



New Jersey Department of Education, Office of Charter Schools

LEAP Academy University Charter School Collection of Best Practices Template

Collection of Best Practices

<p>Name of Charter School: LEAP Academy University Charter School, Inc.</p>
<p>About the Charter School (Mission / Key Design Elements): <i>LEAP’s mission is to “enhance opportunities for the children and families of Camden through the collaborative design, implementation, and integration of education, health, and human services programs and through community development.”</i> The school’s educational philosophy has a dual focus on closing the achievement gap and ensuring college preparation and completion for African American and Latino students. LEAP’s academic focus has been sustained through four design elements: (1) the charter school approach used as a platform for transforming educational options for parents and children in Camden City by producing educational outcomes and establishing an organization that is entrepreneurial, efficient and highly accountable; (2) adoption of a rigorous curriculum that focuses on the STEM/STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Technology) content areas that is taught using multi-disciplinary collaborations and is supported by opportunities for students to engage in active, integrated and self-directed learning across grade levels; (3) embraced the importance of placing college and career readiness at the center of its organizational structure—one that encompasses high expectations for students, educators, and families; and (4) the LEAP model begins at infancy to ensure that children are part of a comprehensive educational pipeline that supports them into productive adulthood.</p>
<p>Best Practice Topic(s) / Performance Area within Organizational Framework:</p> <p>School Based Health, Wellness and Behavioral Services</p>
<p>Summary: Establishing a Culture of Wellness is a priority of the school and fundamental for the work with parents. LEAP believes that schools are the best places for providing families with resources to support their health, socio-emotional and academic needs of its families. LEAP Academy offers families a myriad of opportunities through three major units—(1) a Comprehensive Health and Wellness Center managed by a Family Practitioner and Nurse Practitioners that serves as the medical home for LEAP families; (2) a Family Support Center that provides social, behavioral health and wellness programs for families; and, (3) a Parent Center that provides adult learning options, parents training and job readiness programs.</p>
<p>Partner(s): Rutgers University Community Leadership Center; Rutgers Camden School of Nursing; Cooper Medical Center; Camden County College; Rowan University; Cabrini University.</p>
<p>Dates: from 1997-present</p>
<p>School Contact:</p> <p>Janice Strigh, Lead Person (Janice.strigh@camden.rutgers.edu) Dr. Gloria Bonilla-Santiago (gloriab@camden.rutgers.edu)</p>
<p>Resources:</p> <p>Medical services; wellness programs; fitness center; training and job readiness programs</p>