



SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Nellie Stone Johnson Community School (NSJ) is located in the diverse Hawthorne neighborhood in north Minneapolis. The school's mission is to create a community that focuses on significance; belonging and fun; academic excellence; and social-emotional competence. The school previously served elementary and middle school students, but NSJ will become a High Five through fifth-grade school beginning in the 2015-16 school year. Through explicit modeling of behaviors and expectations, students and staff will persevere in all academic and social endeavors and be responsible, respectful and safe.

WHY COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP SCHOOL STATUS?

As a Community Partnership School, Nellie Stone Johnson will seek to build a program focused on staff and student leadership development, turning today's risk takers into tomorrow's leaders.

NSJ recognizes that its students are performing far below grade level and not meeting state standards and has a sense of urgency about addressing this situation. The school has also struggled with staff retention.

- 2014 math and reading proficiency
 - 21 percent of students were proficient in math
 - 16 percent of students were proficient in reading

NSJ intends to use the autonomy offered under Community Partnership School status to redesign the school and build a strong, committed school community. The school has identified a number of areas for improvement such as using data consistently to inform instruction and teacher collaborative work. NSJ also recognizes the need to provide stronger differentiated instruction and consistent strategies to meet student needs, increase engagement and reduce behavioral issues.

As a Community Partnership School, NSJ plans to implement the following:

- Create a professional development plan that aligns with school goals and focuses on strategic leadership development
- Train, build and retain an expert NSJ teaching and support staff
- Extend the student day
- Train all staff in culturally competent practices
- Develop a model for effectively meeting students' social and emotional needs
- Develop a calendar that includes additional professional development and focused data days for staff
- Implement guided reading, guided math and Responsive Classroom practices with fidelity
- Establish a schoolwide academic language development program for all students
- Incorporate resident literacy coaches into the staffing model
- Embed professional collaborative time for teacher teams into the day





SCHOOL DEMOGRAPHICS

NSJ's student population is 60 percent African American, 30 percent Latino and 10 percent Hmong and other ethnicities.

- Students eligible for free or reduced-price meals – 94 percent
- Students receiving English learner services – 32 percent
- Students receiving special education services – 22 percent
- Students receiving homeless and highly mobile services – 11 percent

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

NSJ will strategically expand or develop partnerships aligned with the school's vision that meet specific student and program needs. Some current partners include the Northside Achievement Zone (NAZ), MNServe and Beacons.

Through the expansion of a pilot program with current partners, NSJ will work to increase the support and differentiated instruction opportunities for students in every classroom through the use of scholar coaches. Scholar coaches will play a key role in supporting academics in the after-school program. NSJ staff will help develop the hiring criteria and select these coaches.

STAKEHOLDER SUPPORT

In October 2014, the Instructional Leadership Team held an information session with staff about Community Partnership Schools and conducted a staff vote to initiate the process. The NSJ design team was formed and the planning process began. Throughout the process, staff members were asked for feedback in a variety of ways. A staff vote was conducted on the final plan in February 2015, with 76 percent voting in favor of the plan.

NSJ engaged families in the planning process at a number of events. Families were asked to complete a survey in English or Spanish to provide feedback on the specifics of the plan. Surveys were distributed at teacher conferences and over 100 surveys were completed. The majority of families agreed or strongly agreed with the ideas of incorporating scholar coaches, adding 30 minutes to the student day and offering a new configuration of after-school programming. Feedback was also incorporated into the school's community engagement plan.

Community partners were also asked to provide feedback on the plan. NSJ intends to continue to engage with all stakeholders and gather input leading into the implementation phase of the Community Partnership School plan.

