

Community Partnership Schools: An Implementation and Effectiveness Evaluation



Summary of Key Follow-Up Analyses Related to Initiative Effectiveness

The Community Partnership Schools (CPS) model is designed to support the achievement of a variety of positive outcomes for enrolled students and their families, including exposure to new opportunities and content, improvements in academic achievement, the development of behaviors deemed important for school success, better health and well-being among enrolled youth, and closer ties and relationships among members of the school community. In this sense, the CPS initiative is a substantive and complex whole-school reform strategy that may take years to implement optimally

In June 2022, the American Institutes for Research® (AIR®) published a report summarizing findings from an effectiveness evaluation designed to assess the impact of the CPS model on a series of student outcomes during early implementation of the model, which spanned the 2015–16 to 2018–19 school years. As part of their initial work, the evaluation team conducted a series of comparative interrupted time series (CITS) analyses to examine initiative impact based on student race and gender. Results from this analysis demonstrated significant positive effects associated with being enrolled in a CPS school in relation to improved school-day attendance and fewer discipline-related outcomes during the first year of CPS implementation. We also found positive academic outcomes for Black students in mathematics performance and for White students in English language arts (ELA) assessment performance during the first year of CPS implementation relative to students enrolled in the comparison schools. In addition, we also observed some significant negative effects in CPS schools in the first year of initiative implementation, particularly among female students in relation to school-day absences and mathematics performance when compared with female students in the matched comparison groups.

Although the data set the evaluation team constructed would have allowed for a broader examination of different student subpopulations, resource and time constraints limited our ability to do so when preparing the initial initiative impact report in 2022. Given the effort invested in creating the data sets used to conduct the effectiveness analysis, the Center for Community Schools at the University of Central Florida (UCF Center) asked AIR to use these data sets to further investigate the results from the initial effectiveness analysis and conduct additional analyses to examine the potential initiative impact on a broader domain of student subpopulations. In this document, we summarize findings from analyses examining the effect of enrollment in a CPS on a series of school-related outcomes for students classified as English learners, students with a disability or who were classified as an exceptional learner, and students who were eligible for free or reduced-price lunches. The goal of these analyses was to answer the following evaluation question: What effect did attending a CPS have

on outcomes for students with a disability, students classified as English learners, and students who were eligible for free or reduced-price lunches? Results from these analyses are outlined in the sections that follow.

CPS Schools Included in the CITS Analyses

The research team, in conjunction with staff from the UCF Center, decided to include treatment schools in the analysis if they had been implementing the CPS model for a minimum of 2 years by the completion of the 2018–19 school year. Eleven CPS schools met this treatment criterion (see Exhibit 1).

Exhibit 1. CPS Schools Included in Impact Analyses by First Year of CPS Implementation and 2 Years of Model Implementation as of 2018–19

School name	First year of CPS implementation	Years of CPS model implementation by 2018–19
Evans High School	2011–12 ^a	8
C. A. Weis Elementary	2015–16	4
Endeavour Elementary Magnet School	2015–16	4
Gulfside Elementary	2015–16	4
Edward H. White Military Academy of Leadership	2016–17	3
Mort Elementary	2016–17	3
Sulfur Springs K–8	2016–17	3
Howard Bishop Middle School	2017–18	2
OCPS Academic Center for Excellence	2017–18	2
Southwoods Elementary	2017–18	2
Webster Elementary	2017–18	2

^a Evans High School began implementing what would be known as the Community Partnership Schools (CPS) model in 2011–12, but did not receive funding from the CPS grant program until 2015–16.

Summary of Results

As shown in Exhibit 2, several positive and significant findings were found in each of the school-related outcomes examined. Exhibit 2 shows only positive and significant findings; shading has been added to highlight which outcomes had a sustained pattern of significant effects.

Exhibit 2. Student Outcomes Where CPS-Funded Schools Had a Significant Effect Compared With a Matched Set of Comparison Schools on the Basis of a CITS Analysis—Results for Specific Student Subpopulations

Outcomes	Students with a disability/qualify as exceptional learners		English learners		Eligible for free or reduced-price lunches	
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 1	Year 2	Year 1	Year 2
Attendance						
Number of school days present	+3%	+4%		+6%		
Number of school days absent			-45%	-23%	-26%	-23%
Number of school-day unexcused absences	-16%	-23%	-37%	-31%	-23%	-34%
Disciplinary incidents						
Number of discipline incidents	-65%		-88%	-73%	-55%	-31%
School days missed because of discipline incidents	-55%		-86%	-61%	-47%	
Academic achievement						
Standardized math assessments	+0.05		+0.24		+0.06	
Standardized ELA assessments	+0.05					+0.04

Note. CPS = Community Partnership Schools; CITS = comparative interrupted time series; ELA = English language arts.

Positive effects related to school-day attendance. Receipt of CPS funding was associated with a significant positive effect in the number of school days attended in Years 1 and 2 of CPS implementation relative to school days attended in schools in the matched comparison group for students with a disability or who qualified as an exceptional learner. In CPS schools, these students attended +3% to +4% more school days than students with a disability or exceptional learners in the comparison schools. In addition, for English learners, this difference was +6% in CPS schools relative to the comparison schools. In a 175-day school year, this percentage would translate into roughly an additional 5 to 11 days of school-day attendance in CPS schools across the groups where significant effects were found.

Significant effects were also found in relation to the number of school-day absences overall, as well as the number of unexcused absences. In both Years 1 and 2 of CPS implementation, there were

significantly fewer school-day absences for students classified as English learners and who were eligible for free or reduced-price lunches in CPS schools relative to students in the comparison schools. These effects were especially notable in Year 1 of implementation for English learners, where the difference was –45% between students in the CPS schools relative to students in the comparison schools. During the 2013–14 and 2014–15 school years, CPS schools in the treatment group averaged about eight absences per school year, so 45% fewer absences would approximate to about 3.5 days of fewer absences. In Year 2 of implementation, the effect for absence fell to –23% for English learners, which was comparable to the effect for absences for students eligible for free or reduced-price lunches in Years 1 and 2 of CPS implementation (–26% and –23%, respectively). Each of these effects would translate to about 2 days of fewer absences among students enrolled at CPS schools relative to students in the comparison schools.

In terms of unexcused absences, all three subpopulations demonstrated significantly fewer unexcused absences during the first 2 years of implementation, ranging from a –16% difference in unexcused absences relative to the comparison schools for students with a disability or classified as an exceptional learner to a –37% difference for English learners in Year 1 of CPS implementation. During the 2013–14 and 2014–15 school years, CPS schools in the treatment group averaged about 6.5 unexcused absences per school year, so a 16% to 37% effect would approximate to about 1 to 2.5 days of fewer unexcused absences.

Positive effects related to disciplinary incidents. Being a CPS school was also associated with a significant negative effect on the number of disciplinary incidents in Years 1 and 2 of CPS implementation (meaning fewer incidents) relative to students attending schools in the matched comparison group for each of the three subpopulations, except for students with a disability or who were exceptional learners, where the effect was not significant in Year 2 of implementation. During this period, we found a –31% to –88% difference in the number of disciplinary incidents among students in CPS schools relative to comparison students. On average, during the 2013–14 and 2014–15 school years, students in CPS schools averaged 0.28 and 0.25 disciplinary incidents, respectively, to provide some context for what 31% to 88% fewer incidents might look like among CPS schools.

In addition, similar effects were found in relation to fewer school days missed because of discipline incidents (due to suspensions). These effects ranged from –47% to –86% for the same CPS implementation years and subpopulations as the significant effects associated with the number of disciplinary incidents, with the exception of Year 2 of implementation for students eligible for free or reduced-price lunches, where no significant effect related to the number of schools days missed were found despite a significant negative effect related to the number of disciplinary incidents. In both the 2013–14 and 2014–15 school years, the average number of school days missed because of disciplinary incidents was 2 days. As a result, differences in the number of days missed because of disciplinary incidents ranged from 1 to 1.7 fewer school days missed because of disciplinary incidents between students in the CPS and comparison schools.

Positive effects related to academic achievement. Positive effects related to academic achievement in mathematics on state assessments were found in the first year of implementation for each of the three subpopulations examined. Effects for students with a disability, who were exceptional learners, or eligible for free or reduced-price lunches were small, with standardized effect sizes of 0.05 and 0.06 respectively. However, positive effects for English learners were more substantive, with an effect size of 0.24 in Year 1 of CPS implementation.

Positive effects related to ELA assessments were limited to Year 1 of implementation for students with a disability or who were classified as exceptional learners and to Year 2 of implementation for students eligible for free or reduced-price lunches. Again, these effects were small (0.05 and 0.04, respectively).

Summary of Findings

Like the results highlighted in the initial 2022 evaluation report, the most consistent significant positive effects (meaning in the desired direction) associated with being enrolled in a CPS school were related to more positive school-day attendance and discipline-related outcomes. However, for the three subpopulations highlighted in this document (students with a disability or classified as an exceptional learner, English learners, and those eligible for free or reduced-price lunches), the effects in these areas were larger and more consistent across the first 2 years of CPS implementation than what was found in the initial report. This finding may suggest that students in these groups may have participated more fully in activities and supports provided to them as a result of CPS implementation, a hypothesis receiving further examination in a review of key documents and reports related to service provision undertaken during this early period of CPS initiative implementation.