly Public Schools' Family Literacy Program. This program is part of a large network of community and statewide early childhood and adult education collaborators. Curriculum for children ages birth through kindergarten is based on current educational research and is play-based. Adult education is provided by dedicated teachers and volunteers from Families Learning Together, Literacy Volunteers of Washington County and Education Exchange. Childcare and transportation options are available for eligible participants.**
- **The Westerly Out-of-School Time Program. Our highly qualified staff believes in the power of kids to change the world. Through service learning our students use what they learn to solve real life problems in our community, including: hands on science & technology projects; exciting weekly field trips; team building games & skills; harvesting & cooking healthy snacks; math & literacy activities – Common Core Standards; education on sustainable living; gardening on-site and on working farm; healthy eating & living; summer reading program; yoga; arts & crafts; theatre, and robotics.**
- **Woonsocket COZ offers after-school academic enrichment and expanded learning opportunities at the elementary, middle and high school levels serving approximately 1,800 students each year. Additionally, our COZ offers summer learning programs/camps to prevent summer learning slide, which is critically important for students in low-income communities.**
- **The Pawtucket COZ is a RIDE approved high performing adult education program providing adult English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and GED classes. The COZ/Adult Education Program runs a 20 hour per week daytime program and an evening program that meets three times per week. The program provides adult literacy services for 250 adults per year. Child care, case management, and career exploration are included.**
- **The Pawtucket COZ offers after school and summer programs for more than 1500 students in grades 1-12. Each extended day program provides academic support and enrichment opportunities four days per week during the school year and for five weeks in the summer. Also, during the summer we offer a multi-week Kindergarten Orientation program at 9 of the 10 elementary schools in the Pawtucket to acquaint incoming students with academic programming, the school environment and its staff. This program dramatically reduces the student's fear and anxiety when school begins in September.**