CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Capacity-Building Strategies

Version 2.2 | March 2026*

This document was authored by the
State Transformational Assistance Center (S-TAC)
for Community Schools

STATE TRANSFORMATIONAL ASSISTANCE CENTER FOR COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

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**This is a working document. The S-TAC will continue to update and revise this document to reflect the evolving needs of CCSPP grantees*

About the Capacity-Building Strategies

The Capacity-Building Strategies:

A Developmental Rubric, developed by the State Transformational Assistance Center (S-TAC) for the California Community Schools Partnership Program (CCSPP), is intended to serve as a road map for both Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) and school sites as they work toward transforming their schools into Community Schools. The Capacity-Building Strategies align with the California Community Schools Framework (CA CS Framework), its Overarching Values, and CCSPP statutory requirements. They are intended to both guide and gauge progress.

To enhance the adoption, implementation, and sustainability of community schooling, the Capacity-Building Strategies are informed by Implementation Science. Implementation Science focuses on the strategies used to facilitate the implementation and sustainability of evidence-based practices. Although the research makes clear that community schooling can improve a range of student outcomes, promote equity, and strengthen communities, these results can only be achieved when the approach is effectively put into practice. Implementation Science bridges the gap between research and practice, elevating the most effective ways to turn good ideas, like community schooling, into meaningful and sustainable change.

The Capacity-Building Strategies also benefited from a review of existing developmental rubrics that aim to guide Community Schools implementation and other improvement efforts, and research focused on systems change. Previous iterations of the Capacity-Building Strategies were shared with S-TAC Advisory Board members, grantees, community partners, and researchers for feedback; and suggested revisions to ensure strategies are comprehensive, interconnected, and succinct. **In Version 2.2, we aim to bring the Capacity-Building Strategies to life by providing examples and sharing stories of grantees** who are building the infrastructure and developing the practices that are foundational to transformation. The quotes in this document are drawn from the Annual Progress Report (APR), which all CCSPP grantees are required to complete. We are grateful to grantees for their candid reflections and thoughtful assessments of their progress. In the spirit of community schools, we view the Capacity-Building Strategies as a collaborative endeavor, and as a living document that will undergo continuous improvement and updates.

Overarching Values

The Capacity-Building Strategies and the California Community Schools Framework

The Capacity-Building Strategies consist of an integrated set of goals and related individual and collective actions that develop the clarity and related knowledge, skills, and commitment to make major improvements in a particular domain—in this case, California Community Schools.

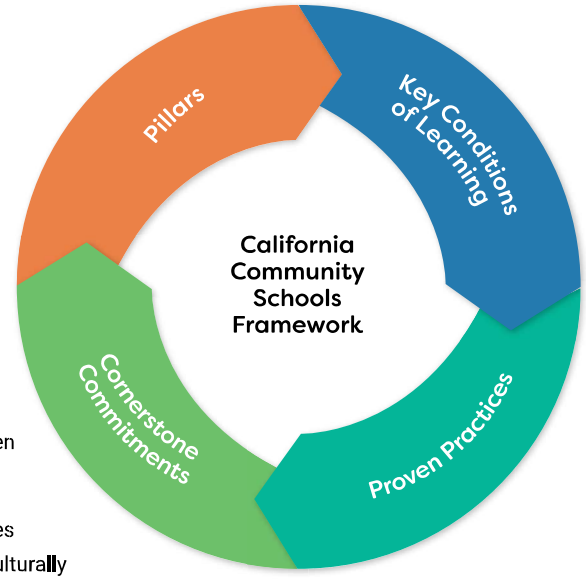
The included strategies are crucial for enhancing the readiness and capability of all interest-holders and empowering them with the knowledge, skills, resources, and support to successfully translate the promise of Community Schools into practice. The Capacity-Building Strategies integrate the **pillars, key conditions of learning, cornerstone commitments, and proven practices** that comprise the CA CS Framework. They provide the road map or the "how" to bring the CA CS Framework to life.

Pillars

1. Expanded learning time and opportunities
2. Integrated student supports
3. Collaborative leadership and practices
4. Active family and community engagement

Cornerstone Commitments

1. A commitment to assets-driven and strength-based practice
2. A commitment to racially just and restorative school climates
3. A commitment to powerful, culturally proficient and relevant instruction
4. A commitment to shared decision-making and participatory practices



Key Conditions of Learning

1. Supportive environmental conditions that foster strong relationships and community
2. Productive instructional strategies that support motivation, competence, and self-directed learning
3. Social and emotional learning (SEL) that fosters skills, habits, and mindsets that enable academic progress, efficacy, and productive behavior
4. System of supports that enable healthy development, respond to student needs, and address learning barriers

Proven Practices

1. Community Asset Mapping and Gap Analysis
2. A community school coordinator
3. Site-Based and LEA-Based Advisory Councils
4. Integrating and aligning with other relevant programs

The Phases of Growth & Development

The Capacity-Building Strategies are structured by three sequential phases of growth and development, each consisting of a set of activities designed to put Community Schooling into practice. These phase-specific strategies and activities aim to assist LEAs and schools in gauging their growth and progress as they engage in the work of transformation.

Activities, strategies, and phases occur over time, in stages that overlap and are revisited as needed. CCSPP Grantees will likely start in the visioning phase and move into the engaging phase during the course of their grant. CCSPP Implementation Grantees will need to assess their starting point—they may be "transforming" in some areas, while simultaneously identifying a need to return to "visioning" or "engaging" to strengthen implementation in other areas. Furthermore, there are no set timelines for moving from one phase of growth and development to another—some grantees may spend months in a phase while others may spend years. It is critical to note that phases of growth and development are not linear. Based on progress and/or weaknesses or gaps in the system, there may be a need to move from "transforming" to do additional "visioning" or "engaging" work.

Because Community Schools are dynamic and seek to continuously evolve and grow, perpetual reflection informs each phase of growth and development. Importantly, the Capacity-Building Strategies highlight that implementation is an ongoing process, not an event.

Phases of Growth & Development

Visioning

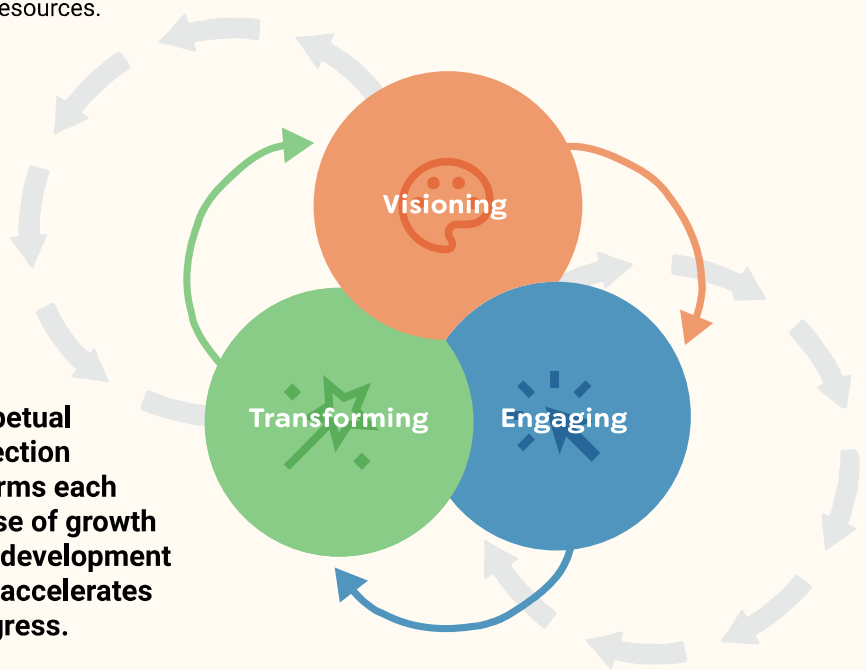
This phase is focused on the initial stages of raising consciousness and understanding around the strategy. Community school leaders, students, families, educators, and partners envision and explore how the strategy can respond to the strengths and needs of the community and begin to organize people, data, and resources.

Engaging

Engaging is focused on deepening skills, capacities, and relationships as well as building the organizational infrastructure essential for implementing the strategy.

Transforming

This is focused on action and the full implementation of the strategy. In partnership with students, families, educators, and partners, community schools operationalize structures and sustainable practices to reflect on data and work collaboratively toward continuous improvement.



Perpetual reflection informs each phase of growth and development and accelerates progress.

Adapted from the National Implementation Research Network, The Active Implementation Hub (2015)

The Why, How, and What of Community School Transformation

The Capacity-Building Strategies: A Developmental Rubric shows the stages of growth that help schools become Community Schools. It highlights a set of connected strategies, actions, and processes that work together to build the structures and relationships needed to reach shared goals.

Because change is complex, the rubric doesn't expect progress to happen in a straight line. Schools may return to earlier strategies, adjust their approach, and move through the stages in different ways, depending on their needs and context. This process is often ongoing and flexible. The strategies in the rubric describe "how" schools grow into Community Schools through thoughtful, step-by-step development. They are as follows:

- Shared Commitment, Understanding, and Priorities
- Centering Community-Based Learning
- Collaborative Leadership
- Sustaining Staff and Resources
- Strategic Community Partnerships

Each strategy and the associated activities address and further all four Overarching Values—"why" we engage in this work. For example, all Capacity-Building Strategies and activities further shared power by ensuring students, families, community partners, and educators participate in all aspects of the work. A key feature across all Capacity-Building Strategies is the use of meaningful measures and data collection—not just for tracking progress, but as tools for learning, reflection, and continuous improvement. These measures help grantees engage in ongoing progress monitoring and possibility thinking, allowing them to adjust, revisit, and refine their approaches over time. All of the strategies and activities work together to build and sustain thriving Community Schools where students, families, and the community flourish through racially just, relationship-centered spaces and opportunities for deep learning, which remove the walls between classroom and community.

Recognizing that the pace of progress can be highly variable, the self-assessment tools, available as hyperlinks at the end of this document, should be used by LEA and school-level implementation teams (e.g., shared decision-making teams, councils, advisories, and steering committees) on a regular basis (at least bi-annually) to gauge progress toward building the capacity of the Community Schools strategy to deeply engage students, families, educators, community members, and partners in the processes that lead to transformation. Conducting self-assessments at the beginning of the school year and midway, for example, can inform implementation plan updates and course corrections, and assist with end-of-the-year reporting requirements. Frequent self-assessments can also capture small wins that add up to bigger wins and enhance the efforts. The tools are designed to facilitate reflective practices and help a team solidify learning, ground the work in the values embraced by the community, and plan collective next steps. The self-assessment tools also provide guidance for teams in terms of their progress, including readiness to move from one phase of growth and development to another, as well as when they need to revisit a particular Capacity-Building strategy.

Version 2.2 provides deeper dive resources, including examples and stories, that support CCSPP grantees in tracking their progress toward achieving transformation.

LEA Self Assessment | Site Self Assessment | Overarching Values

The Capacity-Building Strategies

Shared Commitment, Understanding, and Priorities

Centering Community-Based Learning

Collaborative Leadership

Sustaining Staff and Resources

Strategic Community Partnerships

Shared Commitment, Understanding, and Priorities

When interest-holders unite in a shared understanding of and commitment to the community school strategy, it drives democratic collaboration and transparency. Deep listening and authentic relationship-building (via a robust Needs and Assets Assessment and Mapping processes) are critical to identifying collective priorities and for monitoring progress toward meeting shared goals.

Shared Commitment, Understanding, and Priorities

Site-Level

Visioning

Develop clear and consistent messaging and talking points in languages that reflect your school population. Answer the question: "Why become a community school?"

Engage interest-holders through one-on-one interviews, listening and learning tours, focus groups, community forums, etc., to begin learning about the hopes and dreams of the community and to create a shared understanding of the community school strategy. Use democratic efforts such as petitions, staff voting, surveys, and other consensus-building techniques to gauge interest and commitment to the community school process.

Co-develop (via a collaborative leadership structure) a plan for conducting a Needs and Assets Assessment that deeply engages interest-holders. Develop specific strategies to reach historically and presently marginalized/excluded students and families.

Ensure that through mapping, assets are identified. By including interest-holders, potential partners, early champions, and those that have been marginalized, the Community School will make efforts to more deeply engage.

Understand how a communication cycle can be leveraged to inform all interest holders about community school updates.

Engaging

Create ongoing opportunities to listen to community feedback, questions, ideas, and concerns, and collaboratively shape/refine messaging. Formalize shared commitment to the community school strategy.

Conduct the Needs and Assets Assessment by employing a range of listening methods—including surveys, focus groups, and empathy interviews—to successfully engage 75 to 100% of students, educators (inclusive of all school staff members), families (parents as well as other caregivers, guardians, and chosen family members that extend beyond traditional and legal definitions), and community members in identifying a shared vision and top community school priorities. Produce a findings report and publicly share results and gather feedback.

As part of the Needs and Assets Assessment, analyze baseline data and map resources using the Whole-Child and Family Supports Inventory to explore critical access to a range of supports and services spanning that span the full scope of the CA CS Framework.

Via a shared leadership structure, collaboratively set goals and develop an initial Community School implementation plan that aligns with collective priorities identified through the Needs and Assets Assessment, and statewide CCSPP reporting requirements. The implementation plan should integrate various school-wide efforts and initiatives (e.g., Expanded Learning Opportunities, Golden State Pathways, Universal Transitional Kindergarten) to support alignment and streamline efforts.

Review the school's data collection strategy specific to the identified collective priorities. Actively engage with data, and use data analysis protocols during goal-setting sessions. Engage in possibility thinking to find opportunities in complex issues emerging from data analysis.

Engage interest-holders in a communication cycle/campaign and report development to share community school plans, goals, and data, as well as to encourage participation in shared decision-making spaces.

Assess emerging needs to determine which—when addressed—could create the greatest impact with the least effort. Engage interest-holders to take action on these needs and create small successes to further fuel interest and investment in the Community School strategy while working toward long-term goals.

Transforming

Continuously re-ground the community in a shared vision of success, and systematically orient and onboard newcomers, such as new hires, to maintain a shared commitment to and understanding of the strategy.

Form or expand priority teams/working groups that are diverse and representative of your school's interest-holders to take action on identified priority topics that emerge from the Needs and Assets Assessment process. Together, explore root causes, identify indicators of success, continuously monitor progress, and develop and test strategies to achieve collective priority goals.

Priority teams/working groups implement and take ownership of harnessing diverse perspectives in order to generate new ideas and innovative solutions.

Deliver public presentations and annual reports detailing engagement efforts along with the resulting community school plan/updates, including goals, data, and outcomes. Reports and presentations include feedback from interest-holder groups. Presentations are made by the school's decision-making team/council, which includes students, families, and community partners.

Keep dreaming!

Whole Child and Family Supports Inventory

Community School implementation plan

Shared Commitment, Understanding, and Priorities

LEA-Level

Visioning

Collaborate with schools to raise awareness of the Community School strategy across the broader community, creating shared understanding. Support schools through modeling, listening, coaching, highlighting examples, and developing tools so that sites implement democratic processes that gauge and formalize commitment to the community school strategy.

Engage LEA leaders, school board members, union leaders, community partners, and others to garner support and commitment. Answer the question: "Why community schools for our LEA?"

Leverage existing system-wide structures (e.g., vertical articulation teams, Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP), Parent Advisory Committees, student leadership groups, and other LEA-wide teams and groups) for peer-to-peer learning about the Community Schools strategy.

Disaggregate LEA-wide data by school, and share it with individual Community School site teams to inform baseline understanding and Needs and Assets Assessments.

Engaging

Collect and use initiative-wide data to assess and inform progress, including performance measures (e.g., implementation plan updates), school-level outcomes (e.g., attendance rates), and program outcomes as defined by CCSPP reporting requirements. Continue to disaggregate data by site and by student subgroups to identify and address potential disparities in outcomes.

Co-construct, through the LEA-level steering committee, an LEA-wide strategic plan for rolling out the Community School strategy that includes how Community Schools will be selected, monitored, and supported. Ensure this plan is aligned to and integrated with the LCAP.

Provide ongoing and differentiated support (via coaching on engagement strategies, tools, templates, modeling, and listening) that empowers schools to meaningfully collaborate with interest-holders in conducting a robust Needs and Assets Assessment.

Regularly update the public on progress of the system-wide Community Schools initiative through annual reports and public presentations.

Transforming

Share accountability and responsibility for Community School success between board members, superintendents, principals, educators, families, students, and community members. Collectively advocate and work toward continued system-level changes that aim to disrupt systemic inequities.

Refine habits of listening to accelerate collective learning and improvements. Routinely convene school-level working groups focused on similar priority goals to celebrate successes, exchange best practices, and distill lessons learned to inform LEA goals, systems, and processes and vice versa.

Continuously revise reports and presentations regarding the progress of the systems-wide Community Schools initiative with interest-holder feedback and perspective that furthers the goals and processes of the LEA.

Shared Commitment, Understanding, and Priorities

School Spotlight

Roybal-Allard's Journey from Shared Vision to Real Results

Located in southeast Los Angeles and serving a largely low-income Hispanic neighborhood, Lucille Roybal-Allard Elementary launched its community school initiative in 2021-2022. Following their nearly 12-year dream to become a hub for strong academics and community services, staff moved from building awareness to coalescing around a shared understanding of "where we are" and "what matters most for students to thrive." Along with intensive resource mapping, they deeply engaged interest-holders in a Needs Assessment that combined empathy interviews, district School Experience Surveys, family questionnaires, and targeted outreach to under-heard voices—yielding 100 percent participation from students, staff, and teachers, and 100 percent from families over the last two years. Strengths crystallized around positive relationships; challenges pointed to student attendance and the need to connect learning to community life. Building on that shared understanding, Roybal-Allard advanced into sustained, collective action.

Disrupting the skyrocketing, post-COVID chronic absenteeism rate—a whopping 76.5% in January of the 2021-2022 school year— was a top priority. Leveraging their assets and resources, school staff used Improvement Science methods to take action and track progress, dramatically reducing the chronic absenteeism rate to 20% in January of 2023/24 and an average of 25% overall over the past 3 years. They accomplished this by targeting high-absence students with tailored supports—partnering with vision and dental service providers, offering bus passes and early drop-off supervision, and embedding fun activities on high-risk days. They deepened trust through home visits (including some by the new principal), collaborated with police to streamline safe traffic flow and single-gate entry, and initiated a valet system to greet, check in, and connect with families to keep students arriving on time. Unique to Roybal-Allard, the school implemented an Opportunity Team to support attendance and mentor-targeted students. The focus has now shifted to improving attendance for ALL students, not just the ones with chronic absenteeism. As Roybal-Allard moves through the 2024–25 school year, they will continue their relationship-centered, improvement-focused approach to identify root causes and provide more targeted supports—especially for students receiving special education services—to ensuring every child arrives ready to learn.

> "[Our] school has made significant strides in addressing critical needs and enhancing support for its students and families. Through a Comprehensive Needs Assessment and data analysis from sources like the Youth Truth and Impact Monterey County assessments, key priority areas – including access to basic needs, mental health services, and extended-day academic opportunities – have been identified. These findings will guide ongoing efforts to improve student support and academic outcomes."
>
> *— CCSPP grantee, 2023-2024 APR*

Progress Monitoring Measures

Locally Informed Measures:

- Needs and Assets Assessment engagement rates
- Community Schools Implementation Plans; SPSA or LCAP
- School/District-Level School climate surveys
- Access and utilization rates related to Whole-Child and Family Supports Inventory (e.g., health and wellness services, mental health services, after-school and summer programming, nutrition services, etc.)

System-Level Measures (as identified in RFA):

- School attendance rates
- Chronic absenteeism rates
- Middle school dropout rates
- High school dropout rates
- Proficiency scores, English Language Arts and Mathematics, if available
- High school graduation rates
- College/career readiness
- English Learner progress
- Pupil suspension rates
- Pupil expulsion rates

Needs and Assets Assessment Guide

Whole Child and Family Supports Inventory

Additional Resources

Centering Community-Based Learning

Community-Based Learning (CBL) builds on the rich, diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds of students, families, and educators. Delivered in learning environments that are relationship-centered and ensure a sense of belonging, CBL builds on community assets, cultural wealth, funds of knowledge, and indigenous ways of knowing. Community-Based Learning is powerful instruction that increases student engagement by connecting classroom learning to real-life experiences and issues that are relevant to students' lives and communities, improving their sense of ownership and agency.

Centering Community-Based Learning

Site-Level

Visioning

Invest in educators' learning about and appreciation for students, families, the community, and their wealth of knowledge to inform instructional goals and curriculum. Utilize practices such as community learning tours, relationship-building home visits, and family/student interviews to strengthen educators' knowledge of students and their families' background, interests, and assets; shift mindsets; and build capacity for collective action.

Explore the question: "How is teaching and learning different in a Community School?" Provide educators with opportunities to learn the theoretical roots and applied elements of CBL to integrate classroom learning with real-world experiences in the local community. In teams, identify existing practices and opportunities as well as possibilities for CBL in classrooms, such as project-based learning, youth participatory action research, work-based learning, internships, and service learning.

Ensure that educators have the resources needed to create supportive, student-centered learning environments that serve the whole child, including training and support in restorative justice and positive behavior practices, social emotional learning, and culturally sustaining pedagogy and classroom practices.

Support educators to adopt an ongoing practice of reflective "mirror work" in order to become more conscious of implicit bias and how their positionality and identity influence their work with students, families, and colleagues.

Engaging

Create dedicated time for professional learning focused on strengthening all educators' implementation of learning strategies that create a clear bridge between the classroom, school, and the community.

Continue personal reflection and learning about students and engaging families through home visits and/or other high-impact family engagement practices to deepen understanding and trust, and build effective home-school partnerships that enhance student learning.

Allocate time and supportive resources for educators to collectively plan curriculum and integrate learning experiences that strengthen classroom-community connections. Include time for interdisciplinary teams of educators to learn and plan together, and to explore school and classroom policy changes needed to create restorative, safe, and relationship-centered learning environments. The school community is defining what CBL looks like for their context.

Explore flexibilities in curriculum and assessment to support innovations, powerful instruction, and alternative ways of demonstrating knowledge that can best respond to the assets and needs of students.

Make space for educators to engage in possibility thinking, and ensure the curriculum addresses the learning needs of vulnerable students, English learners, and those with learning differences.

Transforming

Root school-level policy and procedures related to curriculum and pedagogy in a community-based learning framework, including ongoing reflection, continuous professional learning opportunities, educator evaluations, selection and purchasing of instructional materials, and assessment practices.

Bring together teams of educators to develop assessments that provide evidence of the impact/value of community-based pedagogy (e.g., performance assessments like capstone projects and portfolios) as well as to evaluate and adapt their teaching strategies to ensure they remain relevant and effective, using feedback from students, families, and community assessments.

Foster an environment where students can see the impact of their learning on their community, thereby improving their agency and commitment to societal contribution.

Uplift and honor ways that families teach cultural customs, traditions, and history to their children as well as promote pride in their racial or ethnic heritage.

Support educators to identify and leverage their strengths so they can do the same for their students.

Fully integrate whole-child and liberatory family engagement tenets into instructional practices—from creating a restorative and healing-centered learning environment to curriculum and planning, pedagogy, and assessment and feedback cycles.

Centering Community-Based Learning

LEA-Level

Visioning

Invest in learning about students, the community, and their wealth of knowledge to inform instructional goals and curriculum. Empathy interviews with students and families, relationship-building home visits, community tours, and other engagement activities are used by LEA-level administrators and leaders to better understand the community.

Seek to answer the question: "How is teaching and learning different in a community school?" Explore CBL with LEA instructional leaders, including superintendents and school principals, and envision how it aligns with and supports LEA instructional priorities.

Create time, space, and flexibility for educators and schools to co-create a shared understanding of CBL, curriculum, and the importance of creating the conditions that support students' learning, such as a positive and restorative school climate.

Develop district-level policy that supports school-level decision-making that enables educators to explore curriculum and assessment innovations that best respond to the assets and needs of their local community.

Engaging

Modify instructional resources, curriculum, and LEA-wide professional learning, to reflect and support a CBL approach in community schools that emphasizes locally designed, community-based curriculum and pedagogy.

Support teachers district-wide in the implementation of CBL through site-level CS teacher leads, coaches, and communities of practice.

Engage a diverse and representative interest-holder group to vet all new and existing curricular resources and supports to ensure they advance equity and address the learning needs of vulnerable students.

Develop and administer an LEA-wide school climate survey to students, families, and educators to ensure the learning environment provides a welcoming, nurturing, identity-safe, culturally and linguistically affirming, and relationship-centered space.

Collaborate with schools to identify multiple site-and LEA-level success indicators that point to classroom-community connections and engaged learning.

Empower community schools with the flexibility to innovate on curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment in order to curate an instructional framework that best responds to the assets and vision of the local community.

Transforming

Adopt and support a vision of teaching and learning that is at the center of the community school initiative. Continuously strive for LEA-wide teaching and learning that is collaborative, rigorous, relationship-centered, culturally and linguistically affirming, relevant, asset-based, democratic, and community-based.

Actively engage families and community members in classroom instruction. Deeply integrate these important co-educators into the LEA's teaching and learning approach.

Make teaching and learning outcomes visible to all, sharing in success with board members, families, communities, and partners.

Centering Community-Based Learning

School Spotlight

Where Community Becomes Curriculum: Student-Driven Inquiry at Mann UCLA Community Schools, Los Angeles

The Mann UCLA Campus in South Central Los Angeles is a site of rich learning where local history, people, and assets are brought into the classroom to serve as a foundational knowledge-base in learning spaces. In cross-disciplinary teams, teachers at the school collectively plan for Youth Participatory Action Research Projects, in which students are expected to drive research based on their interests, passions, and lived experiences. Students explore the rich assets and history of South Central and identify a question to drive their action research, such as "how does the school-to-prison pipeline impact our community? And what can we do to prevent homelessness? In science classrooms, students engage in a community-based science curriculum where students' wonderings drive the learning in connection to science standards. Through a project-based approach, students explore their own questions that are foundational in the curriculum. For example, students asked questions such as, "What are the benefits of parks? What will change if we get more parks? Students are supported in producing projects and presentations for their community, and have opportunities to connect their causes with local organizations. At Mann, student inquiry drives the learning and instructional program so they are not only learning about periodic properties of carbon and computational representations of earth systems, but are making connections to the real world around them. According to school data from 2023-2024, 93% of students graduated from Mann, a higher average than local and state comparisons.

> "[Our] high school has undergone a remarkable transformation with Centering Community-Based Learning leading the charge. Textbooks are a relic of the past, replaced by classrooms buzzing with real-world projects. Businesses partner with us, mentors guide student ventures, and learning flourishes in community centers. This journey wasn't effortless, but the results are undeniable. We've proudly achieved 'Transforming' status! Our classrooms foster strong relationships, creating a restorative environment for academic growth. The tools that propelled us forward are the very ones that continue to guide us: A unique framework that identifies and leverages our community's strengths, turning them into learning platforms. Centering Community-Based Learning is more than a strategy, it's the essence of [our] High School. It's a testament to collaboration, a celebration of our community's richness, and a promise to nurture well-rounded leaders who will shape our world."
>
> *— CCSPP grantee, 2023-2024 APR*

Progress Monitoring Measures

Locally Informed Measures:

- Increased time dedicated to CBL and collaborative planning
- Improved efficacy of professional learning communities
- Locally determined measures such as completion of California's seal of civic engagement and seal of biliteracy
- School/District-Level School Climate surveys
- Locally determined measures such as shared learning of students and educators via a range of performance assessments (e.g., capstone projects, learning portfolios, learning showcases, community teach-ins, inter-grade and inter-classroom teach-ins, action research presentations, student self-assessment and reflections)

System-Level Measures:

- School attendance rates
- Chronic absenteeism rates
- Middle school dropout rates
- High school dropout rates
- Proficiency scores, English Language Arts and Mathematics, if available
- High school graduation rates
- College/career readiness
- English Learner progress
- Pupil suspension rates
- Pupil expulsion rates

Community Based Learning Guide

Additional Resources

Collaborative Leadership

Shared decision-making ensures that all interest-holders have a voice in the school transformation process. Collaborative leadership helps to flip the traditional hierarchical structure of schools and fosters supportive relationships between interest-holders, resulting in decisions that are widely shared and implemented, improved coordination and alignment of programs and strategies, and possibility thinking to address complex issues, and increased sustainability of the effort.

Collaborative Leadership

Site-Level

Visioning

Map and assess current teams and decision-making spaces with the goal of establishing a coherent and aligned democratic governance structure. With interest-holders, reflect on and re-tool existing structures to identify areas where shared power and alignment can be strengthened.

Build relationships to identify current and potential student, staff, family, and community leaders who could serve on emerging or evolving community school leadership teams. Ensure diverse representation that reflects the school community when identifying and recruiting leaders.

Utilize an asset-based lens toward families, students, and the community, and take steps to deepen relational trust between all interest-holders. Shift away from one-directional engagement toward a model where all interest-holders feel they have a voice in the direction of the school.

Establish regular, transparent, and open communication between site administrators, educators, family and student leaders, key community partners, and the community schools coordinator to nurture collaborative leadership. Build an equal community school coordinator-principal partnership, through trust and dedicated check-ins, that maximizes respective roles and strengths to act on and operationalize the changes that interest-holders wish to see.

Increase the knowledge and capacity of principals and assistant principals to build a culture of shared leadership through high-quality learning opportunities (for example, those provided by 21CSLA).

Engaging

Launch or revise site-level shared leadership structure(s) to facilitate democratic participation and decision-making among students, staff, families, community members, leaders of community organizations, local government agencies, and higher education partners. Create a new site-level steering committee/advisory council, or revamp an existing team, such as the School Site Council or governance councils. If a shared leadership structure spans multiple teams, create a coordination and communication structure to frame how communication and decisions are made across teams.

Provide continuous leadership development opportunities for students, educators, families, and community members that are asset-based and inclusive of multiple languages so that they grow their skills to thrive in leadership positions.

Provide interpretation, translation, childcare, and other accommodations (e.g., for deaf/blind students, parents, and community) to ensure participation from diverse interest-holders and to create an environment where team members feel valued and respected. Democratically decide upon the time and location of meetings to accommodate the schedules of various interest-holders.

Create opportunities in shared leadership spaces to vision and uplift locally-determined measures that matters to the community. Ensure that data being collected aligns with its community-based vision emerging from interest-holder engagement.

Transforming

Make major decisions at the school, including curricular, operational, personnel, budgetary, and strategic decisions, through democratic engagement with representative systems, such as a site-level steering committee/advisory council. Ensure that students, staff, families, and community members have a voice in shaping decisions that impact the school and community.

Actively seek to foster democratic decision-making whenever possible, and constantly strive toward a culture where all interest-holder voices are valued. Clearly and routinely communicate how and why decisions are made and by whom.

Expand and operationalize shared leadership spaces beyond steering committees and site governance councils. Regularly engage students, families, educators, and community partners in conversations about how to improve decision-making and implementation processes to strengthen the impact of the community school strategy. Deepening a sense of connection in this way leads to a more relationship-centered and racially just school climate.

Encourage innovation and possibility thinking by continuously harnessing diverse perspectives and expertise to address complex issues.

Collaborative Leadership

LEA-Level

Visioning

Establish an LEA-level steering committee/advisory council to enact shared decision-making at the systems-level; engage in shared visioning and learning about the Community School strategy; and map and assess current areas of shared decision-making policies across the LEA and identify areas to strengthen.

Provide coaching, peer-to-peer dialogue, and other learning opportunities for site and LEA administrators related to collaborative leadership. Model collaborative leadership and provide guidance and support to schools in analyzing their current collaborative leadership structures.

Foster collaborative leadership practices by providing all Community School sites with professional learning opportunities that focus on adopting asset-based mindsets and acknowledging families and community members as essential decision-making partners.

Engaging

Provide crucial guidance to school-level implementers as well as create structures opportunities for them to share their expertise and input with the LEA-level steering committee/advisory council as co-creators of the LEA-level strategy and supportive structures.

Engage interest-holders in co-developing possible areas of flexibility that could allow schools to better meet the needs of students and families. Example areas of flexibility can include learning programs, assessment, curriculum, staffing, and scheduling.

Identify existing policies that allow for and promote site-based decision-making as well as barriers to autonomy.

Collaborate with LEA leaders who represent allied programs and initiatives to integrate and align efforts to support a strong foundation for the community schools strategy, including a focus on teaching and learning, active family and community engagement, professional learning, interagency collaboration, and shared decision-making.

Transforming

Outline areas of flexibility (such as with scheduling, curriculum and assessments, hiring/retention) and site-based decision-making to support site goals that lead to transformational outcomes for students, families, and educators. Adopt/adapt supportive policies.

Adapt and evolve alongside the steering committee/ advisory council in ways that are continuously shaped by educators, students, families, and community members who are engaged as equal, authentic, and respected partners.

Elevate the steering committee as a key decision-making partner to the superintendent and school board.

Collaborative Leadership

School Spotlight

Trust First, Change Follows: How Anaheim Union High School District Transformed Governance Through Relationships

The Anaheim steering committee has emerged as a beacon of collaborative leadership within the Anaheim Union High School District (AUHSD), driving meaningful change through a commitment to shared decision-making. Designed to include all educational partners—parents, administrators, students, certificated and classified staff, and community leaders—the committee ensures that governance is not about isolated individuals but about coalition-building with long-standing stakeholders in the broader community. With no formal bylaws, the committee operates through a structured yet flexible system of agreements, agendas, notes, and consensus-based voting, often employing the "fist to five" method when full agreement cannot be reached. This intentional inclusivity has allowed 16 of AUHSD's 21 middle and high schools to successfully transition into community schools, reflecting the deep trust and shared investment among members.

The success of the steering committee stems from their unwavering commitment to relationships, transparency, equity in practice, and sustainable transformation—all rooted in a shared dedication to structures and systems that drive ongoing change. Recognizing that meaningful collaboration begins with trust, the committee dedicates time before each meeting to share a meal. This simple yet powerful tradition ensures that every member—regardless of title or position—joins on equal footing, which fosters a culture in which all voices are valued in decision-making. More than just a routine gathering, these meals reflect the committee's deeper commitment to relationships built on genuine care for one another.

Grounded in community ties, many members are former students, local graduates who returned, or parents with children in the district, ensuring decisions reflect lived experiences and local needs. Subcommittees—ranging from agenda planning and professional development to Needs and Assets Assessment, budget, and public relations—drive targeted action while structured decision-making processes and shared leadership principles sustain engagement across all participating schools. Equity in practice means not only ensuring that every educational partner has a seat at the table, but guaranteeing each voice holds equal weight. In addition, every presentation or initiative includes active participation from representatives across all education partner groups, reinforcing the collective nature of the work. Their bold approach to contract negotiations—typically conducted between labor representatives and school administration—demonstrates a commitment to reshaping governance structures through collaboration. By forming an ad hoc committee to inform negotiations rather than relying solely on formal bargaining, they extended the spirit of cooperation into traditionally adversarial arenas, fostering mutual understanding and equitable decision-making. Through these efforts, the Anaheim steering committee has established a lasting model of transformative leadership, ensuring that community schools continue to thrive for years to come.

> "This year, we've made remarkable progress in terms of Collaborative Leadership. We re-established our Parent Advisory Committees and Parent Club, creating vital spaces for parents to engage and contribute. Additionally, we launched a Student Leadership Club, giving students a voice in shaping our school community. For teachers, we introduced adjunct duties, bringing structure and clarity to roles that were previously improvised and disorganized. All these initiatives were either started or revived this year, marking a significant step forward."

Progress Monitoring Measures

Locally Informed Measures:

- Shared decision-making team self-assessments
- Teacher and staff retention rates
- School/District-Level School climate surveys that assess students', families', and educators' sense of voice and agency in decision-making, feelings of connection, and engagement
- Student, Family engagement survey items
- Educator Surveys
- Increased number of caregivers on a school campus
- Site-level steering committee satisfaction/engagement/contribution survey
- Increased number of student-led clubs and spaces

System-Level Measures:

- School attendance rates
- Chronic absenteeism rates
- Middle school dropout rates
- High school dropout rates
- Proficiency scores, English Language Arts and Mathematics, if available
- High school graduation rates
- College/career readiness
- English Learner progress
- Pupil suspension rates
- Pupil expulsion rates
- California Professional Standards for Education Leaders (CPSELs) (leadership development)
- California's Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) surveys (to measure stakeholder voice and agency)
- State-funded professional learning opportunities for steering committee members and school leaders

Collaborative Leadership Guide
LEA Steering Committee Guide
Collaborative Leadership Module
Additional Resources

Sustaining Staff and Resources

A focus on sustainability ensures that the necessary human and financial resources are available to maintain the Community School vision and strategy over time. Effectively managing and aligning resources across policies and initiatives can maintain coherence, strengthen long-term impact, and drive continuous progress and improvement. A sustainable approach not only secures ongoing support for existing programs but also fosters adaptability, allowing Community Schools to evolve in response to emerging needs.

Sustaining Staff and Resources

Site-Level

Visioning

Map existing assets (e.g., staffing, policies, initiatives, and programs) at the school and LEA-level that can support and connect to the community school strategy. Reimagine existing implementation efforts to create better alignment, strengthen relationships, and boost interest-holder engagement.

Analyze workforce and professional learning data to inform improvements to working conditions, recruitment, and retention.

Conduct an inventory of current professional learning systems, resources, and offerings that builds the understanding and capacity of staff to implement the community school strategy. Collaborate with educators to develop a plan to align professional learning, practices, and programs.

Reimagine the roles of all educators and staff, including the critical roles of the principal and teachers, to consider the requisite mindsets and expertise needed to fully embrace the community schools approach. For example, listening to and engaging students, families, and the community becomes the responsibility of everyone on campus.

With support from the LEA, envision the role of and develop a job description for a community school coordinator/director who can support facilitation, engagement, and leadership development so that interest-holders can drive the community school transformation process. Consider other key roles, such as a Community Schools Teacher Lead or Coach that supports the work of teachers in developing and implementing Community-Based Learning.

From the very beginning of the community schools process, consider the long-term sustainability.

Engaging

Recruit a multilingual, multi-racial, community school staff who reflect the diversity of the communities they serve, and work to retain them.

The community school principal drives support for Community School priorities by integrating the Community School process in the SPSA (including but not limited to community specific needs identified in the Needs and Assets Assessment), interpreting and implementing LEA policies and initiatives in a manner that works toward coherency, ensures collaboration, and supports staffing transformation.

Recognize the agency and collective expertise of teachers, school counselors, social workers, health providers, paraprofessionals, instructional aides, after-school program providers, office staff, nutritional service staff, custodians, and additional support staff as foundational for school improvement. Invest in developing and maintaining a supportive working environment where all educators want to stay and grow.

Provide role-specific training and ongoing support to help all educators and administrators embrace community school values and fundamentals within their respective roles.

Identify and pursue grant opportunities, fundraising initiatives, and other sources of external funding to support the long-term sustainability plan.

Continuously monitor culture/climate data, working conditions, and satisfaction rates to support teachers and staff to stay and grow in the school community, acknowledging that a “whole-child” approach requires a “whole-teacher” approach. Reflect on these data and develop responsive strategies.

Transforming

Create systems and processes that empower interest-holders to share decision-making on hiring and selection.

In coordination with the LEA, develop and routinely update a long-term sustainability funding plan to ensure core staff positions and community and inter-agency partnerships are sustained over time. Ensure the funding plan is comprehensive and considers every aspect of the initiative, including how to fund programs, practices, and facilities and maintain contracts and Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) and county-level service providers.

Fully and continuously integrate the community school implementation plan into the SPSA and other improvement plans so that the school is operating from one cohesive improvement plan.

Sustaining Staff and Resources

LEA-Level

Visioning

The superintendent advocates for and champions the Community School approach. The superintendent's cabinet, along with the school board, sees Community Schools as a core LEA priority. The superintendent models collaborative leadership and authentic relationship building.

LEA Human Resources staff support school teams in developing job descriptions and screening processes for key Community School staff, including Community School principals, teachers, and site-level coordinators/directors. LEA considers the requisite mindsets and expertise needed to fully embrace the Community Schools strategy.

Envision the role and job description for an LEA-level Community Schools Director/Coordinator who works with the implementation team in deepening the understanding of the strategy across sites and identifies/provides scaffolded support.

Identify policies that can provide support, including financial, resourcing, and/or implementation, and that align with and reinforce the shared vision for community schooling. Map LEA policies (e.g., expanded learning, college and career pathways, Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS), dual enrollment), but also local city and county policies, as well as state and federal policy, such as the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

Map potential city and county allies, such as the mayor, city council, county leadership, and relevant government departments, including university partnerships and local organizations, to build relationships and advocate for support of the Community Schools strategy.

Engaging

Hire an LEA-level Community Schools Director/Coordinator, and consider additional staffing support (e.g., administrative support, communication specialists, budget analysts, data analysts, grantwriters) to strengthen the LEA-wide community school strategy.

Develop a system of professional learning and supports that include communities of transformative practice for school-level teams to share learnings and challenges as well as role-specific learning and leadership development opportunities. Strategically group communities of transformative practice by grade level span, feeder patterns, and/or areas of focus (e.g., creating and supporting a restorative culture and literacy, and supporting specific demographic groups of students).

Develop and administer an LEA-wide survey to monitor working conditions, employee satisfaction rates, and a racially just and restorative school climate and culture to support teachers and staff to stay and grow in their school communities.

Integrate the Community Schools strategy into the three-year LCAP plan to create coherence, establish sustainable funding streams, and implement local policies and practices that prioritize and respond to the assets and needs of the community.

Work with supportive city officials to seek a formal endorsement or resolution in support of the Community Schools strategy over the long term.

Transforming

Create and/or streamline HR procedures to allow for shared decisions on hiring and selection at the site and LEA-levels.

Provide continuous professional learning to assist schools in creating the working conditions and learning environment that fosters retention and a commitment to school communities.

Cultivate comprehensive, long-term funding streams to ensure sustainability of Community School staffing and operations, including community-based and inter-agency partnerships. Blend and braid existing resources, as well as continuously pursue new funding sources (e.g., grants and partnerships with externally funded organizations) that align with and support the community schools approach.

Continuously promote a culture that allows Community Schooling to become the "way" of doing school. Program and initiatives are integrated and interdependent in design and implementation.

Pursue a policy agenda that supports Community School growth and sustainability. Align policies horizontally (LEA, city) and vertically (local, state, national), such that every level of government is engaged and coordinated, and supports sustainability efforts.

Sustaining Staff and Resources

School Spotlight

The Power of People: How Strategic Staffing Fuels Mountain View School's Long-Term Impact

Mountain View School is a TK-8 learner-centered community school in Southeast San Diego. The school prides itself on being a community of change-makers. Rooted in values of equity and justice, students are encouraged to engage in meaningful learning and empowered to become contributing participants in the world.

As part of a recent union contract agreement, Community Schools in San Diego successfully gained support to sustain the community schools strategy long-term, including the addition of Community School Coordinators and a Community Schools Coach Resource Teacher for each school, enhancing its implementation strategy. The agreement includes a commitment to advancing culturally sustaining and community-based curriculum along with staff release time to allow for deep engagement and collaborative planning. At the district level, one Community Schools District Coach Resource Teacher Position is allocated for every five community schools. The district coach provides direct support to coordinators and resource teachers to work toward strategic goals that align to the Needs and Assets Assessment of the school, while ensuring coherent alignment district-wide. Supported by a principal that embodies the values of CCSPP, teachers and coordinators alongside parents and partners advance collective goals such as the implementation of community-based learning. The strategic staffing employed by the district, paired with union advocacy, and in alignment with Mountain View's vision, strengthens long-term stability and sustainability toward the ethos of the community schooling. Since 2020, Mountain View has maintained 100% of their staff, which signals success in their commitment and ability to respond to the needs and assets of both adults and students.

> "We reflected on our practices for supporting and sustaining our staff last year, and made those practices a focus priority this year. We solicit information from staff using exit tickets at the end of most faculty and professional development meetings, and have used these to help guide our professional development and to make changes. We also have a 'Culture Committee' that has been focused on improving the culture and climate for all interest holders, in particular staff. Recent hires represent diverse backgrounds, gender identification, and life experiences."
>
> *— CCSPP grantee, 2023-2024 APR*

Progress Monitoring Measures

Locally Informed Measures:

Analysis of workforce and professional learning data such as:

- Staff diversity (linguistic, ethnic/racial, etc.)
- Teacher/staff retention rates

School/District-Level School climate surveys to assess educators' sense of well-being, agency, and efficacy

Vacancy and staff attendance rates

Percentage of high-quality teachers (e.g., national board certifications, advanced degrees, specialized credentials)

Budget projections

Release time and allocated collaborative planning time

Supportive County/City/Board Resolutions

System-Level Measures (as identified in RFA):

Pupil suspension rates

Pupil expulsion rates

Teacher retention

Statewide Educator/CSC/staff diversity and retention report

Statewide Educator/CSC/staff Well-Being & Climate Assessment

Statewide vacancy and attendance tracking

Statewide quality educator standards

Statewide budget and workforce sustainability report

Job Descriptions and Staffing Guide

Community School Funding Tool

Additional Resources

Strategic Community Partnerships

Developing strategic community partnerships allows schools and LEAs to expand their capacity to achieve the vision of interest-holders. Partners can strengthen and support a broad continuum of priorities, from expanded learning to integrated student and family supports. Partnerships centered on trusting relationships lead to greater support and investment in the strategy.

Strategic Community Partnerships

Site-Level

Visioning

Using resource mapping results, create and disseminate a comprehensive and public facing resource directory for students, staff, families, and community members that includes existing partners within the school and surrounding community.

Begin to develop a strategy for reaching out to potential partners to introduce them to the school community and the Community School strategy. Consider connecting with potential partners through one-on-one conversations to explore how both parties could contribute to and benefit from the community school process.

Engaging

Recruit Community Based Organizations (CBOs) to participate on school-level shared decision-making councils/teams, when appropriate. Ensure that power is balanced and decisions are made in the best interest of students, families, educators, and the community served.

Create a vision for strategic community partnerships along with a process for vetting and ensuring alignment of site-based partnerships to collective priorities. Prioritize quality and alignment of partners' programs and supports rather than focusing solely on quantity.

Collaborate with partners to streamline referral, coordination, and delivery of student support services so that students receive what they need in a timely and efficient manner.

Develop data-sharing agreements with partners to understand the impact of partnerships in relation to community school collective priorities.

Transforming

Strengthen existing partnerships and continuously develop new partnerships to provide a range of in- and out-of-school resources and supports, as well as opportunities that are aligned with strategies developed by priority teams/working groups and that meet the evolving strengths and needs of the local community.

Evaluate partnerships, and change or end partnership agreements that are not aligned to the vision, collective priorities, and overall needs of the school community.

Formalize systems and processes that embed integrated student supports into the existing MTSS (e.g., Coordination of Services Team). Meet regularly with partners to collaborate, share data, and think creatively to further improve service access and coordination aligned to individual needs.

Engage partners in shared learning, progress monitoring, possibility thinking, and continuous improvement using clear and agreed-upon measures of success.

Collectively celebrate and publicize shared successes.

Strategic Community Partnerships

LEA-Level

Visioning

Map current and potential LEA-wide strategic partners to create a central repository that is continuously referred to and updated throughout planning and implementation. Include information about school-level partnerships.

Assess the extent to which potential partners align with the goals, values, and principles of the community schools strategy. Evaluate their level of commitment to collaboration, willingness to share resources and expertise, and capacity for sustained engagement.

Use data to understand how various resources are allocated to and across school sites. Collaborate with existing partners to redistribute resources that align with needs. Create a process to ensure equitable allocation of resources as additional partnerships are developed.

Engaging

Develop a system-level working group, such as a collective impact partnership, that invites diverse groups of community-based partners and service providers to help pursue system-level opportunities and overcome systemic barriers.

Support schools to differentiate between episodic partnerships and ongoing partnerships, and outline the types of support that ongoing partnerships might require. Create guidance and tools for schools to use to operationalize partner commitments.

Work to remove barriers to partnership and collaboration. Streamline procedures for formalizing ongoing partnerships, including Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), Data Sharing Agreements, and Joint-Use Agreements, at the LEA-level. Support schools by entering into and maintaining partnership agreements.

Leverage relationships with County Offices of Education and local Governments to identify and develop partnerships with county-level service providers.

Transforming

Leverage the system-level working group to open doors and break down barriers to address issues that emerge from multiple site-level community school priority teams/ working groups.

Engage partners in school and LEA-level spaces where learning and decision-making occur. Share lessons learned and best practices around building authentic relationships, shared power and decision-making, and collaborative leadership models.

Move to measuring partnership outcomes and engagement. Evaluate partnership effectiveness and monitor progress toward shared goals outlined in the LEA's Strategic Plan for Community Schools.

Collectively celebrate and publicize shared successes.

Strategic Community Partnerships

School Spotlight

Partnerships with Purpose: How Oakland International Builds a Network of Support Around Every Student

At Oakland International High School (OIHS) in Oakland Unified School district, more than 30 languages are spoken and 22% of the students are refugees. At the school, student wellness is viewed as a precursor to learning, thereby creating strategic support in student mental health and socio-emotional learning. Key partners at OIHS provide students with health, dental, and vision services, and students have access to legal, housing, and food services. As part of their wellness approach to supporting students, access to sports, art, and enrichment is a key component of their Community School strategy. The school partners with Soccer Without Borders to provide free sports opportunities. The partnerships at Oakland International Center ensure that students' well-being is centered and the unique assets and gifts of each student is recognized through aligned and responsive partnerships. In 2011, Oakland Unified became a full-service community school district and continues to support a vision for resourced schools to better serve students holistically.

> "Through strategic community partnerships, [our school] has been able to provide a more comprehensive and efficient support system for students, families, and staff. By aligning with partners who can offer the specific services identified in the needs assessment, [our school] has ensured that all members of the school community have access to the resources they need to thrive. In a short amount of time we have been able to increase our integrated student support, focusing on social-emotional, physical, and mental health to address critical student needs and removing barriers for academic success."
>
> *— CCSPP grantee, 2023-2024 APR*

Progress Monitoring Measures

Locally Informed Measures:

- Partner attendance
- School/District-Level School Climate surveys
- Access and utilization rates related to Whole-Child and Family Supports Inventory (e.g., health and wellness services, mental health services, after-school and summer programming, nutrition services, etc.)
- Partner satisfaction survey
- Families' satisfaction with services provided by partners

System-Level Measures (as identified in RFA):

- School attendance rates
- Chronic absenteeism rates
- Middle school dropout rates
- High school dropout rates
- Proficiency scores, English Language Arts and Mathematics, if available
- High school graduation rates
- College/career readiness
- English Learner progress
- Pupil suspension rates
- Pupil expulsion rates

Sample Memorandums:
Understanding Data Sharing Agreements
Joint Use Agreements

Additional Resources

Summaries

Site-Level Summaries

	Visioning	Engaging	Transforming
Shared Commitment, Understanding, and Priorities	To ensure interest-holders understand and support the community school strategy, sites launch a comprehensive communications campaign and utilize tools like surveys and staff votes to gauge commitment to the strategy. The site creates a plan for a deep Needs and Asset Assessment and a robust baseline data portfolio.	To ensure the voices of all interest-holders are part of the community school process, a Needs and Assets Assessment engages 75-100% of interest-holders in identifying a shared vision and top priorities. Results are shared through a findings report, leading to an implementation plan that includes indicators of success.	So that all interest-holders are engaging in collective action, teams are formed for each identified priority from the Needs and Assets Assessment. Teams foster innovation and possibility thinking. Teams regularly review data and celebrate growth and success.
Centering Community-Based Learning	Sites create shared understanding around the core principles of community-based learning and work to provide the supportive environmental conditions that enable students to better engage in learning and cognitive processes (e.g., relationship-centered practices, social-emotional skill development, restorative practices).	Educators' skill and self-efficacy to implement community-based learning and to provide supportive learning environments, is increased through robust, teacher-led professional learning and collaborative planning, as well as curated learning resources and new structures. Addressing the interests, strengths, and learning needs of vulnerable students is prioritized.	Community-based learning in restorative, relationship-centered climates forms the basis of the site's academic program, with multiple, non-traditional measures of student growth and well-being used to monitor progress and growth. Learning is visible to all—with families, communities, and partners sharing in success.
Collaborative Leadership	In order to cultivate a shared vision of increased power and voice, the Community School implementation team maps existing spaces of shared decision-making and identifies potential leaders and opportunities for increased voice.	In order to build the capacity to share power and voice, schools launch or revamp school site leadership structures or governance councils that are diverse in composition and democratically built.	Student, educator, family, and community voices are increased and operationalized across various spaces of shared decision-making. Major decisions are made through democratic engagement processes that are clear and transparent.
Sustaining Staff and Resources	Schools recognize the important role that all site educators and resources play in successful implementation. Teams acknowledge requisite mindsets, staffing needs, and financial resources needed for successful Community School implementation.	Teams recruit diverse Community School staff, including a Community School coordinator/director, and re-imagine the traditional roles of principals and educators while securing sustainable funding sources. Schools track critical workforce and professional learning data (e.g., teacher retention rates and school climate surveys) to improve and maintain working environments where educators want to stay and grow.	Monitor culture, climate, and working conditions data to support staff retention and growth, and ensure a "whole-teacher" approach. Collaborate with the LEA to develop and update a long-term funding plan that sustains staff, partnerships, programs, and facilities. Fully integrate the community school plan into the SPSA and other improvement plans for a unified approach to school transformation.
Strategic Community Partnerships	Shared leadership teams map local assets to develop and disseminate a resource directory of current and potential partnerships that support learning experiences and the well-being of students. Partners understand the mutual benefits and impact of the Community School strategy.	The results of the Needs and Assets Assessment process are used to create a vision and vetting process for community partnerships to ensure quality and alignment of programs and services. Sites collaborate with partners to streamline service access and delivery.	Community partnerships are strengthened and expanded through collaboration and a shared commitment to data-informed continuous improvement. Services and supports provided are embedded into and aligned with existing systems and processes to improve access and coordination. Partnerships evolve based on changing needs and assets.

LEA-Level Summaries

	Visioning	Engaging	Transforming
Shared Commitment, Understanding, and Priorities	To raise awareness and foster shared understanding of the Community Schools strategy, LEAs collaborate with schools and engage LEA leaders. LEAs leverage existing system-wide structures to facilitate peer-to-peer learning, while data are shared with schools to inform baseline understanding and the Needs and Assets Assessment.	To foster shared understanding and commitment, LEAs utilize LEA-wide data to monitor progress, develop a strategic plan, and provide tailored support to schools for conducting a comprehensive Needs and Assets Assessment in collaboration with interest-holders.	So that all interest-holders share a commitment to and responsibility for community school success, LEAs refine listening habits to facilitate learning and improvement, share best practices among school-level working groups, and ensure transparency by regularly updating the public on the progress of the initiative.
Centering Community-Based Learning	LEAs develop a shared understanding of the principles of community-based learning, and support educators in learning about the wealth of knowledge among students, families, and communities. LEAs establish instructional systems of site-based collaboration, where educators can learn and grow together to create meaningful learning and restorative school climates.	LEAs support the development of robust teacher-led professional development, and explore flexibilities in curriculum and assessment to support powerful instruction and assessment tailored to meet the needs, interests, and strengths of students.	Teaching and learning are the cornerstone of the initiative. LEAs foster collaborative, rigorous, and relationship-centered learning environments that are culturally and linguistically affirming, relevant, asset-based, democratic, and community-based.
Collaborative Leadership	LEAs establish the foundation for shared decision-making processes through a steering committee/ advisory council that engages in shared visioning and learning. They model collaborative leadership and provide learning opportunities that emphasize asset-based mindsets.	LEAs provide essential guidance to school-level implementers, including site administrators, about how to share decision making with local interest-holders.	To support site goals that lead to transformational outcomes for students, families, and educators, LEAs establish areas of flexibility. LEAs evolve alongside the steering committee/advisory council in ways that are continuously shaped by interest-holders.
Sustaining Staff and Resources	LEAs use the existing inventory of district, city, county, state, and federal systems and resources to create a strategic plan that supports, aligns with, and fully embraces the Community School framework. Ensure policies and financial resources support the implementation of the Community Schools strategy.	Building on this foundation, LEAs recruit diverse staff to strengthen the community school strategy and provide ongoing professional learning at both site and district levels. By monitoring working conditions and staff retention, they foster a supportive environment. The CS strategy is embedded into the LCAP, which creates coherence and long-term sustainability.	Community schooling becomes the "way" of doing school, with continuous professional learning, integrated initiatives, and interdependent programs. Sustainable funding streams are secured, and policies at all governmental levels are aligned to support long-term growth and success.
Strategic Community Partnerships	In order to support sites with the identification and recruitment of partners, LEAs map current and potential partners across the district and develop a central partner repository.	LEAs develop a system-level working group to overcome barriers and make broader change. LEAs foster conditions for site partnerships by developing LEA-wide MOUs, data sharing agreements, and Joint Use Agreements.	In order to practice collaborative leadership with partners, LEAs engage partners in spaces of learning and decision-making. LEAs use systems-level working groups to address common challenges that emerge across multiple community school sites.

Glossary

Advisory Council/Steering Committee: Decision-making bodies that involve students, educators, families, and community members. The representatives provide input and guide the direction of the community school initiative.

Allied Reform: A strategy, initiative, or program that complements the community school strategy.

Assets-Driven: The view and approach that builds on the strengths of the community, students, and families. The languages, cultures, histories, and lived experiences of students and their families are uplifted.

Collective Impact Partnership: An organizational body composed of various community partnerships that improve resources and streamline collaborative efforts.

Communities of Transformative Practice: A professional learning network for ongoing community school implementation across school sites. The learning community is tasked with creating opportunities for sharing best practices and supporting implementation challenges. The membership can include, but is not limited to, the school-level advisory council/steering committee and implementation teams.

Community School Coordinator: A key community school staff member responsible for facilitating the overall implementation of community school processes, programs, partnerships, and strategies at the school site. Their work is focused on facilitation, engagement, and leadership development so that interest-holders can drive the community school transformation process.

Continuous Improvement: A reflective process created by cycles of data-gathering, analysis, and ongoing learning. Community schools create intentional spaces of collective reflection that are informed by a variety of measures to support student and educator growth. Data are used in a way that is action-oriented and holistic, and improves practice toward collective goals.

Educator: An individual that serves the community school; it may include teachers, administrators, custodial, front-office staff, security, nutrition, bus drivers, and more.

Families: Families come in diverse forms and compositions, many of which extend beyond traditional norms and legal definitions. They may include parents, multi-generational household members, guardians, and other caregivers. This more inclusive definition of family celebrates connections as opposed to a narrow definition focused on blood ties.

Initial Implementation Team: The initial team of school site and LEA leaders that are tasked with engaging interest-holders in crafting a vision for the community school prior to the development of a formal shared leadership structure. This could be an already-existing team or a new one. The initial implementation team develops a plan for the Needs and Assets Assessment. They model and embrace processes for shared decision-making through relationship and trust-building.

Interest-Holder: An individual who is impacted by the community school strategy and can give voice to decision-making. An interest-holder can include, but is not limited to, students, families, community members, teachers, and staff.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU): An agreement by two or more parties that formalizes a relationship. Providing a road map for collaboration, the MOU clearly articulates the goals, expectations, and responsibilities of each party.

Needs and Assets Assessments: Effective Needs and Assets Assessments include accessible surveys, one-on-one meetings, focus groups, and a variety of additional methods of engagement and information gathering. They inform, shape, and give life to the community school strategy. The Needs and Assets Assessment involves the following processes:

> **Needs Assessment:** An intentional way of gathering information from students, staff, families, and community members to identify a shared vision and set of collective priorities. Families identify barriers to the well-being of students, families, and the community.
>
> **Assets Assessment:** A process of identifying and illuminating the assets and wisdom throughout the community. It enables schools to build intentional relationships and draw in community-based resources that uplift students, families, educators, and the well-being of the entire school community.
>
> **Gap Analysis:** A process to help members identify the gaps in services, programs, and resources that impact school and community well-being.
>
> **Resource Mapping:** A tool that empowers schools to identify community resources in order to create a larger ecosystem of support and resource-building for families, students, educators, and community members.

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Version 2.2 of the *Capacity-Building Strategies Developmental Rubric* is shaped by the wisdom, experiences, and stories from the field. It embodies a shared commitment to collaboration and continuous learning, ensuring the rubric remains responsive, practical, and grounded in real-life practice.

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Statewide Partners

Regional Transformational Assistance Centers

Statewide Advisory Board

Children's Aid National Center for Community Schools

Learning Policy Institute

California School-Based Health Alliance

Community Schools Learning Exchange

Placer County Office of Education

Coalition for Community Schools/ Institute for Educational Leadership

Partners for Rural Impact

California Afterschool Network

California Partnership for the Future of Learning

Parent Institute for Quality Education

Big Picture Learning

Lucero Soto, Parent Representative

Alma Cervantes, Parent Representative

Maritza Bermudez, Parent Representative

Rocio Ruiz-Chen, Parent Representative

Reyna Olaguez, Parent Representative

Alaysia Simmons, Student Representative

Miley Del Cid, Student Representative

Angel Guerrero, Student Representative

Grantee Spotlights

Mountain View School, San Diego Unified School District

Anaheim Union High School District

Mann UCLA Community School, Los Angeles

Lucille Roybal-Allard Elementary School, Los Angeles Unified School District

Oakland International High School, Oakland Unified School District