



The Community Schools initiative in Elmira is an educational philosophy that is a critical component of the Elmira City School District's Improvement Plan. Elmira School leadership has identified Community Schools as a way to re-imagine the school system in a way that continues to deliver high quality academic instruction along with social, emotional and physical health support for students. This model addresses the whole-student and recognizes that students and families who face chronic obstacles to learning in the classroom, from hunger to health, can be connected with programming to improve student achievement. A commitment to this transformational approach is evidenced by strong partnerships among principals, parents, teachers, and community-based organizations and reflects the strengths of our regional Elmira community.

The Elmira City School District is developing the next Elmira generation by re-imagining education and facilities. We have responded to a changing community landscape by embracing a Community Schools model, providing integrative health, mental health, and social services to students and families, on-site, in partnership with the community. We are committed to whole-child, whole-community development by removing barriers and delivering support services as a way to achieve academic excellence in an evolving community.

As a District, our best work is reflected in our beliefs. We believe that:

- All decisions should be based on what is best for students
- Community collaboration is fundamental for student learning
- Family engagement and support is critical to student success
- High expectations require high levels of commitment and support
- All individuals will be accepted, respected, and valued

These principles guide our commitment to the Community Schools philosophy. We've been working on this model, representing a systemic and complex change to our student experience, since 2013-2014. The educational data of that year influenced significant change within our District. Based on state evaluations, Elmira was in need of a course-change to significantly impact the success of the school district and ultimately our students.

We recognize that all students need various opportunities to be involved, actively engaged, and connected. The most significant relationships are those that can bring services directly to our students. Our students, empowered by engaging academic programs and real-world experiential learning, become successful contributors to a global society. These are the most important aspects of the Community Schools initiative.