



Colon Community Schools Vision of Powerful Student Care

... a ferocious unwillingness to allow a student to flounder or to fail.

Caring adults, in a caring school community, are the link to achievement, graduation, and a future of meaningful opportunities. This is particularly critical where students seem to care about school or their future or for those who may lack confidence, or for those who may be alienated or marginalized educationally, emotionally, or socially for a multitude of reasons: prior school experiences; how they learn or do not learn; or because they are a member of racially, ethnically, linguistically, socially, or economically disenfranchised populations. (Adapted from Murphy and Torres, 2014).

We believe:

- each Colon employee arrives at school daily to do all they can to help children;
- each student should feel welcomed into our school community;
- each student has the right to feel safe physically, socially, emotionally, and academically;
- each adult in our district will work collaboratively to establish a blanket of safety comprehensive enough to cover every space and every person in every school;
- each student reaches his/her potential for high levels of success as a result of an equitable system of delivery, i.e., a system that responds to the unique and individual academic and non-academic needs of each student within its charge;
- each student must receive social, emotional, health, and nutritional support on a continuum of intensity that is matched to individual student need;
- each student's values, beliefs, individual backgrounds, and identity must be embraced and celebrated.

At its core foundation, our district recognizes how critical it is to develop a meaningful, positive relationship with EACH student in order to exercise academic press and influence. Using Joseph Murphy's work with pastoral care as a guide, our district's assurance of powerful student care ensures that the norms of pastoral care positively impact EACH student our district has the privilege of serving. Those norms and identifying characteristics are:

- **Care** – Investing in building genuine and trusting relationships that create an environment in which no one is left behind.
- **Support** - Maximizing the gain that occurs when adults create genuine relationships that support the academic and social development of students. The quality and depth of our investment in EACH student prevent them from “falling through the cracks” and helps them to invest in themselves to create a belief in a viable future.
- **Safety** - Focusing on physical and emotional safety and the prevention of harm. Adult and student behavior should reflect values and trust, creating a safe environment.
- **Membership** – Creating a sense of belonging through a variety of methods, because high levels of learning take place when students have a feeling of belonging.

In traditional schooling, we give it the best we can and hope for the best understanding that our efforts will prove to be successful for many students. Authentic caring takes it to a much deeper level as we develop a relentless effort to not allow a student to flounder or fail. A system needs to be created which allows adults to change from saying “we care” to demonstrating through actions that caring is authentic. Authentic caring goes beyond traditional elements to create a safety net where adults do everything possible to ensure student success.

The district’s vision includes support to students on a continuum of intensity matched to EACH student’s need. This continuum of support may encompass a variety of non-academic needs that may present themselves at any time: social, emotional, health, and nutritional needs as well as the impact of trauma on student learning, emotional health, behavior, and the ability to formulate meaningful relationships.

Providing a system of powerful student care, CCS will engage with families to better connect students to the school community and will also work with community agencies to provide support in areas that may extend beyond the capacity of the district and school to provide alone. These areas include, but are not necessarily limited to the areas of social, emotional, health, behavioral, and nutritional needs of students.

Providing a system of powerful student care, CCS will utilize its mode of delivery for collecting data about and responding to student needs, connecting the student to the source of support, positively impacting student and adult relationships, and engaging the families and community in support of its students. In short, our system of Powerful Student Care will ensure that our district is prepared to meet the academic and non-academic needs of EACH student who belongs to our district.