



CONSORTIUM
OF FLORIDA EDUCATION
FOUNDATIONS



COVID Education Innovation in Florida

Health and Wellness Check-ins (Collier County)

Collier County Public Schools knew that continual support of students beyond classroom walls was necessary in helping students and families maintain a semblance of stability and social and emotional wellness, and the District was challenged to meet the rising concerns during COVID-19 for behavioral and mental health supports. Outreach and collaboration were key in creating a comprehensive approach to the problem and the District worked with the Collier County Sheriff's Office Youth Relations Division to utilize Youth Relations Deputies to provide check-ins, communication, and behavioral and mental health supports to identified students over the summer. With parent permission, deputies visited student homes to ensure welfare, maintain connections and relationships, and provide resources and service referrals as needed. In several instances, they even picked up and delivered free District meals for families unable to get them due to a lack of transportation or work hour conflicts with food banks.

Many students and families who participated were in underserved communities with a lack of resources. Youth Relation Deputies are adept at providing these supports as they receive training in Youth Mental Health First Aid, the Columbia Suicide Rating Scale, and Safety Planning. They are also familiar with the students and their families, school staff working with the students and community resources.

As a result of this collaboration and partnership, once school resumed in the fall, the District was able to quickly identify students who had immediate needs early in the school year and anticipate continual support. The program's success indicated the need for increased transition planning for other students experiencing similar events before the end of the school year. The Sheriff's Office reported that the program helped them be proactive with marginalized students and foster a sense of trust in the communities.

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The Consortium elevates the impact of Florida's local education foundations through advocacy and providing a collegial community for ongoing learning, shared resources and support. These nonprofit organizations are aligned with nearly every school district in our state and collectively they raise more than \$80 million annually to innovate learning, power potential and celebrate success.

We believe strong collaboration is essential to ensure school success. Our effort to capture, elevate and share education innovations discovered amid the disruption of the pandemic is offered in that spirit.

Our **Top 10 Takeaways: COVID Education Innovation** report can be accessed at educationinnovationspotlight.com