THE SIX PILLARS OF COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
TOOLKIT

NEA Resource Guide for Educators, Families & Communities

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OVERVIEW

COMMUNITY SCHOOL: *A center of the community that brings together academics, health and social services, youth and community development and community engagement under one roof, leading to improved learning, stronger families, and healthier communities.*[1]

NEA COMMUNITY SCHOOLS TOOLKIT

The National Education Association vision is *a great public school for every student.* We know that partnerships with families, communities, and other stakeholders are essential to quality public education and student success. We believe that individuals are stronger when they work together for a common goal and the common good.

Every student deserves a well-rounded curriculum that will nurture his natural curiosity, imagination, and desire to learn. All students deserve schools that have the resources and programs to support, encourage, and inspire students at every level. They deserve schools that provide things like a band; teachers who are certified to teach physics and calculus; counselors to help students make life-altering choices; caring and supportive staff who welcome families into the school; theater class; girls' volleyball; a chemistry lab; classes that offer college credit; debate; robotics; foreign languages. The new prek-12 education law, the Every Student Succeeds Act or ESSA, will get us closer to achieving that goal for all students if we make our voices heard in how it's carried out.

The 2015 reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) is full of opportunities for stakeholders to make decisions together in the best interest of students. In fact, many decisions about the implementation of ESSA require collaboration with key stakeholders like educators, parents, and community leaders. This is no accident. NEA members, along with other coalition partners, advocated to make sure that the people who know and understand the needs of students best are included in the decisions that affect them the most.

Funding for community schools has several possible levers in the new law. Policymakers can use Title I funding to support a Community School Coordinator responsible for integrating school and community resources. Title IV programs, including 21st Century Learning Centers, Student Support and Academic Enrichment, and Full Service Community Schools, allow funding to support after school programs and Community School Coordinators through a combination of entitlement and competitive grants.

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1   For more on NEA's position and resources on Community Schools, go to **www.nea.org/home/66319.htm**

According to the United States Department of Education,[2] "Full-Service Community Schools provide comprehensive academic, social, and health services for students, students' family members, and community members that will result in improved educational outcomes for children. These services may include: high-quality early learning programs and service; remedial education, aligned with academic supports and other enrichment activities, providing students with a comprehensive academic program; family engagement, including parental involvement, parent leadership, family literacy, and parent education programs; mentoring and other youth development programs; community service and service learning opportunities; programs that provide assistance to students who have been chronically absent, truant, suspended, or expelled; job training and career counseling services; nutrition services and physical activities; primary health and dental care; activities that improve access to and use of social service programs and programs that promote family financial stability; mental health services; and adult education, including instruction of adults in English as a second language."

NEA supports Community Schools because this strategy is one way to advocate for racial justice in education and remove obstacles that stand in the way of some students.

➲ In far too many cases, there are still students—usually minority students—who are tracked into classes that do not prepare them for college and careers. **Instead,** we support the community schools strategy as a way to provide challenging and culturally relevant curricula to students while providing a robust selection of classes.

➲ In too many schools, differential discipline practices remove disproportionate numbers of minorities from the classroom, denying them the opportunity to learn. **Instead,** we stand behind the use of positive behavioral supports and restorative practices to foster a healthy school climate, and to move away from zero-tolerance discipline policies that over-emphasize suspension and expulsion. Our members in Denver, Colorado, are using restorative practices throughout the district to improve and repair student-adult relationships, leading to a decline in out-of-school suspensions.

➲ It is shameful that school funding and resource allocation still favor students from wealthy neighborhoods. **Instead,** community schools are places where resources are made available to students, families, and the neighborhood at the school site, including medical and psychological care, after-school programs, and other services that meet the particular needs of the community.

➲ In neighborhoods where public schools are threatened with takeovers or shutdowns, the promotion of for-profit charter schools often takes root. With their lack of accountability and transparency, for-profit charters rarely achieve good outcomes for diverse students. They seldom invest adequately in the Specialized Instructional Support Personnel (like school counselors or school social workers) who are needed to help students overcome a variety of challenges and succeed in class and in life. We see community schools as a way of bringing communities together without wasting resources or causing destructive competition that leads to the underfunding of neighborhood schools.

So what is the union role in this work? We know how to organize people, and can serve as the first mover in getting a community to survey its needs and commit to moving forward with the community school strategy. We can lead community conversations; serve on planning teams; raise public awareness about student needs and resource equity gaps, and explain how community schools can meet them; and we can make sure our members understand their roles at the school building level.

Federal Education Policy and School Redesign

While most public schools are located within a community, the majority are not "community schools."

The conventional perception of schools is that they focus almost exclusively on academics and extensions of learning through extracurricular activities and athletic programs. Schools are organized by classroom in which teachers teach and students learn. Much like a rotary dial phone, this singular focus follows long-established customs and routines.

While this conventional model has existed for decades in most of our schools, much has changed since President Lyndon Johnson signed the Elementary and Secondary Education Act into law on April 11, 1965 with his childhood teacher at his side.

ESEA is primarily an entitlement statute that sends funding to high-need schools to address educational deficits of students living in poverty. High-poverty schools, those with at least 40 percent of students eligible for Free or Reduced Price Lunch, are often called Title I schools.

Through its various reauthorizations up through the 2015 Every Student Succeeds Act, ESEA has attempted to provide funding and guidance so that students attending high-poverty schools achieve at or near the same levels as their more advantaged peers. For the past 20 years, ESEA regulations and guidance have become more specific by, for example, incentivizing states that accept federal funding to adopt curriculum standards; requiring states to implement annual testing in reading, mathematics and science; mandating redesign models for schools with poor test results; requiring most educators to be deemed "highly qualified"; and encouraging states and districts to evaluate educators, in part, through their impact on student learning.

Beginning with the 2001 reauthorization of ESEA as the No Child Left Behind Act, all students were required to make Adequate Yearly Progress toward a state-defined measure of proficiency. Those schools that failed to do this were subject to progressive sanctions labeled "corrective action" and eventually "restructuring."

While all schools must adopt most ESEA-driven policies, high-poverty schools that receive the bulk of Title I funding have been the primary focus of school accountability and redesign mandates. Recipients of the 2009 Race to the Top (RTTT) competitive education redesign grant were required to identify low-performing schools that had to adopt one of four "turnaround" models:

- ➲ TURNAROUND required replacing the principal and 50 percent of the school staff; providing job-embedded professional development, financial and career incentives; expanding student learning and teacher planning time; and focusing on a community orientation.

- ➲ RESTART required shuttering the school and reopening with a new operator, generally an Education or Charter Management Operator.

- ➲ TRANSFORMATION required replacing the principal; providing job-embedded profesional devel-opment; implementing educator evaluation systems with financial and career rewards; expanding learning time; and focusing on a community orientation.

- ➲ SCHOOL Closure required shuttering the school and enrolling students in other higher-achieving schools.

Subsequent to RTTT, the federal School Improvement Grant program recipients were also required to impose one of the four turnaround models. Finally, any state seeking a waiver from the school accountability mandates of No Child Left Behind was required to do the same. So over the past 15 years, hundreds of high-poverty, low-performing schools have been labeled as "failing" based on student test scores and forced to adopt a one-size-fits-all model of school redesign.

While no one would argue with a goal of having no school in the "low-performing" category, the notion that the top-down imposition of federally mandated solutions is the answer fails to acknowledge the diversity and demands of individual schools.

Instead, many high-poverty schools have transformed themselves without the imposition of federal models. The Community School model, which is not one of the four turnaround models, is based on implementing proven improvement strategies in a collaborative and collegial process resulting in high-performing schools even in high-poverty neighborhoods.
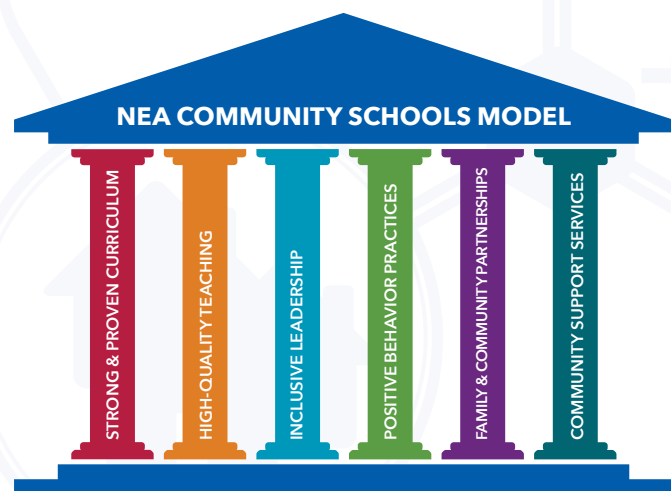
School Redesign: The Community Schools Model

In community schools, as in all schools, teachers teach and students learn—but with a focus on the whole child: an integrated focus. Much like a smart phone, this integrated approach encompasses many new features: before and after school programs beyond the traditional extracurricular and athletic programs; learning opportunities for family and community members; and health and wellness support. Partnerships with community organizations and businesses broaden the educational and experiential scope of learning making the school a hub of community activity.

These schools are often based on the Sustainable Community Schools (SCS) model, which considers the needs of students and their families; services that are currently provided at the school; the availability and capabilities of local provider agencies; and the willingness of school personnel to change course and accept a new way of operating. The Community School concept has been embraced by single schools; entire school districts, cities, and counties; and, in one case, an entire state (Kentucky). The result has been deeper engagement and greater overall academic success. Community Schools lead to:

- ➲ Lower rates of absenteeism;
- ➲ Better work habits, grades, test scores, and behavior;
- ➲ Higher enrollment in college preparatory classes; and
- ➲ Higher graduation rates.

The Community School Model advanced by NEA includes six pillars of practice. Like most public education models, they are adaptable to the needs of an individual school's students, staff, families and community.

NEA COMMUNITY SCHOOLS MODEL

STRONG & PROVEN CURRICULUM

HIGH-QUALITY TEACHING

INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR PRACTICES

FAMILY & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES

The Six Pillars are:

✔ **Strong and Proven Curriculum –**
Educators provide a rich and varied academic program allowing students to acquire both foundational and advanced knowledge and skills in many content areas. Students learn with challenging, culturally relevant materials that address their learning needs and expand their experience. They also learn how to analyze and understand the unique experiences and perspectives of others. The curriculum embraces all content areas including the arts, second languages, and physical education. Rigorous courses such as Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate are offered. Learning and enrichment activities are provided before and after the regular school day, including sports, the arts, and homework assistance. The needs of parents and families are addressed through English-as-a-Second-Language classes, GED preparation, and job training programs.

✔ **High-quality teaching –** Teachers are fully licensed, knowledgeable about their content, and skillful in their practice. Instructional time focuses on learning rather than testing. Individual student needs are identified and learning opportunities are designed to address them. Higher order thinking skills are at the core of instruction so that all students acquire problem solving, critical thinking, and reasoning skills. Educators work collaboratively to plan lessons, analyze student work, and adjust curriculum as required. Experienced educators work closely with novices as mentors, coaches, and "guides on the side," sharing their knowledge and expertise. Together, educators identify the methods and approaches that work and change those that are not meeting student needs.

✔ **Inclusive leadership –** Leadership Teams with educators, the Community School Coordinator, and other school staff share the responsibility of school operations with the principal. This Leadership Team ensures that the community school strategy remains central in the decision-making process. The team plans development and implementation that includes thinking about sustainability that involves not just fund-raising but also organizing resources in new and more effective ways. A Community School Committee inclusive of families, community partners, school staff, youth, and other stakeholders from the school's various constituencies works in collaboration with the Leadership Team.

✔ **Positive behavior practices –** Community school educators emphasize positive relationships and interactions, and model these through their own behavior. Negative behaviors and truancy are acknowledged and addressed in ways that hold students accountable while showing them they are still valued members of the school community. Restorative discipline practices such as peer mediation, community service and post-conflict resolution help students learn from their mistakes and foster positive, healthy school climates where respect and compassion are core principles. Zero-tolerance practices leading to suspension and expulsion are avoided.

✔ **Family and community Partnerships –** Families, caregivers and community members are partners in creating dynamic, flexible community schools. Their engagement is not related to a specific project or program, but is on-going and extends beyond volunteerism to roles in decision-making, governance and advocacy. Their voices are critical to articulating and achieving the school's overall mission and goals. When families and educators work together, students are more engaged learners who earn higher grades and enroll in more challenging classes; student attendance and grade and school completion rates improve.

✔ **Community support services** – Community school educators recognize that students often come to school with challenges that impact their ability to learn, explore, and develop in the classroom. Because learning does not happen in isolation, community schools provide meals, health care, mental-health counseling, and other services before, during, and after school. These wraparound services are integrated into the fabric of the school that follows the Whole Child tenets.[2] Connections to the community are critically important so support services and referrals are available for families and other community members.

NEA Community Schools Strategy Webinars

In September and October 2016, NEA offered and recorded six webinars focusing on elements of the Community Schools model. Each webinar is approximately one-hour divided into four parts: an introduction; two PowerPoint presentations by experts on the topic; and a Q&A with those participating. With each are web links to online resources and downloadable files. School leadership teams and community schools planning teams may find these webinars useful, not only for enhancing their own understanding of this model, but there are resources and links that may be useful to community partners, families, and others interested in working with the school.

✔ **Community Schools: A Strategy for Transforming Struggling Schools**
✔ **The Community Schools Transformation Process: Key Players**
✔ **Inside a Community School: Working Together Towards a Single Vision**
✔ **Community Schools: Best Transformational Practices**
✔ **Community Schools: Funding & Sustainability**
✔ **Scaling Up Community Schools: Strategies across the Country**

Community School Model Implementation

The process of adopting a community school model requires collaborative leadership from administrators, teachers, other school staff, families, youth, community members and potential school partners. This **Community Schools Planning Team** should focus on four key elements of the planning and implementation process. Because some planners are not educators, having a shared vocabulary about key educational terms is essential. For each handbook section, educational terminology will be defined using the ASCD's Lexicon of Learning.[3]

STEP 1. **Asset and Needs Assessment:** An inclusive process which includes families, students, community members, partners and school staff who define "what we have" and "what we need." Asset assessment articulates the strengths and capabilities available within the school, the community and by potential partners. Needs assessment defines specific issues, concerns, and deficits to be addressed.

STEP 2. **Strategic Plan:** Describes the school's vision, values and mission. The plan articulates how assets may be used to address needs with the goal of high academic, civic and personal outcomes for all students. The plan focuses on curriculum, high-quality teaching, wraparound services, positive behavioral practices, parent and community engagement and inclusive leadership.

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2   For more information on The Whole Child Tenets developed by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, go to http://www.ascd.org/whole-child.aspx

3   ASCD Lexicon of Learning available at http://www.ascd.org/Publications/Lexicon-of-Learning/C.aspx

STEP 3. ENGAGEMENT OF PARTNERS: Organizations, businesses and community-based entities that historically have not engaged with the school are recognized as assets and their expertise is critical to implementing the community school pillars.

STEP 4. COMMUNITY SCHOOL COORDINATOR: The Coordinator facilitates the development and implementation of the strategic plan in collaboration with school and community members/partners; oversees the alignment of assets with needs; and manages the integration of before and after school programs and wraparound services with the academic program and schedule. The Coordinator may also engage in fund raising activities.

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PLANNING TEAM

A Community School Planning Team should include representatives from the various constituencies that will work with and/or benefit from the school's academic, enrichment, and social programs. The questions below will help in developing a process for identifying team members. Remember that having different voices and viewpoints is a powerful method for getting "outside the box" thinking.

Key Question	Response	Potential Team Member(s)
Who are the key stakeholders that should be part of our team?	☐ Teachers ☐ Families ☐ Administrators ☐ Community members ☐ Paraprofessionals ☐ Businesses ☐ Students ☐ Health & Welfare organizations ☐ Other: _____	

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

➲ Who will take responsibility for scheduling meetings [site, date, time] and communicating to the team members?

➲ Who will take responsibility for writing notes in a timely fashion and circulating them to team members?

➲ Who will communicate with stakeholders about the team work as it progresses: students, families, community members and partners should be kept informed.

➲ Will the Planning Team have subgroups that work on specific issues or pillars? If so, how will this be done?

➲ How often are the meetings and for how long?

Discussion Questions for Stakeholders	Response
Who are the students and families that our school serves?	
What do they need?	
What is the current mission of our school?	
What might be the mission of our Community School?	
What will our school look like when a Community Schools Model is in place?	
What will students' and teachers' experiences in the school look like?	
When we walk through our Community School what will it look like? Sound like?	
Are there schools near us that we can visit to gather information and ideas?	
How will we develop a sense of shared purpose?	
What communications methods will we use to share our thoughts and work with the larger school community?	
How will we collect feedback about our work from students, families, community members, and partners?	
How will we make decisions about our school design process?	
Who will be responsible for what as we move through this work?	
How will we get the support of the school community for our final plan?	

SWOT Analysis

The first step that the Planning Team may take is completing s SWOT Analysis.[4] Strengths, Weakness, Opportunity, Threat are the elements of SWOT analysis, the purpose is to develop a fuller awareness of what exists as a means of moving forward with strategic planning and decision making. Doing this at the beginning of the planning process helps the team to come to communicate and understand the different perspective represented. In addition, this basic analysis tool may be useful as the Planning Team presents its work and ideas to stakeholders.

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4   Adapted from University of Kansas Community Tool Box, Section 14: SWOT Anaylsis. Available online at http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/assessment/assessing-community-needs-and-resources/swot-analysis/main

List your internal factors: Strengths **(S)** and Weaknesses **(W)**.

- ➲ **Human resources** – educators, parent and community volunteers, community partners, families, students,
- ➲ **Physical resources** – your location, building, play grounds or playing fields, equipment
- ➲ **Financial** – federal, state and local funding; grants funding, other funding sources
- ➲ **Activities and processes** – teaching and learning experiences, before and after school programs, extracurricular and athletic programs
- ➲ **Past experiences** – building blocks for learning and success, your reputation in the community

Don't be too modest when listing your strengths. If you're having difficulty naming them, start by simply listing your characteristics (e.g., we're small, we're connected to the neighborhood). Some of these will probably be strengths.

Although the strengths and weakness of your school are your internal qualities, don't overlook the perspective of people outside your group. Identify strengths and weaknesses from both your own point of view and that of others, including those you serve or deal with. Do others see problems—or assets—that you don't?

List your external factors: Opportunities **(O)** and Threats **(T).** Cast a wide net for the external part of the assessment. No school group, program, or neighborhood is immune to outside events and forces. Consider your connectedness, for better and worse, as you compile this part of your SWOT list. Forces and facts that your school does not control include:

- ➲ **Future trends in education**
- ➲ **The economy** – local, national, or international
- ➲ **Funding sources** – local taxes, state taxes, federal entitlements and grants, other sources of funding
- ➲ **Demographics** – changes in the composition of the student body and their families
- ➲ **The physical environment** – physical plant and grounds, furniture, classroom size, other instructional and learning spaces
- ➲ **Legislation** – state and federal education laws and regulations
- ➲ **Local, national or international events**

USE OF SWOT ANALYSIS

Understanding the factors that currently affect the school will help in defining what the Team needs to learn from the asset and needs assessment by: identifying the issues or problems that the Community School Model will be designed to change, setting goals, and creating an Action Plan.

SWOT Option 1:

Each team member should complete the following prior to the first meeting.

From your perspective, what are the strengths and weaknesses of our current school in terms of meeting the needs of the students and their families? What opportunities do you see? What threats?

WITHIN THE SCHOOL				OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL			
STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS

SWOT Option 2:

If the team would rather do this as a brainstorming session, then positives and the negatives can be listed together:

POSITIVES	NEGATIVES
➲ STRENGTHS	➲ WEAKNESSES
➲ ASSETS	➲ LIMITATIONS
➲ RESOURCES	➲ RESTRICTIONS
➲ OPPORTUNITIES	➲ THREATS
➲ PROSPECTS	➲ CHALLENGES

SWOT Option 3:
In this instance, the team would use a SWOT matrix—which could be completed individually and then shared with the whole group or done as a whole group activity.

	STRENGTHS 1. 2. 3. 4.	WEAKNESSES 1. 2. 3. 4.
OPPORTUNITIES 1. 2. 3. 4.	OPPORTUNITY-STRENGTH Use the strength to take advantage of opportunities. 1. 2.	OPPORTUNITY-WEAKNESS Overcome weaknesses by taking advantage of opportunities. 1. 2.
THREATS 1. 2. 3. 4.	Use strengths to avoid threats. 1. 2.	THREAT-WEAKNESS Minimize weaknesses and avoid threats. 1. 2.

ASSET AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

This handbook outlines an Asset and Needs Assessment tool each of the six Community Schools Model Pillars that covers a wide range of elements. Some suggested practices may be pertinent and some may not be given the grades taught, students served, or family and community requirements. The Team should use those elements that help in planning and implementation.

Collecting relevant information related to each pillar is critical. For example, to determine if the school has a strong and proven curriculum, documents must be collected and reviewed; to determine if this curriculum is engaging and culturally relevant, student input is essential.

The Team may wish to conduct surveys of students, staff and families to gather evidence prior to developing a plan, especially if only anecdotal evidence is available. The National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments, a U.S. Department of Education office, keeps a list with online links to surveys and assessments of school climate; available online at https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/topic-research/school-climate-measurement/school-climate-survey-compendium

Some Surveys That Are Available At No Cost/Low Cost Include:

➲ ASCD Needs Assessment and School Improvement Tool available online at http://www.ascd.org/news-media/Press-Room/News-Releases/ASCD-Releases-Free-Online-School-Improvement-Tool.aspx. According to the ASCD Web site, this survey is "ideal for schools developing and refining strategic plans." The 15-minute survey evaluates the school's strengths and weaknesses in school climate and culture; curriculum and instruction; leadership; family and community engagement; professional development and staff capacity; assessment; and sustainability of a whole child approach to education.

➲ The Federation for Community Schools has a free *Community Needs Assessment* available online at http://www.ilcommunityschools.org/images/files/docs/Community%20Needs%20Assessment%20-%20ALL.pdf. This includes sample student assessments, teacher assessments, parent interest surveys, and community focus group design. The drawback is that all are paper-and-pencil surveys. Also, a School and Community Conditions Analysis form is provided.

➲ A student survey is the Tripod Project available online at http://tripoded.com. Student surveys for K through Grade 12 were created by Ron Ferguson a professor at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, which focuses on the "seven Cs"—care, confer, captivate, clarify, consolidate, challenge and classroom a management.

➲ West Virginia School Health Technical Assistance Center provides a number of school-based health center surveys and tools accessible online at https://livewell.marshall.edu/mutac/?page_id=269&page_id=269

Community Schools: NEA Resources

NEA Community Schools homepage: http://www.nea.org/home/66319.htm

Alvarez, B. (2015). Can community schools dampen the school takeover fever? *NEA Today,* December 18, 2015. Available online at http://neatoday.org/2015/12/18/community-schools/

Eskelsen, L. (2016). Snake oil (and vouchers) don't work. Community schools do! *Lily's Blackboard,* January 27, 2016. Available online at http://lilysblackboard.org/2016/01/snake-oil-and-vouchers-doesnt-work-community-schools-do/

Get ESSA Right (2017). Natinoal Education Association. Available online at http://getessaright.org/

> *Comprehensive website that explains the Every Student Succeeds Act, the opportunities for educators and students that it brings, and implementation resources and support.*

Katz, B. (2015). MN educators advance community schools as game-changer in closing achievement gap. *Education Votes,* December 15, 2015. Available online at http://educationvotes.nea.org/2015/12/15/mn-educators-advance-community-schools-as-game-changer-in-closing-achievement-gap/

NEA Community School Strategy Webinars. These are recorded webinars, each about 1 hour that includes a presentation and discussion by those who attended. Available online at http://www.nea.org/home/68381.htm

- ⮞ Community schools: A strategy for transforming struggling schools
- ⮞ The community schools transformation process: Key players
- ⮞ Inside a community school: working together towards a single vision
- ⮞ Community schools: Best transformational practices
- ⮞ Community schools: Funding and sustainability
- ⮞ Scaling up community schools: Strategies across the country

Community Schools: Other Resources

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. (Undated). Whole child tenets. Available at to http://www.ascd.org/whole-child.aspx

> *The five whole child tenets align with the NEA Community Schools Model pillars: Each student enters school healthy and learns about and practices a healthy lifestyle; learns in an environment that is physically and emotionally safe for students and adults; is actively engaged in learning and is connected to the school and broader community; has access to personalized learning and is supported by qualified, caring adults; and is challenged academically and prepared for success in college or further study and for employment and participation in a global environment.*

Children's Aid Society. (2008). Community schools: Opening doors of opportunity. YouTube video posted on July 8, 2008. Available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rZmXzASDyF4

> *In this 11-minute video, the overall approach to community schools as implemented in the Washington Heights neighborhood in upper Manhattan is described.*

Coalition for Community Schools at http://www.communityschools.org/aboutschools/what_is_a_community_school.aspx

   This Web site hosted by the Institute for Educational Leadership provides useful information for educators, families and community members interested in beginning or supporting a community school. The site features an FAQ, national community school models and a community school directory. Provides excellent graphic depictions of four community schools in Oakland, Baltimore, New York and Lehigh Valley, PA.

Darling-Hammond, L., Bae, S., Cook-Harvey, C.M., Lam, L., Mercer, C., Podolksy, An., and Stosich, E.L. (2016). Pathways to new accountability through the Every Student Succeeds Act. Learning Policy Institute. Available online at https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/Pathways_New-Accountability_Through_Every_Student_Succeeds_Act_04202016.pdf

   This policy brief examines the options available under the Every Student Succeeds Act. Community Schools and Wraparound Services are discussed beginning on page 39.

Dingerson, L. (2015). Investing in what works: Community-driven strategies for strong public schools in Georgia. Southern Education Foundation and Anneberg Institute. Available online at http://annenberginstitute.org/sites/default/files/product/851/files/InvestingInWhatWorks.pdf

   This policy brief outlines eight community-based strategies, including collaborative and stable leadership, quality teaching, restorative behavioral practices, strong curriculum wraparound services, parent-community ties, and investment.

Ferrara, J. and Santiago, E. (2014). Achieving success in high-poverty schools. ASCD Community schools: Whole Child Education in Action, November 4, 2014. Available online at http://inservice.ascd.org/community-schools-whole-child-education-in-action/

   This blog post concisely describes community schools, their mission and their value especially for students living in poverty.

Frankl, E. (2016). *Community schools: Transforming struggling schools into thriving schools.* The Center for Popular Democracy, Coalition for Community Schools and Southern Education Foundation. Available online at http://www.southerneducation.org/Publications/Community-Schools-Layout_021116.aspx

   This report provides an in-depth explanation of community schools; examples of eight models from around the country; and recommendations for those considering adopting or adapting the model.

Great Schools Partnership. (Undated). The glossary of education reform. Available online at http://edglossary.org

   Comprehensive and searchable glossary of educational terminology designed for non-educators. Great Schools Partnership is a consortium of Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont; the glossary is supported with funding from the Education Writers Association and the Nellie Mae Foundation.

Oakland Unified School District. (2014). Oakland community schools: We're college, career & community ready! YouTube video posted July 18, 2014. Available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r_2zFFQxr7M

   In this 6-minute video, the Oakland Unified School District outlines how their community schools prepare youth for college, career, and community. Hear Oakland youth, teachers, principals, families, and community school managers share their views on how community schools prepare them to be College, Career, & Community Ready!

Santiago, E., /Ferrarra, J. and Quinn, J. (2012). *Whole child, whole school: Applying theory to practice in a community school.* Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Education.

   This book examines the ways in which educating the whole child in community school addresses obstacles to learning faced by students living in poverty. A case study highlights the successful journey of one school that transformed itself into a community school. Strategies for using the resources of community partnerships as a framework for school renewal and improvement in student achievement are outlined. The authors share their first hand experiences building a community school from the ground up, as well as providing the national perspective on community schools.

Santiago, E., /Ferrarra, J. and Blank, M. (2008). A full-service school fulfills its promise. *Educational Leadership*, April 2008, 65 (7) 44-47. Available online at http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational_leadership/apr08/vol65/num07/A_Full-Service_School_Fulfills_Its_Promise.aspx

   Article outlines the actions taken at Thomas Edison Elementary School in Port Chester, NY to become a full-service community school. This included a school-based health center, therapy and family casework, parent education and capacity building, and after-school enrichment.

Spokane Public Schools. (2015). Why I chose the community school. YouTube video posted on October 6, 2015. Available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MVtHoUPdScg

   In this 7-minute YouTube video students share why they chose the community school and explain what sets it apart from the traditional high school. A link to more information is available at www.spokaneschools.org/tcs

University of Kansas. (Undated). The Community Tool Box, a Web resource http//ctb.ku.edu/en/default.aspx

   A comprehensive community toolbox developed bye Work Group for Community Health and Development at the University of Kansas. Tools has 46 chapters that fall into six broad categories: Understanding the Community Context; Collaborative Planning; Developing Leadership and Enhancing Participation; Community Action and Intervention; Evaluating Community Initiatives; and Promoting and Sustaining the Initiative.

West Virginia Community Schools. (2015). Building community and school partnerships for student success: A resource guide for West Virginia. Available online at http://wvde.state.wv.us/healthy-schools/CommunitySchools/CommunitySchoolGuidanceDocumentMarch2015.pdf

   This state guide provides information about the levels of community school development from inquiring/exploring to sustaining/excelling; resources related to eight framework elements; and other recommended resources.

Williams, D.T., and Rural School and Community Trust. (2010). The rural solution: How community schools can reinvigorate rural education. The Center for American Progress. Available online at https://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/issues/2010/09/pdf/ruralschools.pdf

   Twenty percent of US students attend rural schools. While all different, rural schools share a common challenge of providing quality education with inadequate financing, teacher shortages, and inaccessible or unaffordable services for students and their families. This report argues that full-service community schools hold great potential for overcoming these challenges.

Wolfe Street Academy. (2016). How a community school helps ELLs succeed. YouTube video, posted April 12, 2016. Available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0OQ-mZA6hI0

This 14-minute YouTube video developed by the Wolfe Street Academy, a public school in Baltimore with more than 76 percent English language leaners, demonstrates how a community school is supporting its students and families through programs and services that include dental screenings, food giveaways, after-school activities, and more.
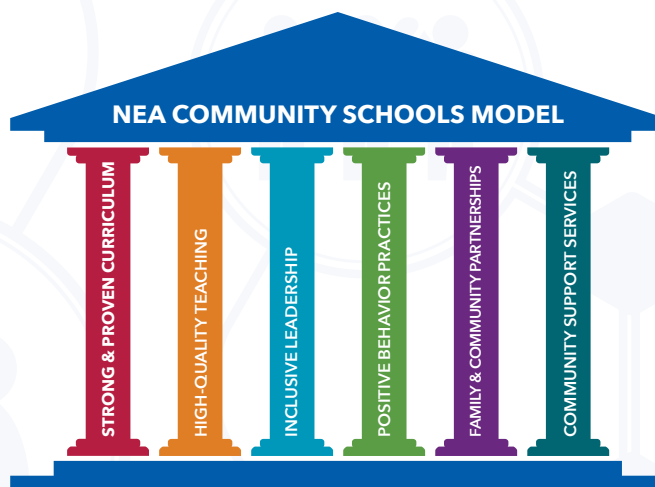
Strong and Proven Curriculum

A Pillar of the Community Schools Model

Comprehensive Curriculum: *Why we need to provide all students with a comprehensive curriculum that includes social studies, foreign languages, the arts, music, and more—rather than focusing narrowly on preparing students for standardized tests in reading and math.*[1]

In Community Schools, educators provide a rich and varied academic program allowing students to acquire both foundational and advanced knowledge and skills in many content areas. Students learn with challenging, culturally relevant materials that address their learning needs and expand their experience. They also learn how to analyze and understand the unique experiences and perspectives of others. The curriculum embraces all content areas including the arts, second languages, and physical education. Rigorous courses such as Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate are offered. Learning and enrichment activities are provided before and after the regular school day; including sports, the arts, and homework assistance. The needs of parents and families are addressed through English-as-a-Second-Language classes, GED preparation, and job training programs.

NEA COMMUNITY SCHOOLS MODEL

- STRONG & PROVEN CURRICULUM
- HIGH-QUALITY TEACHING
- INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP
- POSITIVE BEHAVIOR PRACTICES
- FAMILY & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS
- COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES

Shared Vocabulary[2]

✔ **Academic Language –** refers to the language used in classroom lessons, books, tests, and assignments; the language that students are expected to master in order to learn effectively in schools and academic programs. Academic language is the language of learning in general and specific to content areas. Examples include knowing the meaning and being able to use the following words: analyze, persuade, compare, contrast, summarize, demonstrate, describe, explain, interpret, and infer.

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1   For more on NEA's position and resources on curriculum, go to **http://www.nea.org/home/12957.htm**

2   All Shared Vocabulary definitions are adapted from The Glossary of Education Reform, available online at **http://edglossary.org**

✔ **CONTENT KNOWLEDGE –** refers to the body of knowledge and information that teachers teach and that students are expected to learn in a given subject or content area, such as English language arts, mathematics, science, or social studies. Content knowledge generally refers to the facts, concepts, theories, and principles that are taught and learned in specific academic courses, rather than to related skills—such as reading, writing, or researching—that students also learn in school.

✔ **CURRICULUM –** refers to the lessons and academic content taught in a specific course or program. Depending on how broadly educators define or employ the term, curriculum typically refers to the knowledge and skills students are expected to learn, which includes the learning standards or learning objectives they are expected to meet; the units and lessons that teachers teach; the assignments and projects given to students; the books, materials, videos, presentations, and readings used in a course; and the tests, assessments, and other methods used to evaluate student learning. An individual teacher's curriculum, for example, would be the specific learning standards, lessons, assignments, and materials used to organize and teach a particular course.

✔ **LEARNING STANDARDS –** are concise, written descriptions of what students are expected to know and be able to do at a specific stage of their education. Learning standards describe educational objectives—i.e., what students should have learned by the end of a course, grade level, or grade span—but they do not describe any particular teaching practice, curriculum, or assessment method.

✔ **LEARNING OBJECTIVES –** are brief statements that describe what students will be expected to learn by the end of the school year, course, unit, lesson, project, or class period. In many cases, learning objectives are the interim academic goals that teachers establish for students who are working toward meeting more comprehensive learning standards.

✔ **LEARNING PROGRESSION –** refers to the purposeful sequencing of teaching and learning expectations across multiple developmental stages, ages, or grade levels. Learning progressions are typically categorized and organized by subject area, such as mathematics or science, and they map out a specific sequence of knowledge and skills that students are expected to learn as they progress through their education. The basic idea is to make sure that students are learning age-appropriate material (knowledge and skills that are neither too advanced nor too rudimentary), and that teachers are sequencing learning effectively and avoiding the inadvertent repetition of material that was taught in earlier grades. There are two main characteristics of learning progressions:

(1) The standards described at each level are intended to address the specific learning needs and abilities of students at a particular stage of their intellectual, emotional, social, and physical development, and

(2) The standards reflect clearly articulated sequences—i.e., the learning expectations for each grade level build upon previous expectations while preparing students for more challenging concepts and more sophisticated coursework at the next level.

✔ **21ST CENTURY SKILLS –** refers to a broad set of knowledge, skills, work habits, and character traits that are believed—by educators, college professors, employers, and others—to be critically important to success in today's world, particularly in collegiate programs and contemporary careers and workplaces. Generally speaking, 21st century skills can be applied in all academic subject areas, and in all educational, career, and civic settings throughout a student's life.

The following list provides a brief illustrative overview of the knowledge, skills, work habits, and character traits commonly associated with **21ST CENTURY SKILLS:**

➲ Critical thinking, problem solving, reasoning, analysis, interpretation, synthesizing information

➲ Research skills and practices, interrogative questioning

➲ Creativity, artistry, curiosity, imagination, innovation, personal expression

➲ Perseverance, self-direction, planning, self-discipline, adaptability, initiative

➲ Oral and written communication, public speaking and presenting, listening

➲ Leadership, teamwork, collaboration, cooperation, facility in using virtual workspaces

➲ Information and communication technology (ICT) literacy, media and internet literacy, data interpretation and analysis, computer programming

➲ Civic, ethical, and social-justice literacy

➲ Economic and financial literacy, entrepreneurialism

➲ Global awareness, multicultural literacy, humanitarianism

➲ Scientific literacy and reasoning, the scientific method

➲ Environmental and conservation literacy, ecosystems understanding

➲ Health and wellness literacy, including nutrition, diet, exercise, and public health and safety

The **COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PLANNING TEAM** should focus on a Strong and Proven Curriculum as they conduct the needs assessment using the four key elements of the planning and implementation process found on the following pages. Links to NEA and other resources related to strong and proven curriculum are provided at the end of this section.

STRONG & PROVEN CURRICULUM: ASSET & NEEDS ASSESSMENT

STEP 1. **A SCHOOL-BASED ASSET AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT:** is an inclusive process that families, students, community members, partners, teachers, administrators and other school staff use to define "what we have" and "what we need." Asset assessment defines the strengths and capabilities available within the school, community and by potential partners. Needs assessment defines issues, concerns, and deficits to be addressed.

The **COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PLANNING TEAM** should review the Shared Vocabulary definitions and discuss how each applies at the school site. Team members then collect and examine evidence from a variety of sources and identify specific curriculum assets and needs, including obstacles or barriers. Each Key Element articulates one aspect of a strong and proven curriculum. The Team may chose to assign each question to two or three team members to better use available time. With regard to curriculum, however, it is essential that each pair or trio have one school-based educator with curriculum familiarity as a member.

View the NEA YouTube video, *Community Schools—Strong Curriculum and High-Quality Teaching,* prior to starting the needs assessment; video available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TeRl0nh5E2k

These questions may guide the Team's efforts to connect students to learning standards and objectives. If they are answered well and addressed through the Community Schools plan, they have the capacity to improve student engagement and learning. The response to these questions should lead the Team to identify specific curriculum assets and needs.

1. What evidence is there from daily work and classroom assessments that each student can independently demonstrate an understanding of the content, concepts, and skills associated with each learning standard or objective?

2. What evidence is there that processes are in place to ensure that each student has the opportunity to learn the content, concepts, and skills associated with each learning standard or objective?

3. What evidence is there that academic language related to the learning standards or objectives is incorporated into each student's learning experiences?

4. What evidence is there that students' learning experiences in lesson and/or unit plans are guided by learning standards or objectives?

5. What evidence is there that learning objectives for individual students are defined such that feedback from observation and assessments provide meaningful information academic achievement?

6. What evidence is there that students are engaged in learning?

7. What evidence is there that students are having meaningful, authentic, and culturally appropriate learning experiences?

8. What evidence is there that students' academic performance is appropriate?

Assessment of Existing Curriculum Documents and Practices

Using the Shared Vocabulary definitions and the questions posed, complete the needs assessment below.

Key Element	Assets	Needs	Obstacles	Evidence
General and content area specific academic language				
Content area knowledge and skills				
Content area specific learning standards				
Content specific learning objectives				
Content area specific learning progression				
Content area specific curriculum				
Content area specific 21st century skills				
Content area specific engaging learning experiences				
Content area specific culturally appropriate learning experiences				

Assessment of Existing Curriculum in Specific Content Areas

The Team may engage educators in the process of providing evidence of the curriculum in each content area and grade level, including the assets and needs in each area.

Content Area	Assessment of Curriculum Documents	Assessment of Instructional materials	Assets	Needs
English Language Arts Curriculum Total Instructional Time per Week:	❏ Aligned to learning standards ❏ Instructional progression ❏ Available to all educators ❏ Available to families	❏ Sufficient ❏ Aligned to learning standards ❏ Culturally appropriate ❏ Engaging		
Mathematics Curriculum Total Instructional Time per Week:	❏ Aligned to learning standards ❏ Instructional progression ❏ Available to all educators ❏ Available to families	❏ Sufficient ❏ Aligned to learning standards ❏ Culturally appropriate ❏ Engaging		
Science & Technology Curriculum Total Instructional Time per Week:	❏ Aligned to learning standards ❏ Instructional progression ❏ Available to all educators ❏ Available to families	❏ Sufficient ❏ Aligned to learning standards ❏ Culturally appropriate ❏ Engaging		
Social Studies Curriculum Total Instructional Time per Week:	❏ Aligned to learning standards ❏ Instructional progression ❏ Available to all educators ❏ Available to families	❏ Sufficient ❏ Aligned to learning standards ❏ Culturally appropriate ❏ Engaging		

Content Area	Assessment of Curriculum Documents	Assessment of Instructional materials	Total Time per Instructional Week	Obstacles
The Arts Curriculum ❐ Art ❐ Music ❐ Dance ❐ Theatre ❐ Other Total Instructional Time per Week:	❐ Aligned to learning standards ❐ Instructional progression ❐ Available to all educators ❐ Available to families	❐ Sufficient ❐ Aligned to learning standards ❐ Culturally appropriate ❐ Engaging		
Foreign Languages Curriculum Total Instructional Time per Week:	❐ Aligned to learning standards ❐ Instructional progression ❐ Available to all educators ❐ Available to families	❐ Sufficient ❐ Aligned to learning standards ❐ Culturally appropriate ❐ Engaging		
Physical Education & Health Curriculum Total Instructional Time per Week:	❐ Aligned to learning standards ❐ Instructional progression ❐ Available to all educators ❐ Available to families	❐ Sufficient ❐ Aligned to learning standards ❐ Culturally appropriate ❐ Engaging		

Community School Model Implementation: Strategic Plan

STEP 2. **A Strategic Plan:** describes the school's vision, values and mission. The plan articulates how assets may be used to address needs with the goal of high academic, civic and personal outcomes for all students. The plan focuses on curriculum, high-quality teaching, wraparound services, positive behavioral practices, parent and community engagement and inclusive leadership.

The Community Schools Planning Team should articulate the school's vision, values and mission with regard to the curriculum to be taught. This necessitates having a clear progression in each content area across all grades taught. The Team should be guided by the following questions:

1. **Vision:** As a school community, what academic goals do we want to achieve? (See example below)

2. **Strategies:** What steps will we take over the next three years to realize this vision and attain these academic goals?

3. **Priorities:** Given the steps we have described, how should we prioritize them so that we are progressing in an organized and sequential manner?

4. **Action Plan:** Who will do what? By when? Involving whom? What resources are needed to accomplish this work?

An Example of a School Vision comes from the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Literary and Fine Arts School is a K-8 magnet school in Evanston/Skokie, Illinois.[3]

The mission of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Literary and Fine Arts School is to provide all students with a dynamic educational experience that focuses on the fine and performing arts and emphasizes literature and writing.

A Fine Arts Focused Curriculum…

- Unlocks the door to learning and allows students to view the world through the eyes of an artist
- Cultivates the skills of collaboration, communication, creativity and innovation, critical thinking, problem-solving, and leadership
- Presents students with opportunities to explore big ideas and essential questions
- Uses the Fine Arts as a tool for differentiated instruction and assessment for all students
- Inspires increased student academic achievement and engagement

A Curriculum That Emphasizes Literature and Writing…

- Supports student access to literary works from diverse social, cultural, and historical contexts
- Extends writing and publishing opportunities beyond the classroom
- Encourages writing through literature
- Enriches the classroom experience with regular author experience opportunities

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3   For more information, go to **http://www.district65.net/domain/430**

King Arts has created a dynamic curriculum by integrating the following four pillars into its instructional program: Arts-Integrated Learning; Enhanced Fine Arts Learning; Performance, Publication and Enhanced Literacy, and Inclusion. This arts emphasis is in addition to meeting the District 65 curricular standards.

COMMUNITY SCHOOL MODEL IMPLEMENTATION: ENGAGEMENT OF PARTNERS

STEP 3. **PARTNERS:** may include organizations, businesses and community-based entities that historically have not engaged with the school are recognized as assets and their expertise is critical to implementing the community school pillars.

THE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PLANNING TEAM should review the assets and needs identified and determine if there are areas or gaps in which community-based organizations could work in partnership with the school to enhance the academic and enrichment activities of the students.

With regard to **CURRICULUM**, the community partners may have experience, expertise and resources to enhance in-school learning and/or extend student learning outside of school. Some of this learning may take place outside of the normal school day or school year. The NEA Foundation[4] suggests different models in which community-based partners may extend learning:

➲ **EXTENDED LEARNING TIME:** School models that extend the traditional school day or year to balance the core curriculum with enrichment opportunities. This may include after-school structured programs coordinated with the Community School Coordinator designed to provide children and youth with safe, supervised activities that promote learning across time, contexts and developmental stages.

    FOR EXAMPLE, the Kuss Middle School in Fall River, MA public schools[5] in collaboration with the Boys & Girls Club, the YMCA, and the SMILES program and funding from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts added 300 additional hours per student per year for enrichment activities, more social and emotional support, and community support services.

➲ **SCHOOL VACATION LEARNING PROGRAMS:** Structured programs and enrichment activities designed to supplement academic learning and promote enrichment opportunities during the non-school summer months and other school vacation breaks.

➲ **SCHOOL COMMUNITY NETWORKS:** Intentional connections between schools and community organizations for the purpose of promoting and supporting students' learning needs.

    FOR EXAMPLE, the Pittsburgh public schools[6] in collaboration with 27 community-based organizations developed the Summer Dreamers' Academy, a teacher-led design for summer learning. Math, reading and writing instruction in the morning is followed by afternoon enrichment activities led by community partners.

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4   Adapted from NEA Foundation, Expanding Learning Opportunities to Close the Achievement Gaps: Lessons from Union-District Collaboration. (2012). Available online at **https://www.neafoundation.org/content/assets/2012/04/elo-final-2.pdf**

5   For more information about the Kuss ELT Program, go to **http://neatoday.org/2016/11/22/longer-school-days/**

6   For more information, go to **http://www.pps.k12.pa.us/summerdreamers**

Community School Model Implementation: Community School Coordinator

STEP 4. **The Community School Coordinator:** facilitates the development and implementation of the strategic plan in collaboration with school and community members/partners; oversees the alignment of assets with needs; and manages the integration of before and after school programs and wraparound services with the academic program and schedule. The Coordinator may also engage in fund raising activities.

Most of the Coordinator's responsibilities relate to other Community School Pillars. However, with regard to **CURRICULUM**, the Community School Coordinator is the bridge between the school and community and facilitates the alignment of community-based and partner-provided learning experiences with the curriculum standards, objectives and progressions. The Coordinator uses familiarity with the curriculum or requests from individuals or teams of teachers to identify and arrange for learning activities, using community-based resources or partner-provided expertise, in which both students and family members may engage.

For example, fifth grade students have completed a unit of instruction on the history of their community. In order to extend the learning by engaging students in a real world experience, the Coordinator arranges for a guided tour of an historic property in the community with follow-up learning activities provided by either the historic property or teachers for students to complete.

NEA Resources

NEA YouTube video: Community schools—strong curriculum and high-quality teaching available online at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TeRl0nh5E2k

This 5-minute video explains two of the pillars: Strong and Proven Curriculum and High-Quality Teaching.

NEA Curriculum homepage: http://www.nea.org/home/37004.htm?q=curriculum

Backgrounder: Standards & curriculum. (2013). Available online at https://www.nea.org/assets/docs/Standards_and_Curriculum_FINAL.pdf

Two-page summary of key federal curriculum terminology.

Culture, abilities, resilience, effort: Strategies for closing the achievement gaps. Third edition, (2007). Available online at https://www.nea.org/assets/docs/mf_CAREbook0804.pdf

Comprehensive resource handbook defines specific learning needs with approaches, strategies and activities to address them in four critical areas: culture, language and economic differences; unrecognized and undeveloped abilities; resilience; and effort and motivation. Chapter 7: Developing a Systems Perspective for School Organization may provide useful planning guidance.

Diversity Toolkit. (2015). Available online at http://www.nea.org/tools/diversity-toolkit.html

This online toolkit provides an introduction to the multiple facets of diversity. It offers basic information, a short list of strategies and tools, and suggestions for how to find out more. Chapters focus on class and income; cultural competence for educators; English language learners; gender; race and ethnicity; sexual orientation and gender identify; and social justice.

NEA Foundation Report. (2012). Expanding learning opportunities to close the achievement gaps: Lessons from union-district collaboration. Available online at https://www.neafoundation.org/content/assets/2012/04/elo-final-2.pdf

Reviews what expanded learning opportunities are and how they can help close achievement gaps, identifies ways in which teachers and district can create and implement them. Three case studies are included.

Promoting educators' cultural competences to better serve culturally diverse students. (2008). Available online at http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/PB13_CulturalCompetence08.pdf

Four-page policy brief defines "cultural competence" and its importance to engaging and appropriate instruction and outreach to families.

Universal design for learning (UDL): Making learning accessible and engaging for all students. (2008). Available online at http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/PB23_UDL08.pdf

Long, C. (2013). Author of "Quiet" talks about how to engage introverts in the classroom. NEA Today, March 21, 2013. Available online at http://neatoday.org/2013/03/21/author-of-quiet-talks-about-how-to-engage-introverts-in-the-classroom/

Interview with Susan Cain, author of "Quiet: The power of introverts in a world that can't stop talking," in which she describes strengths of introverts, how they are often marginalized, and how to engage them in the classroom.

Olsen, L, (2014). Meeting the unique needs of long term English language learners. Available online at https://www.nea.org/assets/docs/15420_LongTermEngLangLearner_final_web_3-24-14.pdf

English language learners are the nation's fastest-growing student population, yet they are disproportionately underserved and underachieving. This brief explains the reasons why some students are "long-term ELLs," the impact of narrow curriculum on language development, and identifies "what works."

OTHER RESOURCES

Gandara, P. (2015). The implications of deeper learning for adolescent immigrants and English language learners. Deeper Learning Research Series, Jobs for the Futures' Students at the Center. Available online at http://www.jff.org/sites/default/files/publications/materials/The-Implications-of-DL-for-Adolescent%20Immigrants-and-ELLs-110415a.pdf

A 15-page policy brief that identifies, synthesizes, and shares research findings on effective approaches to teaching and learning at the high school level.

Hunter, D. (2014). Engaging curriculum: A foundation for positive school culture. ASCD The Whole Child Blog, April 18, 2014. Available online at http://www.wholechildeducation.org/blog/engaging-curriculum-a-foundation-for-positive-school-culture

Blogger is a Seattle teacher explains how disengaged students were impacted by lessons inspired by their interest in the Zombie Apocalypse. This link includes a 2.5-minute video explaining what he did.

Nellie Mae Foundation Web site at https://www.nmefoundation.org

New England's largest public charity focused solely on education. The mission includes "growing a greater variety of higher quality educational opportunities that enable all learners—especially and essentially underserved learners—to obtain the skills, knowledge and supports necessary to become civically engaged, economically self-sufficient life-long learners." Web site provides resources on student-centered learning.

Nellie Mae Foundation. (2014). Putting students at the center: A reference guide. Available online at https://www.nmefoundation.org/getmedia/7fe89c01-dc9c-496f-80ed-1a53f25d593f/NMEF-sclreframeweb2

Provides a framework for student-centered learning based on four tenets: personalized learning, competency-based learning, student-owned learning, and anytime, anywhere learning all of which leads to deeper learning. Includes helpful graphics.

Southern Regional Education Bureau (2012). Preparing all teachers to use proven, effective instructional methods across the curriculum. (2012). High Schools That Work brief, April 2012. Available online at http://publications.sreb.org/2012/12v08w_bestpractices_instructionalmethods.pdf

A High Schools That Work brief that outlines the importance of incorporating reading, writing and listening strategies into all content area instruction while keeping students' interest in mind as a means of creating engaging and culturally relevant units of instruction. Includes strategies for all students and for English language learners.

Wolfe, E., Steinberg, A., and Hoffman, N. (Eds.) (2013). *Anytime, anywhere: Student-centered learning for schools and teachers.* Cambridge: Harvard Education Press. [Cloth: $50; Paper: $30]

This 232-page text synthesizes existing research and practices in the emerging field of student-centered learning, and includes profiles of schools that have embraced this approach.
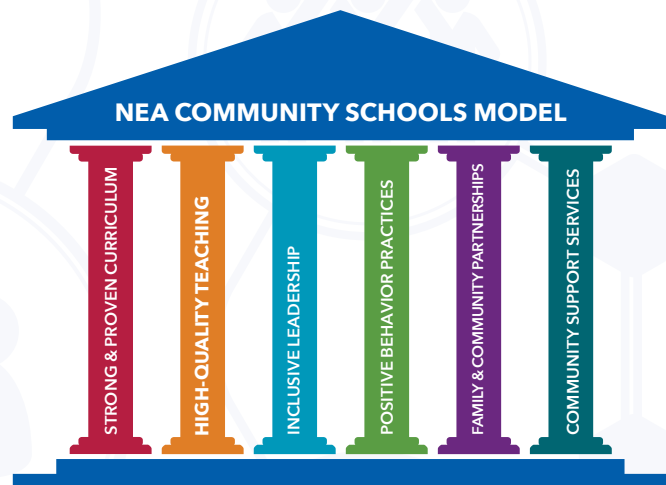
High-Quality Teaching

A Pillar of the Community Schools Model

Great teachers: *with the right policy supports, are the ideal agents of meaningful and sustainable change in our most challenged schools. Accomplished and effective teachers help students learn at high levels. They also spread their expertise throughout the school on behalf of all students.*[1]

In Community Schools, teachers are fully licensed, knowledgeable about their content, and skillful in their practice. Instructional time focuses on learning rather than testing. Individual student needs are identified and learning opportunities are designed to address them. Educators coordinate with community service partners so that all programs support student learning. Higher order thinking skills are at the core of instruction so that all students acquire problem solving, critical thinking, and reasoning skills. Educators work collaboratively to plan lessons, analyze student work, and adjust curriculum as required. Experienced educators work closely with novices as mentors, coaches, and "guides on the side," sharing their knowledge and expertise. Together, educators identify the methods and approaches that work and change those that are not meeting student needs.

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Shared Vocabulary[2]

➲ **Academic Support Strategies:**
refers to a wide variety of instructional methods, educational services, or school resources provided to students in the effort to help them accelerate their learning progress, catch up with their peers, meet learning standards, or generally succeed in school. The following are some representative examples of common forms of academic support:

1 For more on NEA's vision for high-quality teachers in challenging schools, go to Children of poverty deserve great teachers: One union's commitment to changing the status quo. Washington: National Education Association and Center for Teacher Quality. Available online at http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/HE/children_of_poverty_09.pdf

2 All Shared Vocabulary definitions are adapted from The Glossary of Education Reform, available online at http://edglossary.org

- ✔ **AFTER-HOURS STRATEGIES:** Schools may provide after-school or before-school programs, usually within the school building, that provide students with tutoring or mentoring, or that help students prepare for class or acquire study skills, for example.

- ✔ **CLASSROOM-BASED STRATEGIES:** Teachers continually monitor student performance and learning needs, and then adjust what they teach or how they teach to improve student learning.

- ✔ **OUTSIDE-OF-SCHOOL STRATEGIES:** Community groups and volunteer-based learning programs, often working in partnership with local public schools, may provide a variety of programs, such as reading programs for young children that are connected to what students are learning in school.

- ✔ **SCHOOL-BASED STRATEGIES:** Schools create academic-support opportunities during the school day, such as learning labs, to increase the instructional time that academically struggling students receive, while also varying the way that instruction is delivered. For example, if students in a course primarily learn in large or small groups that all work at the same pace, students in a learning lab or other support program might work one-on-one with a teacher and be given more time to practice skills or learn complex concepts.

- ✔ **TECHNOLOGY-ASSISTED STRATEGIES:** Schools may use digital and online learning applications, such as visual simulations or game-based learning, to help students grasp difficult concepts. Teachers may also use course-management programs that allow them to archive course materials and communicate with students online. These options may be self-directed by students or overseen by teachers, or they may be provided during the school day or for students to work from home at their own pace.

- ✔ **VACATION-BREAK STRATEGIES:** Strategies such as summer school or "summer bridge programs" may be created to help students catch up or prepare for the next grade. Similar support programs and learning opportunities may be provided during vacation breaks in the fall, winter, and spring.

- ⮑ **CLASS SIZE:** refers to the number of students in a classroom. In recent decades, a variety of reform efforts have been focused on decreasing class sizes as a strategy for improving school and student performance. After research studies found that smaller class sizes could have positive effects on student learning and academic achievement, many initiatives—both at the level of state and federal policy, and in individual schools and districts—sought to lower the number of students in a classroom. The basic rationale is that if teachers have fewer students, they can devote more time and attention to each student, including more time diagnosing specific learning needs, critiquing work products, and giving students one-on-one instruction and academic support.

- ⮑ **LEARNING EXPERIENCE:** refers to any interaction, course, program, or experience in which learning takes place, whether in traditional academic (schools, classrooms) or nontraditional settings (outside-of-school locations, outdoor environments), or whether it includes traditional educational interactions (students learning from teachers) or nontraditional interactions (students learning through games and interactive software applications). Because students may learn in a wide variety of settings and ways, this term is often a preferred alternative to "course." Learning experience may also be used to underscore or reinforce the goal of an educational interaction—learning—rather than its location (school, classroom) or format (course, program), for example.

⊃ PERSONALIZED LEARNING: [sometimes called "student-centered learning"] refers to a diverse variety of educational programs, learning experiences, instructional approaches, and academic support strategies that are intended to address the distinct learning needs, interests, aspirations, or cultural backgrounds of individual students. Personalized learning is generally seen as an alternative to so-called "one-size-fits-all" approaches to schooling in which teachers may, for example, provide all students in a given course with the same type of instruction, the same assignments, and the same assessments with little variation or modification from student to student. Personalized learning may also be called student-centered learning, since the general goal is to make individual learning needs the primary consideration in important educational and instructional decisions, rather than what might be preferred, more convenient, or logistically easier for teachers and schools.

⊃ PERSONALIZED LEARNING STRATEGIES: These strategies are intended to increasing the level of choice and personal responsibility students have in the instructional process. Student voice includes the values, opinions, beliefs, perspectives, and cultural backgrounds of individual students and groups of students in a school. It is supported by instructional approaches and techniques that are based on student choices, interests, passions, and ambitions. As an alternative to more traditional forms of instruction in which teachers may make unilateral decisions with little or no input from students, introducing more student voice into the learning process is one way to personalize learning. The following representative examples will help illustrate the concept.

✔ ADVISORIES: are time in the school day for educators to meet with small groups of students and advise them on academic, social, and postsecondary-planning issues. Students may also be paired with advisors, adult mentors from community organizations or businesses, or peer mentors who meet regularly with students over the course of several months, a year, or multiple years to help them acclimate to a school, navigate educational options, or plan for higher education and careers after graduation.

✔ AUTHENTIC LEARNING: refers to a wide variety of educational and instructional techniques focused on connecting what students are taught in school to real-world issues, problems, and applications. The basic idea is that students are more likely to be interested in what they are learning, more motivated to learn new concepts and skills, and better prepared to succeed in college, careers, and adulthood if what they are learning mirrors real-life contexts, equips them with practical and useful skills, and addresses topics that are relevant and applicable to their lives outside of school.

✔ BLENDED LEARNING: refers to the practice of using both online and in-person learning experiences when teaching students. In a blended-learning course, for example, students might attend a class taught by a teacher in a traditional classroom setting, while also independently completing online components of the course outside the classroom. In this case, in-class time may be either replaced or supplemented by online learning experiences, and students would learn about the same topics online as they do in class—i.e., the online and in-person learning experiences would parallel and complement one another.

✔ COMMUNITY-BASED LEARNING: refers to a wide variety of instructional methods and programs that educators use to connect what is being taught in schools to their surrounding communities, including local institutions, history, literature, cultural heritage, and natural environments. Community-based learning is also motivated by the belief that all communities have intrinsic educational assets and resources that educators can use to enhance learning experiences for students. Synonyms include community-based education, place-based learning, and place-based education, among other terms.

✔ **Learning Pathways:** refers to a wider and more diverse selection of learning experiences. Common examples include career-related internships that allow students to satisfy school graduation requirements or meet state-required learning standards; dual-enrollment experiences that allow students to take courses at alternate institutions, such as colleges or universities, while also earning academic credit at their home school; or independent-study projects, which allow students to self-design learning experiences in collaboration with a teacher, mentor, or advisor.

✔ **Mixed-Ability Grouping:** [or heterogeneous grouping] refers students of various perceived ability levels or past academic performance enrolled in the same course or program. Teachers employ a variety of personalized instructional and academic support strategies generally called differentiation, differentiated learning, or differentiated instruction.

✔ **Personal Learning Plans:** describe a student's academic, collegiate, and career goals, while mapping out the educational decisions they need to make to achieve them. Portfolios are a cumulative record of a student's academic work and accomplishments. Teachers, advisors, and educational specialists may use these learning plans and portfolios to guide how they teach and support specific students.

✔ **Project-based Learning:** refers to any approach that utilizes multifaceted projects as a central organizing strategy for educating students. When engaged in project-based learning, students will typically be assigned a project or series of projects that require them to use diverse skills—such as researching, writing, interviewing, collaborating, or public speaking—to produce various work products, such as research papers, scientific studies, public-policy proposals, multimedia presentations, video documentaries, art installations, or musical and theatrical performances, for example. Unlike many tests, homework assignments, and other more traditional forms of academic coursework, the execution and completion of a project may take several weeks or months, or it may even unfold over the course of a semester or year.

✔ **Reconfiguring:** the educational structure of a large school so that students are organized into smaller groups and paired with a consistent team of teachers who get to know the students and their learning needs well. While this strategy takes a wide variety of forms from school to school, a few of the most common approaches are small-learning communities, teaming, theme-based academies, or schools-within-schools.

Community Schools Planning Team should focus on High Quality Teaching as they conduct the needs assessment using the four key elements of the planning and implementation process found on the following pages. Links to NEA and other resources related to strong and proven curriculum are provided at the end of this section.

-Quality Teaching Implementation: Asset & Needs Assessment

STEP 1. **A school-based Asset and Needs assessment:** is an inclusive process in which families, students, community members, partners, teachers, administrators and other school staff who define "what we have" and "what we need." Asset assessment articulates the strengths and capabilities available within the school, the community and from potential partners. Needs assessment defines specific issues, concerns, and deficits to be addressed.

The **Community Schools Planning Team** should review the **Shared Vocabulary** definitions and discuss how each applies at the school site. Team members then collect and examine evidence from a variety of sources and identify specific curriculum assets and needs, including obstacles or barriers. Each Key Element articulates one aspect of a strong and proven curriculum. The Team may chose to assign each question to two or three team members to better use available time. With regard to curriculum, however, it is essential that each pair or trio have one school-based educator with curriculum familiarity as a member.

View the NEA YouTube video, *Community Schools—Strong Curriculum and High-Quality Teaching,* prior to starting the asset and needs assessment; video available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TeRl0nh5E2k

These questions may guide the Team's efforts to connect students to learning standards and objectives. If they are answered well and addressed through the Community Schools plan, they have the capacity to improve student engagement and learning. The response to these questions should lead the Team to identify specific high-quality teaching assets and needs.

1. What evidence is there that each student has some form of personalized learning plan?

2. What evidence is that each student receives the needed academic support?

3. What evidence is there that mixed-ability grouping is incorporated into classroom practices?

4. What evidence is there that class sizes are appropriate for all students to achieve learning objectives?

5. What evidence is there that authentic learning strategies are incorporated into teachers' instructional repertoires?

6. What evidence is there that students are able to engage in community-based or out-of-school learning activities?

7. What evidence is there that instructional practices focus on deeper learning?

Assessment of Existing Curriculum Documents and Practices

Using the Shared Vocabulary definitions and the questions posed, complete the needs assessment below.

Key Element	Assets	Needs	Obstacles	Evidence
Academic Support Strategies in general				
• After Hours Strategies				
• Classroom-based Strategies				
• School-based Strategies				
• Out-of-School Strategies				
• Technology Assisted Strategies				
• Vacation Break Strategies				

Key Element	Assets	Needs	Obstacles	Evidence
Class Size				
Personalized Learning Plan				
Personalized Learning Strategies				
Authentic Learning Strategies in general				
• Advisories				
• Blended Learning Strategies				
• Community-based Learning Strategies				
• Learning Pathways				
• Mixed Ability Grouping Strategies				
• Project-based Learning Strategies				

Assessment of Educators Knowledge and Skills in Using Instructional Strategies

The Team may engage educators in the process of providing evidence of their knowledge and skill in various instructional strategies and their need for professional learning in each area.

Content Area	Level of Knowledge and Skill	Need for Professional Learning	Assets	Needs
Classroom-based Academic Support Strategies	☐ High – most use these strategies ☐ Moderate – some use these strategies ☐ Low – few or none use these strategies	☐ High – few need this PL ☐ Moderate – about half need this PL ☐ Low – almost all need this PL		
School-based Academic Support Strategies	☐ High – most use these strategies ☐ Moderate – some use these strategies ☐ Low – few or none use these strategies	☐ High – few need this PL ☐ Moderate – about half need this PL ☐ Low – almost all need this PL		
Personalized Learning Strategies	☐ High – most use these strategies ☐ Moderate – some use these strategies ☐ Low – few or none use these strategies	☐ High – few need this PL ☐ Moderate – about half need this PL ☐ Low – almost all need this PL		
Authentic Learning Strategies	☐ High – most use these strategies ☐ Moderate – some use these strategies ☐ Low – few or none use these strategies	☐ High – few need this PL ☐ Moderate – about half need this PL ☐ Low – almost all need this PL		

High-Quality Teaching Implementation: Strategic Plan

STEP 2. **A Strategic Plan:** describes the school's vision, values and mission. The plan articulates how assets may be used to address needs with the goal of high academic, civic and personal outcomes for all students. The plan focuses on curriculum, high-quality teaching, wraparound services, positive behavioral practices, parent and community engagement and inclusive leadership.

The **Community Schools Planning Team** should articulate the school's vision, values and mission with regard to the high-quality teaching. This necessitates knowing which instructional strategies are the best fit for the students served by the school and the learning needs of educators within the school. The Team should be guided by the following questions:

1. **Vision:** As a school community, what instructional strategies do we know will best assist all of our students in achieving to the best of their abilities?

2. **Strategies:** What steps will we take over the next three years to assist the school's educators in acquiring or enhancing the knowledge and skills of various instructional strategies?

3. **Priorities:** Given the steps we have described, how should we prioritize them so that we are progressing in an organized and sequential manner?

4. **Action Plan:** Who will do what? By when? Involving whom? What resources are needed to accomplish this work?

For Example, the Ankeny (Iowa) Community School District describes the Characteristics of Effective Instruction which focuses on student-centered classrooms, teaching for understanding, formative assessments, a rigorous and relevant curriculum, and teaching for learner differences.[3] By articulating their definition of high-quality instruction, this community school district is providing meaningful information to parents, students, community members, and partners.

One of the six Iowa Core Outcomes is: Educators implement effective instructional practices to ensure high levels of learning for each and every student. To remember the characteristics of effective instruction, use the acronym START.

Student-Centered Classrooms

- ➲ Educators support all students in making connections to construction new learning in order to make decisions and solve problems.
- ➲ The educator facilitates opportunities for students to be metacognitive.
- ➲ Educators and students are partners in learning.
- ➲ Educators facilitate time for students to learn collaboratively.
- ➲ Educators use meaningful and authentic assessment in a real world context.

Teaching for Understanding

- ➲ Instruction facilitates the construction of deep conceptual and procedural knowledge.
- ➲ Instruction facilitates the development of representations and conceptual models.
- ➲ Instruction inducts students into the discipline.
- ➲ Instruction facilitates the application of new learnings and understandings in new and novel situations (transfer).

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3 For additional information, go to http://www.ankenyschools.org/Page/9036

Assessment for Learning (Formative Assessment)

- ➲ Educator utilizes K-12 learning progressions along which students are expected to progress in a domain.
- ➲ Student learning goals are clear, focused on the intended learning, and communicated so all students understand the criteria for success.
- ➲ Instructional modifications for students are planned from carefully elicited evidence of student learning.
- ➲ Descriptive feedback identifies for students the specific knowledge and skills needed to reach learning goal(s).
- ➲ Self and peer assessment is planned and structured by educator and students in order to develop life-long learning skills.
- ➲ Educator facilitates the development of a collaborative classroom climate.

Rigorous and Relevant Curriculum

- ➲ Higher order thinking (HOT) is performed by students during instruction.
- ➲ Deep understanding and mastery of critical disciplinary concepts and skills are demonstrated.
- ➲ Concepts and skills are applied to situations, issues, and problems in the world beyond school.

Rigor and relevance are characterized by content that is linked to a core disciplinary concept or skill and:

- ➲ Requires students to do authentic work, using methods that are specific to the discipline and applying what they know or what they are learning to solve complex problems
- ➲ Involves the use of prior knowledge, the development of in-depth understanding, and the ability to develop and express ideas and findings through elaborated communication.

Teaching for Learner Differences

- ➲ Instruction is focused on "big ideas"—the essential concepts and skills within the content.
- ➲ Instruction is designed and delivered to match students' needs based on assessment data of students' prior knowledge, readiness, individual interests and learning preferences.
- ➲ Educator provides flexibility within content, instruction, and product to allow for variances in students' acquisition and demonstration of learning.
- ➲ Educator provides clear instruction about how to learn, making the various strategies and skills of the learning process conspicuous to all students.
- ➲ Instruction includes opportunities for students to practice and review their learning and receive feedback.
- ➲ Educator regularly monitors each student's progress related to the acquisition of the essential concepts and skills and adjusts instruction to meet students' learning needs.

High-Quality Teaching Implementation: Engagement of Partners

STEP 3.   SCHOOL PARTNERS: may include organizations, businesses and community-based entities that historically have not engaged with the school but are recognized as assets with expertise critical to implementing the community school pillars**.**

The COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PLANNING TEAM should review the assets and needs identified and determine if there are areas or gaps that need to be addressed both in school and with community-based organizations to enhance the academic and enrichment activities of the students.

With regard to HIGH-QUALITY TEACHING, community schools offer authentic learning opportunities for their students and teachers. The Coalition for Community Schools articulates six community-based learning models that may be adapted to the needs of a school.[4]

- ➲ ACADEMICALLY BASED COMMUNITY SERVICE: connects the academic mission of higher education institutions with public schools. Courses for both K-12 students and undergraduates are designed or redesigned to focus on community revitalization. Higher education and public school faculty collaborate to devise joint learning experiences; undergraduates enter schools as co-learners and role models for younger students, and each shares resources with the other.

- ➲ CIVIC EDUCATION: prepares competent and responsible citizens by advocating for civic and political engagement and providing learning experiences that connect students' academic learning with civic involvement based on constitutional principles and democratic concepts.

- ➲ ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION: capitalizes on students' native curiosity by using the school's surroundings and the community as a classroom within which students may construct their own learning. The focus is on the environment as a learning space, not a learning topic.

- ➲ PLACE-BASED LEARNING: uses the history, environment, culture, and economy of a particular place to provide a context for learning. Community needs and interests are drivers of learning; community members are resources and share their expertise through teaching and learning.

- ➲ SERVICE LEARNING: integrates community service and academic learning. Service learning addresses a community need identified by students. There are academic goals, and community partners provide resources and expertise to assist students in attaining them.

- ➲ WORK-BASED LEARNING: allows students to learn from adults in a work setting as role models, mentors or teachers. The primary goal is to learn about careers and making connections between academic learning and real world applications.

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4   These suggestions are adapted from Community-based learning: Engaging students for success and citizenship. Available online at http://www.communityschools.org/assets/1/AssetManager/CBL_Book_1_27_06.pdf

High-Quality Teaching Implementation: Community School Coordinator

STEP 4. **In general the Community School Coordinator:** facilitates the development and implementation of the strategic plan in collaboration with school and community members/partners; oversees the alignment of assets with needs; and manages the integration of before and after school programs and wraparound services with the academic program and schedule. The Coordinator may also engage in fund raising activities.

Most of the Coordinator's responsibilities relate to other Community School Pillars. However, with regard to **high-quality teaching**, the Community School Coordinator is the bridge between the school and community and facilitates the alignment of community-based and partner-provided authentic learning experiences that are community-based. The Coordinator facilitates collaboration between teachers and higher education and community organization partners who are able and willing to extend student learning by bringing their resources and expertise into the instructional process.

For example, the Coordinator reaches out to a National Park located in the community and connects the rangers with the grade 7 and 8 teachers. The rangers are interested in creating an interactive display related to the flora and fauna and would like to engage the students in a service learning, environmental education, place-based learning project over the course of an academic year. The Coordinator arranges for meetings between the rangers and teachers and assists in finding additional resources and expertise as needed.

NEA Resources

NEA YouTube video: Community schools – strong curriculum and high-quality teaching available online at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TeRl0nh5E2k

> *This 5-minute video explains two of the pillars: Strong and Proven Curriculum and High-Quality Teaching.*

NEA Instructional Practice homepage: http://www.nea.org/home/37004.htm?q=instruction

> *Identifying Achievement Gaps in Your School, District or Community Discussion Guide1 . Available online at* http://www.nea.org/home/12464.htm

This is the first in a series of short guides designed for use in leading discussions in schools and communities about achievement gaps. Includes a series of questions that will help identify the specific achievement gaps that exist locally, a first step in closing the gaps.

> *Identifying Factors that Contribute to Achievement Gaps Discussion Guide 2. Available online at* http://www.nea.org/home/17413.htm

This second guide is designed to lead a discussion with educators and community members that will identify the specific factors contributing to local achievement gaps in schools, school districts, and communities. Gaps may exist between groups of students of different backgrounds (e.g., ethnic, racial, gender, disability, and income) on tests, on access to courses and special educational opportunities, and on other indicators such as high school and college completion and employment later in life.

> *Identifying Stakeholders' Responsibilities for Closing Achievement Gaps: District and School Based Strategies Discussion Guide 3. Available online at* http://www.nea.org/home/12467.htm

This third guide focuses on a variety of strategies needed to address the many factors that contribute to the gaps, only some of which schools may influence directly. This guide focuses on district- and school-based strategies for closing achievement gaps.

> *Identifying Stakeholders' Responsibilities for Closing Achievement Gaps: Stakeholder Actions Discussion Guide 4. Available online at* http://www.nea.org/home/12469.htm

Many factors contribute to achievement gaps. Some educators, schools and districts may address. Others fall to other stakeholders.

> *This final guide is designed for use to identify stakeholders who share responsibility for closing local achievement gaps. Each of these stakeholders should be involved in, and accountable for, implementing programs and strategies that will close achievement gaps. Several stakeholders and a summary of actions each might take to close achievement gaps are included.*
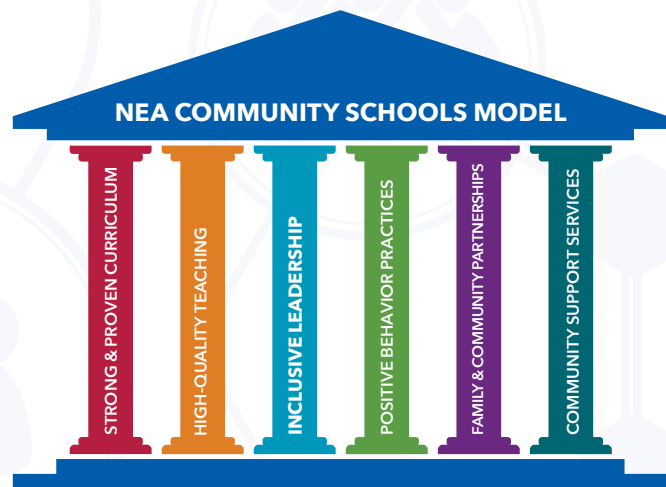
INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP

A PILLAR OF THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL MODEL

> INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP: *is a collaborative relationship among highly effective teachers and administrators characterized by shared decision-making and accountability.*[1]

IN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS, the leadership team consists of administrators, teachers and other school staff, along with the Community School Coordinator. All share the responsibility of school operations with the principal. This Leadership Team ensures that the community school strategy remains central in the decision-making process. The team plans development and implementation that includes thinking about sustainability that involves not just fund-raising but also organizing resources in new and more effective ways. A Community School Committee inclusive of families, community partners, school staff, youth, and other stakeholders from the school's various constituencies works in collaboration with the Leadership Team.

SHARED VOCABULARY[2]

⮞ CAPACITY: refers to the perceived abilities, skills, and expertise of school leaders, teachers, faculties, and staffs— most commonly when describing the "capacity" of an individual or school to execute or accomplish something specific, such as leading a school-improvement effort or teaching more effectively. (Common variations include educator capacity, leadership capacity, school capacity, and teacher capacity). The phrase **"BULIDING CAPACITY"** refers to any effort being made to improve the abilities, skills, and expertise of educators. If the purpose is to reduce a school's reliance on outside contractors or services, for example, educators may say they want to *"build internal capacity."*

NEA COMMUNITY SCHOOLS MODEL

STRONG & PROVEN CURRICULUM

HIGH-QUALITY TEACHING

INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR PRACTICES

FAMILY & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES

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1   For more on NEA's position and resources on school leadership, go to **http://www.nea.org/home/37004. htm?q=school%20leadership**

2   All Shared Vocabulary definitions are adapted from The Glossary of Education Reform, available online at **http:// edglossary.org**

   Listen to NEA webinar, Community Schools: Funding & Sustainability at **http://www.nea.org/home/68381.htm**

In fact, some educational professionals, literature, and resources will call on school leaders to "build capacity" in a specified area without ever describing precisely what capacities should be improved or exactly how they might be improved.

➲ SCHOOL COMMUNITY: refers to the various individuals, groups, businesses, and institutions that are invested in the welfare and vitality of the school and its community. Broadly, the school community includes administrators, teachers and staff, students and their parents and families, and residents and organizations that have a stake in the school's success, school-board members, city officials and elected representatives, businesses, organizations, cultural institutions, parent-teacher associations, "booster clubs," charitable foundations, and volunteer school-improvement committees. Narrowly, the school community includes those working, teaching, and learning in a school: administrators, faculty, staff, and students. In this case, educators may also be actively working to improve the school culture, strengthen relationships between teachers and students, and foster feelings of inclusion, caring, and shared purpose.

➲ SCHOOL CULTURE: refers to the beliefs, perceptions, relationships, attitudes, and written and unwritten rules that shape and influence how a school functions, but the term also encompasses more concrete issues such as the physical and emotional safety of students, the orderliness of classrooms and public spaces, or the degree to which a school embraces and celebrates racial, ethnic, linguistic, or cultural diversity.

A positive school culture is conducive to professional satisfaction, morale, and effectiveness, as well as to student learning, fulfillment, and well-being. Some characteristics of positive school cultures include:

✔ Recognition of teacher and student successes.

✔ Open, trusting, respectful relationships among school community members.

✔ Collegial, collaborative, and productive staff relationships.

✔ Physically, emotionally, and psychologically safe environment.

✔ Positive, healthy behaviors are modeled by staff.

✔ Restorative and positive behavioral practices allow students and educators opportunities to learn and grow.

✔ High academic and behavioral expectations apply to all students.

✔ Collaborative decision-making using input from staff, students and families.

✔ Equity guides the distribution of educational resources and learning opportunities.

✔ Academic support is available to all students.

➲ SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAM: refers to a group of administrators, teachers, and other staff who make governance decisions or who coordinate initiatives. While most teams are composed of school staff, team composition may also include students, families, and community representatives. While not all schools have a leadership team, in a community school this practice is common.

➲ SHARED LEADERSHIP: refers to the practice of expanding the number of people involved in school-based decision-making. Shared leadership requires creating leadership roles or decision-making opportunities for teachers, staff members, students, families, and community members. A school leadership team is a form of shared leadership. Teacher teams organized by grade or content area who meet regularly and provide recommendations on instructional decisions or the design of the academic program are practicing shared leadership. Shared

leadership is also related to voice, as a practical way to include the opinions, viewpoints, feedback, insights, and wisdom of students, teachers, families, and community members in leadership decisions.

⮕ STAKEHOLDER: refers to those who have a personal, professional, or civic "stake" in the school and its students. This may include school staff, students, parents and families, educator associations, parent teacher organizations, community members, local businesses and organizations, cultural institutions, professional associations, and elected officials. In a word, stakeholders

⮕ TEACHER-LEADER: refers to teachers who have taken on leadership roles and additional professional responsibilities. The teacher-leader concept is closely related to voice and shared leadership or the distribution of leadership roles and decision-making responsibilities beyond the administrative team in a district or school (sometimes called "distributed leadership").

⮕ VOICE: refers the values, opinions, beliefs, perspectives, and cultural backgrounds of the people in the school community – especially students, teachers, families, and local citizens—as well as the degree to which those values, opinions, beliefs, and perspectives are considered, included, listened to, and acted upon when important decisions are being made.

INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP IMPLEMENTATION: ASSET & NEEDS ASSESSMENT

STEP 1.	A SCHOOL-BASED ASSET AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT: is an inclusive process in which families, students, community members, partners, teachers, administrators and other school staff who define "what we have" and "what we need." Asset assessment articulates the strengths and capabilities available within the school, the community and by potential partners. Needs assessment defines specific issues, concerns, and deficits to be addressed.

The COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PLANNING TEAM should review the SHARED VOCABULARY definitions and discuss how each applies at the school site. Team members then collect and examine evidence from a variety of sources and identify specific leadership assets and needs, including obstacles or barriers. Each Key Element articulates one aspect of inclusive leadership. The Team may choose to assign each question to two or three team members to better use available time. About leadership, however, it is essential that each pair or trio have one school leader or teacher-leader as a member.

VIEW THE NEA YOUTUBE VIDEO, *Community Schools—Family & Community and Inclusive Leadership* at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LMlwQdZM2Bk

These questions may guide the Team's efforts to determine the current leadership model and practices leading to shared, inclusive models. If they are answered well and addressed through the Community Schools plan, they have the capacity to improve existing leadership practices. The response to these questions should lead the Team to identify specific leadership assets and needs.

1. Describe the existing *leadership model* at the school.

2. Who do you consider to be a member of the *school community* currently? Would this change with a Community School model?

3. What methods are currently in place for school leaders to hear the *voice* of different groups about issues or concerns from teachers? Other school staff? Students? Families? Community members?

4. Aside from members of the school community you've identified above, are there currently other *stakeholders* connected to the school?

5. What is the school's experience with having *teacher-leaders* either formally or informally?

6. If you were to describe the *school culture* in one word or phrase, what would it be? Why?

Assessment of Existing Leadership Practices

Using the Shared Vocabulary definitions and the questions posed, complete the needs assessment below.

Key Element	Assets	Needs	Obstacles	Evidence
Describe and assess the school's **Shared Leadership Team**				
Describe and assess the school's formal **Teacher-Leaders;** informal **Teacher-Leaders**				
Describe and assess each **Stakeholder** as a potential asset				
Describe and assess each **Voice** that could contribute to a shared leadership team				
Describe and assess each **School Community Member Group** as a potential asset				
Describe and assess the school's **Capacity** to implement a CS model				
Describe and assess the **Capacity Building Structures** available to the school as they develop and implement a CS model				

Assessment of Existing School Culture

The Team may engage educators in the process of providing evidence of the school culture.

| School Culture Characteristic	Embedded into the school Culture	Assets	Needs
Recognition of teacher and student successes	☐ Consistently ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rarely		
Open, trusting, respectful relationships among school community members.	☐ Consistently ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rarely		
Collegial, collaborative, and productive staff relationships	☐ Consistently ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rarely		
Physically, emotionally, and psychologically safe environment.	☐ Consistently ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rarely		
Positive, healthy behaviors are modeled by staff.	☐ Consistently ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rarely		
Restorative and positive behavioral practices allow students and educators opportunities to learn and grow.	☐ Consistently ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rarely		
High academic and behavioral expectations apply to all students.	☐ Consistently ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rarely		
Collaborative decision-making using input from staff, students and parents.	☐ Consistently ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rarely		
Equity guides the distribution of educational resources and learning opportunities.	☐ Consistently ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rarely		
Academic support is available to all students	☐ Consistently ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rarely		

Inclusive Leadership Implementation: Strategic Plan

STEP 2. A Strategic Plan: describes the school's vision, values and mission. The plan articulates how assets may be used to address needs with the goal of high academic, civic and personal outcomes for all students. The plan focuses on curriculum, high-quality teaching, wraparound services, positive behavioral practices, parent and community engagement and inclusive leadership.

The Community Schools Planning Team should articulate the school's vision, values and mission about inclusive leadership. This necessitates having a clear understanding of the existing school leadership model. The Team should be guided by the following questions:

1. **Vision:** As a school community, what inclusive leadership goals do we want to achieve? (see example below)

2. **Strategies:** About leadership, what steps will we take over the next three years to realize this vision and attain these academic goals?

3. **Priorities:** Given the steps we have described, how should we prioritize them so that we are progressing in an organized and sequential manner?

4. **Action Plan:** Who will do what? By when? Involving whom? What resources are needed to accomplish this work?

For Example, the San Fernando (Los Angeles United School District, CA) Middle school adopted an inclusive leadership model and reorganized the leadership functions to include teacher-leaders, student and parent voice, and school partnerships.[3]

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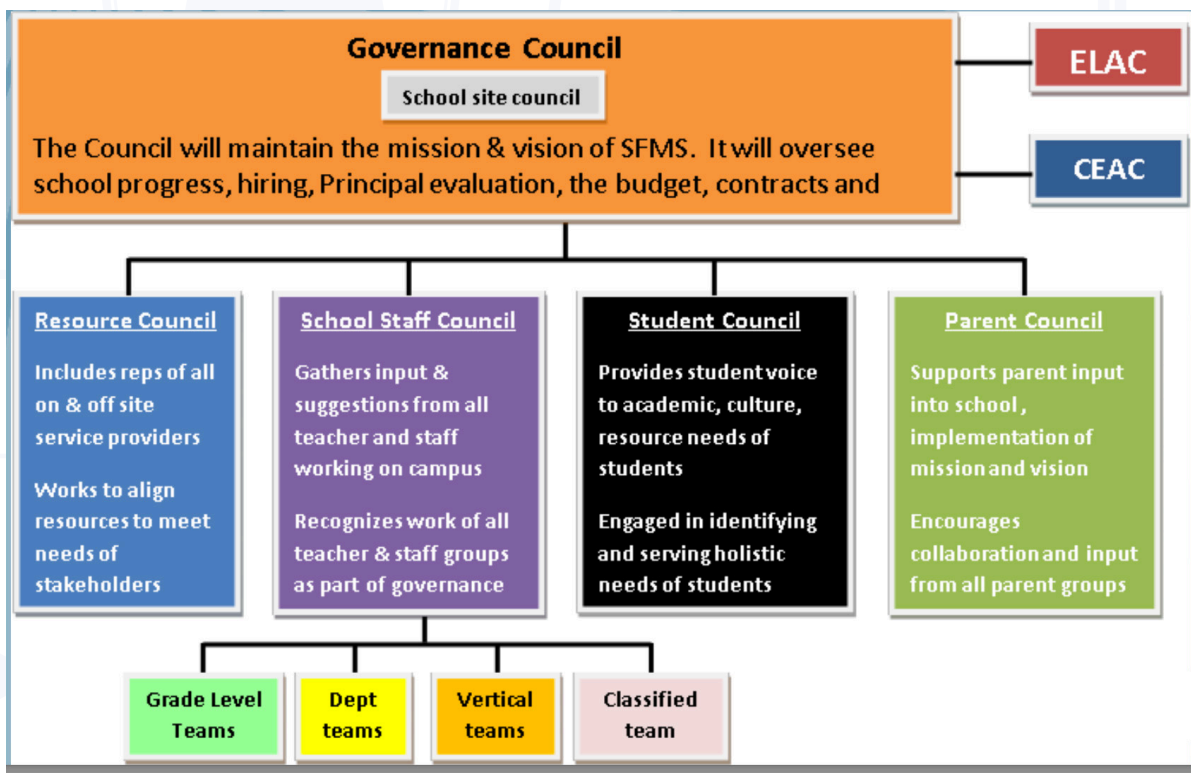
3   Source: **http://cscinnovation.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/CSCi_Mini** For more information on this school, go to **http://www.greatschools.org/california/san-fernando/2367**-San-Fernando-Middle-School/

Another Example, the Winter Hill (Somerville, MA) Community Innovation School established a Governing Board to help guide school operations. Unique in the district, Winter Hill operates with a higher level of autonomy than other schools. They developed and innovated their guiding school principles through the WHCIS Governing Board, made up of the principal and assistant principal, three teachers, three parents and three community members. The school posts all academic offerings, curriculum guides, the school improvement plan, meeting agendas and notes, breakfast-in-the-classroom program, dress code and other relevant information on their website: http://www.somerville.k12.ma.us/node/137/community

Inclusive Leadership Implementation: Engagement of Partners

STEP 3. **School partners:** may include organizations, businesses and community-based entities that historically have not engaged with the school are recognized as assets and their expertise is critical to implementing the community school pillars.

The **Community Schools Planning Team** should review the assets and needs identified and determine if there are areas or gaps in which community-based organizations could work in partnership with the school to enhance or contribute to the leadership functions.

Regarding Inclusive Leadership, the community partners may have experience, expertise and resources to enhance the decision-making structures with the school. The Coalition for Community Schools et. al. highlights the Webb Middle School is Austin, TX. Webb is part of a grant-based pilot working to develop a new supervisory model for the district. Teachers, administrators, families and students are part of a team; these teams under the direction of a community stakeholder team consisting of school partners are drafting a multi-year plan in which teachers will have more input into both academic and non-academic school activities and their own professional learning.[4]

Inclusive Leadership Implementation: Community School Coordinator

In General, the Community School Coordinator facilitates the development and implementation of the strategic plan in collaboration with school and community members/partners; oversees the alignment of assets with needs; and manages the integration of before and after school programs and wraparound services with the academic program and schedule. The Coordinator may also engage in fund raising activities.

Most of the Coordinator's responsibilities relate to other Community School Pillars. However, about **Inclusive Leadership,** the Community School Coordinator may serve on the Shared Leadership Team bringing ideas gathered from interactions with school partners related to leadership functions.

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4   See Community Schools: Transforming Struggling Schools into Thriving Schools at http://www.southerneducation.org/Publications/Community-Schools-Layout_021116.aspx

Listen to NEA webinar, Scaling Up Community Schools: Strategies Across the Country at http://www.nea.org/home/68381.htm

For example, the Coordinator may work closely with the local YMCA and learns that their leadership team consists of many of the instructors of swimming, fitness and children's program who work in concert with the Y Director to create meaningful physical fitness programs that are responsive to community needs. The team changes programs and schedules based on an asset/need assessment done quarterly since they have learned that the time of year impacts what members want from the YMCA.

NEA Resources

NEA YouTube video: Community Schools—Family & Community and Inclusive Leadership. Available online at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LMlwQdZM2Bk

This 4-minute video explains two Community Schools pillars: Family & Community Engagement and Inclusive Leadership.

NEA Leadership homepage: http://www.nea.org/home/37004.htm?q=school%20leadership

NEA Policy Briefs:

Changing role of school leadership. (2008). Available online at http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/PB09_Leadership08.pdf

This 4-page defines standards of effective leadership practices and the inclusion of leadership functions as part of teachers' working conditions.

Planning for school restructuring: Keeping stakeholders in the process. (2013) Available online at http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/Planning-for-School-Restructuring-06282013.pdf

Provides rationale for inclusion of educators and families in the school redesign planning process and the importance of engaging all stakeholders.

Alvarez, B. (2016). Embedding leadership in the teaching profession. *NEA Today*, February 10, 2015. Available online at http://neatoday.org/2016/02/10/teacher-leadership-summit/

Article highlights discussion of teacher leadership efforts discussed at the 2015 International Summit on the Teaching Profession.

Alvarez, B. (2015). Teacher-led schools: They're here and more are on the way. *NEA Today*, February 12, 2015. Available online at http://neatoday.org/2015/02/12/teacher-led-schools-theyre-way/

Article describes the Math and Science Leadership Academy, a teacher-led school, in Denver.

Eskelsen Garcia, L. (2016). In our most dynamic schools, everyone plays a part. *Lily's Blackboard,* June 2, 2016. Available online at http://lilysblackboard.org/2016/06/dynamic-schools-everyone-plays-part/

In this blog post, NEA President Lily Eskelsen Garcia articulates the value of shared leadership so that every educator has a role to play in creating a safe, nurturing and encouraging school culture.

Other Resources

Center for Teaching Quality, (Undated). Five steps to starting your teacher-powered school. Available online at https://www.teacherpowered.org/resources/publications/5-steps-starting-your-teacher-powered-school

Online resource that provides guidance, discussion questions, and activities leading to a teacher-led school.

Landeau, R., VanDorn, D., and Freeley. M.E. (2009). Sharing hats. *Educational Leadership,* 67(2) 57-60. Available online at http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/oct09/vol67/num02/Sharing-Hats.aspx

Articles describes the many hats that principals must where and how building a teacher leadership cadre at NYC's Ryan Middle School resulted in success, though not entirely problem-free. This article needs an ASCD membership.

Louis, K.S., Leithwood, K., Wahlstrom, K.L. and Anderson, S.E. (2010). Investigating the links to improved student learning: Final report of research findings. The Wallace Foundation, Learning from Leadership Project. The print version of the report is available online at http://www.wallace-foundation.org/knowledge-center/Documents/Investigating-the-Links-to-Improved-Student-Learning.pdf The electronic version of the report may be found at http://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/pages/1_3-patterns-of-distributed-leadership-learning-from-leadership.aspx

300-page report broken into chapters. Part 1: sections 1-4 may be useful to planning teams. Topics covered include shared leadership principles and practices.

National School Climate Center web site. Available online at http://www.schoolclimate.org/programs/csci.php

The NCSS school climate survey, an empirically validated tool, provides an in-depth profile of a school's strengths and needs. This web site includes resources and tools related to school climate and culture. Surveys have a cost: available for families, school personnel, elementary school students, middle/high school students.

National Technical Assistance Center for Community Schools. (2009). Building, assessing, sustaining, and improving community schools: Shared leadership. Stanford University John W. Gardner Center for Youth and Their Communities. Available online at http://johnwgardnertestsite.pbworks.com/w/browse/#view=ViewFolder&param=Printable%20Versions%20of%20Toolkit%20Content

Interactive Web site that provides explanation and examples of the toolkit topic; fact sheets; tools and resources; and training design and suggested readings. Individual chapters are available at the following links.

Academic Support at http://johnwgardnertestsite.pbworks.com/w/browse/#view=ViewFolder&param=Session%202%3A%20Academic%20Supports

Assessing Results at http://johnwgardnertestsite.pbworks.com/w/browse/#view=ViewFolder&param=Session%206%3A%20Assessing%20Results

Collaboration at http://johnwgardnertestsite.pbworks.com/w/browse/#view=ViewFolder&param=Session%201%3A%20Collaboration

Lessons Learned at http://johnwgardnertestsite.pbworks.com/w/browse/#view=ViewFolder&param=Session%208%3A%20Lessons%20Learned%20from%20Implementation

Shared Leadership at http://johnwgardnertestsite.pbworks.com/w/page/13471136/Shared%20Leadership

Sustainability at http://johnwgardnertestsite.pbworks.com/w/browse/#view=ViewFolder&param=Session%207%3A%20Sustainability

Youth Development Toolkit at http://johnwgardnertestsite.pbworks.com/w/browse/#view=ViewFolder&param=Session%205%3A%20Youth%20Development

Natsiopoulou, E. and Giouroukakis, V. (2010). When teachers run the school. *Educational Leadership, 67*(7), April 2010. Available online at http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/apr10/vol67/num07/When-Teachers-Run-the-School.aspx

This article describes a Greek high school in which all the administrative roles were taken over by teachers which allowed the principal to focus on school governance. The school was characterized as democratic with full participation.

Oakland Unified School District. (2015). Community schools: Understanding implementation efforts to support students, teachers and families. Stanford University: John W. Gardner Center for Youth and Communities. Available online at https://gardnercenter.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/Oakland%20Unified%20School%20District%20Community%20Schools_Implementation%20Report.pdf

    This report describes findings from a study the full-service community school model being implemented in the Oakland, CA schools. Implementation strategies are described as well as short-term, intermediate and long-term outcomes.

Parrett, W. and Budge, K. (2009). Tough questions for tough times. *Educational Leadership,* 67(2) 22-27. Available online at http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/oct09/vol67/num02/Tough-Questions-for-Tough-Times.aspx Community schools: Understanding implementation efforts to support students, teachers and families. Stanford University

    In determining what the best answers are in creating safe learning environments, asking the right questions is essential. This article, while focusing on student achievement in high-poverty schools, offers questions about leadership, learning, and learning environment. These were used by a Yakima, WA school to change their student learning outcomes.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR PRACTICES

A PILLAR OF THE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS MODEL

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR: *The most effective tool teachers have to handle problem behavior is to prevent it from occurring in the first place. Positive Behavior Practices help teachers improve classroom management and preventive school discipline to maximize student success. Positive Behavior Practices are critical to providing all young people with the best learning environment.*[1]

IN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS, educators emphasize positive relationships and interactions, and model these through their own behavior. Negative behaviors and truancy are acknowledged and addressed in ways that hold students accountable while showing them they are still valued members of the school community. Restorative discipline practices such as peer mediation, community service and post-conflict resolution help students learn from their mistakes and foster positive, healthy school climates where respect and compassion are core principles. Zero-tolerance practices leading to suspension and expulsion are avoided.

NEA COMMUNITY SCHOOLS MODEL

STRONG & PROVEN CURRICULUM · HIGH-QUALITY TEACHING · INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP · POSITIVE BEHAVIOR PRACTICES · FAMILY & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS · COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES

SHARED VOCABULARY[2]

- ➲ **ATTENDANCE:** is a baseline factor in determining student success. Successful schools begin by engaging students and making sure they come to school regularly.

- ➲ **CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT:** refers to the wide variety of skills and techniques that educators use to keep students organized, orderly, focused, attentive, on task, and academically productive during a class. The more traditional interpretation of classroom management may focus largely on "compliance"— making sure students obey school rules. [Glossary of Education Reform]

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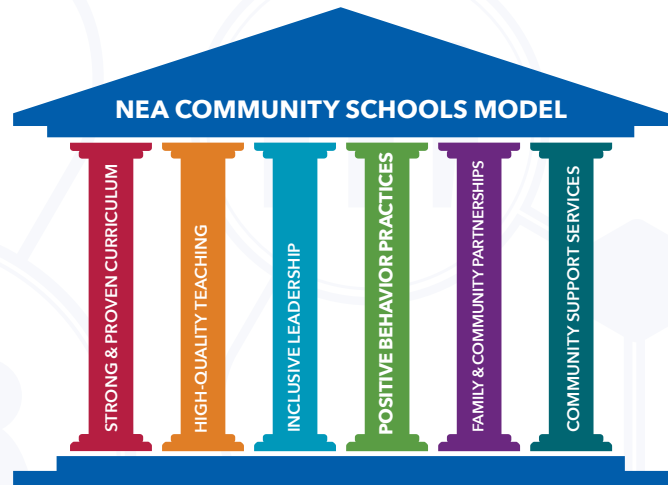
1. For more on NEA's support of PBIS, go to **http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/PB41A-Positive_Behavioral_Interventions-Final.pdf**

2. All Shared Vocabulary definitions are adapted from various sources which are indicated in [brackets] and listed in Resources at the end of this chapter.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR PRACTICES 55

- **Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports:** practices are based on assumptions and beliefs that all children can exhibit appropriate behavior. An educator's responsibility is to identify the environmental conditions that enable appropriate behavior. The research-based PBIS practices include: intervening early; using a multi-tiered model of intervention and support; using research-based interventions; monitoring student progress; and using data make decisions. [PBIS]

- **PBIS Components:** includes seven major components: a) an agreed upon and common approach to discipline, b) a positive statement of purpose, c) a small number of positively stated expectations for all students and staff, d) procedures for teaching these expectations to students, e) a continuum of procedures for encouraging displays and maintenance of these expectations, f) a continuum of procedures for discouraging displays of rule-violating behavior, and g) procedures for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the discipline system on a regular and frequent basis. These major components work for most communities:
  - ✔ Identify the expected behaviors,
  - ✔ Teach, model and practice what those behaviors look like, sound like, and feel like,
  - ✔ Specifically praise appropriate behavior with private or public acknowledgement, and
  - ✔ Measure outcome data to determine successes and barriers to reaching the desired goals. [PBIS]

- **Peer Mediation Program:** refers to a problem solving process conducted by students with students. It is a process by which two or more students involved in a dispute meet in a private, safe and confidential setting to work out problems with the assistance of a trained student mediator. [The Resolution Center]

- **Restorative Justice:** refers to the discipline approach that focuses on repairing harm through inclusive processes that engage all stakeholders. Implemented well, restorative justice shifts the focus of discipline from punishment to learning and from the individual to the community. Restorative justice attempts to reduce bullying and other behaviors leading to conflict and improve attendance. Restorative justice requires that the "victim" and "victimizer" meet with a mediator to address the problem and seek solutions. [Creative Education]

- **Restorative Practices:** build social capital and achieve social discipline through participatory learning and decision-making. Restorative Justice is a restorative practice that directly addresses wrongdoing. [Conflict Solutions Center]

- **School-to-Prison Pipeline:** refers to school disciplinary practices in which students are funneled out of public schools and into the juvenile and criminal justice systems. Many of these students have learning disabilities or histories of poverty, abuse, or neglect, and would benefit from additional educational and counseling services. Instead, they are isolated, punished, and pushed out. [ACLU]

- **Zero Tolerance:** refers to school or district-wide policies that mandate predetermined, typically harsh consequences or punishments (such as suspension and expulsion) for a wide degree of rule violation. Most frequently, zero tolerance policies address drug, weapons, violence, smoking and school disruption in efforts to protect all students' safety and maintain a school environment that is conducive to learning. However, research indicates that, as implemented, zero tolerance policies are ineffective in the long run and are related to a number of negative consequences, including increased rates of school drop out and discriminatory application of school discipline practices. [National Association of School Psychologists] According to the ACLU, "zero-tolerance" policies often criminalize minor infractions of school rules. Students of color are especially vulnerable to push-out trends and the discriminatory application of discipline.

Positive Behavior Practices Implementation: Asset & Needs Assessment

STEP 1. **A school-based Asset and Needs assessment:** is an inclusive process in which parents, students, community members, partners, teachers, administrators and school staff who define "what we have" and "what we need." Asset assessment articulates the strengths and capabilities available within the school, the community and by potential partners. Needs assessment defines specific issues, concerns, and deficits to be addressed.

The **Community Schools Planning Team** should review the **Shared Vocabulary** definitions and discuss how each applies at the school site. Team members then collect and examine evidence from a variety of sources and identify specific behavior management practices assets and needs, including obstacles or barriers. Each Key Element articulates one aspect of a positive or negative behavior management practices. The Team may choose to assign each question to two or three team members to better use available time. Regarding positive behavior practices, however, it is essential that each working group have one representative who has first-hand knowledge of student behavior management at the school.

View the NEA YouTube video, Community Schools—Community Support and Positive Discipline. Available online at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8HN_zW4SwYY

These questions may guide the Team's efforts to determine the types of behavioral practices that are used in the school. If they are answered well and addressed through the Community Schools plan, they have the capacity to improve student engagement and learning. The response to these questions should lead the Team to identify specific assets and needs related to positive behavior practices.

1. Do we have a schoolwide leadership or behavior support team? If so, who are the members? What does the team do?

2. Do we have a schoolwide behavior philosophy or set of expectations? If so, is it written down? Do educators, students and parents have access to this?

3. To what extent does the school staff support and abide by the behavior philosophy or set of expectations?

4. What are the key negative behaviors that impact student engagement and learning?

5. How do we teach students positive behavior practices?

6. How do we use restorative practices with some students?

7. How do we provide professional development, especially to early career educators, about positive behavior practices?

Assessment of Existing School Climate and Disciplinary Practices[3]

Guiding Principle 1: Climate and Prevention

Schools that foster positive school climates can help to engage all students in learning by preventing problem behaviors and intervening effectively to support struggling and at-risk students.

To what extent do we now…	Assets	Needs	Obstacles	Evidence
Engage in deliberate efforts to create positive school climate.				
Prioritize the use of evidence-based prevention strategies, such as tiered supports, to promote positive student behavior.				
Promote social and emotional learning to complement academic skills and encourage positive behavior.				
Provide regular training and supports to all school personnel – including teachers, principals, support staff, and school-based law enforcement officers – on how to engage students and support positive behavior.				
Collaborate with local mental health, child welfare, law enforcement, and juvenile justice agencies and other stakeholders to align resources, prevention strategies, and intervention services.				
Ensure that any school-based law enforcement officers' roles focus on improving school safety and reducing inappropriate referrals to law enforcement.				

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3   Adapted from USED (2014), Guiding principle: A resource for improving school climate and discipline at **https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/school-discipline/guiding-principles.pdf**

Schools that have discipline policies or codes of conduct with clear, appropriate, and consistently applied expectations and consequences will help students improve behavior, increase engagement, and boost achievement.

To what extent do we now…	Assets	Needs	Obstacles	Evidence
Set high expectations for behavior and adopt an instructional approach to discipline.				
Involve families, students, and school personnel, and communicate regularly and clearly.				
Ensure that clear, developmentally appropriate, and proportional consequences apply for misbehavior.				
Create policies that include appropriate procedures for students with disabilities and due process for all students.				
Remove students from the classroom only as a last resort, ensure that alternative settings provide academic instruction, and return students to class as soon as possible.				

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 3: EQUITY AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT[5]

Schools that build staff capacity and continuously evaluate the school's discipline policies and practices are more likely to ensure fairness and equity, and promote achievement for all students.

To what extent do we now…	Assets	Needs	Obstacles	Evidence
Train all school staff to apply school discipline policies and practices in a fair and equitable manner.				
Use proactive, data-driven, and continuous efforts, including gathering feedback from families, students, teachers, and school personnel to prevent, identify, reduce, and eliminate discriminatory discipline and unintended consequences.				

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5   Adapted from USED (2014), Guiding principle: A resource for improving school climate and discipline at **https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/school-discipline/guiding-principles.pdf**

Positive Behavior Practices Implementation: Strategic Plan

STEP 2. A STRATEGIC PLAN: describes the school's vision, values and mission. The plan articulates how assets may be used to address needs with the goal of high academic, civic and personal outcomes for all students. The plan focuses on curriculum, high-quality teaching, wraparound services, positive behavioral practices, parent and community engagement and inclusive leadership.

The COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PLANNING TEAM should articulate the school's vision, values and mission regarding POSITIVE BEHAVIOR PRACTICES. This necessitates having a clear understanding of the current school practices for managing student behavior. The Team should be guided by the following questions:

1. VISION: As a school community, what academic goals do we want to achieve? (See example below)

2. STRATEGIES: Regarding Positive Behavior Practices, what steps will we take over the next three years to realize this vision and attain these academic goals?

3. PRIORITIES: Given the steps we have described; how should we prioritize them so that we are progressing in an organized and sequential manner?

4. ACTION PLAN: Who will do what? By when? Involving whom? What resources are needed to accomplish this work?

AN EXAMPLE OF A VISION THAT INCLUDES POSITIVE BEHAVIOR PRACTICE can be found at the Fletcher (Aurora, CO) Community School[6] that implemented a PBIS program. According to their web site:

➲ FLETCHER COMMUNITY SCHOOL IS USING THE POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS PROGRAM: to encourage students to demonstrate positive behaviors and to reward them for good choices. PBIS is a research-based approach of positive behavior. When PBIS is paired with rigorous classroom instruction, it opens the doors for student success and achievement.

➲ SOAR TICKETS: When a student demonstrates a SOAR behavior they may be awarded a SOAR ticket. A drawing for a small prize will take place in each class at the end of every week. These SOAR behaviors are:

✔ SAFE

✔ OUTSTANDING ATTITUDE

✔ ALWAYS RESPECTFUL

✔ RESPONSIBLE

➲ GOLDEN FALCON: Each Quarter, teachers select a student to be a Golden Falcon, a student who has displayed all four SOAR behaviors. The students' families are invited to celebrate this accomplishment at an assembly.

ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF A VISION THAT INCLUDES POSITIVE BEHAVIOR PRACTICE can be found at the Ridley (PA) Safe Schools and Community Initiatives[7] that includes Peer Mediation Program, Elementary Student Assistance program, Secondary School Assistance Program, Girls Circle Program, and Bullying Prevention Program. On the web site, each program has links to key school policies, personnel, contact information and other relevant information for educators, students, parents and community members.

6   For more information, go to **http://fletcher.aurorak12.org/pbis/**

7   For more information, go to **http://www.ridleysd.k12.pa.us/Page/98**

Positive Behavior Practices Implementation: Engagement of Partners

STEP 3. **Partners:** may include organizations, businesses and community-based entities that historically have not engaged with the school are recognized as assets and their expertise is critical to implementing the community school pillars.

The **Community Schools Planning Team** should review the assets and needs identified and determine how to improve or enhance positive behavior practices with the school for the betterment of the academic and enrichment activities of the students.

Regarding Positive Behavior Practices, community organizations, institutions, and businesses may have resources to enhance school-based positive and restorative behavior practices. However, all partners should be aware of the school's behavioral expectations and make clear that they apply to all programs and activities regardless of the setting or time.

Positive Behavior Practices Implementation: Community School Coordinator

STEP 4. **In General:** the Community School Coordinator facilitates the development and implementation of the strategic plan in collaboration with school and community members/partners; oversees the alignment of assets with needs; and manages the integration of before and after school programs and wraparound services with the academic program and schedule. The Coordinator may also engage in fund raising activities.

Most of the Coordinator's responsibilities relate to other Community School Pillars. However, **regarding Positive Behavior Practices,** the Community School Coordinator should make sure that school partners who are providing before and after school and out-of-school programs are aware of the behavioral norms students are expected to follow and positive behavior practices.

NEA Resources

NEA YouTube video: Community Schools – Community Support and Positive Discipline. Available online at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8HN_zW4SwYY

This 4-minute video explains two Community Schools pillars: Community Support Services and Positive Discipline Practices.

NEA Student Behavior Homepage at http://www.nea.org/home/37004.htm?q=student%20behavior

Positive behavioral interventions and supports: A multi-tiered framework that works for every student. NEA Policy Brief. Available online at http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/PB41A-Positive_Behavioral_Interventions-Final.pdf

NEA Policy Statement on discipline and the school-to-prison pipeline available online at http://ra.nea.org/delegate-resources/policy-statement-on-discipline/

Approved at the 2016 Representative Assembly, this policy statement defines disciplinary terms and outlines five guiding principles.

Kohl, S. (Undated). Modeling positive behavior in the classroom. Available online at http://www.nea.org/tools/52062.htm

Zauber, K. (2003). Management tips for new teachers. Available online at http://www.nea.org/tools/management-tips-for-new-teachers.html

Walker, T. (2015). How engaging students resistance works better than punishment. NEA Today, March 3, 2015. Available online at http://neatoday.org/2015/03/03/engaging-student-resistance-works-better-punishment/

Eric Toshalis, author of Make me! Understanding and engaging student resistance in school, believes that schools need to remodel how educators respond to student oppositional behavior – to view it more as an opportunity, not something to punish. He outlines his research and methods in this NEA Today interview.

Other Resources

Attendance Works: Advancing Student Success by Reducing Chronic Absence available online at http://www.attendanceworks.org/tools/

Web site devoted to improving student attendance. Provides tools, examples fro around the country at elementary, middle and high school levels. Outlines school site strategies: recognize good and improved attendance; engage students and parents; monitor attendance data and practice; provide personalized early outreach; and develop programmatic response to barriers.

Boccanfuso, C., and Kuhfeld, M. (2011). Multiple responses, promising results: Evidence-based non-punitive alternatives to zero tolerance. Child Trends Research-to-Results Brief, March 2011. Available online at http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/alternatives-to-zero-tolerance.pdf

This 12-page brief explains what "zero tolerance" means and implementation effects in schools. It then explains alternatives that encompass positive behavioral methods with an explanation of each. An extensive reference section is included.

Creative Education. (2014). Restorative justice in schools: An overview. Available online at http://www.creativeeducation.co.uk/blog/restorative-justice-in-schools/

Provides one-page overview of restorative justice programs in schools. Links to other programs and sites are included.

Conflict Solutions Center. (2014). Restorative practices in schools. Available online at http://www.cscsb.org/restorative_justice/restorative_practice_schools.html

Provides one-page overview of restorative justice programs in schools. Offers guidance documents in Spanish language versions.

Kappa Delta Pi. (Undated). Culturally responsive classroom management & intercultural communication. Available online at https://www.kdp.org/chapters/programmingideas/pdf/pdoutofthebox/Culturally_Responsive_Classroom_Mgmt.pdf

Two-page group activity process through which participants "develop positive attitudes about others by discussing cultural perspectives and development of classroom management practices that are culturally and linguistically responsive."

Losen, D. (2011). Discipline policies, successful schools, and racial justice. The Civil Rights Project at UCLA. National Education Policy Center. Available online at http://nepc.colorado.edu/files/NEPC-SchoolDiscipline.pdf

A report from the Civil Rights Project at UCLA which focuses on the impact of disparate treatment of racial minorities and students with disabilities when zero tolerance and other punitive behavioral practice are implemented in schools. Makes recommendations for positive behavioral practices.

National Association of School Psychologists. (2001). Zero tolerance and alternative strategies: A fact sheet for educators and policy makers. Available online at http://www.naspcenter.org/factsheets/zt_fs.html

Fact sheet defines zero tolerance, its prevalence in school policies and practices, problems associated with broad application, impact on students with disabilities, and alternatives to zero tolerance policies, policing in schools programs, and the negative impact especially on black students all resulting in negative rather than positive behavioral practices. Interesting graphic depictions of data.

Nelson, L, and Lind, D. (2015). The school to prison pipeline, explained. Justice Policy Institute, posted February 24, 2015. Available online at http://www.justicepolicy.org/news/8775

While juvenile crime rates have dropped over the past 15 years, school discipline policies have become more punitive in some districts. This paper provides a history of zero tolerance policies

PBS News Hour (2014). Colorado high school replaces punishment with "talking circles." Posted on YouTube on February 20, 2014.

This 7-minute video is about Hinkley High School in Aurora, CO, where students, parents and administration are meeting face-to-face to resolve student conflict with conversation. The number of physical altercations has taken a nosedive as this new type of disciplinary action, called "restorative justice," replaces suspension.

Schott Foundation. (2014). Restorative practices: Fostering healthy relationships & promoting positive discipline in schools, a guide for educators. Available online at http://schottfoundation.org/sites/default/files/restorative-practices-guide.pdf

A restorative practice toolkit developed by NEA, AFT, Advancement Project, and the National Opportunity to Learn Campaign. Defines and describes practice, compares restorative programs to zero-tolerance programs, and provides guidance on creating and implementing these restorative practices.

United States Department of Education. (2014). Guiding principles: A resource guide for improving school climate and discipline. Web site at https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/school-discipline/guiding-principles.pdf

Guide focus on three key principles: 1) Climate and prevention: schools that foster positive school climates can help to engage all students in learning by preventing problem behaviors and intervening effectively to support struggling and at-risk students. 2) Expectations and Consequences: Schools that have discipline policies or codes of conduct with clear, appropriate, and consistently applied expectations and consequences will help students improve behavior, increase engagement, and boost achievement. 3) Equity and Continuous Improvement: Schools that build staff capacity and continuously evaluate the school's discipline policies and practices are more likely to ensure fairness and equity

United States Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. (Undated). Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports. Web site at https://www.pbis.org

Comprehensive web site addressing behavioral interventions and supports to assist schools and district in defining, developing, implementing and evaluating a multi-tiered behavioral practices program that emphasizes social, emotional, and academic outcomes for students with disabilities. However, these practices are applicable to all students.

YouTube (2013). Restorative resources – restorative justice in schools. Posted on April 19, 2013. Available online at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9pYuA3o6WuU

An 11-minute video that outlines restorative justice and practices in schools with examples from Santa Rosa, California and Oregon schools. Sponsored by the Conflict Solutions Center.
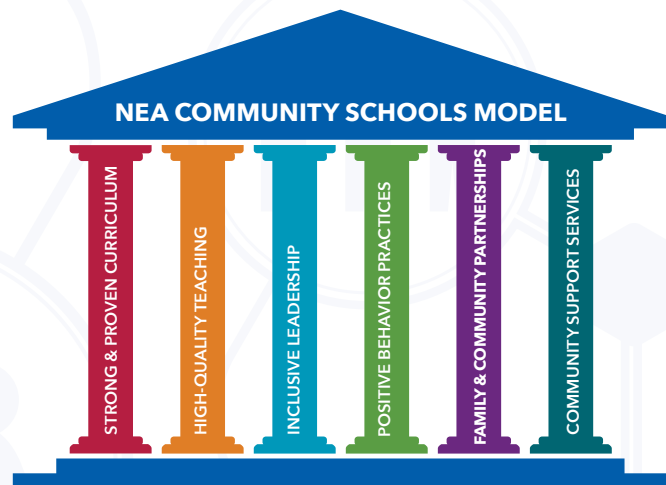
FAMILY & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

A PILLAR OF THE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS MODEL

COMMUNITY SCHOOL: *A center of the community that brings together academics, health and social services, youth and community development and community engagement under one roof, leading to improved learning, stronger families, and healthier communities.[1]*

IN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS, parents, caregivers and community members are partners in creating dynamic, flexible community schools. Their engagement is not related to a specific project or program, but is on-going and extends beyond volunteerism to roles in decision-making, governance and advocacy. Their voices are critical to articulating and achieving the school's overall mission and goals. When families and educators work together, students are more engaged learners who earn higher grades and enroll in more challenging classes; student attendance and grade and school completion rates improve.

When preparing to address this pillar, the Community School Planning Team should become familiar with the federal family engagement requirement. Read NEA's *Quick Brief on Family Engagement in Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)* available at http://ra.nea.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/FCE-in-ESSA-in-Brief.pdf. This document describes changes to Elementary and Secondary Education Act by the 2015 reauthorization as ESSA. Parent "involvement" is now parent "engagement." The brief answers questions about how to inform, involve and engage parents and families.

NEA COMMUNITY SCHOOLS MODEL

STRONG & PROVEN CURRICULUM

HIGH-QUALITY TEACHING

INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR PRACTICES

FAMILY & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES

USE OF FUNDS[2]

The ESSA requires that districts reserve at least one percent of their Title I funding for parent and family engagement activities. Schools with the highest needs are to be given priority when these funds are distributed. Parents and family members must have input into decisions about funding use. At least one of the following must be included in a district family engagement plan:

1   For more on NEA's position and resources on Community Schools, go to http://www.nea.org/home/66319.htm
2   This section is adapted from NEA Quick Brief on Family Engagement at http://ra.nea.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/FCE-in-ESSA-in-Brief.pdf

FAMILY & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS 67

- ⮑ **Professional Development:** for school and non-profit partner organization personnel regarding parent and family engagement strategies, which may be provided jointly to teachers, principals, and other school leaders, specialized instructional support personnel, paraprofessionals, early childhood educators, and parents and family members.

- ⮑ **Home-Based Programs:** that reach parents and family members at home, in the community, and at school.

- ⮑ **Disseminating Information:** about best practices focused on parent and family engagement, especially best practices for increasing the engagement of economically disadvantaged parents and family members.

- ⮑ **Collaborating with Community-Based Organizations:** through sub-grants to schools so they can collaborate with community-based or other organizations or employers with a record of success in improving and increasing parent and family engagement.

- ⮑ **Other Activities and Strategies:** that the school or district determines are appropriate and consistent with its family engagement policy or plan.

NEA recommends ten key strategies for effective family and community partnerships.[3]

1. **Agree on core values:** Take the time at the beginning of the planning process to think deeply and reflect about what family members and community partners believe, and why they think adopting a Community Schools Model will benefit students.

2. **Listen to the community:** Identify priorities through a collaborative process that creates community consensus around what needs to happen and in what sequence.

3. **Use data to set priorities and focus strategies:** Look closely at current achievement trends as part of the asset and needs assessment to address identified gaps in students' knowledge and skills.

4. **Provide relevant, on-site professional development:** Base professional development on data, educator-defined learning needs, student learning needs, and conversations among stakeholders, in a way that builds both educator to educator and educator to parent collaborations.

5. **Build collaborations with community partners:** Engage strategic partners such as colleges, social service agencies, community groups, faith-based organizations, local leaders, public officials, and businesses. Develop community ownership of the community school model.

6. **Use targeted outreach to focus on high- needs communities, schools, and students:** Identify groups that need special attention, learn about their concerns and needs, and respond in culturally appropriate ways.

7. **Build one-to-one relationships between families and educators that are linked to learning:** Take time to have conversations and reach agreement on how best to collaborate to improve student engagement and learning.

8. **Set, communicate, and support high expectations:** Make it clear that success is the norm by creating pathways to career and college, especially for students at risk and those at the margins, and provide students and families with the supports they need to succeed.

9. **Address cultural differences:** Provide support for teachers and education support professionals to bridge barriers of culture, class, and language.

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3   Adapted from NEA Family-School-Community Partnership 2.0 report, available online at **http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/Family-School-Community-Partnerships-2.0.pdf**

10. CONNECT STUDENTS TO THE COMMUNITY: Make learning hands-on and relevant to students' lives while also showing that students and schools serve the community.

SHARED VOCABULARY[4]

➲ CAPACITY-BUILDING: refers to the effort of a school to strengthen its staff's ability to achieve goals; that is to plan, make policy, and do the work needed to meet goals. Schools receiving Title I funds are expected to build their capacity for parent engagement, that is, to strengthen parent and staff resources to more meaningfully inform, engage and involve parents in supporting children's learning (NEA).

➲ COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATION (CBO): refers to public or private nonprofit group, including religious organizations, representative of a community or a significant segment of a community and is engaged in meeting human, educational, environmental, or public safety needs (NEA).

➲ COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTER (CLC): refers to an entity that helps students meet academic achievement standards in core subjects. A center may provide students with opportunities for academic enrichment activities and a broad array of other activities (such as drug and violence prevention, counseling, art, music, recreation, technology, and character education programs). Such centers operate during non-school hours or periods when school is not in session, such as before and after school or during summer recess. Programs offered by a center reinforce and complement the regular academic school programs of students served. A center may also offer students' families opportunities for literacy and related educational development (NEA).

➲ DIVERSE FAMILIES: refer to families of all races, ethnicities, family structures, religions, and socioeconomic status, as well as families with varying physical and mental abilities and families without permanent homes (MDE).

➲ HOME-SCHOOL SUPPORT FOR LEARNING: refers to the ways families and educators can partner together to reinforce and enhance what children are learning. Multiple ways of learning and use of universal design for learning (environments, activities and products accessible to all) are included in the strategies used by families and educators. (MDE)

➲ PARENT ADVISORY BOARD: refers to a group of parents, ideally trained to represent other parents, organized by Title I schools to give the parent perspective, comments, and ideas for school parent engagement programs. They also may work with community-based organizations and businesses to develop parent involvement activities (NEA).

➲ PARENT GROUP: refers to an organization which represents families and parents of students who attend the school, such as Parent Teacher Association or Parent Teacher Organizations, Title I Parent Advisory Council, Special Education Parent Advisory Council, English Language Learners Parent Advisory Council, etc. (MDE)

➲ STAKEHOLDERS: refer to groups of people interested in education, including but not limited to students, families, educators, school administrators, elected officials, community leaders, faith-based organizations, health care providers, businesses, and other community service providers. (MDE)

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4   All Shared Vocabulary definitions are adapted from NEA's Parent and community engagement brief (NEA) at http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/PB11_ParentInvolvement08.pdf, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education (MDE) at http://www.doe.mass.edu/boe/sac/parent/FSCPfundamentals. pdf

FAMILY & COMMUNITY
PARTNERSHIPS

The **Community Schools Planning Team** should focus on Family and Community Partnerships as they conduct the needs assessment using the four key elements of the planning and implementation process found on the following pages. Links to NEA and other resources related to family and community partnerships are provided at the end of this section.

Family & Community Partnerships Implementation: Asset & Needs Assessment

STEP 1. A school-based **Asset and Needs assessment:** is an inclusive process in which parents, students, community members, partners, teachers, administrators and school staff who define "what we have" and "what we need." Asset assessment articulates the strengths and capabilities available within the school, the community and by potential partners. Needs assessment defines specific issues, concerns, and deficits to be addressed.

The **Community Schools Planning Team** should review the **Shared Vocabulary** definitions and discuss how each applies at the school site. Team members then collect and examine evidence from a variety of sources and identify specific family and community partnership assets and needs, including obstacles or barriers. Each Key Element articulates one aspect of a family and community partnership. The Team may choose to assign each question to two or three team members to better use available time. Regarding family and community partnerships, however, it is essential that each working group have one parent and community representative as members.

View the NEA YouTube video, *Community Schools – Family & Community and Inclusive Leadership* at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LMlwQdZM2Bk

These questions may guide the Team's efforts to connect students to family and community partnership. If they are answered well and addressed through the Community Schools plan, they have the capacity to improve student engagement and learning. The response to these questions should lead the Team to identify specific curriculum assets and needs.

1. What *community-based organizations,* institutions, and businesses relationships do we currently have? Describe each <u>briefly.</u>

2. What type of *community-based organizations* currently provided before/after school programs for students and families?

3. What *parent groups* do we currently have? If so, describe each <u>briefly</u>

4. Do we currently have a *parent advisory board*? Describe the role <u>briefly</u>

5. Describe the *capacity* of administrators, teachers, education support personnel to inform, involve and engage family and community members?

6. What type of *professional development* might be appropriate to *build capacity* of school staff in family and community engagement strategies?

7. What type of *professional development* might be appropriate to *build capacity* of parent groups from diverse families to learn how to contribute to family and community engagement programs?

The following school self-assessment is adapted from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Family and Community Partnership Fundamentals. The Community School Planning Team, or a smaller work group, may use this to determine where the school rates itself on key components.

Family-Community Partnership Assessment[5]

We create and ensure a welcoming culture and environment for all families, children and youth, school staff, and community members. Stakeholders are valued and connected to each other in support of high academic expectations, achievement, and healthy development.[6]

Level of Implementation:

- ➲ **Not Here Yet**
- ➲ **Initiating:** Basic level of development and implementation
- ➲ **Progressing:** Functioning level of development and implementation
- ➲ **Mastering:** Highly functioning level of development and implementation embedded throughout school

Our School…	Initiating	Progressing	Mastering	Rating
Uses multiple communication paths	School staff informs students and families of upcoming events using a variety of media and communication pathways in the languages used by families and the community.	School staff collaborates with all families, school council, parent groups, and family engagement staff/team to develop connections with families through multiple two- way communication tools in multiple languages.	Families, students, communities, and school staff communicate in interactive ways, both formally and informally, in language that families and students can understand.	☐ Mastering ☐ Progressing ☐ Initiating ☐ Not here yet
Surveys families, students and community members to identify issues and concerns	School conducts a family and student school climate survey that is translated into multiple languages and is implemented in multiple ways.	Survey data are collected annually and results are compared from year to year to assess progress. Results inform the development of family and student engagement programs and activities.	Survey results are reflected in the School Improvement Plan and are used to guide the development of the student engagement plan, family engagement programs, and other school activities.	☐ Mastering ☐ Progressing ☐ Initiating ☐ Not here yet

5   Adapted from Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Family and Comunity Fundamentals at **http://www.doe.mass.edu/boe/sac/parent/FSCPfundamentals.pdf**

6   **Listen to the NEA webinar:** Community Schools: Best Transformational Practices, at **http://www.nea.org/home/68381.htm**

Our School…	Initiating	Progressing	Mastering	Rating
Facilitates connections among families and students and community	School and school council/parent groups provide opportunities for parents to get to know each other.	School and school council/parent groups jointly develop programs honoring the diversity that families bring and encourage cross-cultural understanding.	School and school council/parent groups take intentional steps to help parents build relationships and achieve greater cross-cultural understanding with those beyond their own neighborhood and culture.	☐ Mastering ☐ Progressing ☐ Initiating ☐ Not here yet
Helps families support learning at home and at school	School helps families support their children's learning at home and provides resources for children to complete homework and other learning assignments.	School, parent groups, and community collaborate to offer opportunities through various media and multiple venues for families (i.e., parent workshops, home visits, web-based resources, etc.) to learn how they can support their children's learning at home, at school and in the community.	School, parent groups and community collaborate to develop and implement ongoing, systemic strategies based on academic performance data and needs identified by families, to assist families in supporting their children's learning both at home and in school.	☐ Mastering ☐ Progressing ☐ Initiating ☐ Not here yet
Promotes out-of-school-time learning	School leaders inform families and students, in a language they understand, of home, school, and community learning opportunities that are available outside school hours.	School, parent groups, and community organizations contribute to out-of-school learning opportunities.	School actively collaborates with diverse community organizations, local businesses, and families to develop and provide out-of-school learning opportunities.	☐ Mastering ☐ Progressing ☐ Initiating ☐ Not here yet

Our School…	Initiating	Progressing	Mastering	Rating
Develops effective parent engagement groups that represent all families	Existing parent groups or organizations identify the status of parent engagement and identify under-represented, under-served, isolated and/or disconnected students or families.	Under-represented, under-served, isolated and/or disconnected families are encouraged and trained to become active participants in school activities and events.	Under-represented, under-served, isolated and/or disconnected students and families are active participants in school activities and events.	☐ Mastering ☐ Progressing ☐ Initiating ☐ Not here yet
Develops parent leadership	School leaders utilize knowledge and skills of parents and parent leaders.	School leaders provide leadership opportunities and train parents to become effective leaders.	Members of under-represented and under-served families are actively solicited, trained and supported to become effective parent leaders.	☐ Mastering ☐ Progressing ☐ Initiating ☐ Not here yet
Ensures that all stakeholders have a voice in all decisions that affect children	School leaders establish and maintain an active, representative school council to share in decision making about school curricular, budget, engagement and policy issues.	School council conducts a needs assessment with families, school staff, students and community group representatives and uses results to inform about school curricular, budget, engagement and policy decisions.	School council continues to use and monitor the needs assessments conducted with families, school staff, students, and community representatives to inform its decision-making.	☐ Mastering ☐ Progressing ☐ Initiating ☐ Not here yet
Links community resources	School staff, parent groups and/or school council collect and make available information for families about community resources.	School staff partner with families to identify appropriate community resources. School staff share information with families.	School staff and school volunteers use the school's family resource center as a place to inform families about services, make referrals to programs, and help with follow-up.	☐ Mastering ☐ Progressing ☐ Initiating ☐ Not here yet

Our School…	Initiating	Progressing	Mastering	Rating
Partners with community groups to strengthen families and support student success	Parent groups and/or school council are aware of local community agencies and post notices of events and services in the school.	School staff, parent groups and/or school council reach out to community organizations and/or businesses to explore services and/or donations for children and families.	Community and business representatives work with school and parent leaders to assess the school community's needs. Partnerships and programs are developed to support student success and align with school priorities.	☐ Mastering ☐ Progressing ☐ Initiating ☐ Not here yet
Turns the school into a hub of community life	School and district make buildings open and available for use by outside groups in the evenings and weekends.	School facilities are open year-round for broad community use. Families and the surrounding community members participate in the programming offered by outside agencies.	School offers resources and activities for whole community, drawing on community agencies, organizations, and other educational institutions. Extended hours are used by outside groups to provide services and educational activities for families and the community.	☐ Mastering ☐ Progressing ☐ Initiating ☐ Not here yet

Family & Community Partnerships Implementation: Strategic Plan

STEP 2. **A Strategic Plan:** describes the school's vision, values and mission. The plan articulates how assets may be used to address needs with the goal of high academic, civic and personal outcomes for all students. The plan focuses on curriculum, high-quality teaching, wraparound services, positive behavioral practices, parent and community engagement and inclusive leadership.

The **Community Schools Planning Team** should articulate the school's vision, values and mission regarding family and community partnerships. This necessitates having a clear understanding of the current school status and potential family engagement strategies and potential community partnerships. The Team should be guided by the following questions:

11. **Vision:** As a school community, what academic goals do we want to achieve? (See example below)

12. **Strategies:** Regarding family and community partnerships, what steps will we take over the next three years to realize this vision and attain these academic goals?

13. **Priorities:** Given the steps we have described; how should we prioritize them so that we are progressing in an organized and sequential manner?

14. **Action Plan:** Who will do what? By when? Involving whom? What resources are needed to accomplish this work?

An example of a district vision that includes Family and Community Partnership for all Pre-K to Grade 8 schools comes from the Holyoke (MA) Full Service Community School.[7]

Holyoke Student Enrollment & Family Empowerment Center

Our Center is the main entry point for families to Holyoke Public Schools and a key gateway for information about HPS programs and initiatives.

Family Engagement School-based Teams

Each school is served by a Family Access & Engagement Coordinator (FAEC) and a School Family Promoter (SFP) who work as a team to support families build and strengthen their relationship with our schools, access information and resources, and develop their leadership and voice. Feel welcome to contact our staff [names and contact information are provided.]

Family Empowerment: Parent Power Academy

We believe that Holyoke Public Schools and Holyoke families are partners in our children's success. We also believe in the value of lifelong learning for all members of our school community, which is why we support parents to acquire new tools and skills that will strengthen their families. The Parent Power Academy will deliver educational and informational workshops for families at the schools and in neighborhood settings. These workshops will become vehicles for parents to make connections with other families as well as with community organizations and service providers. Workshops for families will be offered year-round on the following topics.

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7   For more information, go to https://www.hps.holyoke.ma.us/about-us/departments/family-community-engagement/

- ✔ Parents as first teachers (includes partnering with teachers, early literacy practices, and supporting your child at home)
- ✔ Family health and nutrition
- ✔ Financial education and career advancement
- ✔ Social and emotional learning
- ✔ School leadership and voice

FAMILY EMPOWERMENT: PARENT LEADERSHIP AND VOICE

HPS encourages and embraces the active participation and contributions of parents to improve and support our schools. There are multiple vehicles for parents to exercise their leadership and voice across our district:

- ➲ **SCHOOL SITE COUNCILS:** are organized by the principals at each school as an advisory group pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws. The councils assist principals with identifying student needs, establishing educational goals for the school, developing improvement plans, and reviewing the school budget. School site councils include teachers elected by their peers, parents selected by a recognized parent organization or elected by school families, as well as students at the high school level. The meetings are open and its minutes are available to the entire school community.

  Contact your school principal to get information on your school council's meeting calendar. Don't hesitate to contact our department if interested in learning more about school site councils or acquiring skills to effectively participate in your school's council.

- ➲ **PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATIONS (PTOS):** at each of our schools are independent, critical vehicles for parents to exercise leadership and voice in support of their children's education. Participation in the PTO should be open to all parents and guardians of children in a school. PTOs in Holyoke have historically supported schools through:
  - ✔ Representing and advocating the parents' perspective before school officials
  - ✔ Fundraising to cover specific school needs
  - ✔ Providing rich extracurricular and enrichment activities for students
  - ✔ Engaging and sharing information with families to strengthen school connections
  - ✔ Supporting the celebration of school spirit and pride
  - ✔ Coordinating parent volunteers
  - ✔ Recognizing teachers and staff

  School PTO's are encouraged to work with school leaders and the Family Engagement teams at the schools to identify key needs in the turnaround plan or in the schools where they can focus part of their efforts during each year.

- ➲ **PARENT LEADER GROUPS OR PARENT VOLUNTEER TEAMS:** Parent leaders in some schools have formed volunteer teams or groups of parents to support the school or grades or classrooms. Contact the Family Engagement team in your school to learn how you can join or contribute as a parent volunteer.

- ➲ **FAMILY ENGAGEMENT IN THE HOLYOKE EARLY LITERACY INITIATIVE (HELI):** We want more families to join the Holyoke Early Literacy Initiative (HELI) and increase the frequency of what they do at home to support their child's literacy. We invite and support parents to do "One Thing a Day" to help boost your child's literacy skills.

Please contact our department or Family Engagement staff at your school to learn how to join a HELI Parent Group in your school and to get tips and tools for literacy activities you can start doing with your child at home.

- ➲ **Citywide Parent Leader Group:** A citywide Parent Leader Group meets with the Receiver/Superintendent the first Mondays of each month to provide input and receive updates on the district's turnaround process. Information obtained at these meetings is shared with parents at their schools. Contact our department to learn who represents the schools at these meetings.

- ➲ **Parent Concerns and Feedback:** HPS welcomes parents' feedback, questions, and recognition for our staff by contacting our school leaders or the Family & Community Engagement Department. We appreciate your thoughts and partnership as we continue implementing our turnaround plan and realizing our vision of "a pathway for every student."

  We encourage families to establish regular communication with school leaders and explore all possibilities to contribute to student success at the school level. We recognize sometimes families feel dissatisfied after having worked with teachers and school leaders to resolve a situation related to their child, which leads them to want to raise their concerns to the school district office. If there are issues that remain unresolved at the school level, you may file a written complaint form with the Chief of Family & Community Engagement at the Student Enrollment & Family Empowerment Center or with the Student Services Coordinator at the Department of Pupil Services.

  Please note that most of these complaints are referred to the schools to be addressed, while some are referred to specific department leaders or the Superintendent for investigation or review. Although the process may take time, Holyoke Public Schools is committed to responding to parent concerns and complaints in a timely manner to strengthen the school-family partnership and keep students engaged in school.

  If you have concerns about issues related to school-based operations, please contact the school principal or the Student Enrollment & Family Empowerment Center at 413-534-2055.

Community Engagement

- ➲ **Holyoke Education Dialogues:** are opportunities for groups of families to engage in conversations with the Receiver/Superintendent and other HPS leaders about what our students are learning, how they are learning and how we know they are learning. Groups of 6 to 12 families may sign up to host an evening conversation with HPS leaders. Please contact our department for more information and for available dates.

- ➲ **Holyoke Early Literacy Initiative (HELI):** is a citywide effort founded in 2013 that brings schools, families and community partners together to dramatically improve the reading proficiency of our youngest children. Everyone is being asked to do something and we all have something to do to reach our GOAL: rapid and sustained improvement in reading proficiency by the 3rd grade. As a coalition, we have deployed multiple strategies that are proving successful, from engaging families with children from 0-8 years old in early literacy practices, to strengthening the program designs of literacy programs across the city, and developing citywide collaborative workgroups.

  We want more families to join HELI and increase the frequency of what they do at home to support their child's literacy. We invite and support parents to do "One Thing a Day" to help boost your child's literacy skills.

Please contact our department or Family Engagement staff at your school to learn how to join a HELI Parent Group in your school or to get tips and tools for literacy activities you can start doing with your child at home. You may also join HELI's Family Engagement Workgroup by attending our monthly meetings the first Tuesdays of every month at the Picknelly Center (206 Maple Street), Room 400.

⮑ COMMUNITY OUTREACH: We welcome opportunities to engage with community partners and participate in community events or neighborhood meetings across the city where we can meet and talk to families. During the summer of 2016 our department organized 11 neighborhoods walks and informational tables at multiple community events. Please contact our department if you would like HPS to join your event or make a presentation on a topic.

HPS also welcomes partnership opportunities in support of student learning and our families. Please contact us to learn about our strategic priorities and current initiatives and how we may work together.

FAMILY & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS IMPLEMENTATION: ENGAGEMENT OF PARTNERS

STEP 3. PARTNERS: may include organizations, businesses and community-based entities that historically have not engaged with the school are recognized as assets and their expertise is critical to implementing the community school pillars.

The COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PLANNING TEAM should review the assets and needs identified and determine how to improve or enhance existing family and community partnership with the school for the betterment of the academic and enrichment activities of the students.

REGARDING FAMILY AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS, community organizations, institutions, and businesses may have experience, expertise and resources to enhance in-school learning and/or out-of-school learning and engaging families through home-school partnerships. Some of this learning may take place outside of the normal school day or school year.

15. KNOX COUNTY (KY) COMMUNITY SCHOOLS INITIATIVE:[8] use public schools as "hubs for organizing community resources to improve neighborhood health and safety and student academic success." A six-minute video outlines the programs and services.

16. MADISON (WI) METROPOLITAN SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMUNITY SCHOOL FRAMEWORK:[9] outlines the components of a district community schools model, including a list of community-based organizations on page 8. Madison defines "lead partners" as having a "formal, mutually beneficial relationship" with the school and has "the capacity and long-term commitment to support the Community School by collaborating with other organizations to provide services and/or programs." Lead Partner attributes should include, but not be limited to:

✔ Commitment to the Madison community school vision that every school is a thriving school that prepares every student for college, career and community.

✔ A clear vision and goals that align with the district and individual school goals.

✔ A history of effective community collaboration and engagement.

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8 For more information, go to http://www.greatschoolspartnership.com/community-schools/

9 For more information, go to https://face.madison.k12.wi.us/files/face/The-Madison-Community-School-Framework.pdf

✔ Experience and expertise in providing high-quality identified services and programs.

✔ Established, measurable outcomes and the demonstration of positive impact with programs and services that meet or exceed established standards.

✔ A commitment to collaborate in bringing financial and in-kind resources to the Community School.

✔ Demonstrated financial stability and sustainability, including a history in successful grant writing.

➲ REDWOOD CITY (CA) COMMUNITY SCHOOLS:[10] "partners with families, government agencies, and non-profit and funding agencies to bring services and expertise to school sites. This allows schools to offer a range of learning opportunities designed to complement students' work in the classroom. A comprehensive array of services such as academic support, enrichment activities, physical healthcare, violence prevention, mental healthcare, mentoring, immigration support, adult education, parenting classes, support during school transitions, crisis intervention, and safety net services such as food, housing, transportation, and clothing are offered at community schools." The site lists and hyperlinks to the following active partners:

✔ Beresford Montessori

✔ Boys & Girls Club of the Peninsula

✔ Fair Oaks Community Center

✔ Redwood City Parks and Recreation

✔ Family Connections

✔ First 5 San Mateo County Bank

✔ Institute for Human and Social Development

✔ John W. Gardner Center for Youth and Their Communities

✔ Fair Oaks Health Center

✔ Silicon Valley Community Foundation

✔ Sequoia Children's Center

✔ Sequoia YMCA

✔ Sobrato Early Academic Learning

✔ StarVista

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10 For more information, go to **http://www.rwc2020.org/community-schools-overview/**

Family & Community Partnerships Implementation: Community School Coordinator

STEP 4. **In General, the Community School Coordinator:** facilitates the development and implementation of the strategic plan in collaboration with school and community members/partners; oversees the alignment of assets with needs; and manages the integration of before and after school programs and wraparound services with the academic program and schedule. The Coordinator may also engage in fund raising activities.

Most of the Coordinator's responsibilities relate to other Community School Pillars. However, **regarding Family and Community Partnerships,** the Community School Coordinator is the bridge between the school, families and the community and facilitates the alignment of community-based and partner-provided learning experiences. This is the area where the Coordinator's work is primarily focused.

The Marvine (PA) Elementary School articulates the role of the community school coordinator.[11]

1. Implement and oversee data-driven interventions related to key priority areas, in partnership with key school representatives:

   ✔ Increase daily student attendance and reduce chronic absenteeism

   ✔ Increase positive student behavior (mentors for struggling students, connection to behavioral health services/family case management services, leadership opportunities, etc.)

   ✔ Increase reading and math proficiency (elementary school level) in students performing below grade level proficiency through community school resources and assets

   ✔ Successfully transition students and families across changing school levels (elementary school – middle school – high school)

   ✔ Effectively utilize positive youth development resources to improve student attendance, behavior and/or academic performance (before, during and after school programs)

   ✔ Engaging and empowering parents and caregivers to be effective teachers at home (scheduling parent education programs, running family engagement events, reducing attendance barriers, second cup of coffee, mom's club, providing 1:1 parent sessions, etc.)

2. Collect and review critical data pertaining to students (academic, attendance, behavior), families and programs. Analyze data to develop new strategies and plans for continuously improving existing interventions

3. Generate reports on the outcomes of the community school model to various stakeholders, including the United Way of the Greater Lehigh Valley, St. Luke's Hospital, the Bethlehem School District, and other potential sponsors of the community school work at the site.

4. Provide weekly, and as needed, supervision for all additional individuals secured to support the community school efforts (After School Coordinators, MSW interns, AmeriCorps VISTAs, etc.)

5. Effectively delegate tasks to additional community school staff (After School Coordinators, MSW interns, AmeriCorps VISTAs, etc.); monitor progress on completion of assigned tasks.

6. Recruit, train and coordinate all volunteers at school site (tutors, mentors, corporate/college)

7. Solicit, coordinate and distribute critical donated items (food, clothing, school supplies, hygiene

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11 For more information, go to **https://careers.unitedway.org/job/community-school-coordinator-marvine-elementary-school**

items, books)

8. Identify and build relationships with key providers whose services are needed to best support students and families

9. Responsible for monitoring budgetary matters related to school based grants received, after school program funds, community school building budgets, event costs, etc.

10. Actively participate in Core Team meetings to share relevant data, highlight concerns, develop solutions

11. Lead an effective Leadership Team/Community Partners Team; which includes effective meeting facilitation, clear and consistent communication with team members, new team member recruitment

12. Provide regular communication with all school staff, students and families regarding community school events and activities, highlights and results, and needs

13. Responsible for understanding all policies and procedures of the school site and district

14. Responsible for participating in identified school team meetings as it relates to community engagement, student attendance, transitions, at-risk students

15. Responsible for positive relationship-building with school staff, students, parents, St. Luke's Hospital staff, United Way staff, and other community partners

16. Participates in training and technical assistance activities with the United Way of the Greater Lehigh Valley

17. Demonstrates an understanding of cultural and social barriers to the exchange data/ information within the community.

18. Takes an active role in Quality Improvement projects relating to the community school model.

NEA Resources

NEA YouTube video: Community Schools – Family & Community and Inclusive Leadership. Available online at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LMlwQdZM2Bk

This 4-minute video explains two Community Schools pillars: Family & Community Engagement and Inclusive Leadership.

NEA Family Engagement homepage: http://www.nea.org/home/37004.htm?q=family%20engagement

All in! How educators can advocate for English language learners (2015). Available online at https://www.nea.org/assets/docs/18285_ELL_AdvocacyGuide2015_low-res_updated_6-23.pdf

Section "Partnering with Families and Communities" on pages 23-26 provides useful examples that may be incorporated into a plan. Reference section is helpful.

Families and Communities. (2015). Available online at https://www.nea.org/assets/docs/ESSA%20One%20Pager%20-%20Family%20and%20Communities.pdf

Summarizes the key provisions of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) related to family and community engagement.

Family–School-Community Partnerships 2.0: Collaborative strategies to advance student learning. (2011). Available online at http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/Family-School-Community-Partnerships-2.0.pdf

NEA report reviews the research on school and family collaboration presenting 10 strategies; profiles 16 partnership programs that fall into three categories: family-community programs; parent engagement programs; and wraparound and community service programs.

Graham, E. (Undated). 10 ideas for engaging parents: Educators share their best ideas for communicating and partnering with parents. Available online at http://www.nea.org/tools/56945.htm

Brief article outlines such strategies as focus on the positive, share school experiences, find common ground, visit parents directly, and entice parents into the school.

Henderson, A.T. (2016). Quick brief on family engagement in Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015. Available online at http://ra.nea.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/FCE-in-ESSA-in-Brief.pdf

Describes changes to ESEA by ESSA which changes "parent involvement" to "parent engagement." Brief addresses questions about how to inform and engage families.

Long, C. (2012). How effective family engagement makes a difference. NEA Today, January 18, 2012. Available online at http://neatoday.org/2012/01/18/how-effective-family-engagement-makes-a-difference/

Describes the family engagement program at Salt Lake City's Glendale Middle School which has a high Muslim student population.

NEA Policy Statement on discipline and the school-to-prison pipeline available online at http://ra.nea.org/delegate-resources/policy-statement-on-discipline/

Approved at the 2016 Representative Assembly, this policy statement defines disciplinary terms and outlines five guiding principles. The fifth principle is Student and Family engagement.

Parent and community engagement: Achieving great public schools. (2012). An NEA Policy Brief. Available online at http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/PB11_ParentInvolvement08.pdf

Comprehensive report that includes NEA policy briefs, backgrounder information on family-friendly employment practices, parent-school communications, whole child needs, and school personnel learning to connect with families and communities. Resources and recommendations are included in each section.

School-family engagement: Staff preparation and support are vital. (2011). An NEA Policy Brief. Available online at http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/PB35schoolfamilycommunity2011.pdf

`*This policy brief summarizes the research, benefits and barriers to family and community involvement with the schools.*

Ten things everyone must know about family engagement in Title I, ESSA. (2015). An NEA Policy Brief. Available online at http://ra.nea.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/NEA-ESSA-Ten-Things-Everyone-Must-Know-about-Family-Engagement-in-Title-I.pdf

Quick synopsis of the family engagement provisions required by ESEA/ESSA.

OTHER RESOURCES

Berg, A.C., Melaville, A., and Blank, M.J. (2006). *Community & family engagement: Principals share what works.* Coalition of Community Schools. Available online at http://www.communityschools.org/assets/1/AssetManager/CommunityAndFamilyEngagement.pdf

Report focus on six keys to community engagement for community schools: know where you're going; share leadership; reach out; don't ignore the elephant in the room; tell your school's story; and stay the course. Also discusses engaging families, staff, partners and the public.

ExpandED Schools. (2012). Ten ways to Build School-Community Partnerships. YouTube, posted on December 4, 2012. Available online at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lc_8Qjl2GPU

In this 5.5-minute video, the Baltimore partners of the Collaborative for Building After-School Systems describe ten innovative and effective ways for schools and community organizations to build strong partnerships that support high-quality expanded learning.

Drain, J., and Hasan, M. (2014). Summer enrichment or just hanging out? What parents should know about extended learning opportunities. National Association for Gifted Children. Available online at http://www.nagc.org/sites/default/files/Parent%20CK/Summer_Enrichment_or_Just_Hanging_Out_2014.pdf

According to the authors, summer learning based in family and community activities increases students' school achievement. Students who participate in summer learning activities—whether camp-based, community-based, or family-based—score higher on their fall achievement tests than students who are left to their own devices during their free time.

Henderson, A.T., Mapp, K.L., Johnson, V.R. and Davies, D. (Eds.). (2007). *Beyond the bake sale: The essential guide to family/school partnerships.* New York: W.W. Norton & Company. $15 for paperback and $14 for Kindle.

Countless studies demonstrate that students with parents actively involved in their education at home and school are more likely to earn higher grades and test scores, enroll in higher-level programs, graduate from high school, and go on to post-secondary education. This book provides tips from principals and teachers, checklists, and a resource section.

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Family, School and Community Partnership Fundamentals (2015). Available online at http://www.doe.mass.edu/boe/sac/parent/FSCPfundamentals.pdf

> *School self-assessment rubric focusing on six engagement fundamentals: Welcoming stakeholders; communicating effectively; supporting student success, advocating for each student; sharing power and responsibility; and partnership with the community.*

National Association for Family, School, and Community Engagement (NAFSCE). Available online at http://nafsce.org

> *NAFSCE's offers webinars, conferences, communities of practice and special offerings related to capacity building activities; initiatives and conversations focused on advancing policy; and various networking opportunities and other platforms for the field to share effective practices. The NEA and the NPTA are partners is this work.*

National Partnership for Family and Community Engagement. (2017). Available online at http://www.hfrp.org/family-involvement/projects/national-family-school-and-community-engagement-working-group-completed-project

> *Hosted by the Harvard Family Research Project, according to their web site, NFSCE is "a leadership collaborative whose purpose is to inform the development and implementation of federal policy related to family, school, and community engagement in education. It is dedicated to mobilizing partnerships among families, schools, and communities to promote kindergarten readiness, improve schools, and increase student achievement."*

United States Department of Education Family and Community Engagement Home page at https://www.ed.gov/parent-and-family-engagement

> *Provides links to resources for parents, communities, educators related to engagement.*
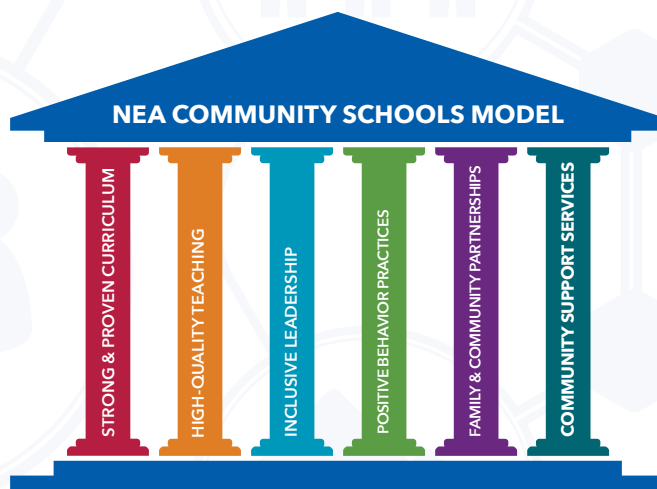
COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES

A PILLAR OF THE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS MODEL

COMMUNITY SCHOOL: *A center of the community that brings together academics, health and social services, youth and community development and community engagement under one roof, leading to improved learning, stronger families, and healthier communities.*[1]

IN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS, educators recognize that students often come to school with challenges that impact their ability to learn, explore, and develop in the classroom. Because learning does not happen in isolation, community schools provide meals, health care, mental-health counseling, and other services before, during, and after school. These wraparound services are integrated into the fabric of the school that follows the Whole Child tenets. [2] Connections to the community are critically important so that resources available to the community to support families can be made available either in the school or nearby.

According to the Annenberg Institute,[3] wraparound services that support students and their families are a critical component for improving high-poverty schools. These services address issues resulting in hunger, illness and exhaustion by bringing nutrition programs, health services and other supports into the school. Programs assisting families in English language acquisition and job training are also provided.

NEA COMMUNITY SCHOOLS MODEL

STRONG & PROVEN CURRICULUM

HIGH-QUALITY TEACHING

INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR PRACTICES

FAMILY & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES

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1   For more on NEA's position and resources on Community Schools, go to **http://www.nea.org/home/66319.htm**

2   For more information on The Whole Child Tenets developed by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, go to **http://www.ascd.org/whole-child.aspx**

3   For more information, go to Investing in What Works available online at **http://www.annenberginstitute.org/sites/default/files/product/851/files/InvestingInWhatWorks.pdf**

COMMUNITY
SUPPORT SERVICES   85

Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child[4]

The Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child Model, developed and released by the US Centers for Disease Control and ASCD, is the next generation of coordinated school health. This model can be used to ensure that students and the school environment are healthy, safe, and supported.

Health and student services are key components of the Community Schools model. Counseling, psychological, social services, and health services are often located within the school or in nearby community service centers. A school's food services play a distinct role in addressing student hunger and nutrition needs, which often pose challenges for low-income students and their families. Many students needing these services are identified by the school's administrators and teachers, but often by education support professionals, including bus drivers, secretaries, cafeteria workers, and custodians. Education Support Professionals (ESPs) are frequently the most immediate and direct conduit into the school community, for the majority not only work, but also live nearby. Additionally, ESPs frequently serve more than one school site and may act as a liaison between schools, as well as between school staff and community agencies.

School-Based Health Centers[5]

In 2014, the United States Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) established a School-based Health Center (SBHC) Task Force that reviewed research studies and report on outcomes.

Low-income, racial and ethnic minority students commonly experience health issues, are less likely to have a usual health care provider, and miss more days of school because of illness than do their more economically and socially advantaged peers. They are also more likely to come to school hungry. In addition, they often have problems with vision, oral health, and hearing. SBHCs may address some of these obstacles, which can be critical to students' education and long-term health.

The DDHS study reported on major findings including: SBHCs led to improved educational outcomes including school performance, grade promotion, and high school completion. SBHCs also led to improved health outcomes including the delivery of vaccinations and other recommended preventive services, and decreases in asthma morbidity, and emergency department and hospital admission rates.

SBHCs provide primary health services to students in grades K-12 and may be offered within the school or in school-linked centers. SBHCs are often established in schools that serve predominantly low-income communities. SBHCs may have the following characteristics:

- ⮥ A single clinician providing primary care services or a multi-disciplinary team providing comprehensive services
- ⮥ Mental health care, social services, dentistry, and health education
- ⮥ Ability to extend services to school staff, student family members, and others within the surrounding community.

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4 Adapted from NEA Education Support Professionals: Meeting the Needs of the Whole Child, available online at **https://www.nea.org/assets/docs/150306-ESP_DIGIBOOK.pdf**

5 Adapted from US Department of Health and Human Services Community Guide to School-based Health Centers available online at **https://www.thecommunityguide.org/sites/default/files/assets/OnePager-SBHC.pdf**

Adult Education Programs

Adult learners include a wide range of individuals with different motivations for continuing or restarting their schooling. Community schools may be a hub for adult learning: Adult Basic Education (ABE) and Graduate Equivalency Diploma (GED) programs for students who have dropped out of school before completion; English as a Second-Language classes; citizenship classes for immigrant families; literacy and numeracy programs for those with minimal skills; course completion for community college or job training program eligibility; opportunities to learn or expand knowledge and use of various technological tools; and personal enrichment.

The school becomes a community center by engaging the community's adults, including students' family members, in education programs that address their learning needs.

Community Support Services Implementation: Asset & Needs Assessment

STEP 1. A school-based Asset and Needs assessment: is an inclusive process in which parents, students, community members, partners, teachers, administrators and school staff who define "what we have" and "what we need." Asset assessment articulates the strengths and capabilities available within the school, the community and by potential partners. Needs assessment defines specific issues, concerns, and deficits to be addressed.

The Community Schools Planning Team should review the Shared Vocabulary definitions and discuss how each applies at the school site. Team members then collect and examine evidence from a variety of sources and identify specific behavior management practices assets and needs, including obstacles or barriers. Each Key Element articulates one aspect of a positive or negative behavior management practices. The Team may choose to assign each question to two or three team members to better use available time. Regarding positive behavior practices, however, it is essential that each working group have one representative who has first-hand knowledge of student behavior management at the school.

View the NEA YouTube video, Community Schools—Community Support Services and Positive Discipline. Available online at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8HN_zW4SwYY

These questions may guide the Team's efforts to determine the types of community support services are used in the school. If they are answered well and addressed through the Community Schools plan, they have the capacity to improve student engagement and learning. The response to these questions should lead the Team to identify specific assets and needs related to positive behavior practices.

1. What community health services do we currently offer within the school or in partnership with outside agencies or organizations? Describe each briefly.
2. What community counseling services do we currently offer within the school or in partnership with outside agencies or organizations? Describe each briefly
3. What community job training and/or counseling services do we currently offer within the school or in partnership with outside agencies or organizations? Describe each briefly.
4. What adult education do we currently offer within the school or in partnership with outside agencies or organizations? Describe each briefly.
5. What family recreational programs do we currently offer within the school or in partnership with outside agencies or organizations? Describe each briefly.

Assessment of Community Support Services[6]
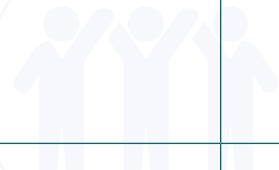
Health and Nutrition Services

To what extent does the school provide…	Assets	Needs	Obstacles	Evidence
Students and/or family members with access to nutrition services, including breakfast and lunch programs?				
Students and/or family members with access to primary health care services, either on-site or through a community partner?				
Students and/or family members with access to dental services, either on-site or through a community partner?				
Students and/or family members with access to vision services, either on-site or through a community partner?				
Students and/or family members with access to hearing services, either on-site or through a community partner?				
Students and/or family members with access to mental health services, either on-site or through a community partner?				
Students and/or family members with access to counseling services, either on-site or through a community partner?				

6 Adapted from USED Full-Service Community School grant programs, go to https://ed.gov/programs/communityschools/index.html

ASSESSMENT OF COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES[7]

EDUCATION AND CAREER SERVICES

To what extent does the school provide…	Assets	Needs	Obstacles	Evidence
Students' family members with access to job training programs?				
Students' family members with access to career counseling services?				
Students' family members with access to family financial stability services?				
Students' family members with access to adult education, including GED or Adult Basic Education programs?				
Students' family members with access to instruction in English as a second language?				
Students' family members with access to recreational programs offered at the school?				

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7 Adapted from USED Full-Service Community School grant programs, go to https://ed.gov/programs/communi-tyschools/index.html

Community Support Services Implementation: Strategic Plan

STEP 2.   A STRATEGIC PLAN: describes the school's vision, values and mission. The plan articulates how assets may be used to address needs with the goal of high academic, civic and personal outcomes for all students. The plan focuses on curriculum, high-quality teaching, wraparound services, positive behavioral practices, parent and community engagement and inclusive leadership.

The COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PLANNING TEAM should articulate the school's vision, values and mission regarding COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES. This necessitates having a clear understanding of the current school practices for managing student behavior. The Team should be guided by the following questions:

1. **VISION:** As a school community, what academic goals do we want to achieve? (See example below)

2. **STRATEGIES:** Regarding COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES, what steps will we take over the next three years to realize this vision and attain these academic goals?

3. **PRIORITIES:** Given the steps we have described; how should we prioritize them so that we are progressing in an organized and sequential manner?

4. **ACTION PLAN:** Who will do what? By when? Involving whom? What resources are needed to accomplish this work?

AN EXAMPLE OF A VISION THAT INCLUDES COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES,[8] West Virginia Community Schools advocate school-based health services and offers the following guidance:

➲ Assess and determine community sponsorship for health and social support services. In some communities, more than one medical, mental health or dental provider may be willing to collaborate. In other communities, it may be difficult to find any providers. It is best to keep community sponsorship local, when possible. Sponsorship may be provided by a variety of organizations. The planning committee may need to explore various options, and weigh the pros and cons of each. Alignment of health services must match the school's goals and values and need to be reviewed regularly to have a successful relationship. Regular review of needs and values is imperative to ensure positive outcomes for students and the appropriate community lead/sponsoring agency.

➲ Negotiate services to meet student needs. When working with a sponsor, discussion should include: hours of operation based on medical needs and school size; services to families and community members during or after school hours; roles and responsibilities and agreement of sponsor to strive toward meeting best practices standards.

➲ **AN EXAMPLE OF A VISION THAT INCLUDES COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES:** West Virginia Community Schools advocates school-based health services and offers the following guidance:

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8   Adapted from the West Virginia School Health Technical Assistance Center, available online at **https://livewell. marshall.edu/mutac/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/OpenSBHC2ndEd.pdf**

AN EXAMPLE OF IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES,[9] the Roy Clarke (Tulsa, OK) Elementary School used their federal nutrition funding to offer a Breakfast in a Bag program and after-school snack program. The school engaged several outside partners to provide health and wellness services to students and their families. These included:

➲ University of Oklahoma Bedlam Clinics creating an in-school clinic that serves all students and their families. This is not an income-based service.

➲ Family and Children's Services provided two in-school therapists.

➲ Tulsa City-County Health Department for health education.

➲ YMCA for after-school programs stressing health, fitness, nutrition, teamwork and academics.

➲ Northeastern State University undergraduates provide tutoring, musicians who provide music lessons.

AN EXAMPLE OF IMPLEMENTATION OF FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES,[10] the Rhode Island Partnership for Community Schools provides guidance and examples of programs implemented in districts across the state. The term "community opportunity zone" (COZ) is used to indicate that these programs are part-nerships with outside the school entities. Examples include:[11]

➲ Woonsocket COZ operates a weekly food pantry; a clothing and household item distribution center; and the Center for Finance Success providing families with financial literacy education, free income tax return preparation, and workforce training opportunities in healthcare, culi-nary arts, and bookkeeping/accounting. Woonsocket also partners with the Ocean State Big Brothers, Big Sisters Program that connects 60 Bryant University undergraduates who mentor students weekly throughout the academic year.

➲ Pawtucket COZ is a Rhode Island Department of Education approved high-performing adult education program offering adult English-as-a-Second-Language (ESOL) and GED classes. The Adult Education Program runs a 20-hour per week daytime program and an evening program that meets three times per week. The program provides adult literacy services for 250 adults per year. Childcare, case management, and career exploration are included.

➲ Westerly COZ offers an array of family services, including adult education provided by teachers and volunteers from Families Learning Together, Literacy Volunteers of Washington County and Education Exchange. Childcare and transportation options are available for eligible participants.

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9 Jenkins, J. (Undated). The power of community: A movement is afoot in Tulsa elementary school that is mak-ing a big impact on students and families. Available online at http://www.tulsapeople.com/core/pagetools. php?pageid=14799&url=/Tulsa-People/August-2011/The-power-of-community/&mode=print

10 Adapted from the Rhode Island Partnership for Community Schools, available online at http://www.ride.ri.gov/ Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/Students-and-Families-Great-Schools/RI-Public-Schools/BEP-program-descriptions.pdf

11 Listen to the NEA webinars: The Community Schools Transformation Process: Key Players, AND Inside a Community School: Working Together Towards a Single Vision at http://www.nea.org/home/68381.htm

Community Support Services Implementation: Engagement of Partners

STEP 3.   **Partners:** may include organizations, businesses and community-based entities that historically have not engaged with the school are recognized as assets and their expertise is critical to implementing the community school pillars.

The Community Schools Planning Team should review the assets and needs identified and determine how to improve or enhance positive behavior practices with the school for the betterment of the academic and enrichment activities of the students.

Regarding Community Support Services, health and welfare organizations and institutions and local businesses play a critical role in providing students and their families with needed support and resources. These may include:

- ⮑ School-based Health Centers that may operate either inside the school or near or in combination –that are operated through agreements with hospitals, clinics or other public health agencies. Primary care, dental care, mental health and psychological counseling services, immunizations, hearing and vision testing and other health related issues are addressed through these centers.

- ⮑ Recreational and Wellness Organizations such as the YMCA/YWCA or the Boys & Girls Clubs which offer an array of recreational programs for both students and their families.

- ⮑ Businesses may offer employees opportunities to engage with students through mentoring and tutoring programs and to act as school volunteers at various school functions. Summer job programs and job training programs provide out-of-school opportunities for students and/or their family members.

Community Support Services Implementation: Community School Coordinator

STEP 4.   **In General, the Community School Coordinator:** facilitates the development and implementation of the strategic plan in collaboration with school and community members/partners; oversees the alignment of assets with needs; and manages the integration of before and after school programs and wraparound services with the academic program and schedule. The Coordinator may also engage in fund raising activities.

Most of the Coordinator's responsibilities relate to other Community School Pillars. However, regarding Community Support Services, the Community School Coordinator should make sure that school partners who are providing before and after school and out-of-school programs are aware of the behavioral norms students are expected to follow and are familiar with positive behavior practices.

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS COORDINATOR JOB RESPONSIBILITIES[12]

This job description incorporates information from a variety of existing CS Coordinator job descriptions. It is meant to be a comprehensive resource for the Community Schools Planning Committee and the district Human Resources Director as they craft their own job description, depending on their specific needs. Many of the existing job descriptions use the Child First model which is cited as the first source in the footnote below.

The North Sanpete (UT) school district states that the CS Coordinator provides general supervision and specific coordination of the Community Education program under the direction of the school principal or school leadership team. The coordinator will program a wide variety of community classes and activities based on community requests, identified needs and class evaluations. The coordinator will become involved in developing other components of the community education concept as possible, such as public involvement, facility coordination, integration with K-12 program and resource utilization.

According to Child First, which funds the Community Schools Coordinator positions for the Baltimore City Schools, the CS Coordinator is a full-time, salaried individual whose work week tends to encompass some evenings and weekends. The CS Coordinator is required to

- ✔ Attend monthly professional development
- ✔ Complete quarterly reports about specific school-wide outcomes from data related to attendance, climate and parent and community engagement.

The CS Coordinator works collaboratively with the school leadership team to co-design, develop and supervise all community school programming including:

- ✔ Family and student support services
- ✔ Health services
- ✔ Enrichment activities including those that occur during the school day, after school and summer
- ✔ Family and community engagement activities

The CS Coordinator strengthens and maintains the bridge between the school and community. They facilitate and provide leadership for the collaborative process and the development of a continuum of services for children, families and community members within a school neighborhood.

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

- ➲ Implement a menu of needs-driven, high-quality programs and services in keeping with the community school model, including but not limited to early childhood programs, expanded learning and enrichment opportunities, health services, parent/family engagement, adult education, direct material assistance and interventions targeted to chronically absent students.
- ➲ Ensure the alignment and integration of all programming with both the principal's vision and the curriculum.

12 The job description, responsibilities and duties of the CS Coordinator are adapted from job descriptions from Baltimore City Child First available at http://tfabaltimore.weebly.com/uploads/1/4/9/5/14952282/cfa_community_school_coordinator_liberty.job_announcement._06-17-13.pdf; National Center for Community Schools' Community School Coordinator Sample Job Description, at http://www.nccs.org/sites/default/files/resource/SampleJobDescription.pdf; North Santpete (UT) school district at https://www.nsanpete.org/index.php/districtpolicies/districtpoliciespersonnel/32-community-school-coordinator.html; and Northfield (MN) public schools at http://northfieldschools.org/files/Community-School-Coordinator.pdf; Chicago public schools Community Schools Initiative Coordinator at https://www.milwaukeejobs.com/j/t-community-schools-initiative-coordinator-e-chicago-public-schools-l-chicago,-il-jobs-j21902470.html

- ➲ Advise the principal on how to integrate partners and community members into school governance structures (i.e., School Leadership, School Safety, Child Study and Attendance teams).
- ➲ Coordinate needs and resource assessment activities on an ongoing basis, employing a variety of strategies and including a broad cross-section of stakeholders.
- ➲ Hire, train and supervise staff as required by the Lead Partner.
- ➲ Convene and staff the site-based Community School Leadership Team, a coordinating body that is co-led by the principal and Community School Coordinator and may comprise administrators, teachers, support services staff, partners, parents and others to identify needs, set priorities and coordinate the strategy.
- ➲ Support the research/evaluation of the community school by supervising and coordinating the collection of data, timely submission of reports and responses to other requests for information made by the initiative's leadership.
- ➲ Participate in capacity-building activities, including initiative-wide and site-based trainings, network meetings and study visits, and—with the principal—ensure the participation of other site-based staff as needed or required.
- ➲ Represent the initiative in various public forums as needed and participate in advocacy activities to promote the initiative.
- ➲ Execute other tasks as indicated by the CS leadership team and/or lead partners.

SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES

PARTNERSHIP AND RELATIONSHIP DEVELOPMENT

- ➲ Leads a comprehensive, participatory needs/assets assessment of the school and community in partnership with the school leadership team and community stakeholders.
- ➲ Develops and coordinates new partnerships guided by needs assessment and School Action Plan.
- ➲ Helps to raise funds and in-kind donations to support programming

STUDENT AND FAMILY SUPPORT

- ➲ Serves as a member of the school student support team and attendance team to identify students at risk of chronic absence and disciplinary action, collaborating with the school, families, and community to provide necessary supports
- ➲ Refers students and families to community agencies and organizations when appropriate.

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- ➲ Organizes, trains, and develops parent leaders to connect to the school, academic achievement and school decision-making.
- ➲ Recruits, trains and helps to manage volunteers in support of Community School efforts.
- ➲ Coordinates with school and before/after school program staff to engage neighborhood associations, residents and community leaders in these efforts.

COMMUNICATION

- ➲ Organizes and staffs regular meetings of appropriate leadership and school or community-based teams. These teams are comprised of administrators, school council members, students, community representatives and extended service partners. They identify, coordinate,

and broker relationships for service delivery at the school.

➲ Implements an approved action plan by establishing and coordinating partnerships, co-locating resources within the school, developing the necessary work plans, agreements, MOUs, and schedules, and connecting families and community residents to those resources.

PROGRAM BUDGETING AND GRANT MANAGEMENT

➲ Prepares annual programmatic budget.

➲ Manages grants and funding streams.

➲ Monitors disbursements from grant funding.

➲ Assists and makes recommendations concerning fiscal needs and requirements for community school programing, activities and initiatives.

➲ Assists with grant proposal writing for non-district funding.

PROGRAM REPORTING

➲ Aids in the evaluation of individual Community School programs by collecting data on new partners and the use of their services as well as general school climate indicators, i.e. school attendance, school safety and academic achievement.

➲ Reports outcomes in a timely manner to school leadership team and funding partners as required.

➲ Represents the initiative publicly, as requested, reporting on program successes and outcomes.

➲ Tracks required data for community school funders and partners.

SPECIFIC DUTIES

➲ Assist the school leadership team in developing the home/school partnership, and serve as a catalyst for public involvement in the schools.

➲ Communicates, collaborates and solves problems with administrators, district personnel, parents, community members and the Community School Advisory Council regarding student, staff and/or program issues. Tracks required data for community school funders and partners.

➲ Organizes and supervises community education programs and activities which may include Adult Basic Education and Adult high school completion; enrichment programs for youth; general, self-enrichment, self-improvement classes for adults; integration of the community school programs with the regular day and evening programs; coordinates existing community resources to enhance community service offerings.

➲ Develops after school and evening programming, including non-school day programming. Collaborates with a variety of community organizations to deliver programming. Identifies and interviews prospective instructors, both paid and volunteer. Facilitates instructor compensation for CS programs. Facilitates the registration process for all CS programs.

➲ Evaluates program effectiveness and participant satisfaction. Provides program and participant data to the school leadership team, partners, and other stakeholders. Conducts an annual program evaluation and submits quarterly activity reports.

➲ Markets and promotes Community School activities and opportunities with the school community. Publicize class offerings and other community school programs using all available media.

➲ Coordinate with local agencies and organizations to avoid duplication in program delivery.

➲ Ensures use of best practices in community school programming for children, youth and adults.

- ➲ Assists and makes recommendations concerning fiscal needs and requirements for Community School programming, activities and initiatives.

QUALIFICATIONS

- ➲ Bachelors degree; masters preferred
- ➲ Five years of relevant experience working with youth, families, or community agencies partnering with schools
- ➲ Knowledge of afterschool curriculum implementation and appropriate techniques and practices for afterschool programming
- ➲ Fundamentals of supervision and supervisory techniques
- ➲ Understanding of community school philosophy
- ➲ Experience developing and maintaining strong working relationships working among a diverse group of actors
- ➲ Experience dealing with difficult situations
- ➲ Experience managing multiple projects and ability to oversee a cadre of staff, partners, and volunteers
- ➲ Strong analytical skills with demonstrated grant management experience.
- ➲ Familiarity with non-profit organizations and school-community partnerships.
- ➲ Exceptional written, verbal and financial communication skills.
- ➲ Strong ability to organize and prioritize information quickly and strategically.
- ➲ Successful experience writing and obtaining grants.
- ➲ High degree of fluency in the full MS Office Professional Suite

NEA Resources

NEA YouTube video: Community Schools – Community Support and Positive Discipline. Available online at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8HN_zW4SwYY

This 4-minute video explains two Community Schools pillars: Community Support Services and Positive Discipline Practices.

NEA Community Schools homepage: http://www.nea.org/home/66319.htm

Backgrounder: Meeting the Needs of the Whole Child (Undated). Available online at http://education-votes.nea.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/04/WholeChildBackgrounder.pdf

Articulates NEA support for the ASCD Campaign for the Whole Child, which advocates addressing the all students' physical, social and emotional health and well-being as a means of providing equity in educational opportunity.

Backgrounder: Students from Poverty. (2016). Available online at http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/Backgrounder_Students%20from%20poverty_online.pdf

The achievement gap based on income has surpassed the achievement gap based on race/ethnicity. This 9-page backgrounder identifies in-school and out-of-school strategies to assist students from poverty gaining access to resources more readily available to their higher-income peers.

NEA Education Support Professionals: Meeting the Needs of the Whole Child, available online at https://www.nea.org/assets/docs/150306-ESP_DIGIBOOK.pdf

NEA resource focus on the work of Education Support Professionals and how they contribute to health, safe, engaged, supported and challenged learning environments.

Family-School-Community Partnerships 2.0: Collaborative strategies to advance student learning. (2011). Available online at http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/Family-School-Community-Partnerships-2.0.pdf

NEA report reviews the research on school and family collaboration presenting 10 strategies; profiles 16 partnership programs that fall into three categories: family-community programs; parent engagement programs; and wraparound and community service programs.

NEA Policy Brief: Planning for school restructuring: Keeping stakeholders in the process. (2013). NEA Policy Brief. Available online at https://www.nea.org/assets/docs/Planning-for-School-Restructuring-06282013.pdf

Provides rationale for inclusion of educators and parents in the school redesign planning process and the importance of engaging all stakeholders.

NEA Policy Brief: Wraparound services. (2013). NEA Policy Brief. Available online at http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/Wraparound-Services-05142013.pdf

Provides information related to full-service community schools addressing outside classroom services provided at the school site.

Long, C. (2016). Community schools bridging the gap between school and home. NEA Today, August 9, 2016. Available online at http://neatoday.org/2016/08/09/community-school-bridging-the-gap/

Article examples the impact of poverty on learning and how community support services, including health and dental services and out-of-school learning opportunities, can help mitigate the impact of poverty on student learning.

Nealis, L. (2015). School mental health professionals: Strengthening community connections, boosting student outcomes. Education Votes, May 15, 2015. Available online at http://educationvotes.nea.org/2015/05/13/school-mental-health-professionals-strengthening-community-connections-boosting-student-outcomes/

Article stresses that more than simply the absence of mental illness, mental health also means possessing the skills needed to cope with life's many challenges. As such, it directly impacts children's learning and development. Struggling with a mental health problem, such as depression, or feeling overwhelmed by academic, social, or family pressures severely limits children's ability to learn and grow. Students, families, and communities thrive when schools meet the needs of the whole child—fostering social-emotional skills and identifying and preventing mental health problems early.

OTHER RESOURCES

West Virginia Community Schools. (Undated). Community school-based health services in West Virginia: A quick reference guide for schools implementing health and social supports of a community school. Available online at https://wvde.state.wv.us/healthyschools/section1/documents/SBHSHealthandSocialSupportsQuickReferenceGuide5-21-15.pdf

This document is intended as a quick guide for schools interested in partnering with their community providers to develop health and social supports which may include school-based health services for primary health care, dental and mental health services, such as doctor, dentist and behavioral health facilities.

New Mexico Office of School and Adolescent Health. (2015). New Mexico school-based health centers: A status report 2015. Available online at https://nmhealth.org/publication/view/report/2000/

Reports on the impact of school-based health centers on identified student needs. Useful report for convincing health partners that such a collaboration bears positive results.

GUIDES FOR SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CENTER DEVELOPMENT

Each of the links below is to comprehensive planning guide for schools interested in creating a school-based health center: covers community planning, health center structure, health center funding, day-to-day operations, evaluation and data collection, youth involvement, marketing, and advocacy and coalition building.

California School-based Health Alliance. (2017). Our Toolkits, available online at http://www.school-healthcenters.org/about-us/toolkits-and-services/toolkits/ U

Colorado Association for School-based Health Care. (2010). Opening a school-based health center in Colorado: a how-to manual. Available online at http://www.casbhc.org/Publications/Technical%20Assistance/Opening%20A%20School-Based%20Health%20Center.pdf

West Virginia School Health Technical Assistance Center. (2014). Opening a school-based health center: A how-to guide for West Virginia. Available online at https://livewell.marshall.edu/mutac/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/OpenSBHC2ndEd.pdf

United States Department of Health and Human Services. (2015). Health equity: School-based health centers. Available online at https://www.thecommunityguide.org/findings/promoting-health-equity-through-education-programs-and-policies-school-based-health-centers

Community Schools: Educator Fact Sheet

Community School: A center of the community that brings together academics, health and social services, youth and community development and community engagement under one roof, leading to improved learning, stronger families, and healthier communities.

Educators know that partnerships with families, communities, and other stakeholders are ` community members and organizations collaborate to strengthen schools, students benefit.

Designing and implementing a **Community Schools Model** provides educators and their local associations with opportunities to engage families through family-centered programs and to build relationships with community members, organizations and institutions.

From an Educato's' perspective, **Community Schools** often address shortcomings of more traditional schools by

- ☑ Garnering additional resources through funding and partnerships to reduce demands on school staff.
- ☑ Providing learning opportunities to develop students academic social, emotional, physical and civic competence.
- ☑ Offering programs focused on the whole family's physical, mental and emotional health.
- ☑ Building social capital through networks and relationships that create opportunities for students.

Educators benefit through a focus on the whole child when they build relationships with parents, families, and community organizations and institutions. This **community of interest** will work with educators on issues related to school quality and allow the educators to

- ☑ Organize support for student-centered budgeting and teaching and learning conditions.
- ☑ Engage educators through opportunities to get involved in their Association's outreach and advocacy.
- ☑ Build stronger relationships within the membership leading to engaged, empowered educators.

A **Community School** is one way to dismantle institutional racism and remove obstacles that stand in the way of some students. In many cases, minority students are tracked into classes leaving them unprepared for college and careers. In too many schools, punitive discipline practices remove disproportionate numbers of minorities and students with disabilities from learning experiences. School funding and

resource allocation still favor students from wealthy neighborhoods. "Failing" schools are threatened with takeover, shutdown, or replacement by charter schools.

INSTEAD, many "failing" schools have transformed themselves by implemeting the COMMUNITY SCHOOLS MODEL, which uses some federal school turnaround elements, but in a collaborative and collegial process resulting in high-performing schools even in high-poverty neighborhoods. In COMMUNITY SCHOOLS, as in all schools, teachers teach and students learn – but with a focus on the whole child: before and after school programs beyond the traditional extracurricular and athletic programs; learning opportunities for family and community members; and health and wellness support. Partnerships with community organizations and businesses broaden the educational and experiential scope of learning making the school a hub of community activity.

The NEA COMMUNITY SCHOOL MODEL includes six pillars of practice. Like most public education models, they are adaptable to the needs of an individual school's students, staff, families and community. The are: A Strong & Proven Curriculum; High-Quality Teaching; Inclusive Leadership; Positive Behavior Practices; Family & Community Partnerships; and Community Support Services.

So what is the role of the EDUCATION ASSOCIATION in this work? We know how to organize people, and can serve as the first mover in getting a community to survey its needs and commit to moving forward with the community school strategy. We can lead community conversations; serve on planning teams; raise public awareness about student needs and how community schools can meet them; and we can make sure our members understand their roles at the site level.

For more information, access our Community Schools Toolkit at
www.nea.org/communityschools

Watch our introductory webinar at https://neaorg.adobeconnect.com/_a932539447/p41qy7y4peb/?launcher=false&fcsContent=true&pbMode=normal

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS: FAMILY FACT SHEET

COMMUNITY SCHOOL: *A center of the community that brings together academics, health and social services, youth and community development and community engagement under one roof, leading to improved learning, stronger families, and healthier communities.*

FAMILIES know that their children thrive in schools where educators and parents work together to focus on student learning. But not all students come to school ready to learn due to hunger, untreated medical conditions, trauma, and a lack of opportunity for exploration and enrichment. For many families, creating the conditions that support learning requires assistance from the broader community.

Designing and implementing a COMMUNITY SCHOOLS MODEL provides families with opportunities to work with teachers, administrators and community organizatiosn and institutions to develop and implement student-centered and family-centered programs.

From the parental perspective, COMMUNITY SCHOOLS often address shortcomings of more traditional schools by

- ☑ Garnering additional resources through funding and partnerships to reduce demands on school staff.
- ☑ Providing learning opportunities to develop students' academic social, emotional, physical and civic competence.
- ☑ Offering programs focused on the whole family's physical, mental and emotional health.
- ☑ Building social capital through networks and relationships that create opportunities for students.

Families benefit through a focus on the whole child when they build relationships with educators, the Association, and community organizations and institutions. This COMMUNITY OF INTEREST will work with families on issues related to the academic, social, emotional, physical development of their children by

- ☑ Instituting a strong and proven curriculum in a safe learning enviroment where positive student behavior is the norm.
- ☑ Providing learning opportunities within the community through afterschool, vacation and summer programs.
- ☑ Addressing students' health needs through in-school or near-school clinics offering physical, dental and optical treatment.

A **Community School** is one way to dismantle institutional racism and remove obstacles that stand in the way of some students. In many cases, minority students are tracked into classes leaving them unprepared for college and careers. In too many schools, punitive discipline practices remove too many minority and students with disabilities from learning experiences. School funding and resource allocation still favor students from wealthy neighborhoods. "Failing" schools are threatened with takeover, shutdown, or replacement by charter schools.

Instead, many "failing" schools have transformed themselves by implemeting the **Community Schools Model**, which uses some federal school turnaround elements, but in a collaborative and collegial process resulting in high-performing schools even in high-poverty neighborhoods. In **Community Schools**, as in all schools, teachers teach and students learn – but with a focus on the whole child. Opportunities include before and after school programs beyond the traditional extracurricular and athletic programs; learning opportunities for family and community members; and health and wellness support. Partnerships with community organizations and businesses broaden the educational and experiential scope of learning making the school a hub of community activity.

The **NEA Community School Model** includes six pillars of practice. Like most public education models, they are adaptable to the needs of an individual school's students, staff, families and community. The are: A Strong & Proven Curriculum; High-Quality Teaching; Inclusive Leadership; Positive Behavior Practices; Family & Community Partnerships; and Community Support Services.

So what is the **Parent's Role** in this work? Parents are their children's best advocates; they know and understand their academic, social, emotional, and physical needs. Parents can engage with their school's educators and commit to moving forward with a community school strategy. They should be full participants in community conversations and on planning teams. As members of the community, they can raise awareness about student needs and explain how community schools can meet them.

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>
> www.nea.org/communityschools
>
> Watch our introductory webinar at https://neaorg.adobeconnect.com/_a932539447/ p41qy7y4peb/?launcher=false&fcsContent=true&pbMode=normal

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS: COMMUNITY FACT SHEET

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COMMUNITY MEMBERS, organizations and institutions know that they benefit from great schools. However, while many community members may have knowledge, skills and talent from which the school would benefit, too often connections with schools do not exist; as a result, students, educators, and families miss opportunities to enhance student learning.

Designing and implementing a COMMUNITY SCHOOLS MODEL provides community members with opportunities to work with educators and families to develop and implement student-centered and family-centered programs.

From the perspective of community organizations, institutions and members, COMMUNITY SCHOOLS often address shortcomings of more traditional schools by

☑ Extending learning through partnership programs with social, cultural and health organizations.

☑ Enhancing student learning opportunities through out-of-school experiences.

☑ Providing family learning programs before and after school hours, on weekends, and during school vacations and summer.

☑ Supplementing educator instruction by sharing knowledge, skill and talent in specific content areas.

Community organizations and institutions benefit through a focus on the whole child when they build relationships with educators, the Association, and parents, families and students. This COMMUNITY OF INTEREST will work with community organizations and institutions on issues related to the academic, social, emotional, physical development of their children by

☑ Instituting adult learning programs, recreational programs, and social programs at the school site.

☑ Providing wraparound services that meet the physical, emotional, and mental health needs of students and their families.

☑ Creating lifelong connections to community-based organizations and institutions reliant on such engagement.

A **Community School** is one way to dismantle institutional racism and remove obstacles that stand in the way of some students. In many cases, minority students are tracked into classes leaving them unprepared for college and careers. In too many schools, punitive discipline practices remove too many minority and students with disabilities from learning experiences. School funding and resource allocation still favor students from wealthy neighborhoods. "Failing" schools are threatened with takeover, shutdown, or replacement by charter schools.

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The **NEA Community School Model** includes six pillars of practice. Like most public education models, they are adaptable to the needs of an individual school's students, staff, families and community. The are: A Strong & Proven Curriculum; High-Quality Teaching; Inclusive Leadership; Positive Behavior Practices; Family & Community Partnerships; and Community Support Services.

So what is the **Community Organization's Role** in this work? Members of community-based groups bring knowledge, skill, experience and talent that benefit a community school strategy. They must be full participants in community conversations and on planning teams. As members of the community, they can raise awareness about student needs and explain how community schools can meet them.

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www.nea.org/communityschools

Watch our introductory webinar at https://neaorg.adobeconnect.com/_a932539447/p41qy7y4peb/?launcher=false&fcsContent=true&pbMode=normal

NEA Community Schools TOOLKIT

National Education Association

The National Education Association (NEA), the nation's largest professional employee organization, is committed to advancing the cause of public education. NEA's 3 million members work at every level of education—from pre-school to university graduate programs. NEA has affiliate organizations in every state and in more than 14,000 communities across the United States.

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