Milestone #1

The Need for Community Schools

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DRAFT

Write an argumentative essay of 8 to 10 pages, not including in the page number total the title page, thesis statement page, and Works Cited, that you will present to a faculty dais during Core 4.

1. Include the following:

a. Completed title page.

b. Thesis statement page.

c. Sentence outline developed for 60-day assignment with any changes received from professor feedback.

d. Add section headers to your paper that match your outline.

e. Introductory paragraph (below the title and preceding the first Level 1 heading on the first page of your essay) including your thesis statement (again).

f. Clearly stated description of your topic, its importance, and your position.

g. Include logical arguments and literature references to support the main points and sub-points of your position.

i. Works Cited page with all cited works listed and all listed works cited in the paper (citations and references must match). You must cite a minimum of 25 references that meet the criteria explained in your 20-day assignment.

j. Update your developmental readings with any cited works used for your essay.

h. Add counterarguments, along with logical reasons for rejecting them.

2. Structure (Assignment evaluation includes the following structure below).

a. Download the "OGS APA Course Assignments Template 7th Ed 2021" template

from the General Helps folder in the AA-101 The Gathering Place Course on DIAL.

Using the template create the following pages.

b. Title Page (Not included in page count).

c. Copy and paste the assignment instructions from the syllabus starting on a new page after the title page, adhering to APA 7th edition style (APA 7

Workshop, Formatting, and Style Guide, APA 7 Quick Guide).

d. Start the assignment on a new page after the copied assignment instructions.

e. Document all sources in APA style, 7th edition (APA 7 Reference Example, APA 7 Quick Guide)

f. Include a separate Works Cited page, formatted according to APA style,

7th edition

3. Submit through DIAL to the professor.

Thesis Statement

Despite objections to more financing and organizational changes, community schools are essential to meet the vast variety of social-psychological, health-related, and socio-economic needs of students and their families.

The Need for Community Schools

The Coalition for Community Schools defines community schools as a "place and a set of partnerships between the school and other community Resources" (McDaniels, A., 2018; Jacobson, R., 2019; Maier, A., & Rivera-Rodriguez, A. (2023). Community schools create partnerships with outside agencies to address complex student needs and have evolved since the mid-1800s to meet the needs of students (McDaniels, A., 2018; Jacobson, R., 2019; Anderson-Butcher et al, 2018; Mayger, L. K., & Hochbein, C. D.,2019, p.226; Sanders, M. G., & Galindo, C., 2020; Provinzano, K., et al, 2018; Jacobson, R., 2019). Despite objections to more financing and organizational changes, community schools are essential to meet the vast variety of social-psychological, health-related, and social-economic needs of students and their families.

While its initial onset began in the 1800s, Community School gained in popularity over time as schools attempted to address the needs of children living in poverty. In the 1930s and 1960s, Community Schools emerged and continued to emerge as a solution to meet the multiplicity of needs of impoverished students lacking resources that were not an issue for wealthier students.. Due to the Non-profit organizations of the Coalition of Community Schools, the Children's Aid Society, the National Center of Community Schools, and the research of Joy Dryfoos (1994, 1998), Community Schools expanded widely in the mid-1990s as America continued to meet the needs of it most neediest students (Sanders, M. G., & Galindo, C., 2020). "What makes community schools unique is the combination of four key pillars (or features) that together create the conditions necessary for students to thrive. The pillars are: 1) integrated student support; 2) expanded and enriched learning time and opportunities; 3) active family and

community engagement; and 4) collaborative leadership and practices" (Partnership for the Future of Learning, 2023).

Because public school districts are locally controlled and funded through local property taxes, funding schools this way can perpetuate structural inequities in poorer school districts. "Public schools largely have not been reimagined and retooled to educate children living in poverty to high levels. On international assessments, the nation's most affluent students perform first in the world, while students in poor communities perform on par with Romania or Chile" (McDaniels, A., 2018). Students living in poverty have minimal access to critical resources. Community schools are resurfacing as a mechanism for addressing the systemic and structural inequities plaguing students, schools, and communities" (Provinzano et al, 2018). Community schools exist to enhance the success of marginalized students by supplying resources, services, and support through community partnerships. This is done by collaboration and establishing ties with stakeholders. Community schools also offer chances for extended day learning and culturally appropriate instructional strategies to reduce systemic access obstacles. In order to satisfy the needs of students and families and to lessen achievement gaps and disparities, these schools offer a platform for partnerships with community stakeholders. The approximate 5,000 Community schools not only give over two million students access, but they also improve all-around student achievement in over 150 communities nationwide. (Sanders, M. G., & Galindo, C., 2020; Daniel et al, 2019; Anderson-Butcher et al, 2018; Partnership for the Future of Learning, 2023).

Community Schools Are Necessary For Increased Social-Psychological Demands

Answer-What is social-psychological? Why is it relevant to education and how do community schools meet this need?

Since the 1900s the study of social psychology has grown. Psychologists, such as Floyd Henry Allport and Robert McCrae's, work helps us to understand the impact that people and circumstances have on our thoughts, feelings and behaviors. Social psychologists look deeply into the why behind human reactions. Why do some people react differently with similar experiences? More specifically how do we help people navigate through their realities, especially in the case of children when it is impeding their ability to learn. This work recognizes the impact trauma and adverse experiences have on both children and adults informing effective ways to build programs, therapy and more nurturing environments to help people navigate through their lives and thrive. Community schools partner with professionals and agencies to work with students struggling through adverse life experiences to remove barriers for learning (Hewstone, M., & Stroebe, W. (Eds.), 2021; Reinert, M., et al, 2021; Anderson-Butcher, D., et al, 2018; Dryfoos, J., & Maguire, S., 2019).

Julia Daniel along with her colleagues research connoted that "structural racism and market-driven reforms have since exacerbated patterns of exclusion and loss of community control. " This has resulted in many students coming to schools not ready to learn due to chaotic environments or a lack of stable housing, food, clothes and basic needs outside of school (Daniel, et al, 2020). As schools have been pushed to meet the needs of their students to help them learn, and respond to metrics-driven punitive systems of school management, community schools help meet the social psychological demands of students providing partnerships with local agencies and programs to help meet the needs of the whole child to increase their readiness to learn. This

breaks down barriers and provides additional help to meet the needs of the whole child, including emotional or mental health needs (Guay, F., 2022; Maier, A., & Rivera-Rodriguez, A., 2023; Hoover, S. A., 2019; Daniel, J., et al, 2020; Anderson-Butcher, et al, 2018; Jacobson, R., 2019).

However, there is some caution. While the wraparound support with local agencies is needed, it is imperative that school staff receive training to make conscious choices not reinforcing racial bias and stereotypes about low income families. The body of research with community schools primarily focuses on the wraparound support with community agencies, rather than considering the various ways the schools could support racial equity. There needs to be deliberate professional development to make sure the school itself is promoting racial equity and a strong sense of belonging for all students and not adding to any existing problems outside of school (Daniel et al, 2020; McKinney de Royston & Madkins, 2019; Jacobson, R., 2019; Grantham, T. C., et al, 2020).

Additionally, while wraparound supports are important components of the community schools strategy, overemphasizing them can reinforce deficit ideas about low-income communities and communities of color (Daniel et al, 2020; McKinney de Royston & Madkins, T. C., 2019; Sanders et al, 2018). To combat misconceptions or stereotypes about low income families, there is an increasing body of research that pushing back on this tendency defining community schools as a strategy that includes integrated student supports; expanded learning opportunities; ways to engage families and community members from marginalized backgrounds in shaping curriculum and the running of the school; and collaborative practices in schools" (Daniel et al, 2020; McKinney de Royston & Madkins, T. C., 2019; Sanders et al, 2018;

Anderson & Cohen, 2018; Guay, F., 2022; Maier, A., & Rivera-Rodriguez, A., 2023; Hoover, S. A., 2019; Grantham, T. C., et al, 2020; Jacobson, R., 2019).

McDaniels work attempts to help people understand that community schools help to level the playing field for people living in low-income neighborhoods. McDaniels explains how poverty is not the fault of people born into it nor is it the fault of educators who staff the neighborhoods' schools. Beyond their control are other challenges facing these neighborhoods such as high rates of unemployment, rapid population turnover, and changes in the job market. All of these factors exacerbate the effects of poverty. When neighborhood disadvantages are concentrated in this way, it weakens community institutions and informal social norms that support conventional behavior—or behavior consistent with expectations that are broadly socially acceptable, like having children in marriage. Historically, policies at all levels of government have helped create neighborhoods of concentrated poverty, and they too often facilitate disinvestment in these communities. Community schools are a solution to help combat the lack of resources with poverty stricken communities (McDaniels, A., 2018).

As we increase our understanding of the negative impact of systemic policies and laws in helping to create and continue cycles of poverty, community schools are necessary to address the students' social-psychological needs, which impact academic performance (Coleman et al, 2020; Daniel et al, 2020; McDaniels, 2018; Walkley & Cox, 2013). These schools provide students with access to enrichment programs to raise academic performance and close the achievement gap; thus, improving student achievement, lessen achievement gaps and disparities (Sanders & Galindo, 2020; Daniel et al, 2019; Anderson-Butcher et al, 2018; Partnership for the Future of Learning, 2023; Daniel et al, 2020). Social-psychological needs impact students' mental health

and behavior. In its Annual Report, The State of Mental Health in America 2022, "Nationally, only 27.2% of youth with severe depression receive some consistent treatment (7-25+ visits in a year)... While rates of mental health treatment are low for all youth with major depression, youth of color are significantly less likely to receive depression treatment than white youth. Asian youth were least likely to have seen a health professional or received medication for their depression (8.30%), followed by Black or African American youth (9.40%) and Hispanic youth (9.50%)" (Reinert, M. et al, 2021; Báez et al, 2019; Hoover, S. A., 2019; Coleman et al, 2020; Daniel et al, 2020; McDaniels, A., 2018; Walkley, M., & Cox, T. L., 2013; Sanders, M. G., & Galindo, C., 2020; Daniel et al, 2019; Anderson-Butcher et al, 2018; Partnership for the Future of Learning, 2023)..

It is estimated that nearly half of all children in the United States have experienced at least one adverse childhood experience, or ACE. Understanding that these children's needs pay off in a number of ways is crucial. Community Schools are also training staff to become trauma-responsive schools to increase students' coping skills and graduation rates. Trauma-responsive schools have improved attendance, classroom behavior, and create emotional and physically safe environments. The foundation of all these components is a comprehensive school mental health system that requires collaboration between schools and the community, in partnership with students and families, to provide a multitiered system of support and services (MTSS). MTSS "promotes positive school climate, social emotional learning, and mental health. MTSS also assesses and addresses the social and environmental factors that affect mental health, including public policies and social norms that shape student mental health outcomes" (Hoover, S. A., 2019; Reinert, M. et al, 2021; Báez et al, 2019; Hoover, S. A., 2019; Coleman et al, 2020).

Students provided with mental health care through community schools reduces school suspensions, disciplinary referrals, risk behaviors and helps to improve school grades, personal responsibility, future aspiration, and family engagement (Olubiyi et al, 2019). However, the Practitioners at Seneca Family of Agencies, a nonprofit organization that partners with schools specifically around mental and behavioral health support and intervention, warns of the temptation to just refer students out of the classroom to receive specialized attention (Kimner, H., 2020). The dispositional amount of referrals for interventions for students of color is often perceived as a resource but can also contribute to feelings of inefficacy for both teachers and students as well as an erosion of the trust between the two (Kiner, H., 2020). Developing a "push-in" version of student support demands explicit teacher capacity building. Schools and districts must create and maintain strong systems for identifying student and teacher needs as well as for developing the human capital resources (including expertise from partner organizations, agencies, and community institutions) needed to create a comprehensive and effective system of support and care (Kimner, H., 2020).

Community Schools Help Meet Health-Related and Socio-Economic Needs

When thinking about the day to day life of a school, many people do not think about the medical needs and care of students. Many schools in districts across the nation share a nurse, school psychologist, or school social worker. The county's health department and medical providers that partner with community schools are necessary to meet these health-related needs. These school-community partnerships increase in-school clinics, nurses and telehealth programs that help to support families in administering medications, and in treating and monitoring student health for increased academic success (Coleman et al, 2020). Working with community

health professionals helps ensure that more students and families have access to the services they need (Roche, M. K., & Strobach, K. V., 2019).

The need for the whole community to work together with school is paramount. The lack of resources for children in poverty must be addressed for the health and well-being of our nation. The poverty rate in America was at 11.6% in 2021, which translates to about 38 million Americans, 3.7 million of which are children (Census Bureau, 2022). Food insecurity currently affects nearly 50 million people nationwide: 87% of which are households with children under the age of 18 (USDA, 2022). Furthermore, one in six households reported the inability to afford food (Census Bureau, 2021; Food Research and Action Center as cited in American Youth Policy Forum, 2015) (Normandin, B., 2022). It is imperative that we invest in giving our children the best resources and opportunities to reach their full potential. "This means going beyond the needs of education and ensuring that children are healthy for school. One way to do this is to support community schools which partner with stakeholders and were developed to respond to the needs of a child as a whole, including physical and mental health services and resources for after-school care and enrichment (Normandin, B., 2022; Wynns, 2021). Community schools are necessary to address the students' social-economic needs (Sanders, M. G., & Galindo, C., 2020; Daniel et al, 2019; Anderson-Butcher et al, 2018; Partnership for the Future of Learning, 2023; Daniel et al, 2020).

States are also attempting to identify and work with impoverished children earlier through Pre-Kindergarten and early childhood programs. These programs are designed to help alleviate some of the barriers between low income children and their more affluent classmates. Pre-Kindergarten initiatives "bring together elementary schools and preschool centers along with

(depending on the site) libraries, museums, hospitals, early intervention providers, home visiting organizations, and family child-care networks to start working to start providing resources earlier. The goal of these Pre-Kindergarten partnerships is to help close the gap between preschool and early elementary education aligning standards and expectations to improve the transition to kindergarten. These programs are designed to help increase students' chances for success in school. These partnerships deepen their work by providing joint professional learning experiences to early childhood and early elementary teachers on literacy, math, and/or social-emotional skill development (Jacobson, D., 2018).

School administrators need to make sure that teachers, students, and families know ways to ask for help and what supports are available. Community schools should prioritize integration, alignment, and coherence through interdisciplinary Coordination of Services Teams (COST)—or comprehensive implementation of Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)23—and include families and community partners" (Kimner, H., 2020). By developing strategic partnerships to address health and socio-economic needs, community schools can help marginalized families get ahead aligned with community resources (McDaniels, A. (2018); Sanders, M. G., & Galindo, C., 2020; Daniel et al, 2019; Anderson-Butcher et al, 2018; Partnership for the Future of Learning, 2023; Daniel et al, 2020)**.**

Community Schools Need Long Term Funding and Organizational Structure

Community Schools are challenged because they may not have the political support, wealth, or resources to advance their student population. They also must struggle against racial bias which fails to acknowledge the history and contributions of people of color, in particular

African-American contributions and history. There is a need for strong community engagement to challenge these beliefs and to lobby for resources (Medina et al, 2020). Diversified funding can be a problem in sustaining community schools. There needs to be a detailed plan for long-term sustainability. Funding for Community School Coordinators in district-directed community schools often share the same school district employer as the educators and staff in the school building (Mayger, L. K., & Hochbein, C. D., 2019). In University-assisted community schools or in lead-partner community schools, the Community Schools Coordinators are employed by community-based organizations (Mayger, L. K., & Hochbein, C. D., 2019).

Community Schools infrastructure needs to include a strong and clearly defined organizational structure with regular partnership meetings to review progress, examine challenges, explore emergent needs, and brainstorm solutions. School-level teaming structures are also essential, especially the Care Team wraparound structures that allow for team problem solving related to individual student needs. Key programs and partners were noted, particularly ones involving academic interventions, school-based mental health services, and parent–family educational programs" (Anderson-Butcher et al, 2018)

Despite the fact that community schools are beneficial for students, Mayer and Hochbein research shows that working across various organizational borders and authority structures is difficult for community school coordinators. The study also showed that uneven funding might have a significant impact on the work. Although the Community School Coordinator's job is essential to the school's success, there isn't a set procedure for how the coordinators should go about bringing different organizations together to collaborate with the school. Positions for Community School Coordinators are frequently financed by a variety of sources. Without

consistent funding, the job security of the Community School Coordinators and the programs in the Community School that depend on funding are in jeopardy. (Mayger and Hochbein, 2019).

Working in community schools with various titles, including the Community Schools Coordinator, is a relatively new category of labor, and few universities have set up courses to prepare people for this new profession. Having courses to understand educational systems and human service systems along with education and community psychology, social work, public administration, and public health would be crucial for the Community Site Coordinators. In schools of education, principals and teachers need curriculum courses to learn about starting community schools and community school models, along with child, youth, and family development as part of their training. For youth workers coming in from community agencies, they need to learn about what goes on in schools and how they can play a role in creating new kinds of institutions (Dryfoos, J., & Maguire, S., 2019).

Successful partnership plans for sustainability should be established from the beginning and plan to maintain community partnerships across multiple schools and fiscal years. Some community schools have inadequate infrastructure for the community and school stakeholders to collaborate efficiently (Anderson-Butcher et al, 2018). All efforts should be made to create a diversified funding stream to support service delivery work from multiple funders (Roche, M. K., & Strobach, K. V, 2019)**.** Funding plans often do not include long-term funding for the Community School's Coordinators. "No matter who employs them, Community School Coordinators' job security may be precarious, as many community schools rely on a patchwork of short-term funding streams that undermine a school's ability to maintain programming over time" **(**Mayger, L. K., & Hochbein, C. D., 2019). The funding in community schools may be

from a combination of public and private sources, employers vary **(**Mayger, L. K., & Hochbein, C. D., 2019).

Community School Must Have Strategic Professional Development Including Self-Care

Community Schools' stakeholders will not realize their potential as sites for improving the educational opportunities of underserved students, if teaching and learning is not a central focus. Besides removing barriers to learning through service integration and family and community engagement, Community Schools must also address teachers' practices, professional development, and support. These schools need highly qualified teachers who are enabled to engage in culturally relevant and responsive practices that advance academic excellence and social change (Sanders et al., 2021). One of the findings of this study was that professional development was more focused on community school objectives in a university community school (Sanders, M. G., & Galindo, C. (Eds.), 2020). This study may have demonstrated that university community schools can work with professional development, but it should be in collaboration with school staff. Understanding the mindset of educators, a collaboration for professional development would build capacity within the school.

We desperately need education leaders who are compassionate, empathetic, and willing to facilitate processes in schools that positively support students and staff who are coping with a complexity of issues, including trauma, but over-caring can produce burnout. Too often the education staff overextends themselves and neglect their own well-being, needs, wants, and feelings. This form of caring can be self-destructive and reinforce patterns of self-neglect. Self-neglect then becomes fertile ground for the exhaustion, overwhelm, and resentment that are

core elements of compassion fatigue" (Johnson, M. M., 2020). It is easy to get caught up in the work of doing good, but God wants us to love our neighbor as we love ourselves (Mark 12:31).

Children are vital to maintain a thriving society. Schools can no longer be solely responsible for meeting the complexity of needs with today's students. Community school partnerships organize collaborations to address the immense needs of underserved students and their families. Jesus summed up his love for the poor by saying, "Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did *it* for one of the least of these brothers *or sisters* of Mine, you did *it* for Me" (Matthew 25:40). Community Schools provide necessary resources to underserved students and families. Jesus also summed up his love for children by saying, "Behold, children are a gift from the LORD, The fruit of the womb a reward" (Psalm 127:3). As a society, we need to take off the price tag and remove all barriers when it comes to taking care of all of our children.

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