

# What Do We Know About Full-Service Community Schools? Integrative Research Review With NVivo

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## Abstract

The full-service community school (FSCS) model is one of the most popular and growing types of community school models, which is widely implemented in underresourced urban schools. FSCSs offer an alternative to traditional public schools in the U.S. and are designed to coordinate community assets within a school. Given increased attention to this approach by both practitioners and policymakers for supporting schools in disadvantaged communities, the purpose of this study was to examine how scholars are describing FSCSs in the literature and offer suggestions for future research. In addition, this study provides a detailed overview of how to use NVivo to conduct qualitative empirical research reviews across disciplines. Findings indicated that scholarly dialogues about FSCSs converge toward (a) the nature of FSCSs; (b) academic performance in these models; and (c) partnerships among schools, communities, and parents. Specific recommendations for future research that will be useful in advancing work on the FSCSs model are included.

**Key Words:** full-service community schools, integrative literature review, NVivo analysis, family–school–community partnerships, urban education

## Introduction

Since the enactment of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) more than 15 years ago, many U.S. schools have struggled to demonstrate effectiveness in

a system reinforced by a neo-liberal emphasis on standards and standardization (Grimmett, Fleming, & Trotter, 2009). These expectations can be even more frustrating for schools serving socioeconomically disadvantaged areas. While students in wealthy schools generally benefit from carefully designed educational programs with comprehensive school facilities that include contemporary technology, well-trained teachers and counselors, and high rates of college admissions, students attending underresourced schools often lack access to these kinds of basic supports for college readiness (Dryfoos, 2000).

The sociological concept of social capital has been used to explain these challenges. According to Bourdieu (1985), social capital denotes “the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition” (p. 248). In other words, being connected to others who can make resources available is critical to obtaining or increasing social capital (Rouxel, Heilmann, Aida, Tsakos, & Watt, 2015). Bourdieu (1985) went on to discuss the significant role that social networking plays in acquiring and possessing social capital. These ideas were reconfirmed and emphasized by Burt (1995), who defined social capital as “friends, colleagues, and more general contacts through whom you receive opportunities to use your financial and human capital” (p. 9).

Portes (1998) identified three types of social networking necessary for creating social capital: (1) close-knit communities, (2) parental support, and (3) networks beyond the family. First, the level of cohesion in a community has been positively associated with the level of social pressure that the residents in the community experience in general (Funk, 2010). For example, a close-knit community can provide a social form of control that reduces children’s chances of dropping out or hanging out with “bad” crowds, because both the child and family are apprehensive of the potential neighborhood shame that would be created by delinquencies (Zhou & Bankston, 1996). Second, several studies of academic performance have demonstrated that parental and kin support plays an important role in children’s academic achievement (Garg, Melanson, & Levin, 2007; Hao, 1994; McLanahan & Sandefur, 1994). Third, extrafamilial networks can lead to better access to critical resources such as job opportunities, investment tips, and educational materials (Portes, 1998).

Students from highly disadvantaged circumstances may have fewer opportunities to benefit from the kinds of social networks associated with upward mobility (Cattell, 2001; Shelton, Taylor, Bonner, & van den Bree, 2015). From this perspective, community services’ integration can provide a powerful means of promoting and supporting parents from highly disadvantaged situations to build and increase social capital (Mohnen, Völker, Flap, Subramanian,

& Groenewegen, 2015). Chen, Anderson, and Watkins (2016) elaborated this point:

Through community service integration, more opportunities are created for parents to establish new social ties extending throughout the community or to strengthen the existing parent–child and parent–teacher relationship...community service integration can help to create a more tightly interconnected neighborhood...community service integration can enrich the resources which the parents are able to invest in their child’s development (p. 2270).

### **The Full-Service Community Schools Approach**

Full-service community schools (FSCSs) are emerging as one of the more popular community school models implementing community services integration in mainly urban and disadvantaged areas. Bringing together community partners, including parents and youth social services agencies, FSCSs are designed to offer comprehensive services with easy access for schools and families (Dryfoos, 1995). The U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) recently defined FSCSs as public elementary or secondary schools that collaborate with “local educational agencies (LEAs); and community-based organizations, non-profit organizations, and other public or private entities” (USDOE, 2014, para. 2). USDOE (2014) also noted that the primary purpose of FSCSs is to “provide comprehensive academic, social, and health services for students, students’ family members, and community members that will result in improved educational outcomes for children” (para. 3).

While the community school concept in the U.S. can be traced back more than a century to the time when schools began listening to the concerns of churches and public opinion (Epstein, 2010) along with the work of John Dewey and Jane Addams (Chen et al., 2016), it was not until the 1980s when Joy Dryfoos (1995, 2005) argued for creating the FSCS model in which schools become “neighborhood hubs” (Dryfoos, 2005, p. 7). The term “hub” was used to describe a community school approach intended to attract a variety of community-based partnerships to develop social relationships within and between the school and its locality as well as to promote action (Bauch, 2001), including the provision of necessary funding specifically designed to meet the contextual needs of the community and its children and families. For example, a FSCS located in a city with older dwellings and a high percentage of rental properties might partner with a local health department to provide testing and interventions at the school for exposure to lead-based paints in the home. Schools located in areas where many parents do not speak English might offer family literacy programs. FSCS programs are also expected to

provide developmentally appropriate support for students who may have disabilities, mental health issues, and similar challenges that may last across the lifespan, thereby improving the transition from childhood to adolescence to adulthood. Programs for before and after school, summer breaks, and weekends are often included in a school hub. Such programs are provided and often funded by partner agencies such as the public health department, community mental health agencies, community centers, and parks and recreation departments (Dryfoos, 2005).

FSCSs often focus on helping parents increase their own social capital, recognizing the important connections between caregiver expectations and children's academic success (Anderson, Howland, & McCoach, 2015). According to Maslow (1970), an individual cannot focus on meeting higher levels of functioning (e.g., self-esteem, achievement) until lower level needs such as nutrition, physical and mental health, and safety are met. According to this theory, the social, physical, and psychological support services provided by FSCSs will address the health, emotional, and familial needs of students so they can focus on learning and academic success (Boykin & Noguera, 2011). In addition, Momeni (2015) addressed that academic support programming and services, such as mentoring, tutoring, and afterschool enrichment, can "extend learning opportunities for students and create individualized instruction to specifically help improve student learning and provide learning opportunities in the community" (p. 13).

FSCSs' development in underresourced schools accelerated in the late 1990s when the Coalition for Community Schools was established (see <http://www.communityschools.org/>). This organization represents a coalition of local, state, and national educational and social service organizations that are collaborating to support national models and local community school initiatives such as FSCSs. For example, the Coalition for Community Schools reported that New York City is investing \$150 million to convert 94 of its lowest-performing schools to the FSCS model (Roche, 2014). Interest in FSCSs has also been enhanced by the 2008 establishment of a federal grant program. Through its Fund for Improvement of Education (FIE), the USDOE initially funded 10 communities across the U.S. to implement or enhance local FSCS models. FIE invested \$4,912,650 in 2008 and more than doubled the initiative to \$10,000,000 in 2014 (USDOE, 2015).

### **Problem Statement and Study Purpose**

Despite strongly held beliefs that FSCSs will yield positive outcomes and comprehensive community investment, very few scientific studies have addressed how FSCSs operate, what achievements they obtain, and how the

model can be better implemented (Momeni, 2015). In fact, Dryfoos (2005) acknowledged that the term FSCSs was not even widely recognized in the academic fields of education and school-based social services. This limited knowledge base presents a real challenge to the field, given that public schools in socioeconomically disadvantaged communities have increasingly adopted FSCS as a means of improving students' academic performance. Moreover, as the investment in the model from federal-, state-, and regional-level organizations has been growing, the field needs to focus attention on the topic of FSCSs to objectively identify the current state of affairs, illuminate areas that need further investigation, and encourage the field to generate new scientific information that will advance this line of work (Biesta, 2007; Chen et al., 2016). Because FSCSs are a relatively new phenomenon and emerging topic in terms of the available research, the model has not yet undergone significant scrutiny in the literature (Torraco, 2005). Using NVivo 10, a commercial qualitative analysis software program, the purpose of this study was to conduct an integrative review of the existing FSCS literature base to offer some preliminary conceptualizations of the model.

## Methods

### Integrative Research Reviews

The methods used in this study adhered to the five stages of the integrative review process articulated by Cooper (1982): (1) problem formulation; (2) data collection; (3) evaluation of data; (4) data analysis and interpretation; and (5) presentation of results. Cooper described the integrative research review as a type of research that synthesizes and condenses “separate empirical findings into a coherent whole” (p. 291). Underscoring the importance of integrative research reviews to ensure that researchers and practitioners have the most up-to-date, comprehensive understandings of their fields of study, Cooper stated:

The behavioral sciences recently underwent a sharp increase in manpower and research (Garvey & Griffith, 1971). To accommodate this expansion, outlets for research reports became plentiful and their accessibility was facilitated by the computerized literature search.... Today most researchers find they cannot keep abreast of primary data reports except within a few specializations. Researchers rely heavily on integrative research reviews to define the state of knowledge. (1982, p. 291)

Cooper further argued that integrative research reviews should illuminate crucial issues that research has not yet resolved, thereby providing stakeholders with ideas for needed research directions. More recently, other scholars have

described the benefits of integrative research reviews. For example, Torraco (2005) pointed out that integrative reviews allow researchers not only to objectively and comprehensively explore the literature across methodologies and academic disciplines, but also to generate new frameworks and perspectives about topics that emerge from these syntheses. These ideas were reiterated by Whittemore and Knafl (2005), who argued that integrative literature reviews can “present the state of the science, contribute to theory development, and have direct applicability to practice and policy” (p. 546).

### **Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria for This Study and Data Collection**

In conducting this integrative literature review, a variety of procedures were employed to locate articles for review and possible inclusion in the study analyses. In stage one, the research team attempted to locate articles, published in academic journals, that explicitly addressed the FSCS model in some fashion. The team agreed that publications from academic journals would best represent how scholars were addressing FSCSs from a scientific and scholarly perspective. In addition, the research team acknowledged that one limitation facing the field was a dearth of published, peer-reviewed articles about the FSCSs, recognizing this to be a huge challenge as many academics and some practitioners tend to rely on the peer-reviewed literature base for their information. Therefore, editorials, bulletins, government reports, conference papers, and book chapters that were not peer-reviewed were not included in the search criteria. On the other hand, it was not necessary that published articles focused solely on FSCSs. Sources were deemed worthy of inclusion in the study dataset as long as ideas pertaining to the FSCS model were present in the article.

With inclusion and exclusion criteria in place, stage two was implemented in 2014, during which computerized databases, including EBSCOhost, ERIC, Google Scholar, and PsychInfo, were searched using various applicable keywords: *full service community schools*, *full service extended schools*, *full service integrated schools*, and *FSCSs*. No limits were placed on the publication year. However, again we limited our search to peer-reviewed publications in order to ensure quality. Initially, 37 articles were retrieved from these computer databases. Two researchers then reviewed the abstracts of each article to assess appropriateness for inclusion in the study. Articles were regarded as appropriate if their abstracts indicated that FSCSs were discussed in some fashion. From these efforts, 22 of the 37 articles were excluded because they addressed community schools in general rather than FSCSs specifically. Ultimately, 15 articles were included in the dataset from these two stages of the search.

To reduce the potential for publication bias that may have existed within the various computer databases that were searched (Crisp, Taggart, & Nora,

2015) and to ensure that every appropriate article was identified, the ancestry and descendancy approaches suggested by Cooper (1982) were additionally adopted. Specifically, researchers can retrieve literature to be reviewed by examining the citations that each reviewed article included in its reference lists (ancestry approach). By employing the ancestry approach, the same two researchers carefully examined sections of each of the 15 articles, including the introduction, literature review, and reference lists. This led to the identification of four more articles about FSCSs. Finally, in keeping with the descendancy approach also proposed by Cooper (1982), the research team used the Journal Citation Reports Indexes provided by the Web of Science. This index indicated that there were 10 leading journals associated with the keywords *social work* and *education/special*, as ranked according to their five-year Impact Factors. The Impact Factor (IF) is a quantitative measure that has been widely used in evaluating the quality of certain journals (Bordons, Fernández, & Gómez, 2002). Bordons et al. (2002) described the advantages of using IFs this way:

Some of the reasons that explain its success are the quasi-qualitative nature of IF and its great accessibility, since it is directly provided by ISI for most international and visible journals. The IF of a certain journal is used as a proxy of the quality and expected impact of each of the papers published in it. (p. 195)

Although the two researchers extensively examined all articles published by these 10 journals, no additional relevant results were found for the study.

### **Analytic Strategies**

Grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) guided the analysis for the literature gathered to examine the current state of the scholarly discussion around the topic of FSCSs. According to Strauss and Corbin (1994), grounded theory is defined as “a general methodology for developing theory that is grounded in data systematically gathered and analyzed” (p. 273); it is thus often referred to as a constant comparative approach (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). This approach enabled the research team to identify topics commonly discussed in this set of data (i.e., articles) by extracting the underlying themes contributing to the examination of the current state of the field for the FSCSs model. This allowed us to provide initial or preliminary conceptualizations of the model as it has been described by scholars in the field.

To increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the analytic process, we decided to use computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) instead of manual analysis (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2011). CAQDAS is increasingly being used by qualitative researchers because it provides platforms

that offer “storing, indexing, sorting, and coding” and collaboration among team members and across time (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2011, p. 71) and is useful with different types of qualitative data (Ulin, Robinson, & Tolley, 2005). Using the features included in many CAQDASs also creates substantial time savings when comparing categories and codes across data, researchers, and over time. Moreover, these are essential processes when employing constant comparison analyses to identify emerging theories and relationships in data (Bazeley, 2006; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Among the many available CAQDASs, NVivo is one of the most widely used in educational research (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2011). By extension, this study describes the detailed use of this qualitative analytic tool when studying the literature.

### Coding the Articles in the Dataset

In this integrative review study, two researchers initially read each identified article independently and then classified each paper according to type (e.g., empirical study, argument paper, case study) and topic (e.g., benefits, challenges, suggestions for FSCS, reflective practices of FSCS) first. The first goal was to identify the primary purpose of each paper. These classifications were subsequently compared by the two researchers, who reached a consensus through discussion whenever differently coded articles were identified. A database was then created in Microsoft Excel, in which articles were listed according to author, title, publication year, and journal name. These categorizations were made in an attempt to identify trends in terms of major journals, publication year, authorship, paper type, and topic.

The two researchers next created NVivo 10 files and imported each of the 19 articles into its respective file. Each researcher conducted an independent exploratory constant comparison analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1998), thereby allowing themes to be extracted without specifying a predetermined coding structure. The NVivo 10 application was an effective tool for open coding (Creswell, 2013) and constant comparisons as it allowed the two researchers to visually identify primary topics related to FSCS in each article independently. In NVivo, extracted themes were represented as *nodes*, with parent and child nodes for main themes and subthemes, respectively; coded excerpts from the articles were represented as *references*.

To identify themes commonly discussed in the field based on grounded theory, starting nodes were not predetermined. To develop initial nodes, the feature of memos in NVivo was employed. For example, a researcher created a memo for the following reference with *principal leadership*: “The principal must pave the way for this intrusion” (Dryfoos, 1993, p. 33). In addition, for the following reference, “One key to the success of schools like Quitman is the



presence of a full-time coordinator” (Dryfoos, 2005, p. 10), the researcher created a memo with *school full time coordinator leadership*. Repeated words such as *leadership* in the memos generated a parent node titled *leadership*, and child nodes that describe those who have the leadership, such as a full-time coordinator or principal, were subsequently created.

References that described the same themes as the parent or child nodes already created were dragged by the researchers to the existing nodes. For instance, the following excerpt, “Also essential to a community school is a school coordinator whose role is to ensure that services, activities, and programs will be offered to address students’ and families’ needs considering the available, existing resources in a given community” (Trepanier, Paré, Petrakos, & Drouin, 2008, p. 108), was placed under a child node titled *school full time coordinator leadership* under the parent node of *leadership*. However, for a reference suggesting leadership by a different subject, such as teachers or parents, new child nodes titled *teachers* or *parents* were added to the existing child nodes under the parent node of *leadership*.

All nodes and the references included within them were developed by the two researchers and were thoroughly reviewed, compared, and scrutinized after completing the independent coding processes for each of the 19 studies. When discrepancies were identified, the researchers discussed them until full agreement was reached and a single NVivo file including the parent and child nodes and references was created. When consensus was difficult to achieve, the two researchers consulted with the project’s principal investigator, who assisted in resolving disagreements.

## Results

This section presents descriptive results that demonstrate current trends in terms of major journals, publication year, authorship, paper type, and topic, as well as constant comparison results found through the analysis in NVivo in order to identify what has been discussed in the field of FSCSs. The section describing constant comparison results in NVivo is organized by the parent and child nodes that emerged.

### Descriptive Results

Findings indicated that although no major journals appeared to deal exclusively with the FSCS model, one publication, *New Directions for Youth Development*, published four of the identified articles, all within the same year as a special issue. In addition, findings confirmed that significant contributions were made by Joy Dryfoos to the FSCS literature. She authored publications

in *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, *NASSP Bulletin*, *Reclaiming Children & Youth*, and *New Directions for Youth Development*.

Table 1. Peer-Refereed Journal Information for FSCS Publications

Journal	Articles Published	Authors
<i>American Journal of Orthopsychiatry</i>	1	Adelman & Taylor (1997)
<i>American Psychologist</i>	1	Holtzman (1997)
<i>Children &amp; Schools</i>	1	Peebles-Wilkins (2004)
<i>Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research</i>	1	Conwill (2003)
<i>Journal of Educational &amp; Psychological Consultation</i>	1	McMahon, Ward, Pruett, Davidson, & Griffith (2000)
<i>Journal of Research on Adolescence</i>	1	Dryfoos (1995)
<i>NASSP Bulletin</i>	1	Dryfoos (1993)
<i>New Directions for Youth Development</i>	4	Bundy (2005); Dryfoos (2005); Quinn (2005); Tagle (2005)
<i>Reclaiming Children &amp; Youth</i>	2	Dryfoos (2003); Hoover (2003)
<i>School Community Journal</i>	2	Trepanier, Pare, Petrakos, & Drouin (2008); Voyles (2012)
<i>School Psychology Review</i>	1	Adelman & Taylor (1996)
<i>The Future of Children</i>	1	Tyack (1992)
<i>The High School Journal</i>	1	Sanders & Lewis (2005)
<i>Urban Education</i>	1	Abrams & Gibbs (2000)

### *Publication Years*

The earliest article we found was published in 1992 by David Tyack. Describing the history of FSCSs in the U.S., Tyack suggested that when reforming urban schools, the children-at-risk model, which focuses on meeting the health and social needs of underserved students, should be used instead of the nation-at-risk model, which focuses on the improvement of academic achievement.<sup>1</sup> After 1992, only a few articles appeared for the remainder of the decade. Then in 2000 and 2003, two (11%) and three articles (16%) were published, respectively, and five articles (26%) were published during 2005. Four out of five of the 2005 articles (80%) appeared in a special issue of *New Directions for Youth Development*. Lastly, one article was published in 2008 and 2012, respectively.

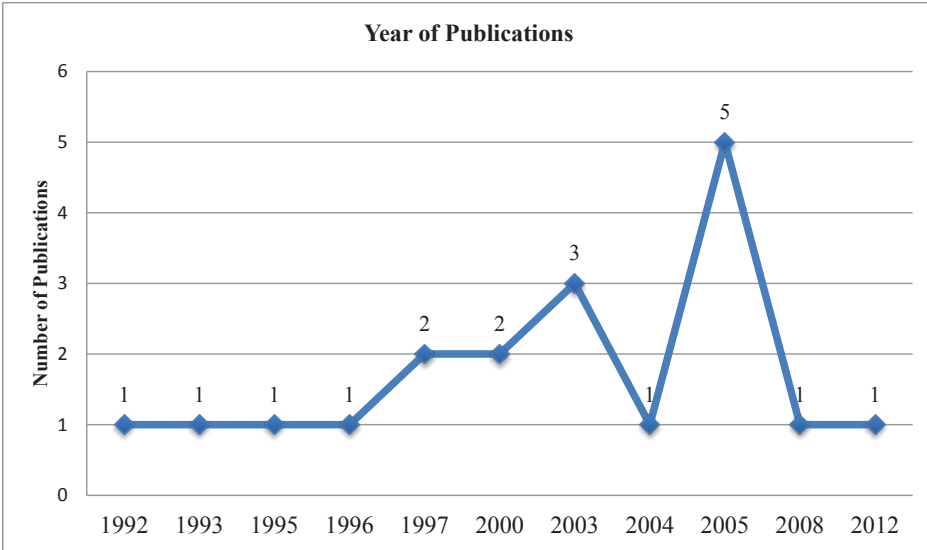


Figure 1. Number of publications by year.

*Primary Publication Topics*

Our analysis suggested that the 19 FSCS articles addressed six topics (see Table 2). Specifically, 5 of the 19 papers (26%) primarily addressed the benefits, challenges, and suggestions for implementing FSCSs. Five articles (26%) provided case studies that described reflective practices in FSCSs, while four articles (21%) provided comprehensive descriptions of the FSCSs, such as common attributes, purposes, benefits, and model implementation guidelines, respectively. Two articles (11%) outlined exemplary FSCS practices, and two others (11%) described partnerships between a school and community agencies. One article (5%) provided a historical reflection on the direction of FSCSs. However, no single article was identified that exclusively addressed the outcomes and impact of the FSCS model.

*Authorship*

As noted, Joy Dryfoos appears to have made the most significant contributions to the FSCS literature. Indeed, Dryfoos wrote four of the articles (21%) included in this study. In addition, 14 of the articles (74%) cited Dryfoos’s FSCS work. Dryfoos primarily provided comprehensive descriptions and illuminated exemplary and reflective FSCS practices, highlighting implementation guidelines in her articles (see Table 2).

Table 2. Primary Topics of FSCS Publications

Primary Topics	Articles Published	Authors
Historical reflection with directions of FSCS	1	Tyack (1992)
Benefits/challenges/suggestions for FSCS	5	Abrams & Gibbs (2000); McMahon et al. (2000); Adelman & Taylor (1996, 1997); Holtzman (1997)
Reflective FSCS practices	5	Dryfoos (1995); Quinn (2005); Sanders & Lewis (2005); Bundy (2005); Trepanier et al. (2008)
Exemplary FSCS practices	2	Dryfoos (2003); Tagle (2005)
Comprehensive description on the FSCS and guidelines	4	Peebles-Wilkins (2004); Hoover (2003); Dryfoos (1993); Dryfoos (2005)
Partnership between school and community agencies	2	Conwill (2003); Voyles (2012)

*Types of Papers*

Our analyses indicated a lack of empirically based articles reporting original research on the FSCS model, either qualitatively or quantitatively. Only one article (5%), by Abrams and Gibbs (2000), was identified as a qualitative and empirical study of the FSCS model. This paper noted that a core challenge to model implementation was the conflict that occurred among multiple players during program planning. Similarly, only one paper (5%) in this review (McMahon, Ward, Kline Pruett, Davidson, & Griffith, 2000) offered advice for developing effective interagency collaboration. On the other hand, 16 of the 19 articles (84%) were either conceptual or argumentative, providing comprehensive descriptions of the model and prescriptive guidelines for its implementation, which included a number of case studies describing various examples of existing FSCSs. There was one book review written by Hoover (2003; see Table 3).

Table 3. Types of Studies Analyzed

Types	Articles Published	Authors
Analytic literature review	1	McMahon et al. (2000)
Empirical studies	1	Abrams & Gibbs (2000)
Theoretical articles/argument papers (comprehensive description and guidelines for implementing FSCSs with arguments)	7	Dryfoos (1995); Dryfoos (2005); Peebles-Wilkins (2004); Tyack (1992); Adelman & Taylor (1996, 1997); Dryfoos (1993)
Case studies	9	Conwill (2003); Trepanier et al. (2008); Holtzman (1997); Bundy (2005); Voyles (2012); Dryfoos (2003); Sanders & Lewis (2005); Quinn (2005); Tagle (2005)
Book review	1	Hoover (2003)

**Constant Comparison Analysis Results in NVivo**

With applying the constant comparison approach to analyzing the 19 articles in NVivo, three broad themes emerged as parent nodes: (1) the nature of the FSCS model; (2) academic performance; and (3) partnerships among school, community, and parents. These three parent nodes are the main themes emerging from the constant comparison analysis and hence represent the units that organize the findings. The findings are also illustrated in a literature map that presents clear distinctions between parent and child nodes on the basis of the analysis (see Figure 2). The literature map has been provided to illustrate the coding structure and how each of the articles fit into each main theme (represented as a parent node in NVivo) and subtheme (represented as a child node in NVivo) and as a visual overview of our study results (Creswell, 2013).

*The Nature of Full-Service Community Schools*

The first theme, the nature of the FSCS model, contained three subthemes: (a) a commonly shared definition, (b) a purpose, and (c) specific features of the model noted by scholars in the 19 publications. Each is described in the following sections.

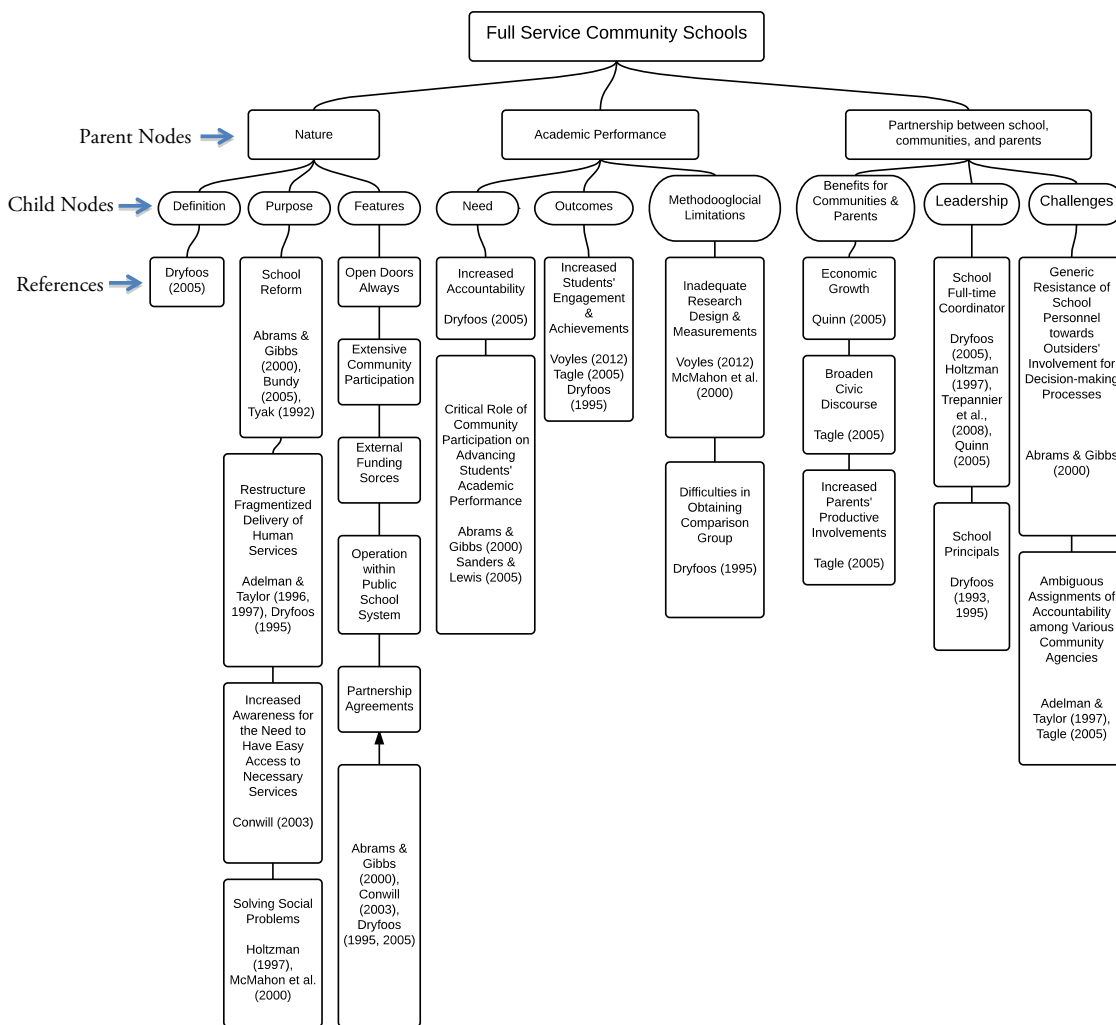


Figure 2. Literature map.

**Definition.** There is nothing that makes all FSCSs alike because the model is typically designed to meet the particulars of each individual community, which will differ from others, as will the available resources (Peebles-Wilkins, 2004; Dryfoos, 2005). Indeed, a consequence of this is that the emerging FSCS field has struggled to define itself and, as such, has been referred to by many different names, including integrated school-based services, school-linked services, coordinated or co-located social and health facilitators, community-centered services, and health services within schools (Adelman & Taylor, 1997). Despite the multitude of terms, our analyses indicated that many scholars have adopted those of Dryfoos (1993), namely, “full-service community school,”

along with its definition (Abrams & Gibbs, 2000; Adelman & Taylor, 1996; Holtzman, 1997; McMahan et al., 2000). Specifically, Dryfoos (1993) noted that the term “full-service community school” is comprehensive in nature and encompasses various names, referring to public schools that integrate educational, medical, social, and/or human services that are conducive to meeting the individual needs of children and families as well as facilitating easy access to these services. Described as “one-stop-shopping” (Dryfoos, 1995, p. 150), the origin of Dryfoos’s use of the term FSCS can be traced back to the full-service schools established in 1991 in Florida. Moreover, credit appears to be due to efforts by the Florida legislature to support an interagency collaborative system that would provide a comprehensive package of human services in school buildings.

*Purpose.* Our analyses identified several different perspectives on the purpose of FSCSs. First, some scholars have argued that interest in the FSCS stems from its potential as a new model for school reform, focusing on improving academic achievement (Abrams & Gibbs, 2000; Bundy, 2005; McMahan et al., 2000; Tyack, 1992). Second, several scholars argued that the purpose of FSCSs is to systematically reduce the fragmented delivery of human services for children and youth (Adelman & Taylor, 1997; Dryfoos, 1995). Third, some authors focused on the goal of FSCSs helping youths and families from socioeconomically disadvantaged neighborhoods to more easily access necessary services (Conwill, 2003). Holtzman (1997) went one step farther, suggesting that the FSCS model could make a significant contribution to resolving social problems such as social inequity and massive migration from rural to urban and urban to suburban areas. Likewise, McMahan et al. (2000) also noted FSCS’s potential contribution to solving social problems by helping children and families who live in high-risk areas such as inner cities.

*Features.* Our analyses indicated that many FSCS settings appear to share features that distinguish them from other educational initiatives (Abrams & Gibbs, 2000; Conwill, 2003; Dryfoos, 1995, 2005). First, FSCSs open their doors to students, families, and the community before, during, and after school, seven days a week, all year long. Second, FSCSs establish partnership agreements with both public schools and service providers to promote positive youth development. Third, FSCS models tend to be operated within formal and ordinary neighborhood public school systems, unlike, for example, charter schools that cater to special interests (e.g., math and science). The FSCS model also requires extensive community-based and parental participation, from planning to implementation to monitoring, with the goal of transforming schools into holistic child-centered institutions. Finally, FSCSs are often financed through sources outside school systems, particularly states and foundations.

### *Academic Performance*

Publications addressing students' academic achievement fell into three sub-categories, all of which additionally focused on students' academic engagement: those that (1) addressed achievement as a need or rationale for implementing an FSCS; (2) examined achievement as an outcome of the FSCS model; and (3) discussed the significant methodological limitations of the few existing research studies. Each is described below.

*Need/rationale.* Dryfoos (2005) argued that the No Child Left Behind Act passed in 2001 placed enormous accountability on teachers and school administrators with regard to academic achievement. Moreover, this occurred even though it was well known that many of the external factors that schools cannot control (e.g., poverty level of the community) have been found to critically impact academic performance (Barton, 2005). Therefore, Dryfoos (2005) maintained that schools needed help from community agencies that could share some of the responsibilities for education, thereby supporting academic performance. Abrams and Gibbs (2000) also reported that many studies have found positive correlations between community participation—especially by parents—and students' academic engagement and achievement. Further, work by Sanders and Lewis (2005) illustrated the critical role of community involvement as a means of supporting school success in advancing students' academic performance.

*Outcomes.* Evidence of positive outcomes, namely, that FSCSs increase students' academic engagement and measurable achievements, was described in very few publications. First, two researchers in the literature reviewed in this study, Volyes (2012) and Tagle (2005), have claimed FSCS models have shown increased academic engagement and reduced behavioral problems. Similarly, Dryfoos (1995) mentioned that the rates of attendance and graduation in FSCS schools were significantly higher than in comparable schools.

*Methodological limitations of existing FSCS studies.* In spite of some reported evidence that academic performance improved through implementation of the FSCS model, several authors also noted the extent to which methodological flaws have limited the credibility of these results. For example, Volyes (2012) pointed out that most studies examining students' academic achievements in FSCSs used inadequate research designs that were focused too simply on changes between input and output and ignored the highly complex contexts in which FSCSs operate. Similarly, McMahon et al. (2000) argued that the existing research lacked systematic analyses to identify factors that prevent evaluators from measuring FSCS effectiveness. Finally, Dryfoos (1995) expressed her frustration at not being able to obtain comparison groups in her research.



## Partnership Between Schools, Communities, and Parents

The third theme—partnership between schools, communities, and parents—contained three subthemes: (1) benefits for communities and parents, (b) challenges of collaboration with communities and parents, and (c) leadership of the full-time coordinator and principal at the school level. Each is described in the following sections.

### *Benefits for Communities and Parents*

Although the articles reviewed in this study tended to present the benefits of FSCSs mostly from the students' perspectives, some evidence emerged that communities and parents also benefitted from the collaboration processes that occurred when schools adopted the FSCS model (Conwill, 2003; Dryfoos, 2005; Sanders & Lewis, 2005; Tagle 2005). First, Quinn (2005) noted that one FSCS, which had adopted the Children's Aid Society model, promoted economic growth at the neighborhood level by employing community residents in its partnership schools, supporting community businesses, partnering with financial institutions, and offering entrepreneurial classes for parents and other adults. Tagle (2005) also pointed out that collaboration with diverse groups through an observed FSCS initiative helped the community broaden its level of civic discourse.

### *Challenges of Collaboration With Communities and Parents*

Although a well-established collaborative relationship among schools, communities, and parents is essential for making FSCSs successful (Trepanier et al., 2008), our analysis of the available literature also identified barriers to communities and parents becoming actively involved in FSCS models. For example, Abrams and Gibbs (2000) noted that outsiders' participation in a FSCS is often easier to attempt than to accomplish. Some participants reported a generic resistance of school personnel to the involvement of outsiders in any decision-making processes. Thus, the authors identified respectful attitudes toward partners as an important element for school personnel to adopt. This can be demonstrated by accepting both resources and personnel from outside the school, understanding outsiders' cultures (including language differences), helping outside personnel understand how schools work, and developing shared visions and goals about what the collaborations should look like and accomplish (Abrams & Gibbs, 2000; Adelman & Taylor, 1996, 1997; Dryfoos, 1995, 2003; Quinn, 2005; Voyles, 2012). To facilitate a respectful school attitude towards community members/organizations and parents who want to be involved, Abrams and Gibbs (2000) underscored the importance that enough time for communication be provided, and Holtzman (1997) encouraged full

community and parental participation from the very beginning of FSCS implementation planning.

The issue of ambiguous assignment of accountability among various community agencies was also identified as a challenge (Adelman & Taylor, 1997). For example, Tagle (2005) argued that the FSCS model often struggles in the management and assignment of responsibilities to multiple (and often changing) players; therefore, establishing reasonable and specific benchmarks for each partner was suggested as an important strategy for successful implementation.

#### *Leadership of the Full-Time Coordinator and Principal at the School Level*

Our analysis indicated that a number of publications addressed the critical and essential roles of both the full-time FSCS coordinator and school principal, both of whom are (or should be) located at the school to make the initiative successful. Several scholars noted that the presence as well as professional work of the full-time coordinator was important, as this person needs to ensure that necessary services are provided appropriately, nonschool programs are effectively and efficiently coordinated, complex tasks are competently handled, supports are instituted that meet the unique needs of the school, and, most importantly, communication with the school principal is clear and ongoing (Quinn, 2005; Trepanier et al., 2008). The effectiveness of full-time school coordinators and their connection with principals was also highlighted by Dryfoos (2005) who argued that a coordinator's successful role fulfillment was as "peer to the principal" (p. 10) and that, ultimately, coordinators were the driving force in yielding successful outcomes in FSCSs. Similarly, based on experience with the School of the Future project launched in 1990, Holtzman (1997) also underscored the school coordinator's ability to promote active involvement and support from the community, other partner agencies, and stakeholders by directly interacting with these individuals and groups. Relationships, trust, and follow-through by the coordinator are all considered crucial.

In addition, some publications explicitly highlighted the leadership of the school principal as key to the success of the FSCS model. Dryfoos (1995) argued that, although it is vital for principals to lead school restructuring efforts, they should also act as facilitators to help outsiders successfully navigate and integrate into the school environment. Dryfoos (1993) eloquently captured this:

Picture what happens when the school environment is infiltrated by a whole new set of outsiders. New staff members who work for a different organization, often with a higher pay scale and always with a different union, arrive. Scarce space—perhaps several classrooms or the old band room—is converted (usually during the summer) into a primary care facility with freshly painted walls, new furniture, and attractive posters.

Or, as in Florida, prefab units are added to the campus. The principal must pave the way for this intrusion. (pp. 32–33)

## Discussion

Maslow's hierarchy of needs explains how people are better suited to work at achieving self-actualization, such as self-improvement through education, after basic needs like housing and safety are met (McLeod, 2007). Thus, it is not hard to understand why students from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds underperform compared to students from middle- and upper-middle-class backgrounds. However, the theory that if we can increase the social capital (Bourdieu, 1985) in underserved areas through community service integration, thereby providing students with effective opportunities to achieve academically, we can improve upward mobility through our educational systems. It is from this perspective that FSCSs are considered a promising model for school reform, aiming to reduce risks (e.g., by providing lead screenings) and increase opportunities (e.g., offering afterschool enrichment programs), particularly for students from impoverished backgrounds (Conwill, 2003; McMahon et al., 2000; Tyack, 1992).

Interest in FSCSs from both practitioners and policymakers appears to be increasing (Dryfoos, 2005). For example, the Coalition for Community Schools (CCS), established in 1998, has become a unifying force now including more than 170 member organizations. Later, the Full-Service Community School Act (FSCSA), introduced in 2009 by the U.S. Congress, paved the way for building stronger partnerships between schools and communities for at-risk youth. Even more recently, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), passed in December 2015, placed renewed attention on school–community partnerships and their importance. As expected, some emphasis was found in our study about the importance of sharing information related to what appears to be working well with FSCSs. Not surprisingly, several authors described the significance of partnerships among communities, parents, and schools. Also not surprisingly, it appears that a primary reason different stakeholders have difficulty cooperating with each other relates to the differing missions and accountability requirements of various child and family service agencies (Adelman & Taylor, 1997; Anderson, 2000; Tagle, 2005).

Unfortunately, we found no scholarship that specifically examined issues of accountability or even suggested ways of handling these issues. However, such work has been undertaken in other fields. For example, in children's mental health and social services, interagency collaboration vis-à-vis systems of care development has 30 years of empirical evidence, highlighting not only the need

to coordinate services but also how disparate systems can work together to do so (Anderson & Mohr, 2003). Likewise, although several scholars noted that the leadership of the school principal and having a full-time FSCS coordinator were critical to the success of these initiatives, little substantive information beyond ensuring “open communication” was available to guide efforts. While the emphasis in the existing literature on the benefits and challenges of the FSCS model along with some narratives of exemplary practice via case studies is important to advancing the field, the knowledge base remains underdeveloped. Specifically, we call for the creation of detailed, empirically derived frameworks for monitoring the creation, implementation, and functioning of FSCSs.

Despite the efforts of educational practitioners and policymakers to expand the FSCS model, academic researchers have barely started to study these approaches. It has been argued that the slow response may be partially due to the origins of the FSCS model being in community development instead of in educational scholarship (Burbach & Decker, 1977). Regardless, the lack of scientific research to guide implementation is problematic, particularly given the growing funding and increasing numbers of FSCSs in this country. Indeed, many scholars working in FSCS settings have pointed to the need for more peer-reviewed research to ensure quality while informing the broader public about the success of these initiatives. We agree with and argue that the lack of empirical evidence actually hurts the field by seriously threatening long-term sustainment, because without reliable information to guide implementation, practitioners and administrators are correct to worry that the FSCS approach may become just another fad. In addition, the paucity of scholarly discussions about the FSCS model prevents those who are interested in the topic from stepping forward and making productive contributions to the field, as many academics look mostly to the peer-reviewed literature base for their groundwork.

Thus, one of our key findings is the need for more scientific research on FSCSs. We recommend that more evaluation research be undertaken, using both quantitative and qualitative approaches, both to fully understand the complexity of these models and to guide more efficient and effective replication and improvement (Towne & Shavelson, 2002). Although random designs are difficult to implement when studying complex community-based programs (Knapp, 1995) such as FSCSs, we recommend that quasi-experimental designs using control groups be used when feasible (see, e.g., Foster, Stephens, Krivelyova, & Gamfi, 2007). We optimistically anticipate that with better designs and larger sample sizes it may be possible to examine specific types of model configurations and explore their relationship with group and individual outcomes longitudinally. Additionally, we speculate that the degree and quality of

family involvement in FSCSs will be correlated with change patterns in group and, possibly, youth outcomes. In sum, even though Dryfoos and others have published many FSCS-related articles that have been widely utilized, more research, including rigorous studies with comparison groups, is recommended.

This study used research methods that are subject to several limitations. First, a number of potential FSCS papers were excluded because they were published as technical reports. Although this exclusion was reasonably made because (1) the purpose of this study was to examine how scholarly research published in peer-reviewed journals has described and evaluated FSCSs, specifically, and to call for more research that employs scientific methods in the field, and (2) there was no effective way to confidently ensure the quality of non-peer-reviewed publications (such as technical reports) or even have a reasonable method for identifying all such existing publications. However, by choosing to exclude those items and focusing solely on academic discourse through peer-refereed journals, it is possible that some important work has been overlooked. As an example, Whalen's (2002) report that evaluated the Polk Brothers Foundation's three-year Full-Service Schools Initiative in the Chicago area provided valuable information that helped us gain a better understanding of outcomes for FSCS models. In his report, Whalen (2002) maintained that the model played a positive role in improving students' academic performance, including active engagement and reading and math scores, appearing to confirm the findings of Voyles (2012), Tagle (2005), and Dryfoos (1995). He further found that the model was associated with declined mobility and increased resources at all participating schools. Unlike articles published in peer-reviewed journals, however, accessibility to good quality reports about FSCSs is limited to those who know where to look. Understandably, without far better dissemination of such reports, the field will remain underinformed about potentially useful research and scholarship.

The second limitation resulted from our effort to differentiate the FSCS model from other types of community school models. By restricting our search criteria to capture publications that included the phrase "full-service community schools" in their abstracts, we acknowledge that some articles may have been missed. It is quite possible some authors may use the phrases community schools and FSCSs interchangeably, and, as such, it is possible that we failed to include one or more papers focused on FSCSs. On the other hand, although valuable implications for FSCSs may have been included in publications that focus strictly on community schools, we also note that including those articles would have made it difficult to maintain the selection criteria used in this study to specifically focus on the FSCS model.

Despite these limitations, as well as the tentativeness of the existing literature base related to FSCSs, our study offers important preliminary insights into both the current status and future direction of the FSCS model. Arguably, the greatest limitation of the existing scholarly discussions of the FSCS model is that they have tended to originate with educational practitioners rather than academic researchers. The importance of having both the practitioner and the empirical perspective is critical for an emerging field, and the lack of empirical investigation appears to create at least two challenges. First, it reduces the likelihood of communities choosing to develop an FSCS model, and second, when such models are implemented, there is a lack of empirical work to guide development. A possible third challenge will be created if funders desiring to use empirical evidence to make resource distribution decisions do not fund FSCSs due to the lack of data.

The limited and uncertain information on FSCS, at least in part, stems from the difficulty of studying multilayered, multifaceted systems. However, this lack of empirical literature should not be considered wholly unusual, especially given the challenges of conducting evaluation studies examining complex social interventions (Knapp, 1995). Because FSCSs are contextualized by numerous local factors, deciding appropriate goals and outcomes will require interagency communication and cooperation (Anderson, 2000). Moreover, once agreed upon, accurately measuring outcomes will still depend on understanding and accounting for a host of variables, many of which cannot be easily measured or replicated in studies across sites. Ultimately, understanding who improves in FSCSs and the factors associated with their improvement will be illusive and complex. Consensus about effectiveness will likely be most clear in hindsight, emerging over time, as evidence from multiple site-specific studies are published and examined (Foster et al., 2007). This integrative literature review provides an important first step.

## Endnote

<sup>1</sup>The “nation at risk” model is a generic name given to approaches to school reform that resulted from the publication of *A Nation at Risk* in 1983, which created fear among the American public that U.S. schools were falling behind the rest of the world academically (retrieved from <http://www2.ed.gov/pubs/NatAtRisk/index.html>).

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