

Community Partnerships at Hamilton Middle School

Hamilton Middle School

Denver, CO



COLORADO
Department of Education

Hamilton Middle School is a Title 1 school located in Southeast Denver serving nearly 650 students in 6th-8th grade. More than 65% of students are eligible for free or reduced lunch, over 70% identify as a race other than White, 48% are multilingual learners, and 15% have Individualized Education Programs (IEP). Hamilton Middle School has partnered with community organizations to ensure a safe and welcoming environment for both students and families, in alignment with the school's vision of serving the Whole Child, Every Child. To gather insight into the needs of the community, Hamilton Middle School utilized school surveys with students, families, and staff. Based on the findings, a plan was developed to support opportunities in four areas: Student Enrichment, School Culture, Family Resources, and Family and Community Engagement.



To support student enrichment Hamilton Middle School partnered with over 15 different community organizations. For example, Right at School provided after-school homework help, tutoring, sports, and STEAM activities to over 60 students. The Colorado Mountain Club sponsored a conservation club where students experienced outdoor adventures, learned about wildlife, and attended a hiking field trip. African American Young Ladies Summit (AAYLS) empowered female students of color with tools to create a lifelong journey of personal success and achievement. Other stakeholders included Sims Fayola, Breakthrough Kent, GESTEM, and Optimist Club of Monaco South. To promote stronger family engagement,

Hamilton Middle School partnered with local businesses and organizations to bring resources and opportunities to families. Through these partnerships, Hamilton Middle School was able to provide a series of Healthy Food and Cooking Workshops for families through Veggie RX, a High School Night for families to meet feeder high schools and ask questions, basic needs support with Denver Health Dental Sealant and Immunization in-school clinic days, and clothing for students through Clothes to Kids Denver and GGirl's Closet.

Stakeholders collected data through surveys to gauge the continued interest in the program and to collect feedback for improvements. Hamilton Middle School used this data to improve and grow the programs for next year. Qualitatively, families are requesting more of these opportunities in the future. The second-semester Veggie RX class was full and had a waitlist. The DPS Spark program grew from providing one field trip opportunity a month to providing two field trips a month. Next year there are plans to add a College Day for 8th-grade students in partnership with SPARK and open DCC to the public and neighboring schools. Some programs have capacity limits and waitlists which has been a challenge, so Hamilton Middle School plans to double the number of opportunities for the DPS Spark program and build engagement momentum in the community by opening these opportunities to neighboring schools as well.



Hamilton Middle School plans to continue to reach out to community partners that will enrich the diverse community and provide a space for equitable connection, collaboration, and interaction to further improve educational outcomes for students. The goal is to continue to gather feedback from the community to be able to provide an even stronger web of resources for the 2023-2024 school year. Advice to those who want to implement a Community Partnership Program is to focus on one need at a time and reach out to community partners for a helping hand. Consider your school's goals and how your community partnership can assist in filling any gaps. There are many community partners wanting to help; they just need to know how.

