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**City Renews Funding for Muncie Community Schools “City Connects” Program**

For the past three years, Muncie Community Schools’ [City Connects program](https://www.bc.edu/bc-web/schools/lynch-school/sites/cityconnects.html) has become an integral part of helping students succeed in school. As a result, the city of Muncie is renewing its financial commitment to the initiative, providing $100,000 for each of the next three years.

The city’s investment will enable the school district to employ family navigators in six of its nine schools. Family navigators are the lynchpins of the program. They assess the strengths and needs of each child, and develop individual plans that allow students to help realize their potential.

Each family navigator is a mental health professional, school counselor or masters’ level social worker who not only initiates needed services within the school, but also connects families with resources and programs throughout the Muncie community. They focus on four different areas: academics, social/emotional/behavioral needs, health and family.

“Investing in the success of our youth is the most important thing we can do,” Muncie Mayor Dan Ridenour said. “This program helps children and families thrive in our community.”

City Connects was originally founded in Boston and boasts a significant track record of success over 20 years. Muncie was one of the first schools in Indiana to implement the program with the help of [Marian University’s Center for Vibrant Schools](https://www.marian.edu/educators-college/community-outreach/center-for-vibrant-schools/index.php), which oversees the program throughout the Midwest.

“The City Connects program is making a big difference in our schools, and it’s extremely gratifying to see that the city and Mayor Ridenour recognize that,” MCS Director of Public Education and CEO Dr. Chuck Reynolds said. “Without this support, we wouldn’t be able to maintain a full staff of family navigators who are assisting some of our most vulnerable students, allowing them to overcome significant challenges and succeed in the classroom. This investment helps change students’ lives in very meaningful ways.”

MCS has family navigators at East Washington Academy, Grissom Elementary, Longfellow Elementary, South View Elementary, Southside Middle School and, beginning this fall, Central High School. For more information, visit [muncie.k12.in.us/departments/student-services/family-navigators](https://www.muncie.k12.in.us/departments/student-services/family-navigators).