Adapting and Extending Wraparound Services
Explore the concrete ways Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD) employed “Power Strategies” that address critical student needs now and lay a sustainable foundation for lasting improvement.

Learn more and see examples here.
We’re here to work with families and with the school as a team. Our ultimate goal is to support every family in each and every way that family needs.

NORA LEAHY, FAMILY SUPPORT SPECIALIST
IN CLEVELAND:

#1 Empowering, Adaptable Instruction

#2 Time & Attention

#3 The Teaching Job

#4 Relationships & Social-Emotional Support

#5 Family & Community Partnerships

See Snapshot of Cleveland
Students’ & Families’ Experiences in March 2020

- No longer had access to services that had been available in schools, including healthy meals and counselors
- Need for services increased for many families, as rising unemployment exacerbated food and housing insecurity
- Working families struggled to balance jobs with students learning from home

2012
CMSD’s strategic plan begins prioritizing improved wraparound supports in schools.

2019-20
55 schools in the district have comprehensive wraparound supports.

MARCH 2020
But when the pandemic hit, the needs of families drastically changed.
WHAT THEY DID
(& HOW THEY DID IT)

CMSD leaders worked with their community partners to meet families’ new needs in two key ways...

1. **Pivot the role** of Family Support Specialists to prioritize direct services to families.

2. **Create daytime learning pods** for students enrolled in remote learning to provide an in-person alternative for families who needed it — while also expanding access to mental health services, food, clothing, and rent assistance.
Before COVID...

Family Support Specialists* supported students and families, and oversaw afterschool and summer programs.

*Full-time employees at each school offering wraparound services

In response to families’ changing needs, the role of Family Support Specialists shifted to...

- Temporarily expand support to include families at schools *without* wraparound services.
- Provide technical support to help students participate in remote learning.
- Coordinate students’ access to mental and physical health services.
- Connect families to needed resources (such as clothes or legal support) and deliver food directly to students’ homes.
HOW THEY DID IT:
Create daytime learning pods for students enrolled in remote learning to provide an in-person alternative and expand access to services that address families’ needs.

Community partners – including Say Yes, The Cleveland Foundation, United Way of Cleveland, MyCOM, Cleveland Public Library and the City of Cleveland – shifted from running after-school programs to implementing **24 daytime learning pods, serving 800 CMSD students**.

- Pods provide a safe, quiet location where students can use reliable internet and get help from staff members.
- To support this shift, the district is offering professional development opportunities to the non-profit partners who are now providing academic support during the day.

CMSD partner Esperanza, Inc. runs a learning pod especially for students who are learning English.

CMSD worked with the Greater Cleveland Food Bank to expand food access at 22 schools.

And CMSD partnered with Cuyahoga County and the State of Ohio to expand mental health supports.
A learning pod at Greater Friendship Baptist Church in Cleveland
(Source: WKYC)
98 percent of parents with children attending the learning pods agree that the pods truly helped during this time of virtual learning.

- UNITED WAY OF GREATER CLEVELAND

- Based on the track record at wraparound schools prior to the pandemic — including a **10 percent increase in attendance** — CMSD leaders are optimistic that the expansion of wraparound services will help mitigate the health and education impacts of the pandemic.

- During the pandemic, CMSD has increased the reach of wraparound services **from 42 schools to 64 schools**, with plans to extend to all 103 schools by 2023.

- CMSD’s learning pods serve **800 CMSD students**, including a dedicated center for English Language Learners.

- Students participating in the Esperanza, Inc. pod **say that it helps them engage with learning online**, since at home there can be inconsistent internet or distractions.
WHAT SUPPORTED CHANGE IN CLEVELAND?

EXISTING WRAPAROUND INFRASTRUCTURE
CMSD began implementing wraparound supports in 17 schools in 2012, and that number has been increasing ever since. This laid the groundwork for responsive wraparound services in 2020.

STRONG COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS
When the pandemic hit, CMSD was able to quickly pivot to meet students' new needs due to existing strong relationships with local nonprofits. This lightened the load (and cost) of the district providing these resources themselves.

LOCAL FUNDING SUPPORT
Ohio legislation provides every school with funds to support student wellness. In 2020-21, CMSD used a portion of the $8.9m received for health and wellness services at wraparound schools. And the local philanthropic community provides significant investment too – for example, raising $150m to fund college scholarships for the Say Yes program.
Where CMSD is Going Next

- CMSD will resume afterschool and summer programming once COVID restrictions are lifted. Leaders hope to increase academic support by redesigning these programs to act as **learning hubs** across schools.
- The district is on track to expand their **wraparound services** to 100 percent of schools by 2023.
- CMSD has prioritized investments in **Family Support Specialists** for each wraparound school. Formalizing and extending their model will ensure the longevity and reliability of wraparound services.

As part of their next steps, CMSD could focus on **building toward**...

- **Deepening student learning and engagement**
  Further leverage community partners to extend opportunities for learning—during and beyond the school day, and in varied group sizes.

- **Addressing Local Need & Demand**
  Systematize how input about needs and challenges is gathered from families, especially those who are the most underserved.

- **Streamlining Coordination Between Teachers & Community Partners**
  Ensuring close coordination between teachers and afterschool and summer programming providers, to target supports to the students and subjects where they are needed most.
“Keeping families afloat and keeping kids learning is going to make a difference in the long run.”

JON BENEDICT, SAY YES CLEVELAND
DISTRICT SNAPSHOT

ENROLLMENT

38,000 STUDENTS
103 Schools

FUN FACT

Cleveland’s Family Support Specialists made 6,808 postsecondary referrals in 2020.
DISTRICT SNAPSHOT

- Black: 64%
- Hispanic: 16%
- White: 15%
- 2+ Races or Ethnicities: 3%
- Asian: 1%

Bar chart:
- Students from Low-Income Backgrounds: 100%
- English Language Learners: 8%
- Students With Disabilities: 23.5%
ARTIFACTS

- Say Yes Cleveland’s website
- Say Yes Cleveland “2020 in Review”
- The 74 Million’s report on how CMSD adapted wraparound services
- FreshWater Cleveland’s article on CMSD’s learning pods for ESL students

RELATED

- School Practices to Address Student Learning Loss  EdResearch for Recovery
- Leveraging Community Partnerships for Integrated Student Support  EdResearch for Recovery
- Building Systems of Integrated Student Support  America’s Promise Alliance
- Uplifting the Whole Child: Using Wraparound Services to Overcome Social Barriers to Learning  MA Budget & Policy Center
- Community Schools as an Effective School Improvement Strategy: A Review of the Evidence  Learning Policy Institute