

# COMMUNITY AND SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS



# WHY DO WE NEED PARTNERSHIPS?

**Student development and success do not occur in a vacuum.**

Student development and success require the **ongoing, positive cooperation** between the **student, their family and/or support network, and the community** at large.

No one agency or organization can provide all of the necessary supports.

**Collaboration and partnerships are the keys to lifelong success for students and families.**

# WHAT EXACTLY IS A PARTNERSHIP, ANYWAY?

## Partnerships are:

**Mutually beneficial relationships between schools and the community.**

- ▶ Partnerships support student achievement by providing educational opportunities and/or programs for students, teachers and staff.
- ▶ Partnership opportunities are aligned with the strategic plan and values of the school district.
- ▶ Successful partnerships rely on timely and respectful communication between partners.

## Partnerships are not:

- ▶ Advertising or marketing opportunities for the business or community partner.
- ▶ A donation of resources (money, time, products) without a link to a curricular activity or program.
- ▶ Opportunities made available to specific students at a cost, even if offered at a discount (martial arts lessons, tutoring, etc.)
- ▶ An off-site or community event at which students and families are invited to participate

# WHERE DO WE GO TO START THE PROCESS?

The **district's Partnership Office, Volunteer Office, Community Engagement Office or Business Office** can share the program information with specific schools that are most closely aligned with the goals of the community partner and the program. They can troubleshoot, mediate, and support both the schools and the partner. They can vet partners to assure student and school safety and program relevance.

An **existing relationship** with a teacher or administrator can help open the door to a program for that teacher's classroom, which can then be shared with other teachers across the district.

The **district's Curriculum Department** can help identify and facilitate programs that have a strong tie to specific curriculum or area of need.

**Web-based platforms** that connect businesses with students can lead to successful partnerships. Businesses and community groups can register with a district to provide facility tours, classroom presentations and programs, internships, apprenticeships and mentoring. These platforms can often be found on district websites or through a work-based learning program at a school.

# WHAT DOES THE PSD PARTNERSHIP OFFICE DO?



# THE PSD PARTNERSHIP OFFICE

The **PSD Partnership Office** facilitates partnership opportunities between community groups and schools, programs and departments.



- ❑ We work with potential community partners and organizations to ensure student safety and mission alignment
- ❑ We identify a broad range of potential partners within the community and facilitate those connections with the schools
- ❑ We ensure our community partnerships are successful by providing professional, timely communication and support.

The Partnership Office offers a comprehensive data bank of opportunities, programs and partners that will support students and staff in creating and sustaining connections with the world and people around them.

# COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Our **Community Partners** are non-profit and governmental agencies providing services to students & families



- **Coats and Boots** provides new winter coats and boots to students in Title 1 schools at no cost to the students
- **Project Smile / Project Vision** works with local dentists and ophthalmologists to screen students for potential dental and vision problems, and provide follow-up care at no cost
- **Supply Our Students** brings together 5 community partners to ensure all students in the Poudre School District have needed school supplies
- **Fort Collins Rotary Clubs** and service organizations offer teacher recognitions, student composition contests, and dictionaries to students across the district

# BUSINESS PARTNERS

Our **Business Partners** support students and staff with experiences and opportunities

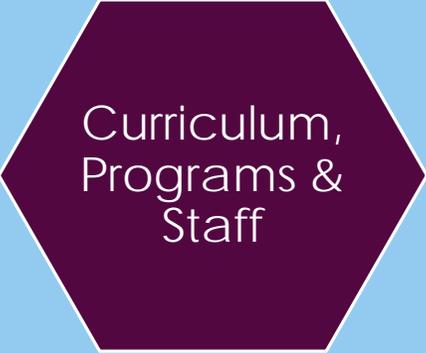


- **Woodward, Inc.** provides student internships, apprenticeships, employees serve on the PSD Foundation Board of Directors
- **UCHealth** provides health and fitness classes for students and staff; support health sector career pathways in high schools
- **Columbine Health Systems** offers student internships, mentoring, apprenticeships and supports health sector pathways in high school
- Engineering and architectural firms, financial investment businesses and others provide classroom presentations and lectures

# CURRICULUM, PROGRAMS & STAFF PARTNERS

**Curriculum, Program and Staff Partners** provide programs that directly support in-school programs & professional development opportunities for staff

- Community partners provide Teacher Externships of 40 hours through the summer
- Front Range Community College, Colorado State University and University of Northern Colorado offer concurrent enrollment to all high school students
- Community partners offer work-based learning opportunities including ACE (Alternative and Cooperative Education), PaCE (Professional and Community Experience), PWR Internships (Postsecondary and Workforce Ready)



Curriculum,  
Programs &  
Staff

# VOLUNTEERS

Our **Volunteers** are parents and community members who work in our schools to support students & families



- Volunteers register online and must pass a background check
- Volunteers serve as vision and hearing screeners, literacy champions, spelling bee preparators, and field trip chaperones
- Volunteers mentor students, assist with lunch duties, and serve as administrative assistants to teachers and staff

# OUTREACH AND EVENTS

Through **Outreach and Events**, we work with other agencies to raise awareness of partnership opportunities across the community and provide opportunities to network and learn from each other



- Partnership Office staff attends Parent Engagement Nights, and supports the City of Fort Collins' Recreation and Volunteer events
- Partnership Office staff coordinates with the Fort Collins Chamber of Commerce to provide community learning opportunities through Leadership Fort Collins and Leadership Northern Colorado
- The Partnership Office welcomes 30 community members each year for PSD Insight, providing in-depth information to community members about PSD operations and departments
- Partnership Office staff are members of professional organizations, serve on local non-profit boards, and volunteer with community organizations

# WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES TO PARTNERING?



## ✓ **We are a (site-based) fortress.**

Access to students/ families is protected.

Every school has it's own culture, and decides what programs to offer students.

All partners need to be vetted and screened for student safety.

## ✓ **Time is of the essence.**

Teacher time is limited. Classroom time is limited.

Time of the year – beginning of the year, testing, winter and spring breaks.

## ✓ **Unexpected or prohibitive costs.**

Materials, lunches, transportation, etc.

## ✓ **FERPA is a thing. So is PII.**

Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act of 1974. By law, we cannot share personally identifiable information (PII) about students.

## ✓ **District policies govern partnerships.**

# HOW DO WE OVERCOME THESE CHALLENGES?

## ASK THESE QUESTIONS FIRST:

**What is our goal (business or community group) in offering this program to the district?**

Pro tip: “we want to let students and families know what we do/provide/offer” is not a good goal for a project.

**How does this program directly support the vision and goals of the school district?**

Check the district’s website for strategic goals and align the project with those goals.

Example: PSD’s District Ends.

**What makes this program unique?**

It’s a tough line-up for classroom programs and projects. What makes your program stand out? Is it innovative? Does it hit several curriculum standards at once? Is it really easy to implement? Does it reach hundreds of children at once?

**How many children can we reach with this program, and what is the commitment of school staff?**

What is the return on investment? Does this program fill a need in the classroom that’s a challenge to fill? Is the program easy to implement? Can it be repeated or shared at several schools?

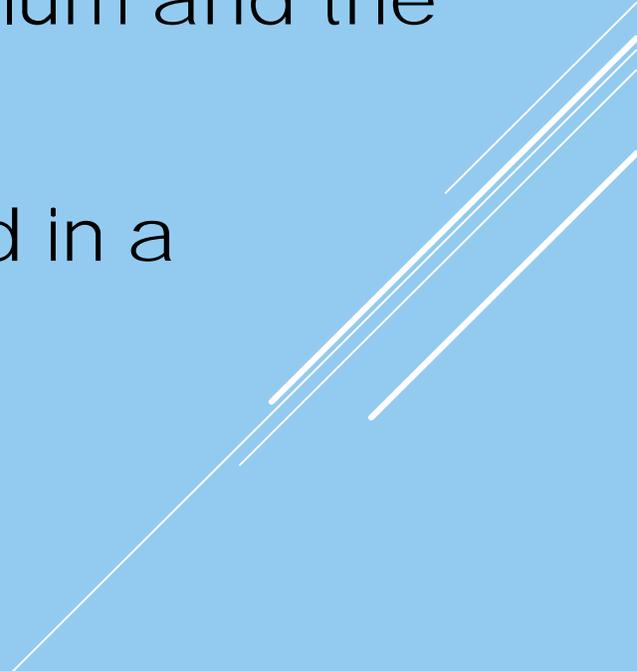
**How does this program directly support curriculum?**

# WHAT DOES A SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIP LOOK LIKE?

A successful partnership meets the needs of the students, teachers and community partner.

It is easy to implement, doesn't require a lot of preparation or classroom time, and directly supports curriculum and the goals and vision of the district.

A successful partnership meets an existing need in a newer, easier or more relevant way.

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# WHAT DOES A SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIP LOOK LIKE?

**Rotary Teacher of the Year and Month:** These programs celebrate teacher excellence with an award lunch and trophy. Teachers are nominated by their principal and celebrated by the Rotary Club. The program requires minimal time and effort on the part of the school staff; provides a service above and beyond what the district can provide; and is at no cost to the school or district.

**Colorado State University First-Gen Campus Visits:** These programs bring 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> graders to the CSU campus for a campus tour, lunch, and presentation by first-generation CSU students and athletes. There is no cost to the school except transportation, hundreds of students are impacted; and the program supports the district's goal of student connectivity with the community and post-secondary readiness.

**Engineering Week** is a partnership between PSD, HP, Intel, Broadcom and AMD. Volunteer engineers visit 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms during National Engineering Week to teach students about engineering jobs and lead them in creating an engineering project. There is no cost to the schools; programs are 1.5 hours during and can be scheduled any time during the day; the program directly supports curriculum; thousands of students are impacted.

**Teacher Externships Program** brings teachers into local businesses for 40 hours over the summer to learn about academic pathways to employment in specific sectors and industries. There is no cost to the district; teachers are nominated by their principal; hundreds of students are potentially impacted.

## HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

- Register as a volunteer in the district
  - Reading support, classroom support, teacher/ administrative support
- Call your local school and ask if they need supplies or support of any kind
- Participate in or attend a school-sponsored event or fundraiser
- Support a district or school Foundation or other affiliated non-profit
- Sign up with the district to serve as a student mentor
- Consider advocating on the local and/or state level for educational initiatives

## HOW CAN **WE** GET INVOLVED?

- Contact the district to determine what steps are needed to become a Community Partner
- Create a project or program that meets a specific need in the district or school
- Consider advocating on the local and/or state level for educational initiatives
- Contact the district's Board of Education or research past meeting agendas to learn what future plans are and what needs there will be
- Consider ways to support teachers, administration and families in addition to students

# QUESTIONS?

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