

Landscape Scan & Rubric Framework



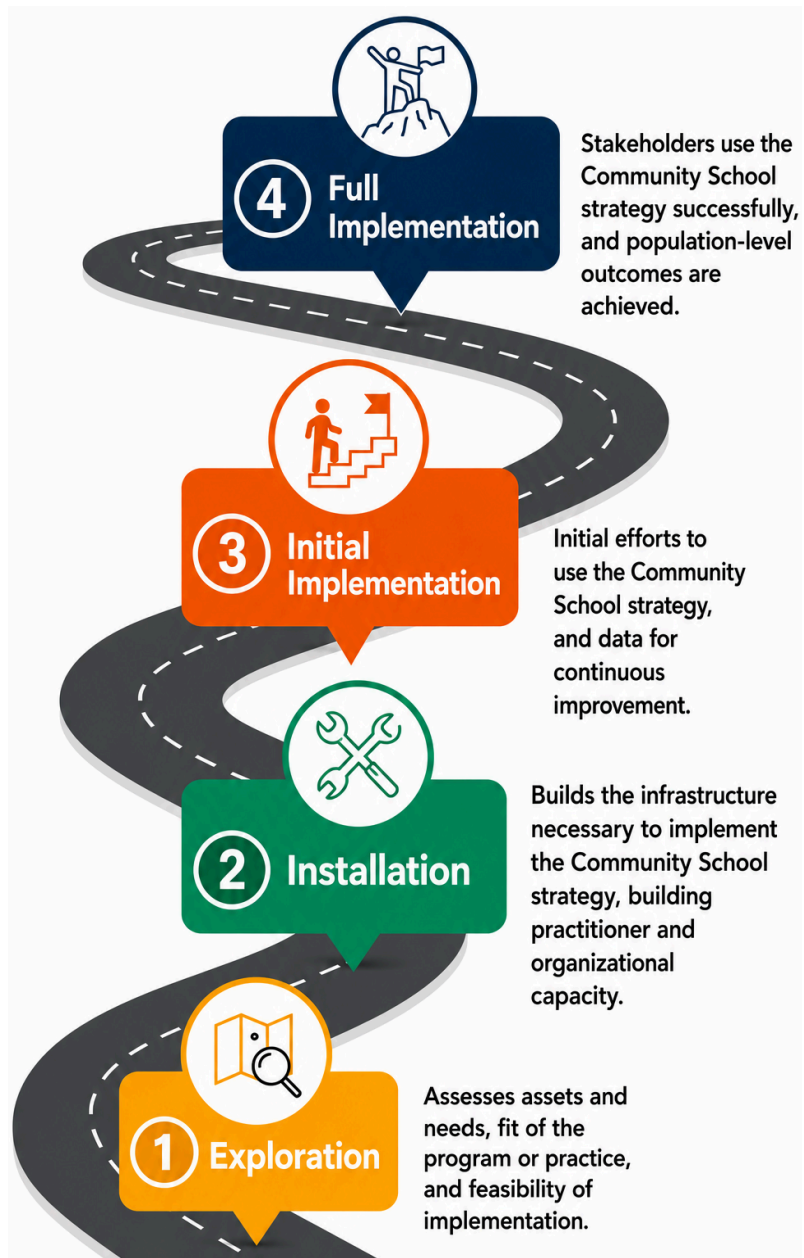
Family, School, and Community Partnerships



Introduction

Assessing existing practices, strategies, and initiatives is a critical step in determining readiness for change because it creates an opportunity for leaders to approach the community schools strategy with strategic integration in mind and avoid initiative overload. **The District, School, and Lead Partner Agency Readiness Rubrics** were developed to take stock of what is already in place in a school, district, or lead partner agency that will ultimately support or align with the community schools strategy. Recognizing current strategies that are already working helps build a culture of success and strengthens relational trust among stakeholders.

Descriptions of current strategies and practices are provided across the rubrics. These descriptions show what these strategies and practices look like at an 'excelling' level of performance,



emphasizing a commitment to educational equity and improving youth, family, and community outcomes ([CDE, 2020](#)). Schools, districts, and agencies with excelling strategies and practices will demonstrate high levels of implementation across the [Essentials for Community School Transformation Framework](#) (CDE, 2020; Community Schools Forward, 2023).

Readiness

Know Before You Go!

Before entering the Exploration phase, consider the following:

- **Why is that destination where you want to go?**
Your “why” and data snapshot
- **Who is helping you plan the trip?**
Your team
- **What do you already know about your destination?**
What more do you need to learn?
Learning about CSs
- **What do you already have that will help you get there?**
Your landscape analysis and data snapshot
- **Who needs to know your travel plans?**
Engaging stakeholders and building awareness

Key Actions

We recommend moving through the **Landscape Scan** in a process of self-reflection and guided discussion:

- **Step One:** The Readiness Team meets. Team leads outline the process of completing the rubrics/self-reflections.
- **Step Two:** Each individual team member establishes their own reflections on the different components of the **Essentials for Community School Transformation Framework** for their specific system (school, district, partner agency). Individuals may be “assigned” colleagues to interview in order to collect needed information while avoiding overwhelming colleagues with interview requests.
- **Step Three:** Individuals complete the rubric summary sheet before the next team meeting.
- **Step Four: The Readiness Team** meets for a collaborative discussion about their reflections and findings.
 - ◆ We encourage members to be honest and transparent, which may mean engaging in hard conversations that lead to uncomfortable truths. It is crucial that all members feel comfortable, seen, heard, and safe.
 - ◆ Whether your team is large or small, consider inviting key internal and external stakeholders to this specific meeting as thought partners.
- **Step Five:** The team comes to a consensus regarding the community schools strategy being a good “fit” for their school, district, or agency and decides on next steps for building readiness.
 - ◆ Recommendations for next steps will vary based on the site/system, team make-up, and findings of the rubrics. We have provided examples of next steps for school-based, district-based, and lead partner agency-based teams on each associated rubric.

Key Outputs

Completing this Landscape Scan is a crucial step in understanding how ready your system may or may not be for exploring and implementing the community schools strategy. Completing the Landscape Scan will lead to a short summary that pulls together the most important readiness considerations for your team. This summary

sheet will be useful during the collaborative discussion as members discuss their individual reflections and findings. Whether your team is school-based, district-based, or agency-based, the Landscape Scan will provide a comprehensive overview of how current initiatives, existing teams, community partnerships, and staff roles and responsibilities align with the community schools strategy. With this information in hand, your **Readiness Team** will make a well-informed plan for the team’s next steps.

Table of Contents

- Introduction..... 1
- Readiness..... 2
 - Know Before You Go!..... 2
- Key Actions..... 3
- Key Outputs..... 3
- Table of Contents..... 4**
- School Readiness Rubric..... 6**
 - Enabling Conditions..... 8
 - Trusting Relationships..... 9
 - Actionable Data..... 12
 - Shared Vision..... 14
 - Inclusive Decision-Making..... 16
 - Key Practices Audit..... 18
 - Powerful Student and Family Engagement..... 19
 - Collaborative Leadership, Shared Power, and Voice..... 20
 - Expanded, Enriched Learning Opportunities..... 23
 - Rigorous, Community-Connected Classroom Instruction..... 24
 - Culture of Belonging, Safety, and Care..... 27
 - Integrated Systems of Support..... 30
 - Supportive Infrastructure..... 32
 - Shared Governance Structures..... 32
 - School Leadership Team..... 32
 - School Policy..... 33
 - School Accountability Committee..... 34
 - Continuous Improvement..... 36
 - Data Systems..... 38
 - Professional Learning Opportunities..... 40
 - Strategic Partnerships..... 42
 - Sustainable Resources..... 44
- Recommendations for Next Steps..... 46

School Readiness Rubric Summary.....	47
District Readiness Rubric.....	50
Enabling Conditions.....	51
Trusting Relationships.....	52
Actionable Data.....	55
Shared Vision.....	57
Inclusive Decision-Making.....	59
Supportive Infrastructure.....	61
Shared Governance Structures.....	61
District Policy.....	61
District Accountability Committee.....	62
Continuous Improvement.....	64
Data Systems.....	67
Professional Learning Opportunities.....	69
Strategic Partnerships.....	71
Sustainable Resources.....	73
Recommendations for Next Steps.....	75
District Readiness Rubric Summary.....	76
Lead Partner Agency Readiness Rubric.....	79
Enabling Conditions.....	80
Trusting Relationships.....	82
Actionable Data.....	84
Shared Vision.....	86
Inclusive Decision-Making.....	87
Supportive Infrastructure.....	88
Shared Governance Structures.....	88
Continuous Improvement.....	91
Data Systems.....	93
Professional Learning Opportunities.....	95
Strategic Partnerships.....	97
Sustainable Resources.....	98
Recommendations for Next Steps.....	100
Lead Partner Agency Readiness Rubric Summary.....	101

School Readiness Rubric

Building on the [Essentials for Community School Transformation Framework](#) (Community Schools Forward, 2023), this rubric provides school leaders, educators, and other school staff an opportunity to consider how the components of the framework may already be in place within their school. The first section of the rubric covers the **Enabling Conditions** of the Framework: *Trusting Relationships, Actionable Data, Shared Vision, and Inclusive Decision-Making*. This section is self-reflective. When fully realized, the enabling conditions serve as the foundation for the [Six Key Practices](#) of community schools.

These six **key practices** make up the second section of the **School Readiness Rubric** and are what transforms a school from an isolated academic institution into a thriving community hub:

- Powerful student and family engagement
- Collaborative leadership, shared power, and voice
- Expanded, enriched learning experiences
- Rigorous, community-connected classroom instruction
- Culture of belonging, safety, and care
- Integrated systems of support

A community school treats these practices as a unified strategy to address the whole child, avoiding operating in silos. Many traditional schools already have "pockets" of these practices—such as after-school clubs or a family engagement liaison. An initial audit during a readiness phase highlights what is already in place for a school to build upon rather than starting from scratch. Later activities in this guide will help you connect these practices to community mapping and assets and needs assessments that typically happen once a school decides to move forward with this strategy.

The third section of the School Readiness Audit Rubric explores the **Supportive Infrastructure** currently in place, as organized by the Essentials for Community School Transformation Framework:

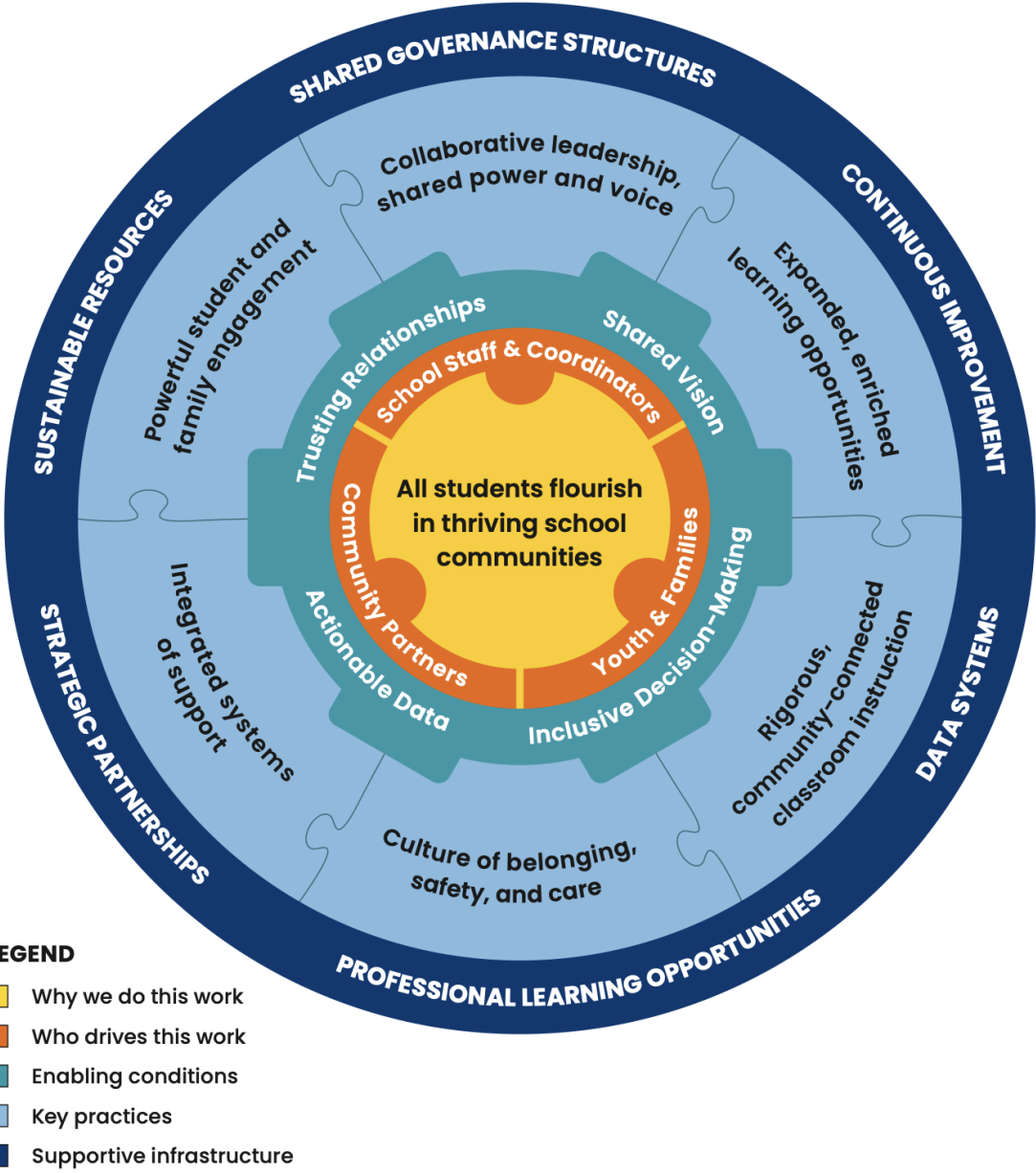
- Shared governance structures
- Continuous improvement
- Data systems
- Strategic partnerships
- Professional learning opportunities
- Sustainable resources

This section may require deeper exploration into the systems and processes within the school through artifact reviews and one-on-one conversations with colleagues.

The descriptions provided for the components are written to a high standard with examples considered to be *excelling*. It is not expected that the school utilizing the rubrics would be meeting this high-level of performance for each component. They are written this way so that through self-reflection, users can identify to what extent their school aligns with that description. Along with self-reflection questions, a continuum is included.

Completing the rubrics is an iterative process — not a one-time activity. Individual team members, and the team as a whole, can and should return to the readiness rubrics to track progress and build towards sustainability.

Figure 1. Essentials for Community School Transformation



Source: Community Schools Forward. (2023).

Enabling Conditions

The enabling conditions of the community schools strategy—trusting relationships, actionable data, shared vision, and inclusive decision-making—create a foundational ecosystem that shifts a school from a rigid, isolated institution to an adaptive, collaborative partner. These conditions are represented in the teal layer of the Essentials of Community Schools Transformation Framework ([Community Schools](#)

[Forward, 2023](#)). Instead of functioning as an independent silo, these four conditions act as a self-reinforcing system that drives transformation across the school.



Trusting Relationships

Trusting relationships are formed through social interactions within communities and environments. Elements that make up trusting relationships include competence, respect, integrity, care, shared vision, culture of listening, and

interactions ([Brookings, 2024](#)). The following description shows a high standard of trusting relationship practices in schools reflecting an *excelling* level of performance:

The school actively engages families and community members through transparent communication, shared leadership, and collaborative decision-making practices.

These efforts include:

- Sharing data with families about their child's development and performance and inviting families to contribute ideas for supporting their child's learning and growth
- Sharing schoolwide data with all families and community partners, not only parent leadership groups, regarding achievement, discipline, and overall school performance
- Engaging families and community partners in conversations about school goals, strategies for improving student outcomes, and overall school improvement efforts
- Presenting student performance and attendance data disaggregated by race, gender, and other student or family characteristics to support equity and social justice goals
- Encouraging teachers and staff to have early, honest conversations with families about academic or behavioral challenges so all stakeholders can support the student together
- Maintaining regular communication between teachers and families, including email communication at least every other week, while encouraging families to ask questions and share concerns

The school also creates meaningful opportunities for family and community participation through:

- Public events such as Back-to-School Night, Conferences, Family Nights, and School Accountability Committee meetings that include dedicated time for families and community members to share experiences and concerns
- Soliciting family input on desired programs and activities to help guide school planning
- Encouraging educators to build relationships with families and ensure families know how to contact teachers directly
- Training families and community members in effective leadership practices and involving them in discussions about school goals and family and community engagement efforts
- Providing leadership opportunities for families and community members within partnership work, including opportunities to support classroom instruction and school initiatives



Self-Reflection

Take a few minutes to reflect on the description above.



After reading the above description, what patterns or trends stand out to you regarding **trusting relationships** across your school?



Where Does Our School Fall?

Use the continuum below to reflect on the overall nature of our school's relationships with students, families, and community partners.

LOW TRUST

HIGH TRUST



Our school's relationships with students, families, and community partners tend to be transactional, time-bound, and based on school-need.

Our school's relationships with students, families, and community partners are neither positive nor negative, with partners being asked to volunteer, support fundraising, and sit on committees.

Our school's relationships with students, families, and community partners are built on a foundation of mutual trust, respect, two-way communication, follow-through, and transparency.



Why did you place your school at this point on the continuum? _____



Strengths and Opportunities

Reflect on where strong trusting relationships exist and where they can be built or strengthened.

What are some areas where strong trusting relationships currently exist, and what are the opportunities where trusting relationships can be or need to be built?



Existing Trusting Relationships

Where are we strong?



Opportunities for Building Trusting Relationships

Where can we grow?



Remember: Be honest and specific. These reflections will help guide meaningful action and stronger partnerships across our school community.

Actionable Data

Actionable data is defined as information that is clear, specific, and timely enough to lead directly to a decision. It provides the context necessary to determine next steps. The following description shows a high standard of actionable data practices in schools reflecting an excellent level of performance:

Information is intentionally collected, analyzed, and shared with all stakeholders to drive continuous improvement and inclusive decision-making (Learning Policy Institute, 2023). The data that is collected:

- combines quantitative data (e.g., attendance, test scores, behavior) with qualitative data (surveys, empathy interviews, home visits);
- is available in real-time or frequently enough to allow for mid-course corrections rather than only end-of-year reflections;
- is presented through user-friendly and accessible dashboards;
- and is disaggregated by student groups to identify achievement gaps ([Burch & Miller, 2022](#)).

The school collects data from more than **70% of families** about community needs and satisfaction with the school ([CDE, 2020](#)). The school evaluates what teachers are doing to implement evidence-based practices aimed at improving student outcomes and improving relationships between teachers and families ([CDE, 2020](#)).

The school collects data from families and community partners annually about the assets that exist in the community ([CDE, 2020](#)). The school discusses with families and community partners how community resources can help meet the academic, social-emotional, health, and financial needs of students and families. Current school performance is analyzed relative to local, state and federal metrics and expectations (e.g. *School Performance Framework metrics, Every Student Succeeds Act indicators*) ([CDE, 2025](#)).



Self-Reflection

Take a few minutes to reflect on the description above.



After reading the above description, what patterns or trends stand out to you regarding **actionable data** across your school?



Where Does Our School Fall?

Use the continuum below to reflect on how our school collects and uses data from families and the local community.

NOT YET

HIGHLY ACTIONABLE



Our school does not collect data from families and the local community to inform annual improvement planning.



Our school annually collects data from families and the local community and uses this data in annual improvement planning.



Our school frequently collects data from families and the local community, and uses this data to make real-time changes, in addition to using it for annual improvement planning.



Why did you place your school at this point on the continuum? _____



What are some areas where strong actionable data currently exists, and what are the opportunities where strong actionable data is needed?



Existing Actionable Data

Where do we have strong data practices?



Needed Actionable Data

Where do we need stronger data practices?

Shared Vision

A shared vision is a collective agreement outlining a school's image of a desired future and may include core values and long-term goals for students. The following description shows a high standard of shared vision practices in schools reflecting an *excelling* level of performance:

The school's vision serves as an anchor for decision-making related to student academics, behavior, and social-emotional development and ensures that interventions, programs, and classroom practices are aligned toward shared goals. The school's vision:

- Is co-created by school leaders, school staff, students, families, and community members
- Encourages collective responsibility for the experiences and outcomes of all students
- Outlines the essential skills, well-being, and dispositions students need for life after graduation
- Is reflected in school policies and the school's *Unified Improvement Plan*
- Is communicated consistently across the school's communication platforms



Self-Reflection

Take a few minutes to reflect on the description above.

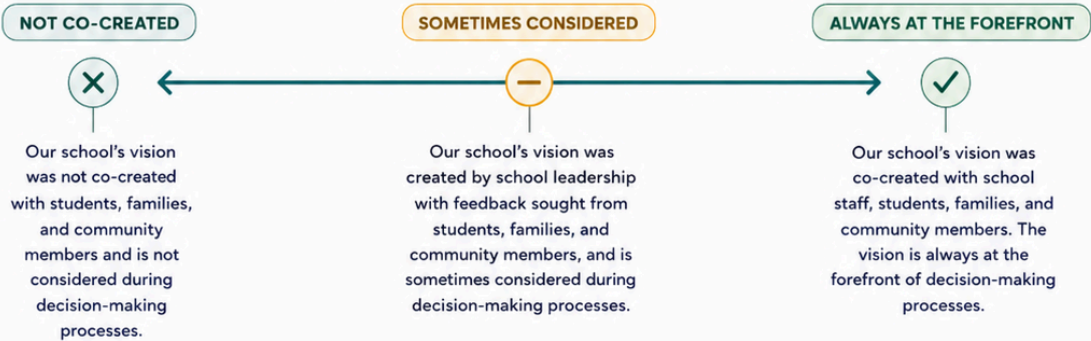


After reading the above description, what patterns or trends stand out to you regarding a **shared vision** across your school?



Where Does Our School Fall?

Use the continuum below to reflect on how our school's vision is built and used in decision-making.



Why did you place your school at this point on the continuum? _____



How was your school's vision created?

What are the strengths of your school's vision?

What is needed to make it more impactful?



Strengths of the Current Vision



Needed to Strengthen Impact

Inclusive Decision-Making

Inclusive decision-making is a process where those affected by a choice—especially people from underrepresented groups—have a meaningful opportunity to influence the outcome. It ensures diverse perspectives are not just heard, but actively integrated into the final decision to ensure equity and better results. The following description shows a high standard of inclusive decision-making practices in schools reflecting an *excelling* level of performance:

The school brings diverse voices and perspectives to the table through the **School Accountability Committee (SAC)** to provide input on budget decisions, curriculum, and resources and support, among other things.

By bringing more stakeholders to the table who have direct connections to students in the school:

- Solutions to challenges become more relevant and effective
- Inequities are more easily uncovered
- Trust is increased
- School staff, families, students, and community members feel a greater sense of ownership over the work being done

The school empowers educators and school staff to form interdisciplinary teams including the principal, teachers, other school staff, students, families, and community partners. Actionable data is shared with all stakeholders, not just administrators, enabling everyone to identify and address inequities together. The school creates formal partnerships with community organizations where both parties agree on shared goals and responsibilities, ensuring that community voices are reflected in high-level budget and policy decisions. School decisions are made through consensus-building rather than top-down mandates. For example, school-level committees involving various stakeholders, such as the SAC, advise the principal on the school's attendance policy and the school's *Unified Improvement Plan*.



Self-Reflection

Take a few minutes to reflect on the description above.



After reading the above description, what patterns or trends stand out to you regarding **inclusive decision-making** within your school?



Where Does Our School Fall?

Use the continuum below to reflect on how inclusive decision-making happens in our school.

LIMITED INCLUSION

SOME INCLUSION

HIGHLY INCLUSIVE



Decisions that impact students and families are made only by school leadership.



Educators and school staff are included in the decision-making processes but other stakeholders are not.



Families and students, as well as educators and school staff, are always represented in decision-making processes when those decisions impact them.



Why did you place your school at this point on the continuum? _____



What are some areas where inclusive decision making currently exists, and where are the opportunities for integrating stronger inclusive decision-making?



Existing Inclusive Decision-Making

Where do we see inclusive decision-making happening well?



Opportunities to Integrate Inclusive Decision-Making

Where can we expand or strengthen inclusive decision-making?

Key Practices Audit

By integrating implementation of the six key practices of community schools—powerful student and family engagement; collaborative leadership, shared power, and voice; expanded, enriched learning experiences; rigorous, community connected classroom instruction; culture of belonging, safety, and care; and integrated systems of support—the school becomes a place with optimal, whole child conditions for learning and development (Community Schools Forward, 2023). These key practices are represented in the light blue layer of the [Essentials of Community Schools Transformation Framework](#) (Community Schools Forward, 2023).

For each key practice, rate the associated activity on a scale of 0 (not at all or N/A) to 3 (fully implemented). Total your ratings on each key practice and divide by 10 to determine the average. This average score can help identify which key practice(s) your school is strongest in and should leverage should the team decide to implement the community school strategy, as well as identify where there are gaps and opportunities for growth during implementation.



Powerful Student and Family Engagement

Activity	Rating
<p>The school has established a family engagement policy connected to equity and student learning.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
<p>The school employs a family liaison who is the primary contact for families; helps families navigate the school system; creates a welcoming environment; and connects families to community resources. This position is:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Part-time</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Full-time</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
<p>The school utilizes two-way multilingual communication methods with families.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
<p>The school shares data with all families about their child's development and/or performance and invites them to contribute ideas about how to support their child.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
<p>The school shares data with all families (not just the SAC and PTA/PTO) about overall levels of student achievement and student discipline and engages them in multiple conversations about:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> setting goals,</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> ways to improve student outcomes, and</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> overall school performance.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
<p>The school utilizes the following high-impact family engagement strategies:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Positive phone calls home;</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Sharing individual student data;</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Regular, personalized communication;</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Goal-setting talks;</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Relationship-building;</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Academic partnering;</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Ongoing communications;</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Modeling of learning support strategies; and</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Relationally- focused, non-punitive home visits.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
<p>There is an active PTA/PTO at the school.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1

	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
<p>Food, translation, childcare, and transportation are provided at school events and workshops to enable more families to attend.</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Food <input type="checkbox"/> Translation services <input type="checkbox"/> Childcare <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
<p>Families are included in the planning and design of school events and practices to engage marginalized families.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
<p>Adult education classes are offered at the school by the school, district, or partner organization. These classes include:</p> <input type="checkbox"/> ESL classes <input type="checkbox"/> GED test prep <input type="checkbox"/> Workforce development workshops <input type="checkbox"/> Parenting workshops	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
Average rating (combined score divided by 10):	
<p>Describe the extent to which you feel your school exhibits powerful student and family engagement, and why. If available, provide 2 examples.</p>	
<p>How can you elevate this practice to align with the community school strategy?</p>	

Collaborative Leadership, Shared Power, and Voice

Activity	Rating
<p>The school conducts an annual needs assessment with families and students and acts on their feedback.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3

<p>There are processes in place for documenting and sharing information across teams and committees so that everyone is aware of each other’s work, can avoid duplication of efforts, and can identify opportunities for collaboration (AIR, 2024).</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
<p>Diverse school and community representatives (school staff, students, families, community members, school leadership) are purposefully recruited to teams and committees (AIR, 2024).</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
<p>Team and committee members are provided space to meaningfully contribute to meetings and connect with one another (AIR, 2024).</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
<p>The school transparently and accessibly communicates about decision-making processes (PTA, 2022).</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
<p>School leadership invites family and community members into the process of making policy decisions (CDE, 2020).</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
<p>Families are included in the planning and design of school events and practices to engage marginalized families (CDE, 2020).</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
<p>School Accountability Committee (SAC) membership is maintained with all roles* consistently filled and recruitment processes in place when needed. *See Page 29 for a list of required SAC membership roles.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4
<p>The School Accountability Committee (SAC) is operational and well-functioning.* *See SAC Responsibilities Inventory</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
<p>The school offers students, staff, and families capacity-building opportunities to develop leadership skills.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3

Average rating (combined score divided by 10):	
Describe the extent to which you feel your school prioritizes collaborative leadership, shared power, and voice. If available, provide 2 examples.	
How can you elevate this practice to align with the community school strategy?	

Expanded, Enriched Learning Opportunities

Activity	Rating
<p>The school or district provides out-of-school time (OST) programming for students to participate in. This programming is available:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Before school <input type="checkbox"/> After school <input type="checkbox"/> 5th day <input type="checkbox"/> Weekends <input type="checkbox"/> Mid-year school breaks <input type="checkbox"/> Summer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
<p>The school or district partners with community organizations, local businesses, and/or cultural institutions to provide out-of-school time (OST) programming for students to participate in. This programming is available:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Before school <input type="checkbox"/> After school <input type="checkbox"/> 5th day <input type="checkbox"/> Weekends <input type="checkbox"/> Mid-year school breaks <input type="checkbox"/> Summer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
<p>The existing expanded programs provide at least 300 additional hours (or a 25% increase) over the standard school year.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
<p>There are pathways for students to earn credit through expanded learning, such as internships or community-based projects.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
<p>There is a clear balance between academic support (tutoring, homework help) and enrichment (arts, sports, music).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
<p>The programming is intentionally designed to support social, emotional, and physical well-being, rather than just academic remediation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
<p>The school has "open-door" policies that allow partners to easily use school facilities (gyms, labs, libraries).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1

	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
There are systems in place (e.g., late buses) to ensure all students can participate regardless of their family's schedule or resources.	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
School-day teachers and expanded-learning staff have dedicated time to collaborate and share student data.	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
Students are provided opportunities to share their input on what enrichment activities are offered.	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
Average rating (combined score divided by 10):	
Describe the extent to which your school provides expanded, enriched learning experiences for students. If available, provide 2 examples.	
How can you elevate this practice to align with the community school strategy?	

Rigorous, Community-Connected Classroom Instruction

Activity	Rating
Current learning materials (e.g., textbooks, reading lists, and case studies) reflect the racial, linguistic, and cultural identities of the student body.	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
All school staff engage in regular professional development opportunities to learn about culturally responsive approaches to teaching and engaging all students.	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2

	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
<p>Educators leverage community assets as teaching tools in the classroom. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Local businesses <input type="checkbox"/> Local historical sites <input type="checkbox"/> Non-profits <input type="checkbox"/> Natural environments <input type="checkbox"/> Local professionals, such as family members, artists, historians, scientists, elders, etc. 	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
<p>Community partners have a physical presence on school grounds. This may look like a garden, artwork, etc.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
<p>Students engage in learning outside of the school building and within the community, such as neighborhood walks, site visits, or field trips (Campo & Kimner, 2023).</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
<p>Traditional classrooms are transformed into lab environments, such as forensic science labs, culinary arts kitchens, graphic design studios, and automotive shops.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
<p>In the classroom, educators regularly affirm and sustain students' and families' knowledge and expertise (Campo & Kimner, 2023).</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
<p>There are clear pathways for older students to link classroom theory to internships, apprenticeships, or job shadowing.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
<p>Educators use experiential learning practices that prioritize youth voices (Campo & Kimner, 2023).</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3

<p>Educators use project-based learning strategies to engage students in real-world problem solving that address local community concerns (e.g., environmental justice, local economics, housing).</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
<p>Average rating (combined score divided by 10):</p>	
<p>Describe the extent to which the local community is integrated into the school's academic curriculum and classroom instruction. If available, provide examples.</p>	
<p>How can you elevate this practice to align with the community school strategy?</p>	

Culture of Belonging, Safety, and Care

Activity	Rating
The school utilizes restorative practices for discipline procedures.	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
There are structured opportunities (e.g., advisories, morning meetings, peer mentoring) for students to build healthy relationships with one another.	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
<p>The school utilizes positive behavioral intervention and supports through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> an agreed upon and common approach to discipline, <input type="checkbox"/> a positive statement of purpose, <input type="checkbox"/> a small number of positively stated expectations for all students and staff, <input type="checkbox"/> procedures for teaching these expectations to students, <input type="checkbox"/> a continuum of procedures for encouraging displays and maintenance of these expectations, <input type="checkbox"/> a continuum of procedures for discouraging displays of rule-violating behavior, and <input type="checkbox"/> procedures for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the discipline system on a regular and frequent basis. 	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
Every student has at least one adult in the building who knows them well and to whom they feel comfortable turning.	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
The physical spaces of the school (signage, hallways, main office) feel inviting and reflect the diverse languages and cultures of the community.	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
Families report feeling that their children are both physically safe and emotionally protected while at school.	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
There is a formal system to support the mental health and professional morale of teachers and staff to prevent burnout.	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2

	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
The school regularly reviews discipline data to identify and address disproportionality based on race, gender, or disability.	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
Students are involved in creating school norms, classroom agreements, or the "Code of Conduct".	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
There are clear protocols for identifying and addressing microaggressions, bullying, or discriminatory behavior among students and staff.	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
Average rating (combined score divided by 10):	
Describe the extent to which you feel your school promotes a culture of belonging, safety, and care. If available, provide 2 examples.	
How can you elevate this practice to align with the community school strategy?	

Integrated Systems of Support

Activity	Rating
<p>There is a Family Resource Center on school grounds that provides families and students with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Food; <input type="checkbox"/> Clothing; <input type="checkbox"/> School supplies; <input type="checkbox"/> Personal hygiene items; <input type="checkbox"/> Assistance applying for Medicaid; <input type="checkbox"/> Assistance for applying for SNAP; <input type="checkbox"/> Housing assistance; and <input type="checkbox"/> Legal aid. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
<p>There are formal Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) that define exactly how partners and school staff collaborate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
<p>There is an onsite School-Based Health Center.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
<p>The school partners with local providers to bring the following services to the school on specific days that families are given advanced notice for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Medical services <input type="checkbox"/> Dental services <input type="checkbox"/> Vision services <input type="checkbox"/> Behavioral and mental health services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
<p>A referral system is in place for identifying and connecting families to external community resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
<p>The school maintains an up-to-date directory of local providers (food pantries, mental health clinics, legal aid).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
<p>All school staff (including bus drivers, cafeteria workers, and office staff) are trained on how to refer a student for support.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2

	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Different funding streams (Title I, Medicaid, private grants) are combined to pay for integrated supports.	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
Social-emotional learning (SEL) and basic wellness supports are integrated into the daily experience of all students, not just those in crisis.	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
The school has a formal team (e.g., Student Support Team, CARE Team) that meets weekly to review student needs, using "real-time" indicators (attendance, behavior changes, course performance) to trigger early interventions.	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
Average rating (combined score divided by 10):	
Describe the extent to which your school has integrated community supports and services in response to student and family needs. If available, provide 2 examples.	
How can you elevate this practice to align with the community school strategy?	

Supportive Infrastructure

The supportive infrastructure of the community schools strategy functions as a stabilizing and scaling mechanism that transitions a school from a collection of siloed classrooms and staff roles into a cohesive, transformational system. This infrastructure provides the "scaffolding" necessary to sustain the enabling conditions (trusting relationships, actionable data, shared vision, and inclusive decision-making) over time. These conditions are represented in the dark blue layer of the **Essentials of Community Schools Transformation framework** ([Community Schools Forward, 2023](#)).

The interaction of these six elements creates a system that moves beyond temporary fixes toward permanent institutional change.



Shared Governance Structures

Shared governance is when school leadership, educators, school staff, students, families, and community members work together as a formal team, such as a **School Accountability Committee**. They decide together on goals and budgets, and make sure everyone does their part to reach positive student outcomes. Shared governance structures begin in school policy. The following descriptions show a high standard of shared governance structures in schools reflecting an *excelling* level of performance:

School Leadership Team

The school has a School Leadership Team with representatives from school leadership, teachers, school staff, students, and families. This team meets regularly to manage the day-to-day operations, data-informed decision-making, and strategic alignment of the school's supports and programs.

School Policy

School district policies lead to shared governance structures within and across the system by establishing the formal rules and frameworks that redistribute decision-making power from a central district office to a collaborative group of stakeholders. These policies create a supportive infrastructure for community schools by legitimizing and funding the roles, teams, resources, and processes necessary to integrate community partners and resources into schools across the district.



Self-Reflection

Reflect on the description above and how it shows up in your school.

Where Does Our School Fall?

Use the continuum below to reflect on how our current school policies include students, families, and community members in decision-making.

NOT REQUIRED

RECOMMENDED

REQUIRED & MEANINGFULLY ENGAGED



Current school policies do not require the inclusion of students, families, and community members in planning and decision-making.



Current school policies recommend that students, families, and community members provide feedback in planning and decision-making.



Current school policies require students, families, and community members to be represented and meaningfully engaged in planning and decision-making.



Does school policy require annual needs and assets assessments that involve a broad spectrum of the community, or are unified improvement plans built primarily on internal district data?



What formal teams are in place across the school? List the teams and team members/roles.

What are the strengths of these teams?

What are the opportunities and gaps?



Strengths of Existing Teams



Opportunities for and Gaps of Existing Teams

School Accountability Committee

All schools in Colorado are required by law to convene a [School Accountability Committee](#) (SAC). The SAC is a legally mandated advisory group that allows family members, teachers, and community members to partner with school leadership to improve the educational experience. A well-functioning SAC exemplifies a shared governance structure within a school. Use the following table to identify the membership roles of your SAC and to what extent your SAC is engaging in the statutory requirements. If you are not a member of your SAC and are unsure of the following items, reach out to your SAC Chairperson and schedule time with them to discuss.

SAC Membership Roles	Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Principal or principal’s designee <input type="checkbox"/> At least one teacher who provides instruction <input type="checkbox"/> At least three (3) parents/guardians of students enrolled in the school <input type="checkbox"/> At least one adult member of an organization of parents, teachers, and students recognized by the school (e.g., PTA/PTO, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> At least one person from the community 	
SAC Responsibilities	Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Making recommendations to the principal on the school priorities for spending school moneys, including federal funds, where applicable; <input type="checkbox"/> Making recommendations to the principal of the school and the superintendent concerning preparation of a school Performance or Improvement plan, if either type of plan is required; <input type="checkbox"/> Publicizing and holding a SAC meeting to discuss strategies to include in a school Priority Improvement or Turnaround plan, if either type of plan is 	

<p>required, and using this input to make recommendations to the local school board concerning preparation of the school Priority Improvement or Turnaround plan prior to the plan being written;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Publicizing the district’s public hearing to review a written school Priority Improvement or Turnaround plan;<input type="checkbox"/> Meeting at least quarterly to discuss whether school leadership, personnel, and infrastructure are advancing or impeding implementation of the school’s Performance, Improvement, Priority Improvement, or Turnaround plan, whichever is applicable, and other progress pertinent to the school’s accreditation contract;<input type="checkbox"/> Providing input and recommendations to the DAC and district administration, on an advisory basis, concerning principal development plans and principal evaluations. (Note that this should not in any way interfere with a district’s compliance with the statutory requirements of the Teacher Employment, Compensation and Dismissal Act.);<input type="checkbox"/> Publicizing opportunities to serve and soliciting parents to serve on the SAC;<input type="checkbox"/> Assisting the district in implementing at the school level the district’s parent engagement policy; and<input type="checkbox"/> Assisting school personnel to increase parents’ engagement with teachers, including parents’ engagement in creating students’ READ plans, Individual	
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Continuous Improvement

Continuous improvement is the ongoing habit of making small, steady changes to do things better over time. Rather than waiting for a single "giant fix," it focuses on constantly looking for ways to spot mistakes, cut out waste, and make work or life a little smoother every day. To support continuous improvement, the Education Accountability Act of 2009 requires each Colorado school to create an [annual improvement plan](#). The following description shows a high standard of continuous improvement practices in schools reflecting an *excelling* level of performance:

Tip: *Review your school's Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) before considering the following description. Discuss with colleagues if you are not typically involved in the school's improvement planning process.*

The school engages in a cycle of continuous improvement, including *Unified Improvement Planning*, to strengthen student learning and overall system effectiveness. These practices include:

- Developing an annual improvement plan that focuses on the most significant challenges facing students and families and establishes clear targets for improvement
- Using evidence-based strategies to address the root causes of student challenges and drive progress on identified priorities
- Outlining a logical implementation process within the improvement plan, including how adjustments will be made when needed
- Maintaining systems and structures that support effective planning and implementation
- Ensuring the school's Unified Improvement Plan is aligned with district strategies and goals
- Approaching continuous improvement as a collaborative, whole-child process that involves the broader school community rather than relying on a top-down model



Self-Reflection

Reflect on the description above and how it shows up in your school.

Where Does Our School Fall?

Use the continuum below to reflect on how stakeholders are engaged in our annual improvement planning process.

NOT INCLUDED



Students, families, and community members are not included in any way with the school's annual improvement planning process.

MEANINGFULLY ENGAGED



Students, families, and community members are meaningfully engaged throughout the school's entire annual improvement planning process.

PARTIALLY INCLUDED



Students, families, and community members provide feedback that may or may not be included in the school's annual improvement plan.



Why did you place your school at this point on the continuum? _____



How were the following stakeholder groups engaged in the improvement planning process?

- School Accountability Committee
- School administration
- School staff
- Families
- Students
- Community members

Describe how each group was engaged.



What are the strengths of the continuous improvement processes in your school? What opportunities are there to strengthen these processes?



Existing Strengths
What's working well?



Opportunities to Strengthen
What could be improved?

Data Systems

Data systems are the digital tools and organized methods a group uses to collect, store, and find information. They provide educators a pathway to clear evidence of what students and families need in order to succeed. The following description shows a high standard of data systems in schools reflecting an *excelling* level of performance:

The school's data systems support continuous improvement, informed decision-making, and coordinated student and family support. These systems include:

- Continuous improvement systems, such as those embedded within the school improvement planning process
- Academic and student engagement data
- Student and family support referral systems
- Needs assessments
- Visual tools, such as data dashboards that integrate ongoing student progress and end-of-year outcomes
- Data-sharing agreements with community partners that maintain student and family privacy

Data is used to inform decision-making and action planning by identifying problems or patterns that need to be understood before selecting interventions.



Self-Reflection

Refer back to your **Data Snapshot (Section 4)** and review the data systems in place in your school. Consider the following questions.



1. What is **not** currently being tracked or collected that you feel is important?



2. To what extent are the data systems in place **accessible** to key stakeholders beyond school staff?



3. What processes are in place to **communicate** school level data to families and the local community?



Where Does Our School Fall?

Use the continuum below to reflect on the strength and accessibility of our data systems for both internal (staff) and external (families and community) stakeholders.



Why did you place your school here on the continuum? _____

Professional Learning Opportunities

Professional learning opportunities are chances for people to gain new skills, knowledge, or ideas to do their jobs better. They include things like workshops, mentoring, or hands-on projects that help someone grow in their career and stay up-to-date in their field. High quality professional development can boost student achievement and create safer, more supportive schools. The following description shows a high standard of professional learning practices in schools reflecting an *excelling* level of performance:

The school provides professional learning opportunities that link educator and staff growth to student outcomes, including:

- Professional learning focused on teacher-student relationships
- Professional learning focused on teacher-family relationships and community engagement
- Shared learning opportunities, such as professional learning communities, that demonstrate a direct impact on teaching practices
- Data demonstrating that the professional learning opportunities offered contribute to higher teacher retention rates



Self-Reflection

Reflect on the professional learning opportunities provided in your school.



To what extent does the school provide professional learning opportunities focused on:

- Collaborative leadership
- Restorative practices
- Trauma-informed teaching practices
- Family engagement
- Integrating the local community into classroom lessons and activities



If available, provide 2 examples.



Where Does Our School Fall?

Use the continuum below to reflect on the extent and quality of professional learning opportunities available to school staff.



Why did you place your school here on the continuum? _____

Strategic Partnerships

Strategic partnerships are long-term agreements where two or more groups team up to reach a goal that neither could easily achieve alone. Partners share their unique strengths, tools, or expertise to solve a specific problem or create something new. The following description shows a high standard of strategic partnership practices in schools reflecting an *excelling* level of performance:

The school maintains strategic partnerships that are formal, mutually beneficial, long-term relationships with community organizations to support students and families through shared governance and pooled resources. These partnerships are characterized by:

- A shared vision that all partners agree is better achieved together
- A focus on addressing identified student and family needs
- Formal agreements, such as Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), that define roles, responsibilities, and conflict resolution processes
- Braiding and sharing of resources
- Joint performance metrics and shared data tracking to measure agreed-upon outcomes and impact
- Incorporation of trusted community partner organizations into school operations ([Community School Playbook](#), 2018)

Strategic partnerships may be:

- Programmatic, where schools and partners combine expertise to implement specific initiatives
- Resource-based, where infrastructure such as physical space, staffing, or administrative support is shared

These partnerships are grounded in a culture of shared responsibility between the school and its community partners.



Self-Reflection



To what extent do the formal partnerships in place in your school meet the identified needs of students and families?



Where Does Our School Fall?

Use the continuum below to reflect on the strength and quality of the formal partnerships in place in our school.



Why did you place your school here on the continuum? _____



Do the formal partnerships in your school include:

- Family Resource Center
- Health providers
 - Physical
 - Mental
 - Vision
 - Dental
- Nonprofit agencies
- Local government agencies
 - Housing
 - Nutrition
 - Social
 - Legal
- Local government offices
- Local chamber of commerce
- Local businesses
- Libraries
- Institutes of higher education
- Colorado Department of Education offices
- Colorado Department of Public Health offices
- Foundations
- Statewide Family Engagement Center(s)
- Colorado Coalition for Community Schools



If available, list your strategic partners. Make note of gaps.



Additional notes or reflections: _____

Sustainable Resources

Sustainable resources are tools, money, or materials that are managed so they don't run out. It means having a steady supply of what is needed—like funding, staff, or energy—in a way that keeps the work going for the long haul without exhausting the people or the budget. The following description shows a high standard of sustainable resource practices in schools reflecting an *excelling* level of performance:

The school supports long-term sustainability through coordinated systems, strategic resource alignment, and continuous evaluation practices. These efforts include:

- Regular use of braided and blended funding practices
- Long-term formal agreements with community partner organizations
- Data systems that demonstrate a proven return on investment
- Dedicated human capital and policy integration to sustain systems and supports over time
- Structures that ensure programs and supports remain in place during leadership transitions

The school also maintains teams responsible for coordinating programming, partnerships, and evaluation efforts. These practices include:

- A school-based team that coordinates programming and evaluation and has dedicated funding to support its work
- Team membership that includes administrators, teachers, families representing diverse perspectives, students when appropriate, and community representatives
- Maintaining files, guides, or implementation notebooks documenting how events, programs, and activities are organized, resourced, and implemented
- Providing time during staff or school improvement meetings to discuss how interventions and programming contribute to school and student improvement
- A school-based team dedicated specifically to coordinating community partnership programming and evaluation
- Annual collection of data from families and community partners regarding community assets and resources
- Ongoing discussions with families and community partners about how community resources can support the academic, social-emotional, health, and financial needs of students and families



Self-Reflection



How are initiatives launched, maintained, and sustained within your school? What common barriers tend to show up?



Where Does Our School Fall?

Use the continuum below to reflect on the availability, consistency, and sustainability of resources in our school.

LIMITED & INCONSISTENT



Resources within and provided by our school are limited and inconsistent. They frequently diminish when changes in staff occur.

VARIED & PARTIALLY ACCESSIBLE



Resources within and provided by our school vary in scope and availability but efforts are generally made to procure what is needed and provide access to those who need it.

CONSISTENT & SUSTAINABLE



Resources within and provided by our school are consistent and access is structured to meet immediate and future need. Resources are sustained despite changes in the school.



Why did you place your school here on the continuum? _____



To what extent does the school have access to the following funding sources? How are the funds designated and utilized?

Federal

- 21st CCLC
- Titles I, II, and IV
- IDEA
- Medicaid
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services
- Americorps
- Workforce Investment and Opportunities Act

State

- EASI grant funds
- Colorado Out-of-School Time grant funds (COAPP, NPOST)
- Public and school-based health funds

Municipal

- Dedicated revenue from city/county
- District general funds
- Juvenile justice and crime prevention programs
- Parks and recreation centers

Private

- Philanthropy
- Local businesses
- Chamber of Commerce
- Local nonprofits



If available, list how funds are designated and utilized, and note any gaps.



How does the school provide staffing for family and/or community engagement staff?



What are some examples of sustainable resources that currently exist in your school, and what opportunities are there to expand and add to the sustainable resources?

Existing Sustainable Resources

Opportunities to Expand and/or Add Sustainable Resources

Recommendations for Next Steps

After completing the rubrics, the next steps for a school may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Pausing to determine if there is more learning needed about the community schools strategy and returning to Section 3 of this guide;
- Re-starting the rubrics with newly invited team members;
- Creating a plan for addressing gaps or areas in need of improvement as revealed by the rubrics;
- Moving onto Section 6: Identifying Key Stakeholders and Section 7: Building Awareness;
- Developing a system for data tracking and progress monitoring focused on the school's community schools strategy initiative;
- Connecting with a technical assistance provider to deepen school staff's expertise on the community schools strategy;
- Establishing a sub-committee of the School Accountability Committee to support the community schools initiative efforts;
- Identify the district support needed to more formally consider the community schools strategy; and/or
- Determine what future partnerships the school may need to support their community schools initiative.

School Readiness Rubric Summary

Review your responses on the previous self-reflection questions and summarize them in the below table.

Enabling Conditions	
<p>Trusting Relationships: What patterns or trends stand out to you regarding trusting relationships for your school?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<p>How might you elevate trusting relationships to align with the community school strategy?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Actionable Data: What patterns or trends stand out to you regarding actionable data within your school?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<p>How might you elevate your school's approach to actionable data to align with the community school strategy?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Shared Vision: What patterns or trends stand out to you regarding shared vision practices for your school?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<p>How might you elevate your school's approach to a shared vision to align with the community school strategy?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

<p>Inclusive Decision-Making: What patterns or trends stand out to you regarding inclusive decision-making practices within your school?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<p>How might you elevate inclusive decision-making practices to align with the community school strategy?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
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Supportive Infrastructure	
<p>Shared Governance Structures: What patterns or trends stand out to you regarding shared governance structures for your school?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<p>How can you elevate your shared governance structures to align with the community school strategy?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Continuous Improvement: What patterns or trends stand out to you regarding continuous improvement practices within your school?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<p>How can you elevate your continuous improvement processes to align with the community school strategy?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

<p>Data Systems: What patterns or trends stand out to you regarding data systems within your school?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<p>How can you elevate your school's data systems to align with the community school strategy?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Professional Learning Opportunities: What patterns or trends stand out to you regarding professional learning opportunities within your school?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<p>How can you elevate professional learning opportunities to align with the community school strategy?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Strategic Partnerships: What patterns or trends stand out to you regarding strategic partnership practices for your school?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<p>How can you elevate your school's strategic partnerships to align with the community school strategy?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Sustainable Resources: What patterns or trends stand out to you regarding sustainable resources for your school?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<p>How can you elevate your school's sustainable resources to align with the community school strategy?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

District Readiness Rubric

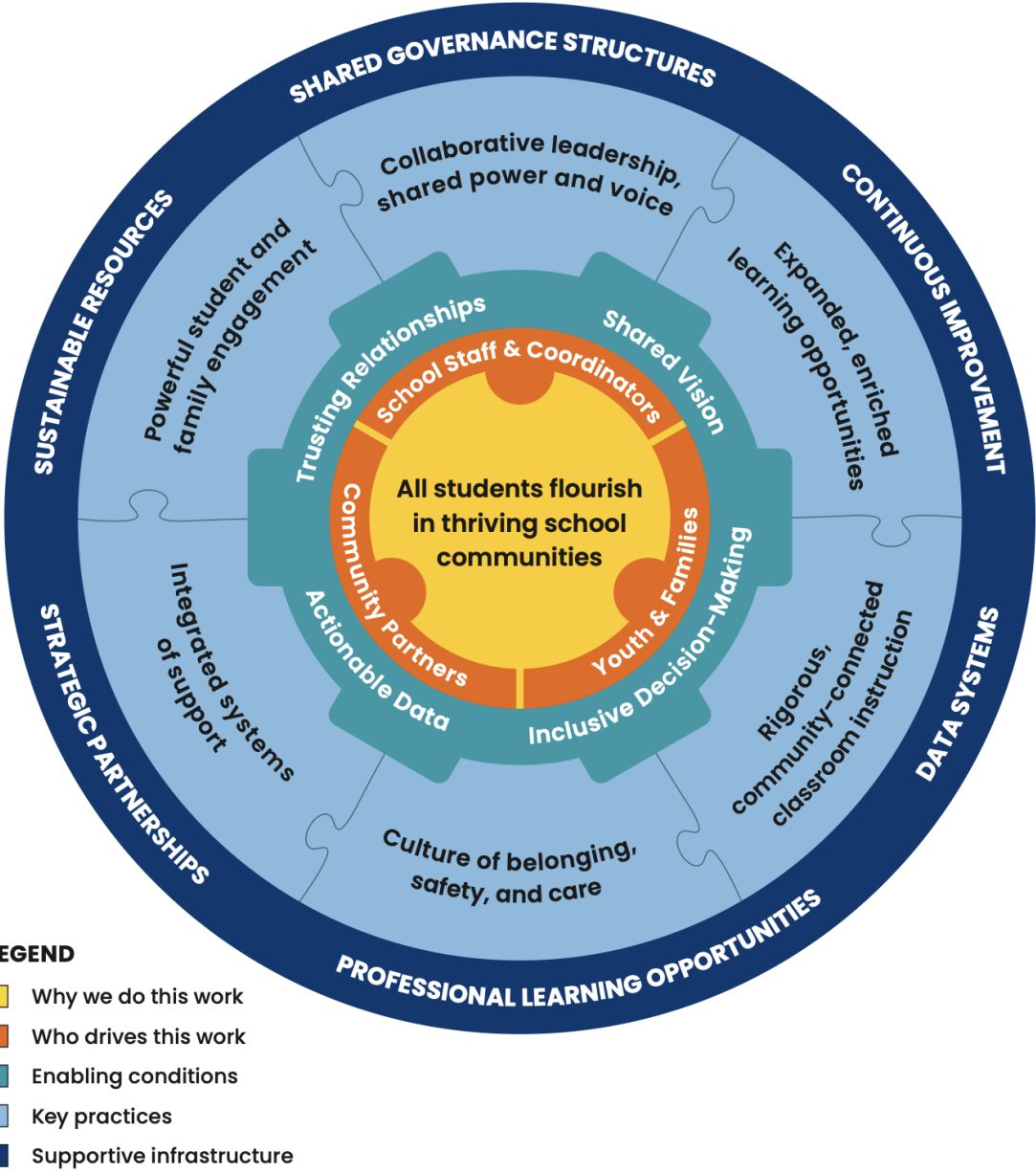
Building on the [Essentials for Community School Transformation](#) Framework (2023), this rubric provides district leaders and staff an opportunity to consider how the components of the framework may already be in place across their school district. The first section is on the Enabling Conditions: *Trusting Relationships, Actionable Data, Shared Vision, and Inclusive Decision-Making*. When fully realized, the enabling conditions create a system within which school- and district-level transformation is possible and encouraged.

The second section of the District Readiness Rubric explores the Supportive Infrastructure currently in place, as organized by the Essentials for Community School Transformation framework: *Shared Governance Structures, Continuous Improvement, Data Systems, Strategic Partnerships, Professional Learning Opportunities, and Sustainable Resources* (2023). This section may require deeper exploration into the systems and processes within the district through artifact reviews and one-on-one conversations with colleagues. Later activities in this guide will help you connect these conditions and infrastructure to community mapping and assets and needs assessments that typically happen once a district decides to move forward with this strategy.

The descriptions provided for the components are written to a high standard with examples considered to be excellent. It is not expected that the district utilizing the rubrics would be meeting this high-level of performance for each component. They are written this way so that through self-reflection, users can identify to what extent their district aligns with that description. Along with self-reflection questions, a continuum is included.

Completing the rubrics is an iterative process - not a one-time activity. Individual team members, and the team as a whole, can and should return to the readiness rubrics to track progress and build towards sustainability.

Figure 1. Essentials for Community School Transformation



Source: Community Schools Forward. (2023).

Enabling Conditions

The enabling conditions of the community schools strategy—trusting relationships, actionable data, shared vision, and inclusive decision-making—create a foundational ecosystem that shifts a school district from a rigid, isolated institution to an adaptive, collaborative partner. These conditions are represented in the teal layer of the Essentials of Community Schools Transformation framework ([Community Schools](#)

[Forward, 2023](#)). Instead of functioning as an independent silo, these four conditions act as a self-reinforcing system that drives transformation across the district and its schools.



Trusting Relationships

Trusting relationships are formed through social interactions within communities and environments. Elements that make up trusting relationships include

competence, respect, integrity, care, shared vision, culture of listening, and interactions ([Brookings, 2024](#)). The following description shows a high standard of trusting relationship practices in school districts, with examples considered to be *excelling*:

District leadership promotes transparency, equity, and family engagement through ongoing communication and shared data practices. These efforts include:

- Sharing data with families and community partners about overall levels of achievement, discipline, and site performance
- Engaging families and community partners in conversations about goal setting, strategies to improve student outcomes, and overall district or site improvement
- Presenting student performance and attendance data disaggregated by race, gender, and other student or family characteristics to support equity and social justice goals
- Sending email communications to families at least every other week and encouraging families to respond with questions or concerns

The district creates meaningful opportunities for school staff, students, families, and community partners to participate in decision-making, leadership, and engagement efforts. Examples include:

- Public events, such as **District Accountability Committee (DAC)** meetings and School Board meetings, that include dedicated time for school staff, students, families, and community partners to share experiences and concerns
- Soliciting student and family input on desired programs and activities to help guide planning and implementation
- Gathering feedback and input from school staff, students, families, and community partners to improve district practices and inform future actions
- District-level program coordinators, such as *Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Coordinators*, *Special Education Coordinators*, and *Family Coordinators*, building relationships with families and ensuring families know how to contact district-level staff
- District-level coordinators supporting school-level staff in strengthening relationships with families to improve child development and student learning
- Providing leadership training for school staff, families, and community members focused on district goals, family and community engagement practices, and community ambassador roles
- Offering leadership opportunities for district staff, families, and community members within partnership work, including serving as integral members of the DAC



Self-Reflection



After reading the above description, what patterns or trends stand out to you regarding **trusting relationships** across your district?



Where Does Our District Fall?

Use the continuum below to reflect on the current strength of trusting relationships with students, families, and community partners.



Why did you place your district here on the continuum? _____



What are some areas where strong trusting relationships currently exist, and what are the opportunities where trusting relationships can be or need to be built?

Existing Trusting Relationships (Areas of Strength)

Opportunities for Building Trusting Relationships (Areas for Growth)

Actionable Data

Actionable data is defined as information that is clear, specific, and timely enough to lead directly to a decision. It provides the context necessary to determine next steps. The following description shows a high standard of actionable data practices in school districts, with examples considered to be *excelling*:

Information is intentionally collected, analyzed, and shared with all stakeholders to drive continuous improvement and inclusive decision-making (Learning Policy Institute, 2023). The school's data practices include:

- Collecting both quantitative data (e.g., attendance, test scores, behavior) and qualitative data (e.g., surveys, empathy interviews, home visits)
- Making data available in real time, or frequently enough to allow for mid-course corrections rather than only end-of-year reflections
- Presenting data through user-friendly and accessible dashboards
- Disaggregating data by student groups to identify achievement gaps ([Burch & Miller, 2022](#))
- Collecting data from more than 70% of families regarding community needs and satisfaction with the school ([CDE, 2020](#))
- Evaluating how teachers implement evidence-based practices aimed at improving student outcomes and strengthening teacher-family relationships ([CDE, 2020](#))
- Collecting annual data from families and community partners about community assets and resources ([CDE, 2020](#))
- Engaging families and community partners in discussions about how community resources can support the academic, social-emotional, health, and financial needs of students and families
- Analyzing current school performance in relation to local, state, and federal metrics and expectations, including **School Performance Framework** metrics and **Every Student Succeeds Act** indicators ([CDE, 2025](#))



Self-Reflection



After reading the above description, what patterns or trends stand out to you regarding **actionable data** across your district?



Where Does Our District Fall?

Use the continuum below to reflect on how the district collects and uses data from families and the local community.



Why did you place your district here on the continuum? _____



What are some areas where strong actionable data currently exists, and what are the opportunities where strong actionable data is needed?

Existing Actionable Data (Areas of Strength)

Needed Actionable Data (Areas for Growth)

Shared Vision

A shared vision is a collective agreement outlining a district's image of a desired future and may include core values and long-term goals for students. The following description shows a high standard of shared vision practices in school districts, with examples considered to be *excelling*:

The district's vision serves as an anchor for decision-making related to student academics, behavior, and social-emotional development and ensures that interventions, programs, and schools are aligned toward shared goals. The district's vision:

- Is co-created by school leaders, school staff, students, families, and community members
- Encourages collective responsibility for the experiences and outcomes of all students across the district
- Is reflected in school board policy and the district's strategic plan
- Is communicated consistently across the district's communication platforms



Self-Reflection

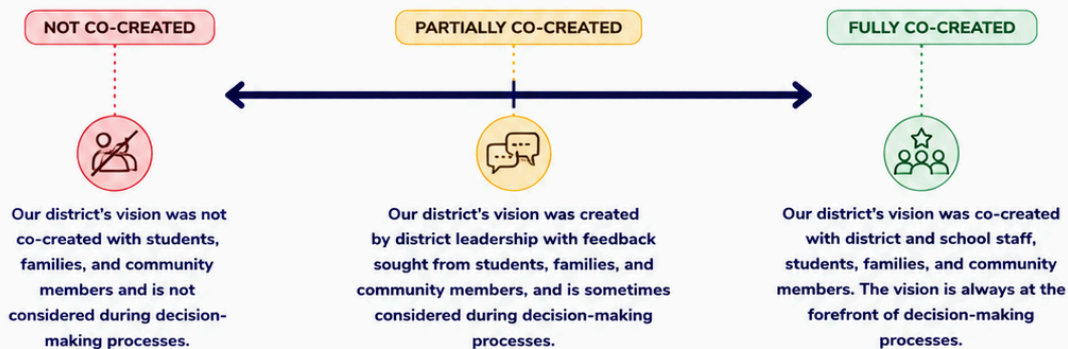


After reading the above description, what patterns or trends stand out to you regarding a *shared vision* across your district?



Where Does Our District Fall?

Use the continuum below to reflect on the co-creation and centrality of the vision in our district's decision-making processes.



Why did you place your district here on the continuum? _____



How was your district's vision created? What are the strengths of your district's vision? What is needed to make it more impactful?

Strengths of the Current Vision

Needed to Strengthen Impact

Inclusive Decision-Making

Inclusive decision-making is a process where those affected by a choice—especially people from underrepresented groups—have a meaningful opportunity to influence the outcome. It ensures diverse perspectives are not just heard, but actively integrated into the final decision to ensure equity and better results. The following description shows a high standard of inclusive decision-making practices in school districts, with examples considered to be *excelling*:

The district prioritizes collaborative leadership and shared decision-making by ensuring diverse voices and perspectives help shape district priorities, policies, and practices. Examples include:

- Bringing diverse stakeholders to the table to provide input on budget decisions, curriculum, resources, and supports
- Engaging stakeholders who have direct connections to students, resulting in more relevant and effective solutions, increased trust, greater identification of inequities, and stronger ownership among school staff, families, students, and community members
- Empowering individual schools to form interdisciplinary teams that include principals, educators, other school staff, students, families, and community partners
- Sharing actionable data with all stakeholders, not just administrators, to support collective identification and addressing of inequities
- Creating formal partnerships with community organizations that establish shared goals and responsibilities and ensure community voices are reflected in high-level budget and policy decisions
- Using consensus-building processes, rather than top-down mandates, to guide district decision-making
- Convening district-level committees made up of various stakeholders to advise the superintendent on matters such as the Student Code of Conduct and the district's strategic plan



Self-Reflection



After reading the above description, what patterns or trends stand out to you regarding **inclusive decision-making** across your district?



Where Does Our District Fall?

Use the continuum below to reflect on the current level of inclusive decision-making in our district's decision-making processes.



Why did you place your district here on the continuum? _____



What are some areas where inclusive-decision making currently exists, and where are the opportunities for integrating stronger inclusive decision-making?

Existing Inclusive Decision-Making (Areas of Strength)

Opportunities to Integrate Inclusive Decision-Making (Areas for Growth)

Supportive Infrastructure

The supportive infrastructure of the community schools strategy functions as a stabilizing and scaling mechanism that transitions a district from a collection of siloed departments and schools into a cohesive, transformational system. This infrastructure provides the "scaffolding" necessary to sustain the enabling conditions (trusting relationships, actionable data, shared vision, and inclusive decision-making) over time. These conditions are represented in the dark blue layer of the Essentials of Community Schools Transformation framework ([Community Schools Forward, 2023](#)). The interaction of these six elements creates a system that moves beyond temporary fixes toward permanent institutional change.



Shared Governance Structures

Shared governance is when district leadership and staff, youth, families, school leadership and staff, and community members work together as a formal team, such as a District Accountability Committee. They decide together on goals and budgets, and make sure everyone does their part to reach positive student outcomes. Shared governance structures begin in district policy. The following description shows a high standard of shared governance structures in school districts, with examples considered to be *excelling*:

District Policy

District policies lead to shared governance structures within and across the system by establishing the formal rules and frameworks that redistribute decision-making power from a central district office to a collaborative group of stakeholders. These policies create a supportive infrastructure for community schools by legitimizing and funding the roles, teams, resources, and processes necessary to integrate community partners and resources into schools across the district.



Self-Reflection



In what ways does the district strategic plan prioritize whole-child metrics—such as mental health, chronic absenteeism, and social-emotional growth - alongside standardized test scores?



In what ways does district policy require annual needs and assets assessments that involve a broad spectrum of the community, or are strategic plans built primarily on internal district data?

District Accountability Committee

All districts are required by Colorado state law to convene an Accountability Committee (C.R.S. 22-11-302). The District Accountability Committee (DAC) provides the district with the organizational structure and authority for making program, policy, fiscal, and standards decisions and implementing best practices. The benefits of accountability committees include:

For families:

- Increased awareness of policies and opportunities to provide input
- A greater sense of ownership and involvement
- Shared experiences and stronger connections with professionals and other families

For education professionals:

- Greater awareness of community values and perspectives

- Increased confidence and ability to partner with families
- Opportunities to engage and collaborate with family representatives in leadership roles ([CDE, 2019](#)).

Each local school board is responsible for either appointing or creating a process for electing the members of a DAC. Use the following table to identify the membership roles of your DAC and to what extent your DAC is engaging in the statutory requirements. If you are not a member of your DAC and are unsure of the following items, reach out to your DAC Chairperson and schedule time with them to discuss.

DAC Membership Roles	Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> At least three parents of students enrolled in the district; <input type="checkbox"/> At least one teacher employed by the district; <input type="checkbox"/> At least one school administrator employed by the district; and <input type="checkbox"/> At least one person involved in business in the community within the district boundaries. 	
DAC Responsibilities	Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Recommending to its local school board priorities for spending school district moneys; <input type="checkbox"/> Submitting recommendations to the local school board concerning preparation of the district's Performance, Improvement, Priority Improvement or Turnaround plan (whichever is applicable); <input type="checkbox"/> Reviewing any charter school applications received by the local school board and, if the local school board receives a charter school renewal application and upon request of the district and at the DAC's option, reviewing any renewal application prior to consideration by the local school board; <input type="checkbox"/> At least annually, cooperatively determining, with the local school 	

<p>board, the areas and issues, in addition to budget issues, that the DAC shall study and make recommendations upon;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Providing input and recommendations to principals, on an advisory basis, concerning the development and use of assessment tools to measure and evaluate student academic growth as it relates to teacher evaluations. <input type="checkbox"/> For districts receiving ESEA funds, consulting with all required stakeholders with regard to federally funded activities; <input type="checkbox"/> Publicizing opportunities to serve and soliciting parents to serve on the DAC; <input type="checkbox"/> Assisting the district in implementing the district's parent engagement policy; and <input type="checkbox"/> Assisting school personnel to increase parents' engagement with educators, including parents' engagement in creating students' READ plans, Individual Career and Academic Plans, and plans to address habitual truancy. 	
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Continuous Improvement

Continuous improvement is the ongoing habit of making small, steady changes to do things better over time. Rather than waiting for a single "giant fix," it focuses on constantly looking for ways to spot mistakes, cut out waste, and make work or life a little smoother every day. To support continuous improvement, the [Education Accountability Act of 2009](#) requires each Colorado school district to create an [annual improvement plan](#). The following description shows a high standard of continuous improvement practices in school districts, with examples considered to be *excelling*:

Tip: Review your district's Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) before considering the following description. Discuss with colleagues if you are not typically involved in the district's improvement planning process.

The district engages in a cycle of continuous improvement to strengthen student learning and overall system effectiveness. These practices include:

- Developing an annual improvement plan that focuses on the most significant challenges facing students and families and establishes clear targets for improvement
- Using evidence-based strategies to address the root causes of student challenges and drive progress on identified priorities
- Outlining a logical implementation process within the improvement plan, including how adjustments will be made when needed
- Maintaining systems and structures that support school-level planning and implementation
- Ensuring school-level Unified Improvement Plans are aligned with district strategies and goals
- Approaching continuous improvement as a collaborative, whole-child process that involves the broader community rather than relying on a top-down model



Self-Reflection



Where Does Our District Fall?

Use the continuum below to reflect on current district policies related to inclusive planning and decision-making.



Why did you place your district here on the continuum? _____



In what ways does the district strategic plan prioritize whole-child metrics—such as mental health, chronic absenteeism, and social-emotional growth - alongside standardized test scores?



In what ways does district policy require annual needs and assets assessments that involve a broad spectrum of the community, or are strategic plans built primarily on internal district data?

Data Systems

Data systems are the digital tools and organized methods a group uses to collect, store, and find information. They provide educators a pathway to clear evidence of what students and families need in order to succeed. The following description shows a high standard of data systems in school districts, with examples considered to be *excelling*:

The district's data systems support continuous improvement, informed decision-making, and coordinated student and family support. These systems include:

- Continuous improvement systems, such as those embedded within the district improvement planning process
- Academic and student engagement data
- Student and family support referral systems
- Needs assessments
- Visual tools, such as data dashboards that integrate ongoing student progress and end-of-year outcomes
- Data-sharing agreements with community partners that maintain student and family privacy

Data is used to inform decision-making and action planning by identifying problems or patterns that need to be understood before selecting interventions.



Self-Reflection



Refer back to your Data Snapshot (Section 4) and review the data systems in place in your district. Consider the following questions.

- What is not currently being tracked or collected that you feel is important?
- To what extent are the data systems in place accessible to key stakeholders beyond district staff?
- What processes are in place to communicate district level data to families and the local community?



Where Does Our District Fall?

Use the continuum below to reflect on your district's data systems and data sharing practices.



Professional Learning Opportunities

Professional learning opportunities are chances for people to gain new skills, knowledge, or ideas to do their jobs better. They include things like workshops, mentoring, or hands-on projects that help someone grow in their career and stay up-to-date in their field. High quality professional development can boost student achievement and create safer, more supportive schools. The following description shows a high standard of professional learning practices in school districts, with examples considered to be *excelling*:

The district provides professional learning opportunities that link educator and staff growth to student outcomes, including:

- Professional learning focused on strengthening teacher-student relationships
- Professional learning focused on strengthening teacher-family relationships
- Shared learning opportunities, such as professional learning communities, that demonstrate a direct impact on teaching practices
- Data demonstrating that the professional learning opportunities offered contribute to higher teacher retention across the district system



Self-Reflection



Does the district offer professional learning opportunities focused on:

- Collaborative leadership
- Restorative practices
- Trauma-informed teaching practices
- Family engagement
- Integrating the local community into classroom lessons and activities

If available, provide 2 examples.



Where Does Our District Fall?

Use the continuum below to reflect on the district's professional learning opportunities.

LIMITED



The district does not provide or encourage participation in professional learning opportunities for district staff.

DEVELOPING



The district offers brief professional learning opportunities in staff meetings and encourages staff to engage in professional learning on their own time.

STRONG



The district builds a culture of professional learning by integrating it all staff trainings and meetings. The district encourages participation in external professional learning and provides support to do so.



What professional learning opportunities currently exist within the district? What opportunities are needed to strengthen staff capacity and deepen implementation?

Existing Professional Learning Strengths

Opportunities to Expand Professional Learning

Strategic Partnerships

Strategic partnerships are long-term agreements where two or more groups team up to reach a goal that neither could easily achieve alone. Partners share their unique strengths, tools, or expertise to solve a specific problem or create something new. The following description shows a high standard of strategic partnership practices in school districts, with examples considered to be *excelling*:

The district maintains strategic partnerships that are formal, mutually beneficial, long-term relationships with community organizations to support students and families through shared governance and pooled resources. These partnerships are characterized by:

- A shared vision that both partners agree is better achieved together
- A focus on addressing identified student and family needs
- Formal agreements, such as Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), that define roles, responsibilities, and conflict resolution processes
- Braiding and sharing of resources
- Joint performance metrics and shared data tracking to measure agreed-upon outcomes and impact
- Incorporation of trusted community partner organizations into district operations (Community School Playbook, 2018)

Strategic partnerships may be:

- Programmatic, where the district and its partners combine expertise to implement specific initiatives
- Resource-based, where infrastructure such as physical space, staffing, or administrative support is shared

These partnerships are grounded in a culture of shared responsibility between the district and its community partners.



Self-Reflection

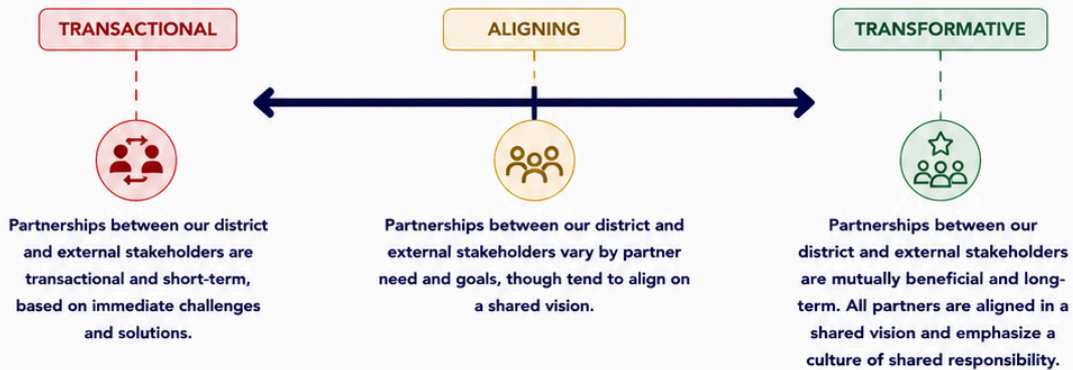


To what extent do the formal partnerships in place in your district meet the identified needs of students and families?



Where Does Our District Fall?

Use the continuum below to reflect on the strength and alignment of partnerships in your district.



Do the formal partnerships in your district include:

- Family Resource Center
- Health providers
 - Physical
 - Mental
 - Vision
 - Dental
- Nonprofit agencies
- Local government agencies
 - Housing
 - Nutrition
 - Social
 - Legal

- Local government offices
- Local chamber of commerce
- Local businesses
- Libraries
- Institutes of higher education
- Colorado Department of Education offices
- Colorado Department of Public Health offices

- Foundations
- Statewide Family Engagement Center(s)
- Colorado Coalition for Community Schools

If available, list your strategic partners. Make note of gaps.



Additional Reflection (Optional)

If applicable, share any examples of successful partnerships in your district and how they meet student and family needs.

Sustainable Resources

Sustainable resources are tools, money, or materials that are managed so they don't run out. It means having a steady supply of what is needed—like funding, staff, or energy—in a way that keeps the work going for the long haul without exhausting the people or the budget. The following description shows a high standard of sustainable resource practices in school districts, with examples considered to be *excelling*: (CDE, 2020):

The district supports long-term sustainability through coordinated systems, strategic resource alignment, and continuous evaluation practices. These efforts include:

- Regular use of braided and blended funding practices
- Long-term formal agreements with community partner organizations
- Data systems that demonstrate a proven return on investment
- Dedicated human capital and policy integration to sustain systems and supports over time
- Structures that ensure programs and supports remain in place during leadership transitions

The district also maintains dedicated teams responsible for coordinating programming, partnerships, and evaluation efforts. These practices include:

- A district-level team that coordinates programming and evaluation and has dedicated funding to support its work
- Team membership that includes district administrators, school administrators, teachers, families representing diverse perspectives, students when appropriate, and community representatives
- Maintaining files, guides, or implementation notebooks documenting how events, practices, and activities are organized and carried out
- Conducting evaluations of each implemented practice or intervention and discussing opportunities for improvement
- Providing time during staff or district leadership meetings to discuss how programs and interventions contribute to district, school, and student improvement
- A district-level team dedicated specifically to coordinating community partnership programming and evaluation
- Annual collection of data from families and community partners regarding community assets and resources
- Ongoing discussions with families and community partners about how community resources can support the academic, social-emotional, health, and financial needs of students and families



Self-Reflection



How are initiatives launched, maintained, and sustained within your district? What common barriers tend to show up?



Where Does Our District Fall?

Use the continuum below to reflect on the consistency, availability, and sustainability of resources in your district.



To what extent does the district have access to the following funding sources? If so, how are the funds designated and utilized?

Federal:

- 21st CCLC
- Titles I, II, and IV
- IDEA
- Medicaid
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services
- Americorps
- Workforce Investment and Opportunities Act

State:

- EASI grant funds
- Colorado Out-of-School Time grant funds (COAPP, NPOST)
- Public and school-based health funds
- Health and nutrition programs
- Early childhood programs
- College access funds

Municipal:

- Dedicated revenue from city/county
- District general funds
- Juvenile justice and crime prevention programs
- Parks and recreation centers

Private:

- Philanthropy
- Local businesses
- Chamber of Commerce
- Local nonprofits



How does the district provide staffing for family and/or community engagement staff?



What are some examples of sustainable resources that currently exist in your district, and what opportunities are there to expand and add to the sustainable resources?

Existing Sustainable Resources

Opportunities to Expand and/or Add Sustainable Resources

Recommendations for Next Steps

After completing the rubrics, the next steps for a school district may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Pausing to determine if there is more learning needed about the community schools strategy and returning to Section 3 of this guide;
- Re-starting the rubrics with newly invited team members;
- Creating a plan for addressing gaps or areas in need of improvement as revealed by the rubrics;
- Moving onto Section 6: Identifying Key Stakeholders and Section 7: Building Awareness;
- Developing a system for data tracking and progress monitoring focused on the district's community schools strategy initiative;
- Connecting with a technical assistance provider to deepen district staff's expertise and consulting ability on the community schools strategy;
- Establishing a sub-committee of the District Accountability Committee to support the development of community schools in the district;
- Identify the school(s) within the district that may be willing to explore the community schools strategy; and/or
- Determine what future partnerships the district may need to support their community schools initiative.

District Readiness Rubric Summary

Review your responses on the previous self-reflection questions and summarize them in the below table.

Enabling Conditions	
<p>Trusting Relationships: What patterns or trends stand out to you regarding trusting relationships for your school district?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•••	<p>How might you elevate trusting relationships to align with the community school strategy?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Actionable Data: What patterns or trends stand out to you regarding actionable data within your school district?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•••	<p>How might you elevate your district's approach to actionable data to align with the community school strategy?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Shared Vision: What patterns or trends stand out to you regarding shared vision practices for your school district?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•••	<p>How might you elevate your district's approach to a shared vision to align with the community school strategy?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

<p>Inclusive Decision-Making: What patterns or trends stand out to you regarding inclusive decision-making practices within your school district?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<p>How might you elevate inclusive decision-making practices to align with the community school strategy?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
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Supportive Infrastructure	
<p>Shared Governance Structures: What patterns or trends stand out to you regarding shared governance structures for your school district?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<p>How can you elevate your shared governance structures to align with the community school strategy?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Continuous Improvement: What patterns or trends stand out to you regarding continuous improvement practices within your school district?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<p>How can you elevate your continuous improvement processes to align with the community school strategy?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

<p>Data Systems: What patterns or trends stand out to you regarding data systems within your school district?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<p>How can you elevate your district's data systems to align with the community school strategy?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Professional Learning Opportunities: What patterns or trends stand out to you regarding professional learning opportunities within your school district?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<p>How can you elevate professional learning opportunities to align with the community school strategy?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Strategic Partnerships: What patterns or trends stand out to you regarding strategic partnership practices for your school district?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<p>How can you elevate your district's strategic partnerships to align with the community school strategy?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Sustainable Resources: What patterns or trends stand out to you regarding sustainable resources for your school district?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<p>How can you elevate your district's sustainable resources to align with the community school strategy?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Lead Partner Agency Readiness Rubric

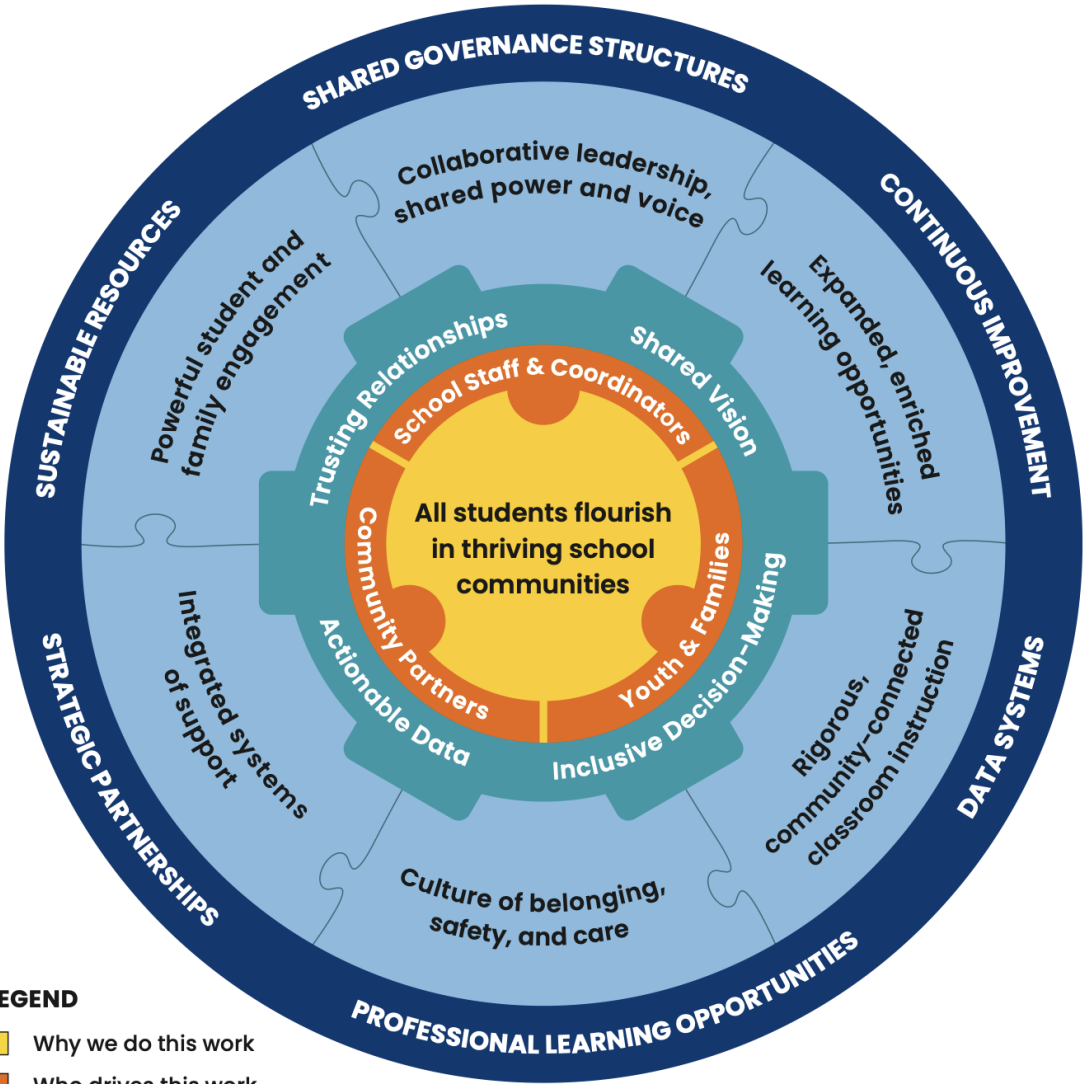
Building on the [Essentials for Community School Transformation](#) Framework (Community Schools Forward, 2023), this rubric provides lead partner agency staff an opportunity to consider how the components of the framework may already be in place within their agency. The first section is on the [Enabling Conditions: Trusting Relationships, Actionable Data, Shared Vision, and Inclusive Decision-Making](#). When fully realized, the enabling conditions create a system within which lead partner agencies can support school- and district-level transformation.

The second section of the Lead Partner Agency Readiness Rubric explores the Supportive Infrastructure currently in place, as organized by the Essentials for Community School Transformation framework: *Shared Governance Structures, Continuous Improvement, Data Systems, Strategic Partnerships, Professional Learning Opportunities, and Sustainable Resources*. This section may require deeper exploration into the systems and processes within the agency and local community through artifact reviews and one-on-one conversations with colleagues. Later activities in this guide will help you connect these conditions and infrastructure to community mapping and assets and needs assessments that typically happen once an agency decides to move forward with this strategy.

The descriptions provided for the components are written to a high standard with examples considered to be *excelling*. It is not expected that the lead partner agency utilizing the rubrics would be meeting this high-level of performance for each component. They are written this way so that through self-reflection, users can identify to what extent their agency aligns with that description. Along with self-reflection questions, a continuum is included.

Completing the rubrics is an iterative process - not a one-time activity. Individual team members, and the team as a whole, can and should return to the readiness rubrics to track progress and build towards sustainability.

Figure 1. Essentials for Community School Transformation



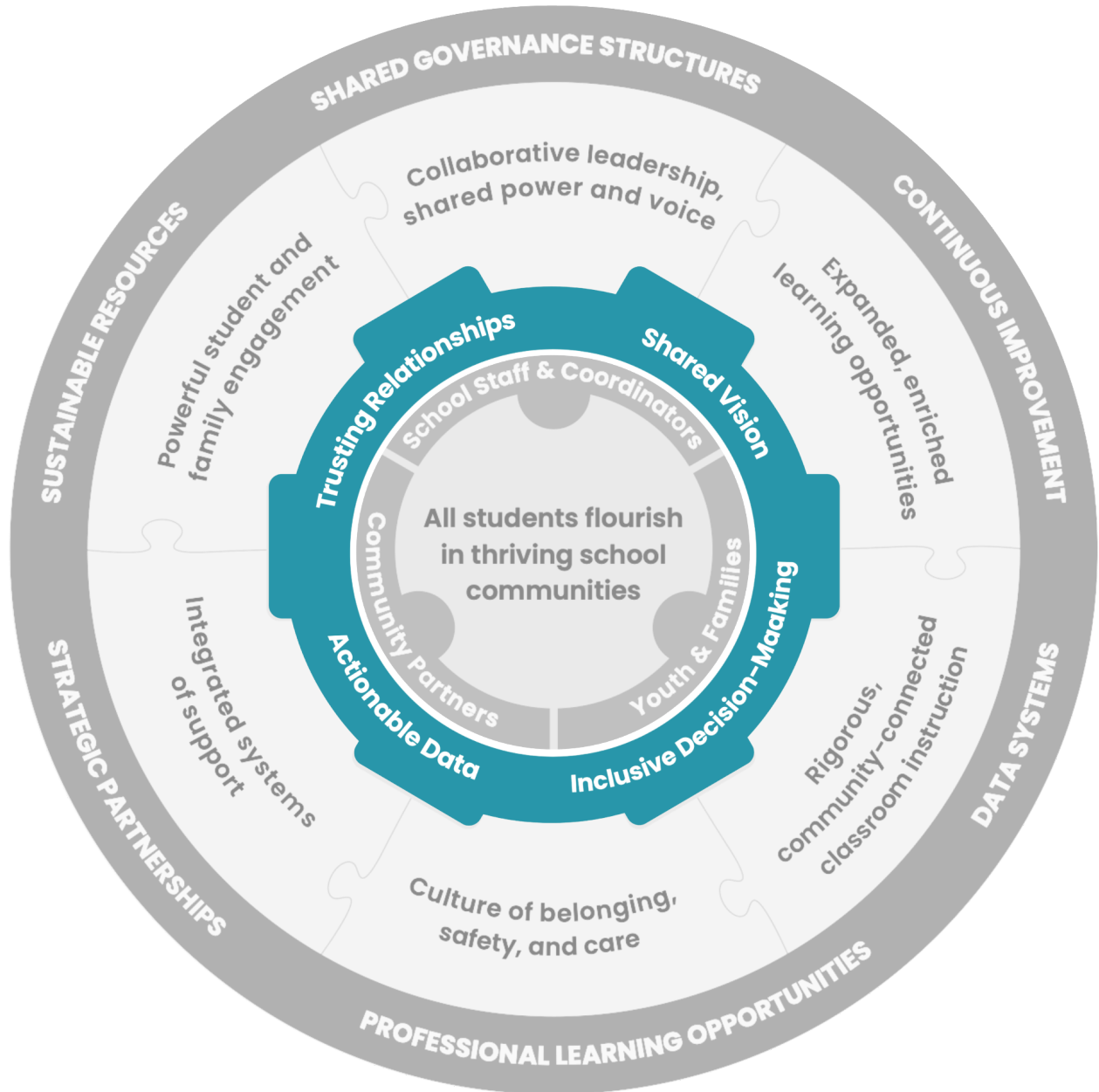
- LEGEND**
- Why we do this work
 - Who drives this work
 - Enabling conditions
 - Key practices
 - Supportive infrastructure

Source: Community Schools Forward. (2023).

Enabling Conditions

The enabling conditions of the community schools strategy—trusting relationships, actionable data, shared vision, and inclusive decision-making—create a foundational ecosystem that supports a lead partner agency to be an adaptive, collaborative partner in a community schools initiative. These conditions are represented in the

teal layer of the **Essentials of Community Schools Transformation framework** ([Community Schools Forward, 2023](#)). Instead of functioning as an independent silo, these four conditions act as a self-reinforcing system that drives transformation.



Trusting Relationships

Trusting relationships are formed through social interactions within communities and environments. Elements that make up trusting relationships include competence, respect, integrity, care, shared vision, culture of listening, and interactions ([Brookings, 2024](#)). The following description shows a high standard of trusting relationship practices between lead partner agencies and local schools and school districts with examples considered to be *excelling*:

Trusting relationships for a lead partner agency mean the agency operates as an embedded, collaborative partner with local schools and school districts. These relationships and practices include:

- Building collaborative and intentional relationships with community partners that schools and districts may not already have access to
- Centering the questions, “What do youth and families in our local schools need, and how can we co-create solutions?”
- Coordinating programs that align with the identified needs of youth and families and demonstrate reliability to school and district leaders
- Identifying unmet needs that existing funding cannot support and aligning resources and opportunities to fill gaps and reduce operational burdens on schools and districts
- Providing a single point of contact to streamline communication between the agency and school or district administrators
- Organizing activities, such as community walks, that help school staff better understand the neighborhoods and communities their students and families come from



Self-Reflection



After reading the above description, what patterns or trends stand out to you regarding *trusting relationships* between your agency and local school districts/schools?



Where Do We Fall?

Use the continuum below to reflect on the current state of your agency's trusting relationships with local schools/districts.



What are some areas where strong trusting relationships currently exist, and what are the opportunities where trusting relationships can be or need to be built?

Existing Trusting Relationships

Opportunities for Building Trusting Relationships

Actionable Data

Actionable data is defined as information that is clear, specific, and timely enough to lead directly to a decision. It provides the context necessary to determine next steps. The following description shows a high standard of actionable data practices for a lead partner agency who partners with local schools and school districts, with examples considered to be *excelling*:

The agency intentionally collects, analyzes, and shares information with stakeholders to support continuous improvement and inclusive decision-making (Learning Policy Institute, 2023). The agency's data practices include:

- Collecting both quantitative data (e.g., attendance, behavior, resource tracking) and qualitative data (e.g., surveys, empathy interviews, home visits)
- Making data available in real time, or frequently enough to allow for course corrections rather than only end-of-year reflections
- Presenting data through user-friendly and accessible dashboards
- Disaggregating data by student and family groups to identify gaps and inequities ([Burch & Miller, 2022](#))

The agency also uses data systems and planning processes to strengthen partnerships with schools and districts by:

- Using a backwards-design framework that begins with desired community outcomes and identifies the data needed to demonstrate measurable results to school and district leadership
- Co-creating data plans with local schools and districts to ensure data collection is mutually beneficial and transferable when appropriate
- Maintaining dashboards that layer school and community data to better understand connections between student outcomes and community conditions, such as attendance patterns and transportation access
- Establishing **Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs)** that clearly define what data will be shared and how it will be protected
- Implementing techniques to connect records across systems without revealing personally identifiable information
- Using disaggregated data to help schools and districts direct resources toward students and families with the greatest needs
- Creating maps that show where eligible families live in relation to available community assets and resources



Self-Reflection



After reading the above description, what patterns or trends stand out to you regarding *actionable data* for your agency?



Where Do We Fall?

Use the continuum below to reflect on the current state of your agency's actionable data.



What are some areas where strong actionable data currently exists, and what are the opportunities where strong actionable data is needed?

Existing Actionable Data

Needed Actionable Data

Shared Vision

A shared vision is a collective agreement outlining a lead partner agency’s image of a desired future and may include core values and long-term goals for the local community. The following description shows a high standard of shared vision practices for a lead partner agency who partners with local schools and school districts, with examples considered to be *excelling*:

The agency’s current vision is aligned with the local school district’s vision and promotes collective responsibility for the experiences and outcomes of youth and families within the community. This shared vision:

- Is reflected in agency policy and the agency’s strategic plan
- Is communicated consistently across the agency’s communication platforms
- Is co-created by agency leaders, agency staff, youth, families, and community members
- Serves as an anchor for decision-making that impacts youth and families
- Ensures that interventions and programs across systems are aligned toward shared goals and outcomes



Self-Reflection

Take a few minutes to reflect on the description above.



After reading the above description, what patterns or trends stand out to you regarding the **shared vision** within your agency?



How Our Vision Aligns

Use the continuum below to reflect on how our agency’s shared vision aligns with local school districts’ visions for students.



Our vision was not co-created with stakeholders and does not align with local schools’ and school districts’ visions for students.



Our vision was not co-created with stakeholders but does align with local schools’ and school districts’ visions for students.



Our vision was co-created with stakeholder and aligns with local schools’ and school districts’ visions for students.



How does the agency’s shared vision align with the local school district’s vision? How do they differ?



Shared Vision Alignment



Shared Vision Difference

Inclusive Decision-Making

Inclusive decision-making is a process where those affected by a choice—especially people from underrepresented groups—have a meaningful opportunity to influence the outcome. It ensures diverse perspectives are not just heard, but actively integrated into the final decision to ensure equity and better results. The following description shows a high standard of inclusive decision-making practices for a lead partner agency who partners with local schools and school districts, with examples considered to be *excelling*:

The agency convenes a diverse group of stakeholders with direct connections to local youth and families to strengthen collaboration, improve decision-making, and increase shared ownership of community efforts. These practices include:

- Bringing together stakeholders to make solutions more relevant and effective, uncover inequities, increase trust, and strengthen ownership among agency staff, school and district staff, families, youth, and community members
- Ensuring agency leadership reflects the diversity of the local school districts and neighborhoods the agency serves
- Supporting community members in serving on committees and boards so policy decisions are informed by lived experience
- Using written charters to shift decision-making power from senior executives to subject matter experts who are closer to the issues
- Facilitating listening sessions where community members identify funding priorities
- Establishing steering committees that include school district leadership, out-of-school providers, and family advocates to jointly determine resource allocation
- Engaging local community members and subject matter experts in reviewing grant applications and recommending which community programs should receive funding
- Maintaining formal partnerships with school districts that define shared goals and responsibilities and ensure community voices are reflected in high-level budget and policy decisions



Self-Reflection



After reading the above description, what patterns or trends stand out to you regarding inclusive decision-making within your agency?



Decisions are only made by agency senior executives.



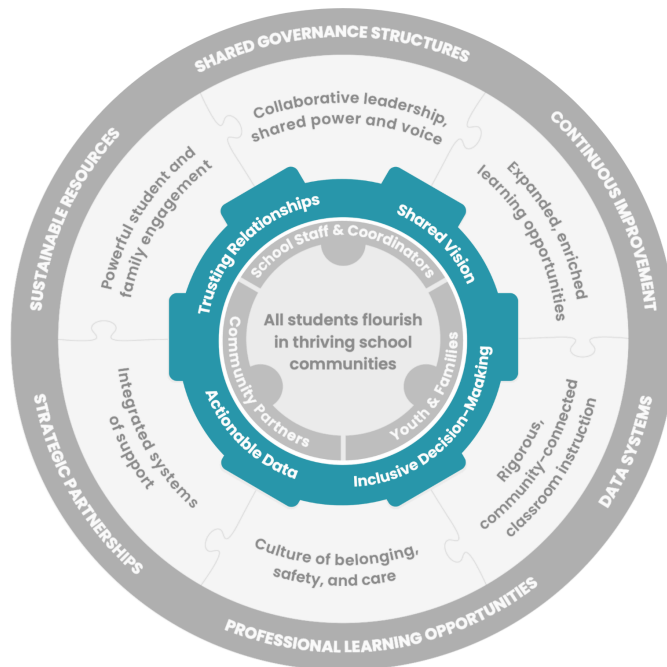
Agency staff are included in decision-making processes but external stakeholders are not.



Our agency intentionally includes stakeholders with diverse perspectives in our decision-making processes.

Supportive Infrastructure

The supportive infrastructure of the community schools strategy functions as a stabilizing and scaling mechanism that transitions an agency from a collection of "add-on" programs into a cohesive, transformational system. This infrastructure provides the "scaffolding" necessary to sustain the enabling conditions (trusting relationships, actionable data, shared vision, and inclusive decision-making) over time. These conditions are represented in the dark blue layer of the **Essentials of Community Schools Transformation framework** ([Community Schools Forward, 2023](#)). The interaction of these six elements creates a system that moves beyond temporary fixes toward permanent institutional change.



Shared Governance Structures

Shared governance is when agencies, youth, families, staff, and community members work together as a formal team. They decide together on goals and budgets, and make sure everyone does their part to reach positive outcomes. The following description shows a high standard of shared governance structures for a lead partner agency who partners with local schools and school districts, with examples considered to be *excelling*:

The lead partner agency has established shared governance structures that support collaborative decision-making, community engagement, and systems-level coordination. These structures include:

- Governance councils that address high-level systems concerns and include representatives from major constituencies, such as agency staff, board members, and community members

- Standing committees that focus on specific areas such as policy or programming and are made up of both board and non-board members
- Advisory groups that provide specialized expertise or community perspectives without having direct authority
- Task forces that are temporary and address a specific issue or project
- Representative councils that represent the interests of specific departments or neighborhoods and ensure those closest to the work have a formal voice in decisions that impact them directly
- Implementation workgroups that translate board governance decisions into actionable plans and bring together the staff members who will execute the work

Local youth, families, community businesses, and community partners are regular participants in the shared governance structures the agency has in place.



Self-Reflection



After reading the above description, what patterns or trends stand out to you regarding **shared governance structures** within your agency? Do school and district representatives show up in any of these structures within your agency?



Where Do We Fall?

Use the continuum below to reflect on the current state of your agency's shared governance structures.



What are some areas where shared governance structures currently exist, and what are the opportunities where shared governance structures can be or need to be built?

Existing Shared Governance Structures

Opportunities for Building Shared Governance Structures

Continuous Improvement

Continuous improvement is the ongoing habit of making small, steady changes to do things better over time. Rather than waiting for a single "giant fix," it focuses on constantly looking for ways to spot mistakes, cut out waste, and make work or life a little smoother every day. The following description shows a high standard of continuous improvement practices for a lead partner agency who partners with local schools and school districts, with examples considered to be *excelling*:

To maximize mission impact and ensure long-term sustainability, the agency engages in continuous improvement through ongoing assessment, reflection, and refinement of programs and operations. These practices include:

- Using structured improvement models, such as the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) Cycle, to guide continuous improvement efforts
- Involving service recipients, including youth and families, community members, and school and district staff, in the co-creation and evaluation of programs to ensure initiatives respond to real needs
- Using technology and software systems to track key performance indicators such as beneficiary satisfaction, volunteer retention, and program effectiveness
- Regularly conducting surveys, focus groups, and community forums to gather diverse perspectives and inform future strategies and improvements



Self-Reflection



After reading the above description, what patterns or trends stand out to you regarding *shared governance structures* within your agency? Do school and district representatives show up in any of these structures within your agency?



Where Do We Fall?

Use the continuum below to reflect on the current state of your agency's shared governance structures.

LIMITED PARTICIPATION / NOT INCLUSIVE



Opportunities to participate in governance within our agency is limited to senior leadership roles.

INTERNAL FOCUS / NOT INCLUSIVE



Agency staff are included in governance structures, but external stakeholders are not.

INCLUSIVE & MULTI-LEVEL



Governance structures our agency intentionally include all levels of agency staff, as well as local youth, families, community businesses, and community members.



What are some areas where shared governance structures currently exist, and what are the opportunities where shared governance structures can be or need to be built?

Existing Shared Governance Structures

Opportunities for Building Shared Governance Structures

Data Systems

Data systems are the digital tools and organized methods a group uses to collect, store, and find information. The following description shows a high standard of data systems for a lead partner agency who partners with local schools and school districts, with examples considered to be *excelling*:

The agency's data systems provide clear evidence of what youth and families in the local community need in order to succeed. These systems support informed decision-making and action planning by identifying problems or patterns before interventions are selected. The agency's data systems include:

- Continuous improvement systems (see: Continuous Improvement)
- Youth and family engagement data
- Youth and family support referral systems
- Needs assessments
- Visual tools, such as data dashboards that integrate ongoing progress and end-of-year outcomes
- Data-sharing agreements with school districts that maintain youth and family privacy

Data is used to guide decision-making and action planning by helping the agency better understand challenges, trends, and areas of need before implementing interventions.



Self-Reflection



Refer back to your Data Snapshot (Section 4) and review the data systems in place in your agency.

Consider the following questions.

- What is not currently being tracked or collected that you feel is important?
- To what extent are the data systems in place accessible to key stakeholders beyond agency staff?
- What processes are in place to communicate local data to the community?



Where Do We Fall?

Use the continuum below to reflect on the current state of your agency's data systems.

**LIMITED /
VERY FEW**



Our agency has very few data systems in place and access to them is limited by agency role.

**DEVELOPING /
INTERNAL USE**



Our agency has clear data systems in place. Data is available to agency staff but not external stakeholders.

**STRONG /
SHARED**



Our agency utilizes all our data systems to inform decision-making and action planning. Systems are in place to share data with local schools and school districts.



What are your agency's existing strengths regarding data systems? What opportunities are there to strengthen these systems and practices?

Existing Data System Strengths

Opportunities to Strengthen Data Systems and Practices

Professional Learning Opportunities

Professional learning opportunities are chances for people to gain new skills, knowledge, or ideas to do their jobs better. They include things like workshops, mentoring, or hands-on projects that help someone grow in their career and stay up-to-date in their field. The following description shows a high standard of professional learning practices for a lead partner agency who partners with local schools and school districts, with examples considered to be *excelling*:

The agency provides professional learning opportunities that connect staff growth to improved outcomes for youth and families. These opportunities and practices include:

- Training staff together to foster a safe, supportive, and collaborative culture where individuals feel comfortable being vulnerable, asking questions, and sharing successes and challenges
- Building stronger, safer, and more supportive communities for youth and families through collaborative staff development
- Providing professional learning focused on strengthening relationships between agency staff and youth and families
- Offering Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) that support staff performance, strengthen commitment to agency goals, and reduce professional isolation and burnout
- Investing in professional learning as part of a broader commitment to workforce culture, helping attract and retain individuals who are committed to positive community outcomes



Self-Reflection

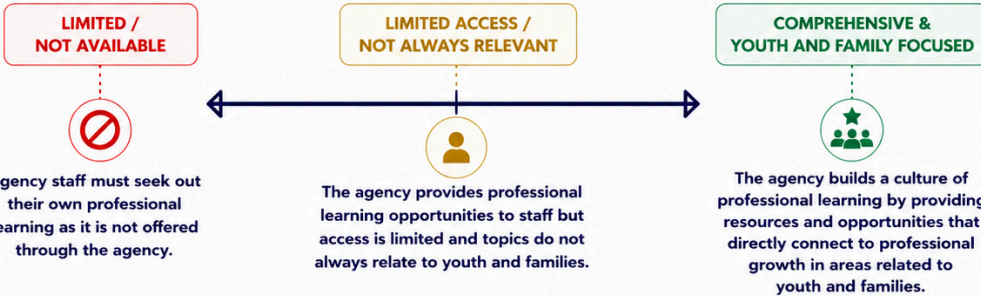


After reading the above description, what patterns or trends stand out to you regarding *professional learning* within your agency? Do school and district representatives show up in any of these processes within your agency?



Where Do We Fall?

Use the continuum below to reflect on the current state of your agency's professional learning.



Does the agency offer professional learning opportunities focused on:

- Collaborative leadership
- Restorative practices
- Community engagement
- Positive youth development
- Education systems

If available, provide 2 examples.

Example 1

Example 2

Strategic Partnerships

Strategic partnerships are long-term agreements where two or more groups team up to reach a goal that neither could easily achieve alone. Partners share their unique strengths, tools, or expertise to solve a specific problem or create something new. The following description shows a high standard of strategic partnership practices for a lead partner agency who partners with local schools and school districts, with examples considered to be *excelling*:


The agency maintains strategic partnerships that are long-term, mutually beneficial alliances grounded in shared governance and pooled resources. These partnerships are characterized by:


- A shared vision that all partners agree is better achieved together
- Formal agreements, such as **Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs)**, that define roles, responsibilities, and conflict resolution processes
- Joint performance metrics that establish shared outcomes, impact goals, and collaborative data tracking practices

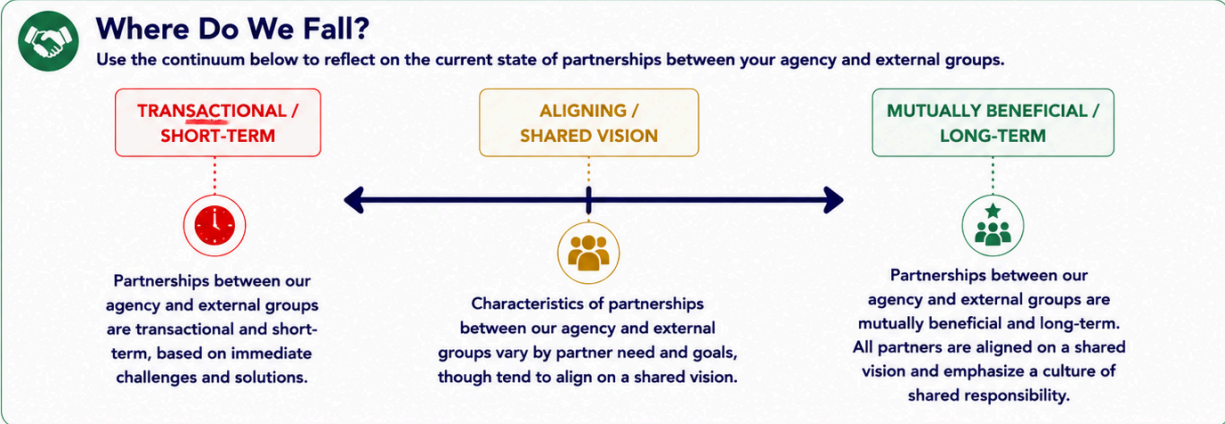
Strategic partnerships may be:

- Programmatic, where partners combine expertise to implement a specific initiative
- Resource-based, where partners share infrastructure such as office space, IT systems, or administrative staff

These partnerships are supported by a culture of shared responsibility across all partners.

 **Self-Reflection**

 **Are there formal partnerships in place between your agency and the local school districts? What identified student and family needs do these partnership agreements address?**



 What are some examples of formal partnerships that currently exist, and what are the opportunities where formal partnerships can be or need to be built?	Existing Formal Partnerships	Opportunities to Build Formal Partnerships
	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Sustainable Resources

Sustainable resources are tools, money, or materials that are managed so they don't run out. It means having a steady supply of what is needed—like funding, staff, or energy—in a way that keeps the work going for the long haul without exhausting the people or the budget. The following description shows a high standard of sustainable resource practices for a lead partner agency who partners with local schools and school districts, with examples considered to be *excelling*:

Sustainable resources include braided and blended funding practices, long-term formal agreements with school districts, data systems that show a proven return on investment, human capital, and policy integration. Having sustainable resources in place means that when a leader of an intervention, program, or initiative leaves the agency, the systems and supports remain in place through the changes.



Self-Reflection



Resources within and provided by our agency are limited and inconsistent. They frequently diminish when changes in staff occur.

Resources within and provided by our agency vary in scope and availability but efforts are generally made to procure what is needed and provide access to who needs it.

Resources within and provided by our agency are consistent and access is structured to meet immediate need. Resources are maintained despite changes within the agency.



How are initiatives launched, maintained, and sustained within your agency? What common barriers tend to show up?



How are grant funds designated through your agency?



What are the sources of grant funding for your agency and what are the allowable uses for those funds?

Funding Sources

Allowable Use of Funds



Does the agency employ community engagement staff?



What are some examples of sustainable resources that currently exist in your agency, and what opportunities are there to expand and add to the sustainable resources?

Existing Sustainable Resources

Opportunities to Expand and/or Add Sustainable Resources

Recommendations for Next Steps

After completing the rubrics, the next steps for a lead-partner agency may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Pausing to determine if there is more learning needed about the community schools strategy and returning to Section 3 of this guide;
- Re-starting the rubrics with newly invited team members;
- Creating a plan for addressing gaps or areas in need of improvement as revealed by the rubrics;
- Moving onto Section 6: Identifying Key Stakeholders and Section 7: Building Awareness;
- Developing a system for data tracking and progress monitoring focused on the agency's community schools strategy initiative;
- Determine if the agency has specific sets of requirements or eligibility criteria for potential school or district partners;
- Connecting with a technical assistance provider to deepen agency staff's expertise and consulting ability on the community schools strategy;
- Establishing a formal committee within the agency to support local development of community schools;
- Determine if the structure of future partnerships on the community schools strategy will be time-limited; and/or
- Contacting a local school district to gauge interest in collaborating on the strategy.

Lead Partner Agency Readiness Rubric Summary

Review your responses on the previous self-reflection questions and summarize them in the below table.

Enabling Conditions	
<p>Trusting Relationships: What patterns or trends stand out to you regarding trusting relationships for your agency?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<p>How might you elevate trusting relationships to align with the community school strategy?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Actionable Data: What patterns or trends stand out to you regarding actionable data within your agency?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<p>How might you elevate your agency's approach to actionable data to align with the community school strategy?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Shared Vision: What patterns or trends stand out to you regarding the shared vision for your agency?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<p>How might you elevate your agency's approach to a shared vision to align with the community school strategy?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

<p>Inclusive Decision-Making: What patterns or trends stand out to you regarding inclusive decision-making within your agency?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<p>How might you elevate inclusive decision-making practices to align with the community school strategy?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
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Supportive Infrastructure	
<p>Shared Governance Structures: What patterns or trends stand out to you regarding shared governance structures for your agency?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<p>How can you elevate your shared governance structures to align with the community school strategy?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Continuous Improvement: What patterns or trends stand out to you regarding continuous improvement within your agency?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<p>How can you elevate your continuous improvement processes to align with the community school strategy?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

<p>Data Systems: What patterns or trends stand out to you regarding data systems within your agency?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<p>How can you elevate your agency's data systems to align with the community school strategy?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Professional Learning Opportunities: What patterns or trends stand out to you regarding professional learning opportunities within your agency?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<p>How can you elevate professional learning opportunities to align with the community school strategy?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Strategic Partnerships: What patterns or trends stand out to you regarding strategic partnerships for your agency?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<p>How can you elevate your agency's strategic partnerships to align with the community school strategy?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Sustainable Resources: What patterns or trends stand out to you regarding sustainable resources for your agency?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<p>How can you elevate your agency's sustainable resources to align with the community school strategy?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

