

PHENND

Philadelphia Higher Education Network for Neighborhood Development

AmeriCorps VISTA Community Partnership Project



PHENND is...

The Philadelphia Higher Education Network for Neighborhood Development (PHENND) is a consortium of over 30 colleges and universities in the greater Philadelphia area. PHENND works to build the capacity of its member institutions to develop mutually beneficial, sustained, and democratic community-based service-learning partnerships. The consortium actively seeks to **revitalize local communities and schools** and foster civic responsibility among the region's colleges and universities.



PHENND

K-16
Partnerships
Network

VISTA Project

What is a VISTA?

An AmeriCorps VISTA is full-time federally funded volunteer who is responsible for capacity building initiatives and community outreach for an organization.

The VISTA program is a tool in our tool kit.

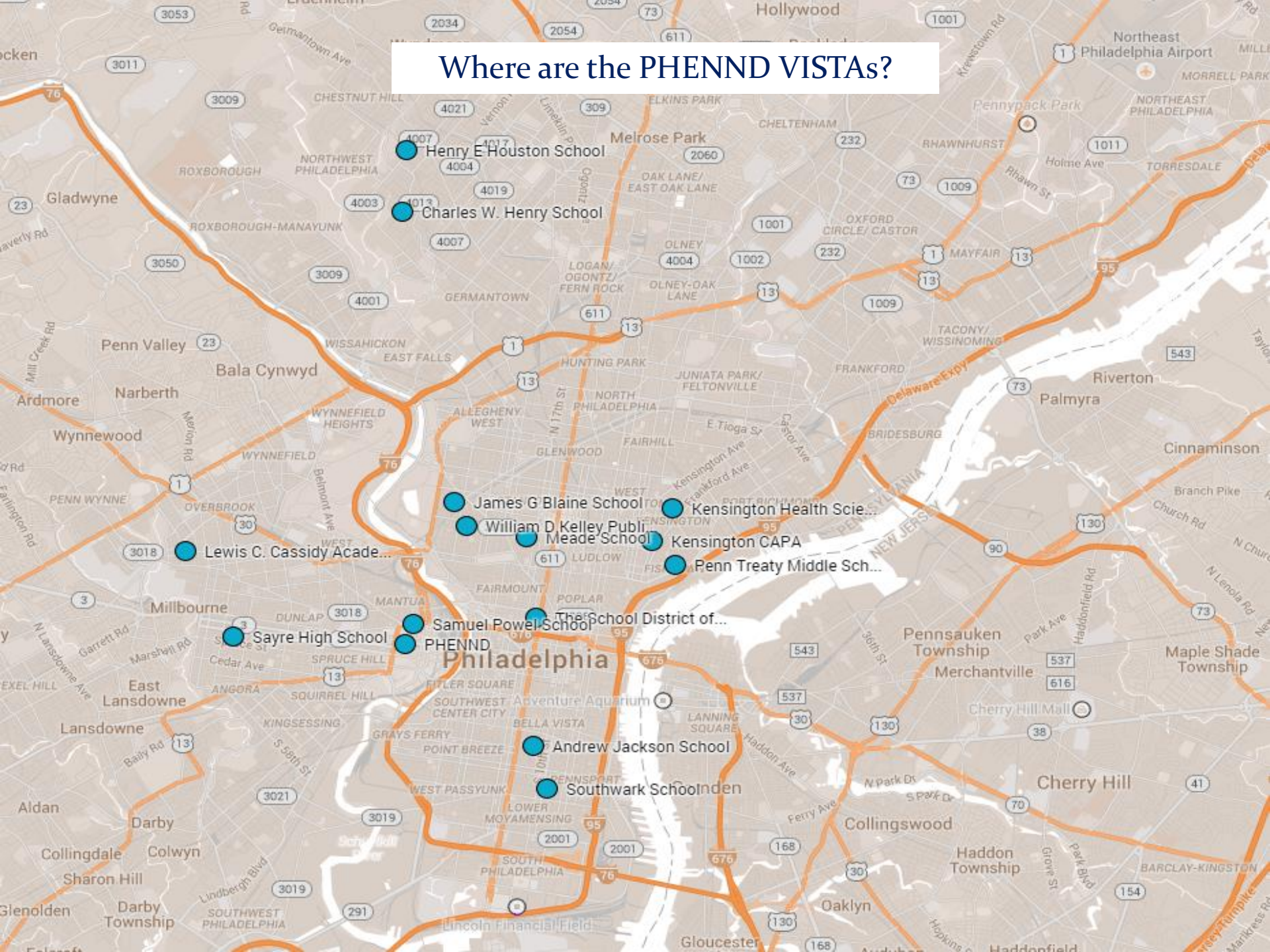
VISTAs are not standard employees or allowed to displace other workers.

VISTA Role

The VISTA builds capacity of schools in **four major areas** through specific activities:

- **Documentation and Needs Assessment**
- **Communication and Relationship Building**
- **Strategic Planning**
- **Evaluation**

Where are the PHENND VISTAs?



Henry E. Houston School

Charles W. Henry School

James G. Blaine School

William D. Kelley Public Meade School

Kensington Health Science Center

Kensington CAPA

Penn Treaty Middle School

Lewis C. Cassidy Academy

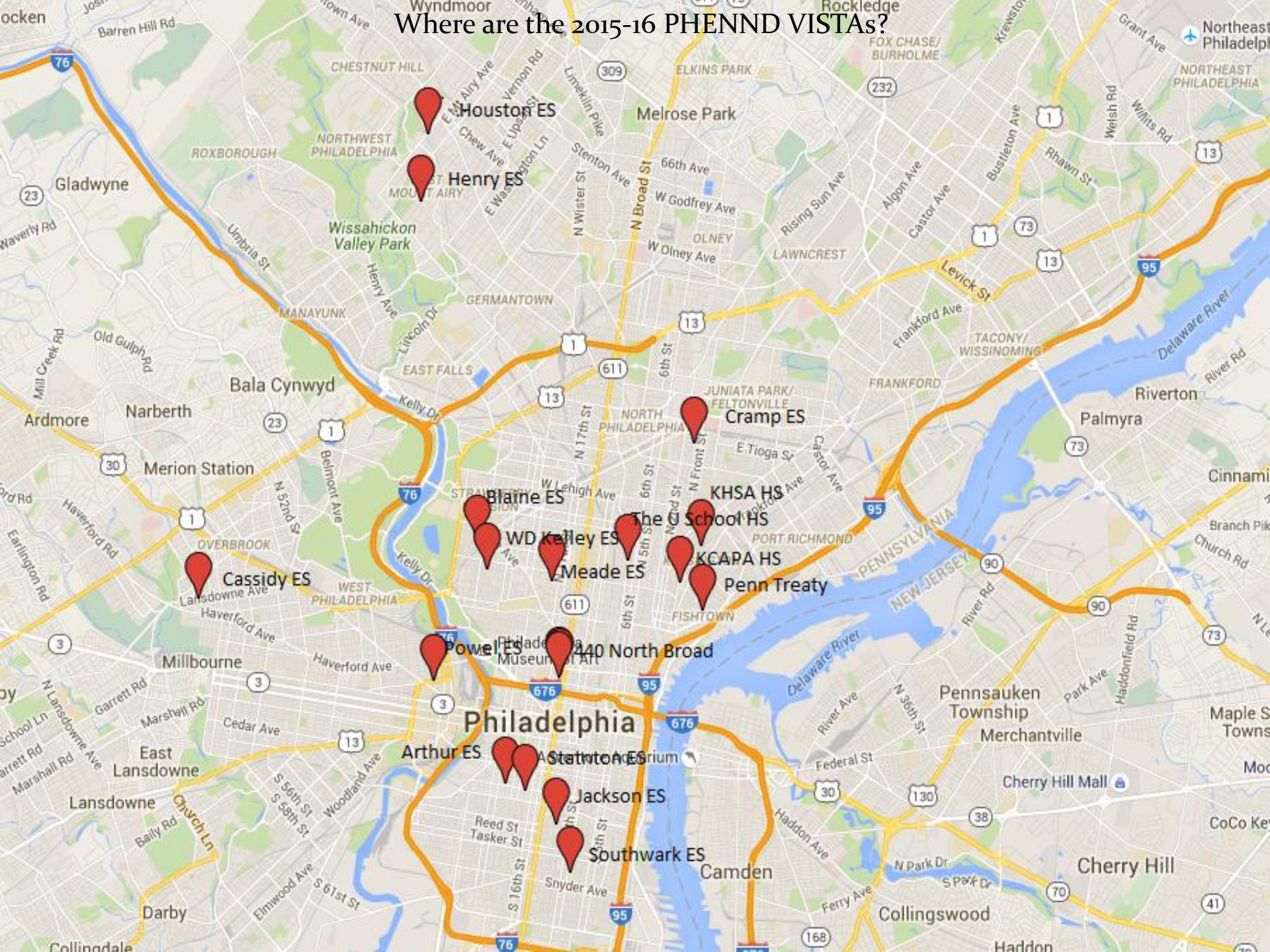
Sayre High School

Samuel Powel School

Andrew Jackson School

Southwark School

Where are the 2015-16 PHENND VISTAS?



Houston ES

Henry ES

Cassidy ES

Powell ES

Arthur ES

Blaine ES

WD Kelley ES

Meade ES

440 North Broad

Statton ES

Jackson ES

Southwark ES

Cramp ES

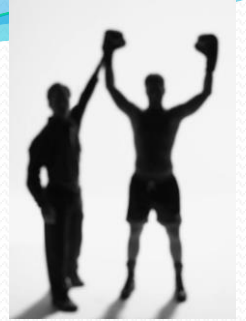
The O School HS

KCHA HS

KCAPA HS

Penn Treaty

Accomplishments



- The 13 school VISTAs have engaged more than 300 partner organizations this year alone in aligning with school schedules, holding partner meetings, and planning school/community events
- Cultivated new or revived old partnerships to meet defined school needs (literacy organizations, graduate schools of education, service learning college students, non-profits, museums, environmental groups)
- Successful MLK days, math and literacy nights, career/college fairs, parent engagement events
- This year alone generated over \$20,000 in cash and non-cash resources valued at through small grants, community fundraisers, DonorsChoose.org, as well as over 1,000 volunteers



Lessons Learned So Far

- Partners respond positively to regular meetings and hearing school needs. Grateful for an “in” to school and want to help in creative ways
- VISTAs flourish with strong task supervision at the school level
- Hard for VISTA to carve out his/her role if there is one very dominant partner at the school
- Principal and leadership team need to want to do this work



Baby steps to a community school

- Helping school identify outstanding needs and define goals and priorities
- Helping leadership better align partner organization resources to school needs
- Helping partners build capacity to better serve students through increasing collaboration with other partners

6 buckets: programs and services inside a community learning school

Medical
(primary,
dental,
vision)

Mental
Health

Academic
support

Out of
School
Time (OST)

Parent and
family
support

Community
engagement
and
programs

PHENND
VISTA

Future Aspirations

- Embed PHENND VISTA project in a larger city-wide community schools strategy
- Use VISTA project cycle to assess school's readiness to be a Community School
- Share lessons learned with other intermediaries and SDP