



THE UCF CENTER FOR COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

What are Community Schools?

Community schools are a growing national movement focused on providing high-quality academic programs and vital services to children living in vulnerable neighborhoods. They create conditions in which children learn and thrive.

Partnerships play a key role in community schools. Schools partner with community organizations to bring in local resources and services that address the needs of students and their families. These include medical and behavioral healthcare, food assistance, tutoring and mentoring, and opportunities for family and community engagement.

Community schools become the hub of their neighborhood, supporting the success of students and their families and unifying the community.



UCF and Community Schools in Florida

Inspired by the promise of community schools, leaders from the University of Central Florida and Children’s Home Society of Florida came together in 2009 to develop a community school in Florida. They went on to partner with Orange County Public Schools and a healthcare provider to establish a community school at Evans High School in the Pine Hills neighborhood of Orlando. Within a few years, the graduation rate at Evans began to rise, as did the number of student success stories.

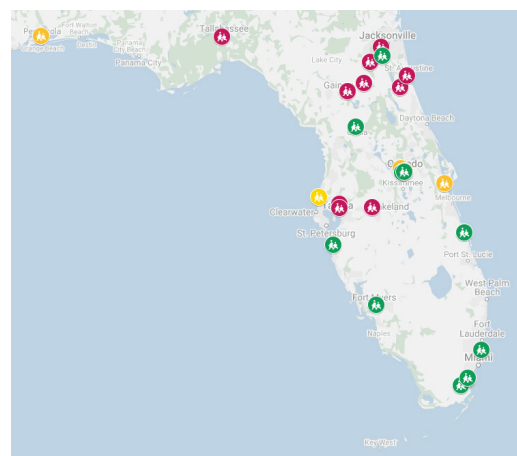
Community Partnership Schools

The unique mix of partners supporting Evans — a university, nonprofit, school district and healthcare provider — led UCF and CHS to name the approach the Community Partnership Schools™ model of community schools. The partners’ expansive contribution of resources and long-term commitment to the school are unlike any other and underlie the success of Community Partnership Schools.

Expansion and the Center

The success at Evans led the Florida Legislature to allocate funding in 2014 to establish other Community Partnership Schools across the state and to launch the Center for Community Schools at UCF to assist with the expansion.

In 2019, the Legislature established the Community School Grant Program and named the UCF Center for Community Schools as the grant program administrator in statute.



UCF Center Is a Leader

National and international community school leaders have taken note of the UCF Center for Community Schools' successful role in expanding and certifying Community Partnership Schools in Florida. Several now serve as members of the center's Advisory Board, and a leader from the center co-chairs a national committee to expand community schools and develop leaders.

Moreover, the London-based International Centre for Excellence of Community Schools named the UCF center as its first International Hub in 2018. The center is now offering guidance to community school efforts globally.

Recently, the center hosted site visits by educators representing British Council Wales and Duke University.

The UCF Center for Community Schools is growing in its capacity to advance community school practices in Florida and beyond. Philanthropic support will enable the center to study best practices, share findings with the field, and contribute to systems-level change in education and student well-being.

To learn more, contact center Director Amy Ellis at 407-823-2723 or amy.ellis@ucf.edu.

Community Partnership Schools Standards and Certification

The UCF Center for Community Schools worked with partners across the state to develop a rigorous, strengths-based certification process to ensure each school meets Community Partnership School™ Standards. Earning the title of UCF-Certified Community Partnership School represents years of work focused on student success and well-being and is a distinct honor for the school.

The UCF Center for Community Schools is one of the few organizations in the world to lead a certification process and award certification to community schools.



The Impact of Community Partnership Schools

Children living in vulnerable neighborhoods frequently have inadequate food, housing and healthcare. Some may experience crime, neglect, abuse or other traumas. At school these children are often unable to focus on learning. Community Partnership Schools address these challenges and help students and families succeed.

STUDENTS SERVED*

6,801 in tutoring and academic support

7,205 in enrichment activities

1,280 receiving primary healthcare

3,015 receiving behavioral healthcare

2,193 receiving dental care

2,260 receiving vision care

FAMILY & COMMUNITY MEMBERS ENGAGED*

164,529 hours of volunteering

9,227 hours of mentoring

SUCCESS STORIES

Improved academic success

In Orlando, Evans High School's graduation rate increased from 64% in 2010-11 to 88% in 2018-19.

Improved behavior

In Pensacola, C. A. Weis Elementary School's out-of-school suspensions decreased from 425 in 2015-16 to 113 in 2017-18.

Decreased teacher turnover

In Cocoa, Endeavour Elementary School's teacher retention rate increased from 69% in 2016-17 to 94% in 2018-19.

*Reported in 2019-20