



Charleston Promise Neighborhood (CPN) – Charleston County School District Info Sheet

CPN is a newly-formed nonprofit organization (May, 2010) modeled after the highly successful Harlem Children's Zone. CPN's founders include the Charleston County School District, the cities of Charleston and North Charleston, Charleston County, business partners, private philanthropists, and key community-based organizations, who have united with one goal: ***Provide every child in the Neighborhood with a clear path to college.***

The Neighborhood

Home to just over 17,000 residents – 4,300 of whom are children under the age of 18 – the CPN is a 5.6 mile area of Charleston County, South Carolina that straddles portions of the cities of Charleston and North Charleston (sometimes referred to as “The Neck”). CPN boundaries were chosen to coincide with the areas served by four CCSD elementary schools: James Simons Elementary School, Sanders-Clyde Elementary/Middle School, Mary Ford Elementary School, and Chicora Elementary School.

Our Challenge

Currently, the high schools serving the Neighborhood have graduation rates of just 56% and 41%, making them among the lowest performing in the district and far below the national average of 70%. Research shows that improving the quality of education in early childhood and elementary schools is one of the only ways to significantly improve graduation rates and decrease high school dropout rates. As a result, CPN has focused its early work on partnering directly with the four public elementary schools in the Neighborhood, where 1,543 children currently attend school.

Our Focus

Working closely with the schools and Neighborhood partners, CPN is creating a seamless system of wrap-around supports for early childhood and elementary-age children designed to ensure success and will continue to provide supports as youth progress to middle and high schools. CPN's initial focus is on:

- Strengthening principal leadership
- Recruiting and retaining the best teachers
- Increasing parent involvement
- Adding evidence-based in-school supports, including targeted reading and math support
- Creating high-quality expanded learning and enrichment environments

Funding

CCSD committed \$50,000 in funding to CPN for the 2010-2011 school year to support start-up and implementation planning. In addition to CCSD funding, CPN raised an additional \$438,000 this year, meaning that for every one dollar spent by CCSD, the Charleston Promise Neighborhood raises an additional \$8.76. In the 2011-2012 school year, approximately \$362,000 of CPN's program budget will be spent providing evidence-based programs/services to drive increased academic achievement for the children served by these four schools.

Partners & Investors

In addition to our governmental partners, we also have partnerships with the College of Charleston, Medical University of South Carolina, The Citadel, Metanoia, WINGS for Kids, Trident United Way, the Coastal Community Foundation, and Blackbaud, Inc.