Community Schools

Strategy Guide 2.1

Strategy Vision and Description

The Community School strategy **transforms a school into a community hub where educators, local community members, families, and students work together to strengthen conditions for student learning and healthy development.** As partners, they organize in- and out-of-school resources, supports, and opportunities to improve student outcomes. Colorado Revised Statutes, 22-32.5-103 further defines a community school as a public school that implements:

- an **annual asset and needs assessment** of and by both the school community and the surrounding community;
- a **strategic plan** that includes the creation of problem-solving teams who are dedicated to continuous school improvement;
- a **process to engage partners** who bring assets and expertise to implement the school's goals; and
- a **Community School Coordinator** who is a school staff member at the community school site, who has the primary responsibility to facilitate the problem-solving teams, and who works with school leadership to assemble relevant stakeholders to solve problems identified by the assessment.

Decades of research demonstrates that community schools are an effective school improvement strategy (Maier, A., et.al, 2017). Figure 1, below, outlines the essential elements of community school transformation**.** The integrated implementation of the following **six key practices** is most effective when the **enabling conditions** for collaboration (trusting relationships, a shared vision, inclusive decision-making and actionable data) and **supportive infrastructure** maintained by the district and other system-level partners (shared governance structures, continuous improvement practices, data systems, professional learning opportunities, strategic partnerships and sustainable resources) are in place.

- Collaborative Leadership, Shared Power and Voice
- Powerful Student and Family Engagement
- Culture of Belonging, Safety and Care
- Rigorous, Community-Connected Classroom Instruction
- Expanded, Enriched Learning Opportunities
- Integrated Systems of Support

Figure 1. Essentials for Community School Transformation



Source: Community Schools Forward. (2023).

Figure 1

This strategy guide includes information about how to implement a community school as a school improvement strategy while using the Unified Improvement Plan to guide planning and goal setting.

Research has shown that the following components support the effectiveness of a Community Schools strategy. It is important to note that while there may be evidence to demonstrate the effectiveness of each component, these components are most effective when implemented together. The following components are derived from various articles and research that articulate what a Community Schools strategy should include:

1. Community Schools Coordinator
2. Annual Assets and Needs Assessment
3. Strategic Plan
4. Collaborative Leadership and Shared Decision-Making
5. Community Partners
6. Braided and Blended Funding

Evidence Base

ESSA defines levels of research based on the quality of the study (Levels 1-4). CDE requires that schools and districts identify the research base for strategies that they select for their Unified Improvement Plans, and for applications for school improvement funds in the EASI application.

The research on the **Community Schools strategy** that is cited here meets the threshold for **ESSA Level 1-3**.

Necessary Preconditions

Required Preconditions: Before building the infrastructure necessary to implement the Community School strategy, the school must have the following elements in place:

- Start-up Implementation Team is formed;
- Need for Community School strategy is demonstrated;
- Contextual fit of the Community School strategy and feasibility of implementation confirmed;
- Stakeholders express readiness, or the motivation and capacity to transform to a community school;
- Needs and assets are confirmed;
- Stakeholder engagement plan is formed;
- A school-level staff member who will coordinate the Implementation team (until a Community School Coordinator is hired) is designated;
- A school-level decision maker/administrator who will support and champion the work is designated;

Readiness Indicators: To demonstrate sufficient readiness for implementation, the school or district should:

- Ensure that school and district leadership understands and is supportive of the Community School strategy and is willing to dedicate the necessary time, resources, and professional development to ensure fidelity and quality of implementation efforts;
- Confirm they have adequate capacity to staff an implementation team (see Core Component 1, below; note that an existing team may act as an implementation team, provided team members have sufficient capacity to put in the time and effort needed to support the implementation of the Community School strategy);
- Ensure that all stakeholders (families, students, and educators) understand the rationale for change and that the majority are supportive of the Community School strategy.

Supportive Preconditions: The following conditions support the implementation of this strategy, but they are not required prior to initial implementation:

- One or more of the six community school key practices are in place; and/or
- Community partnerships are in place.

Since the Community School strategy includes many significant components of comprehensive school transformation, as detailed in the Core Components section, having any of these supportive conditions in place ahead of time (e.g., implementation team, needs and assets confirmed, stakeholder engagement plan, etc.) will give schools and districts a head start in their community school implementation.

Contextual Fit

Possible Root Causes include inadequate, inconsistent or ineffective…

- Student engagement (e.g., high dropout rates, low graduation rates, high chronic absenteeism)
- Support systems (e.g., afterschool programs, enrichment programs, safe environments)
- Leadership structure (e.g., top-down management, lack of student and family power and voice)
- Student support services or family support services
- Culturally relevant pedagogy and curriculum
- Standardized test performance
- Approaches to student behavior
- Implementation of practices
- Family, school, and community partnerships

Is this strategy a good fit for your district/school?

The Community School strategy creates a framework to support foundational practices. As long as the district or school has a commitment to shared governance structures, continuous improvement practices, data systems, professional learning opportunities, strategic partnerships, and securing sustainable resources, the Community School strategy is a good fit for any district or school that can devote 3-5 years to implementation activities.

Core Components, Elements & Activities

Research has shown that the following Core Components support the implementation of the Community School strategy and work in an integrated fashion to transform a traditional school into a community school. To have a fully realized community school, the following Core Components should be represented throughout the implementation plan. It is important to note that while there is evidence to demonstrate the effectiveness of each component independent of one another, the strategy is most effective when all components are implemented simultaneously. These components should ideally be approached concurrently, as they work in concert and are mutually supporting. *Note that these Core Components all describe annual or ongoing processes, except for Core Component 3: Strategic Plan, which is a one-time task that should be completed during the initial installation of the strategy and should help guide the implementation of the other Components.*

Core Component 1: Community School Coordinator *(Ongoing)*

The Community School Coordinator (CSC) is responsible for the ongoing implementation, integration, alignment, and coordination of the Community School strategy at the site level. The role of the CSC is fundamental to the strategy; they are responsible for ensuring that all other components of the strategy are in place and sustained. It is best practice to hire this position at the school level and to maintain a 1.0 FTE dedicated entirely to this position. All CSC activities described below are ongoing.

Elements or Activities	Description
Build, Maintain, and Lead Implementation and Leadership Teams	The Community School Coordinator establishes a governance structure to support collaborative leadership and the integrated implementation of other key practices by intentionally building and maintaining School Leadership and Implementation Teams. Ensure balanced representation from school leaders, teachers, union representatives, specialized support staff, families, students, and community partners. Activities may include: • Creating meaningful agendas and managing meeting logistics. • Guiding the team through strategic planning. • Establishing clear rules and norms for how decisions are made.
Facilitate Trust and Relationship-Building	The Community School Coordinator fosters a culture of belonging, safety and care at the school by prioritizing listening to understand the unique perspectives, visions, and needs of all stakeholders. Activities may include: • Establishing transparent, two-way communication. • Utilizing a shared-leadership model. • Being highly responsive to the community's needs.

Elements or Activities	Description
Recruit, Coordinate, Convene, and Sustain Community Partners	The Community School Coordinator develops an integrated system of support for students and families by asset mapping and aligning efforts with community partners that support student and school success. Activities may include: • Identifying new partnerships as student and family needs emerge.
Support Community School Practices, Structures, and Systems	The Community School Coordinator manages and coordinates an integrated system of support for students and families through maintaining a living map of all internal and external resources (mental health, physical health, dental, vision, food, housing, etc.). Activities may include: • Establishing formal MOUs with partners. • Aligning resources with instructional goals. • Designing and executing periodic assessments to identify root causes of challenges. • Facilitating the Community School Leadership and Implementation Teams. • Facilitating family leadership development.
Facilitate Data-Driven Inquiry, Continuous Improvement, and Creative Problem-Solving	The Community School Coordinator develops and maintains a supportive infrastructure in partnership with the Community School Leadership and Implementation Teams, district, and community partners. Evaluate programs, services, and initiatives and if they are achieving the intended outcomes. Activities may include: • Conducting, analyzing, and sharing the findings from annual Needs and Assets Assessments. • Guiding teams through root-cause analyses. • Setting SMART goals in partnership with the Community School Leadership Team. • Facilitating data-sharing agreements with partners.
Build Teacher and Administrator Capacity to Enhance Whole Child Learning and Instruction	The Community School Coordinator develops and maintains a supportive infrastructure and builds a culture of belonging, safety, and care by designing training for school staff and community partners on restorative practices, trauma-informed care, cultural responsiveness, etc. Activities may include: • Creating consistent opportunities for teachers, community partners, and school leaders to learn together. • Working with teachers to align enrichment programs and community-based projects with classroom goals. • Identifying local experts and neighborhood history to integrate into the classroom curriculum. • Leading or supporting the implementation of family, school, and community partnership programs and activities.

Elements or Activities	Description
Core Component Deliverable(s)	• Community School Coordinator position job description • Permanent 1.0 FTE Community School Coordinator position

Core Component 2: Assets and Needs Assessment *(Annual)*

An assets and needs assessment in community schools is a systematic, data-driven process used to identify both the gaps in services (needs) and the existing strengths (assets) within a school and its surrounding community. Assessments are conducted on an annual basis, with all activities led by the Community School Coordinator.

Elements or Activities	Description
Preparation and Planning	Students' and community needs and assets shift over time, and the school should establish an annual schedule for assessing these and using findings to adjust the strategic plan accordingly. The first step in this annual process is for the Community School Coordinator to convene the Community School Leadership Team to: • Clarify questions to answer, such as “What are the major barriers to student attendance?” • Determine capacity of budget, staff, and time.
Data Collection and Asset Mapping	Establish a strong data system with the Community School Leadership team, the district, and community partners that involves identifying data to be collected and a plan for data collection. Activities may include: • Reviewing archival data such as test scores, attendance and chronic absenteeism rates, behavior referrals, demographic trends, etc. • Conducting culture and climate surveys with staff, students, and families. • Conducting focus groups, on-on-one interviews, and community town halls. • Documenting local resources such as nearby health clinics, businesses, libraries, and neighborhood associations. • Mapping existing school-based programs and services. • Identifying individual skills and expertise within the community. • Including diverse perspectives, including students, families, and community partners.
Analysis and Reporting	Establish a strong data system with the Community School Leadership team, the district, and community partners that involves collaborating on data analysis and a plan for communicating findings with stakeholders. Activities may include: • Looking for patterns and data stories. • Performing Root Cause Analysis to identify the underlying causes behind performance challenges. • Ranking needs based on their impact on students' success and the school’s capacity to address them. • Creating a final report or executive summary to share with the community.

Elements or Activities	Description
Core Component Deliverable(s)	• An assets and needs assessment report that serves as the foundation for strategic planning and service alignment.

Core Component 3: Strategic Plan *(One-time)*

The strategic plan for community schools defines the school's vision, values, and mission and articulates how to align community assets with identified needs to improve student, family, and community outcomes. It should be used as an implementation roadmap and as a public document that communicates the school's rationale for choosing the strategy and plan for implementation to key stakeholders, including staff, families and students, local school boards, and potential funders. Because it can take up to 3-5 years to fully implement the strategy, the strategic plan should cover a 5-year period. The plan should be developed during Installation and then be treated as a living document that is followed with fidelity but adapted as necessary based on regular implementation progress monitoring and annual needs and asset assessment findings during Partial and Full Implementation.

Elements or Activities	Description
Develop a Shared Vision, Priorities and Goals	Develop a shared vision for the Community School strategy and strategy implementation to establish trust and foster support. This one-time activity may include: • Reviewing findings from the original Needs and Assets Assessment to ensure the vision addresses identified needs and challenges. • Asking the community, "What does a thriving school look like to you?" and "What are our community's greatest assets?" • Drafting a vision statement focused on an aspirational future and SMART goals. • Presenting draft to stakeholders and the public and collecting feedback.
Determine Programs, Initiatives, and Services that Address Identified Root Causes	Address the identified Root Causes through the ongoing, integrated implementation of programs, initiatives, and services aligned with the six key practices found in the the Essentials for Community School Transformation Framework. 1. Collaborative leadership, shared power, and voice; 2. Powerful family and student engagement; 3. Expanded and enriched learning opportunities; 4. Rigorous, community connected classroom instruction; 5. Culture of belonging, safety, and care; and 6. Integrated systems of support.

Elements or Activities	Description
Develop a Plan for Monitoring and Evaluation	Develop a plan to progress monitor implementation efforts related to the six key strategies and their impact on identified Student Performance Priorities over time. Develop a comprehensive evaluation plan for the Community School strategy as a whole, possibly including a return-on-investment study for the Community School Coordinator position. Activities may include: • Identify key performance indicators that align with the vision and SMART goals. • Establish data collection systems and assign roles to collect and manage data sets. • Schedule routine review meetings and performance reports. • Involve the Community School Leadership Team in analyzing findings. • Outline how results will be shared with the broader community and establish a feedback loop.
Core Component Deliverable(s)	• A 5-year strategic plan that defines the school's vision, values, and mission and articulates how to align community assets with identified needs to improve student, family, and community outcomes

Core Component 4: Collaborative Leadership and Shared Decision-Making *(Ongoing)*

Collaborative leadership and shared decision-making is one of six key community schools practices that prioritizes building relationships, trust, and shared responsibility among stakeholders to achieve common goals. It moves beyond traditional top-down, hierarchical management by distributing influence and engaging diverse stakeholders—including educators, families, and community members—to co-create solutions. This key practice is also highlighted here as a Core Component because, like the Community School Coordinator position, it is fundamental to the strategy. Collaborative leadership structures and shared decision making processes must be established from the onset and sustained throughout implementation.

Elements or Activities	Description
Intentional Community Representation on the Community School Leadership Team	Recruit diverse representatives who can help inform community school implementation. This includes teachers, students, families, and community partners. • Clearly define the common goals and purpose of the Community School Leadership Team. • Structure Community School Leadership Team meeting agendas so members can engage in real-time information-sharing, problem-solving, and decision-making. • Make team members feel valued and respected by providing space for them to meaningfully contribute to meetings and connect with one another.

Elements or Activities	Description
Cross-Team Communication	Clearly define the connections between various school initiatives and committees that focus on specific student populations or school priorities. • Routinely share key program data and documentation (e.g., student participation trackers, budgets) with leadership teams during meetings. • Create processes for documentation and sharing information across committees and teams to create awareness of work, avoid duplication efforts, and identify opportunities for collaboration. • Create transparent systems of communication toward a shared understanding of decision-making processes. • Promote an understanding of the community school's initiative and six key practices as part of the school improvement strategy.
Strong, Respectful Partnerships Between School Administrators and Community School Coordinators	Identify a mutually agreed-upon communication structure that prioritizes building positive and trusting relationships, as well as routine opportunities to discuss programming goals, updates, implementation challenges, and solutions. • Build professional capacity for implementing and sustaining the initiative for both school leaders and Community School Coordinators. • Entrust Community School Coordinators with strategic and operational decision-making. • Integrate Community School Coordinators into school operations and structures. • Share key documentation and data with Community School Coordinators. • Ensure quick follow-up on assigned tasks, responsibilities, and commitments.
Core Component Deliverable(s)	• A Community School Leadership Team composed of the Community School Coordinator, Principal, teachers, students, families, and community partners and that meets, at a minimum, monthly

Core Component 5: Community Partners *(Ongoing)*

Community partners act as essential, strategic allies that provide integrated support, including health services, academic enrichment, mental health counseling, and family resources. Identification, recruitment, maintenance and evaluation or ongoing activities throughout implementation, with the Community School Coordinator responsible for leading all activities.

Elements or Activities	**Description**
Service Alignment and Integration	Partners provide wraparound services such as primary medical care, dental, vision, mental health counseling, and nutritional assistance. Partners provide opportunities for students to connect with adult mentors, internships, apprenticeships, and job shadowing opportunities through local businesses. • Address basic needs assistance by collaborating with local food banks, housing agencies, and legal aid. • Nonprofits and local agencies lead before-school, after-school, and summer programs focused on academic tutoring and social-emotional learning. • Local experts and business owners support project-based learning, service learning, and real-world problem solving in the classroom and community. • Establish formal protocols for school staff to connect students and families with community-based interventions. • Use Memorandums of Understanding to clearly define roles, responsibilities, and long-term commitments. • Regularly review the impact of partner-led initiatives on indicators like attendance, behavior, and academic growth.
Capacity-Building	Develop the skills and resources that community partners need in order to strengthen and expand the school's ability to meet student and family needs. • Organize events where school staff and partners visit local businesses and neighborhoods to build trust and social capital. • Provide classes for adults, such as English as a second language, financial literacy, or job training. • Provide leadership skills training for family members to become ambassadors for the school within the community.
Core Component Deliverable(s)	• A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for each community organization involved. • Formal referral protocols to connect students and families with community resources. • *Optional:* Professional development training materials for community partners. • *Optional:* Family Ambassador training kits.

Core Component 6: Braided and Blended Funding *(Ongoing)*

Braided and blended funding strategies combine multiple revenue streams—such as federal, state, and private grants—to support comprehensive services.

Elements or Activities	**Description**
Identify Funding Sources for Programs, Initiatives, and Services in Strategic Plan	During strategic planning, identify existing community assets and local, state, or federal funds that will fund identified programs, initiatives, and services. Determine whether funds are eligible to braid or blend and develop budgets and internal accounting procedures accordingly.
Seek and Secure a Diverse Portfolio of Short- and Long-term Funding From Multiple Public and Private Sources	Throughout planning and implementation, balance short-term vs. long-term needs to create a resilient financial infrastructure • Use competitive, one-time grants to seed new projects or address immediate community crises. • Advocate for inclusion in permanent state funding formulas or municipal budgets to provide predictable funding support. • Collaborate with local and national partners to secure and manage resources. • Secure funds for coordination and collaboration work, rather than strictly direct services.
Implement, Monitor, and Modify Plans	Utilize braided or blended funding to implement the initiative or activity. Note requirements for specific funding streams. • To braided funding, coordinate funds from several sources for one purpose or initiative. For example, using Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) funds for special education staff while using School Medicaid for health services, even if both support the same child. Each funding stream will have its own reporting requirements. • To blend funds, combine funds into one stream for one purpose or initiative. Applies to Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Title I, II, III, and IV. Each funding source loses its original identity. • Progress monitor initiative or activity to ensure it aligns with reporting requirements and/or the community school's vision and goals. Modify the plan as needed.
Core Component Deliverable(s)	• A fiscal map that identifies all available public and private funding sources, their specific eligibility requirements, and their alignment with school goals. • A gap analysis report that identifies programmatic needs that are currently unfunded. • *Optional:* A cost allocation plan that describes how shared costs are distributed across different grants or funding sources. • *Optional:* Joint outcome dashboards to demonstrate to funders how their combined investments are working together to impact student outcomes.

Guidance for Implementation

The following guidance is aligned with best practices in Community School strategy research and implementation science, specifically the National Implementation Research Network's guidance that implementation happens in four discernible stages: Exploration (assess assets and needs, determine contextual fit and feasibility); Installation (build the necessary infrastructure); Initial implementation (initial efforts of staff to implement components of the strategy); and full implementation (staff use the program or practice successfully, and population-level outcomes are achieved).

Implementation Element	Description
Staffing and Teams	During the installation stage of implementation, school leadership gains buy-in from staff through the creation of a shared understanding of the Community School strategy and its alignment to the school's vision and context. The ***Community School Coordinator (CSC)*** functions as a school administrator who facilitates community school partnerships and practices aimed at supporting student learning and development. It is best practice for this position to be a full FTE and not a shared position. The CSC role is as a site leader, strategic thinker, and connector that holds the meaning-making and engagement of community school development; CSCs are not directly responsible for program management. While CSC roles and responsibilities can and will look different at each community school site, the CSC roles and responsibilities will often include: • Convene, facilitate, and often staff a Community School Leadership Team to set goals, evaluate progress and support community school development. • Recruit, coordinate, and convene partners to integrate and align efforts that support student and school success • Help facilitate trust and relationship-building among school staff, families, and the community. • Support community school practices, structures and systems • Facilitate data-driven inquiry, continuous improvement, and creative problem-solving. • Build teacher and administrator capacity to enhance whole child learning and instruction. The ***Community School Leadership Team*** is composed of school leaders (including the Community School Coordinator), staff, families, and students. It is created during the Installation stage of implementation and maintained through full implementation. Playing a critical role in implementing and maintaining the community school key practice of collaborative leadership and shared decision making, this team sets goals, evaluates progress, and supports the integrated implementation of community school key practices, programs, and initiatives.

Implementation Element	Description
	The ***school-level Implementation Team*** is created during the Exploration stage of implementation and maintained through full implementation. A team with the capacity and commitment to lead integrated implementation activities throughout the 3-5-year implementation timeline is critical to reaching the goal of full implementation of the Community School strategy with fidelity. This team is composed of school (and possibly community partner staff) and eventually led by the Community School Coordinator. It develops and drives the plan for integrated implementation of community school key practices and progress monitoring. This team will look to the district or regional implementation team to ensure alignment of priorities. For examples of school implementation team activities for the Initial and Partial stages of implementation, please see the Sample Implementation Plan below. *A **district-level Implementation Team*** is optional but best practice. Having a dedicated staff member or team at the district or regional level with deep knowledge of the strategy to support schools in their integrated implementation efforts makes it easier for schools to prioritize and sustain efforts, as reaching full implementation can be a 3–5-year process. The main purpose of this team is to help identify sustainable resources to support ongoing implementation and to develop and maintain shared governance structures, continuous improvement practices, data systems, professional learning opportunities, and strategic partnerships at the district and the school level.
Training & Resources	Effective community school training should prioritize building collaborative leadership and a shared mindset among all stakeholders. Training should focus on ongoing professional development that covers the six key practices to ensure the strategy is integrated into the site's core values. There are several national and state-level organizations that can support Community School strategy planning and implementation. See **Additional Resources** and **Additional Sources Supporting Implementation of Strategy** sections below for national and state organizations that provide professional learning opportunities and resources. *Technical Assistance and Professional Development Upon Request. Contact Jes Stroope.*
Implementation stages, and considerations for pacing	Full Implementation of the Community School strategy can be expected to take between 3-5 years and will likely not result in a linear process through the stages of implementation. For a detailed plan of implementation, including how to pace out implementation activities over this period of time, please reference the National Implementation Research Network, Community School Strategy Implementation Roadmap which provides information about the activities in each of the four stages of implementation (exploration, installation, initial implementation, and full implementation) as well as additional resources and defined evidence of outcomes.

Implementation Element	Description
Progress Monitoring	Data sources, collection procedures, and analysis processes will be determined by the implementation team. Various types of data can be used in this process to provide a clear picture of the selected area of focus. Data collected must include student outcome data and fidelity data.
Change management	Because the Community School strategy requires highly inclusive and responsive system-level changes in school governance and partnerships, successful implementation requires effective change management strategies to align all key stakeholders. During installation, it is critical that school and district leadership clearly articulate why the strategy is a good fit for the school's context and what implementation will entail, ensuring all stakeholders understand the underlying rationale and their role. Additionally, through initial and full implementation, the Community School Leadership and Implementation teams must: develop and leverage champions for the strategy; meaningfully engage staff, families, and students early and often in shared decision-making, planning and implementation; use data to drive decision making; provide continuous support; regularly progress monitor the implementation of prioritized initiatives, making timely adjustments as needed; and effectively communicate updates to stakeholders.

Sample Implementation Plan

The following Sample Implementation Plan is aligned with the National Implementation Research Network, Community School Strategy Implementation Roadmap. It is built on the following assumptions about a school:

- *The Community School strategy is not currently in place.*
- *Exploration stage activities (i.e., assessing readiness for change and demonstrating need and contextual fit of the strategy; see Required Pre-Conditions on page 3) were completed before selecting community schools as a major improvement strategy.*
- *The school is ready to launch Installation and Initial Implementation activities.*

This sample covers Year One of Community School strategy implementation, assuming that the installation work begins in the spring and initial implementation starts in the fall. A true action plan should specify precise dates and date-ranges for each activity. Dates reflected below can also be adjusted to align with the district UIP or other school or district context.

Installation Stage (April – August)

Name	Description	When	Key Personnel
Establish a well-functioning Implementation Team *[Core Component 4]*	Revisit Implementation Team membership to lead the Community School strategy. Ensure the team is supported and equipped to lead the development of the strategy at the building level and is functioning well.	April - May	• School leadership • Implementation Team
Establish a common definition and shared vision *[Core Component 4]*	Ensure that the community school initiative is clearly defined (e.g., vision, logic model, theory of change).	April - May	• District and school leadership • Implementation Team
Hire a Community School Coordinator (CSC) *[Core Component 1]*	Identify and hire a Community School Coordinator (CSC) at the school building level who will lead the implementation team.	April - May	• District and school leadership • Implementation Team
Conduct an annual needs and assets assessment *[Core Component 1, 2, and 5]*	Conduct an annual asset and needs assessment of and by both the school and the community that engages at least seventy-five percent of families, students, and educators in the community. Identify community partners (assets) whose resources and services can address identified needs. Adjust Strategic Plan accordingly.	April - May	• Community School Coordinator (CSC) • Implementation Team
Assess areas of alignment and growth *[Core Component 3]*	Assess existing and desired practice/program with the Implementation Team using the Essentials for Community School Transformation Framework.	June - Aug	• CSC • Implementation Team

Name	Description	When	Key Personnel
Develop a Strategic Plan *[Core Component 3]*	Use assets and needs assessment data and other relevant sources to design implementation strategy. Determine which programs/services should be implemented and if coaching is needed. Include plans for (1) ongoing data collection and analysis, (2) how progress and new developments will be communicated to stakeholders, and (3) how to collaborate with community partners.	June - Aug	• CSC • Implementation Team
Ensure resources and support are available to support strategy *[Core Component 3, 5, and 6]*	Reassess existing and needed support and financial resources for staff to implement the Community School strategy. Begin to engage community partners whose resources and services are aligned to the strategic plan.	June - Aug	• CSC • Implementation Team
Ensure policies and practices are in place to support strategy *[Core Component 3]*	Ensure required policies, enabling conditions (e.g., inclusive decision-making), and a supportive infrastructure (e.g., data systems and professional learning opportunities) are in place.	June - Aug	• CSC • Implementation Team
Transfer leadership of Implementation Team to CSC *[Core Component 1 and 4]*	Transition implementation team leadership to Community School Coordinator (CSC) and build an agreed upon schedule of regular convenings for the year ahead.	Aug	• CSC • Implementation Team
Develop Community School (CS) Leadership Team *[Core Component 1 and 4]*	Develop a new Community School (CS) Leadership Team composed of school leaders (including the Community School Coordinator), staff, families, and students. The purpose of this team is to set annual goals, evaluate progress, and support the integrated implementation of community school key practices, programs, and initiatives.	June - Aug	• CSC • Implementation Team • CS Leadership Team

Name	Description	When	Key Personnel
Develop feedback loops *[Core Component 1, 4, and 5]*	Develop feedback loops between CSC, implementation team, CS Leadership Team, and other stakeholders to ensure effective communication.	June - Aug	• CSC
Engage Community Partners *[Core Component 1, 4, and 5]*	Establish Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with community partners.	Jul - Aug	• CSC • CS Leadership Team • District admin
Train practitioners *[Core Component 1 and 4]*	Ensure that all school and community practitioners understand the school's vision for implementation of the strategy, including its scope and reach, and their role.	Jul - Aug	• Implementation Team • CS Leadership Team
Create readiness for change with stakeholders *[Core Component 1, 4, and 5]*	Create readiness for change with stakeholders, including community partners. Identify and engage champions for the strategy.	Jul - Aug	• CS Leadership Team • Champions

Initial Implementation Stage (August – July)

Name	Description	When	Key Personnel
Determine decision-making criteria *[Core Component 4 and 3]*	Develop decision making criteria for expanding the community school initiative. Add any changes to the Strategic Plan.	Aug	• CSC • CS Leadership Team
Ensure stakeholder readiness *[Core Component 1 and 4]*	Ensure stakeholders' readiness in the community for initial implementation by providing orientation and/or initial training on the Community School strategy and strategic plan.	Aug	• CSC • CS Leadership Team

Name	Description	When	Key Personnel
Implement action steps *[Core Component 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6]*	Support all school and community practitioners in implementing the strategy or practices/programs with fidelity.	Aug-July	• CSC • Implementation Team • CS Leadership Team
Progress monitor Implementation *[Core Component 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6]*	Convene the Implementation Team regularly to use process data and feedback to examine practices, monitor fidelity and progress and refine the implementation plan accordingly. Evaluate and improve current implementation of the strategy and practices/programs with the implementation team. Reevaluate any training needed for practitioners/ implementers.	Monthly or Quarterly	• CSC • Implementation Team
Assess Implementation Team *[Core Component 1, 3, and 4]*	Assess the functionality of the implementation team on a regular basis. Restructure or revisit membership, if necessary.	Oct, Feb, May, Aug	• CSC • CS Leadership Team
Progress monitor student and community outcomes *[Core Component 1, 3, and 4]*	Gather outcome data through multiple sources to examine progress made toward goals to ensure the Community School strategy is having an impact for students, families, staff, and community. Evaluate and improve current implementation of the strategy and practices/programs with the implementation team. Reevaluate any training needed for practitioners/implementers.	Oct, Feb, May, Aug	• CSC • Implementation Team • CS Leadership Team
Execute communication plan *[Core Component 1, 3, and 4]*	Execute communication plan to share progress, new developments and continue to foster community readiness and champions for implementation of the Community School strategy.	Oct, Feb, May, Aug	• Community School Coordinator • CS Leadership Team

Name	Description	When	Key Personnel
Conduct an annual needs and assets assessment *[Core Component 1, 2, and 3]*	Conduct an annual asset and needs assessment of and by both the school and the community that engages at least seventy-five percent of families, students, and educators in the community. Adjust Strategic Plan accordingly.	April - May	• Community School Coordinator (CSC) • Implementation Team

Additional Resources

State-Level Implementation Support

- Colorado Department of Education
  - Community Schools, Office of Family, School, and Community Partnerships
  - The Innovation Schools Act: Community Schools
  - Accountability Pathways: Community School Conversion
  - Community Schools Technical Assistance and Professional Development Upon Request. Contact Jes Stroope.
  - Implementation Guide
- Colorado Coalition for Community Schools
- Colorado Education Association: collaborate with local educator associations to access Community School Coordinator training provided by the Colorado Education Association.

National Implementation Support

- American Institute for Research (AIR): Community School Team and an approved EASI provider in the field validated expertise area of community schools.
- Brookings Institute
- Coalition for Community Schools, Institute for Educational Leadership
- Learning Policy Institute
- National Center for Community Schools, Children's Aid
- The National Implementation Research Network: Learning modules and resources pertaining to implementation science.
- Community School Strategy Implementation Roadmap - designed by New York State Community Schools Technical Assistance Centers (Eastern Region Rockland 21C).

Sources

Academic Studies Leading to ESSA Rating

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