

Community schools turn a campus into a community hub

A locally designed operating model for learning, belonging, partnership, and support.

Source: National Education Association — What Are Community Schools?



Community schools organize the whole school around the whole child

Community schools are public schools that provide services and support matched to each neighborhood's needs—created and run by the people who know children best, all working together.

The goal is not to add disconnected programs. It is to integrate learning, relationships, partnerships, and support into one locally designed way of working.

THE SCHOOL BECOMES A HUB FOR

Learning

Before-, during-, and after-school opportunities

Health & wellness

Supports students and families can reach

Youth development

Experiences that broaden learning and belonging

Community engagement

Shared voice, decisions, and local partnership

Local needs determine the mix of services and opportunities.

Six connected pillars turn the idea into an operating model

The pillars are adaptable to local context—and strongest when they work together.

01 Strong & proven curriculum

02 High-quality teaching

03 Inclusive leadership



learning • belonging • well-being

04 Positive behavior practices

05 Family & community partnerships

06 Community support services

Together, the pillars connect instruction, leadership, climate, partnership, and support.

The shift is from programs around students to a system built with them

FROM		TO
Programs scheduled around the school day	→	Expanded learning before, during, and after it
Referrals handed off to separate providers	→	Supports coordinated around the whole child
Family outreach after decisions are made	→	Students and families sharing voice and power
A building used mainly for instruction	→	A neighborhood hub for learning and well-being

Integrated does not mean identical: the mix of learning, wellness, family, and community supports follows local needs.

Source: National Education Association — What Are Community Schools?

Local design is the model— not a deviation from it

Community schools begin with the neighborhood, then organize people and resources around a shared vision.

01

Needs

What students and families say they need to thrive

02

Current services

What the school already provides—and where gaps remain

03

Provider capacity

What local organizations can reliably contribute

04

Readiness

Whether people and systems can work in a new way

Six pillars hold the strategy together

The pillars are adaptable; their power comes from working as one system.

01 Strong & proven curriculum

Rich, challenging, culturally relevant learning

03 Inclusive leadership

Shared operations and strategy with students and families

05 Family & community partnerships

Strengths-based partnership and meaningful participation

02 High-quality teaching

Skilled educators with time and support to collaborate

04 Positive behavior practices

Relationships, restoration, accountability, belonging

06 Community support services

Health, social, youth, and family supports coordinated

Instruction remains the center of gravity

01

+

02

STRONG & PROVEN CURRICULUM

Learning is rigorous, varied, and connected to students' lives.

- Foundational and advanced knowledge across content areas
- Enrichment before and after the school day
- Adult learning shaped by family and community interests

HIGH-QUALITY TEACHING

Educators have the expertise, collaboration, and support to respond.

- Instruction focuses on learning and closing opportunity gaps
- Individual needs shape learning opportunities
- Teachers collaborate and keep developing their practice

Shared leadership and restorative practice change how school feels

03 INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP

Operations and strategic planning are shared among administrators, educators, staff, families, students, and community members.

The leadership team keeps the community school strategy central—and plans for sustainability.

04 POSITIVE BEHAVIOR PRACTICES

Relationships and restoration replace reflexive exclusion. Students learn from mistakes, repair harm, and strengthen community.

Partnerships become capacity when they connect to real needs

05 FAMILY & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Recognize neighborhood strengths. Create repeated, meaningful ways for families and community members to collaborate and support learning and school life.

Voice → shared decisions

Assets → learning opportunities

Trust → sustained participation

06 COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES

Coordinate academic, health, social, youth, and family supports so they are easier to reach—and connected to the school's shared priorities.

Health & wellness

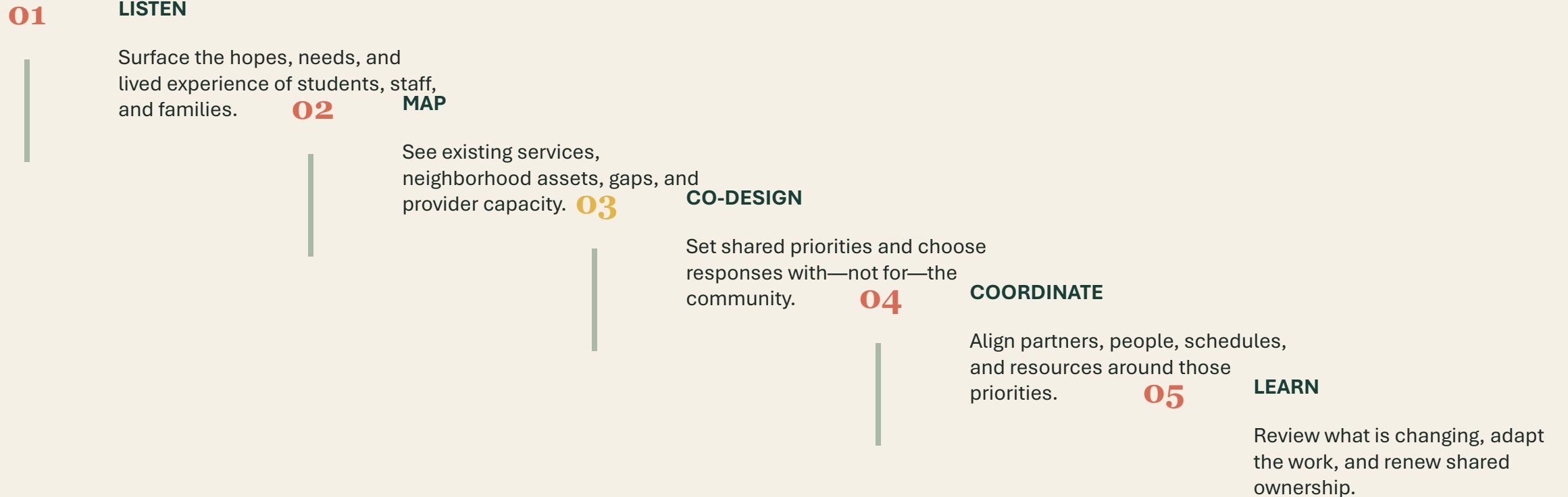
Before/after-school learning

Family and adult learning

Community resource hub

LOCAL NEEDS SET THE MIX

A community school is a repeatable way of working



Districts create conditions. Schools shape the response.

DISTRICT

Set a shared framework



Fund coordination capacity



Remove partnership barriers



Align data and improvement routines



Plan for sustainability



SCHOOL + COMMUNITY

Define the local vision and priorities

Name a trusted site coordinator and team

Build relationships with capable community providers

Use evidence and experience to adapt

Grow ownership beyond a single grant or leader

Standardize the enabling conditions. Protect local agency.

Partnerships convert community strengths into coordinated capacity

The community school model gives outside organizations a clear way to contribute to shared priorities.

COMMUNITY SOURCES

- 01 Health providers
- 02 Nonprofits & social services
- 03 Colleges & universities
- 04 Local government
- 05 Businesses & employers
- 06 Arts, cultural & civic groups

A SHARED
PRIORITY
AGENDA

Needs + assets assessment
Partner roles
Coordinator
Measures of progress

ALIGNED VALUE

- | | |
|----------|---|
| DISTRICT | Cross-agency relationships • funding alignment • less duplication |
| SCHOOL | More learning options • coordinated supports • staff capacity |
| FAMILIES | Simpler access • trusted referrals • services closer to home |

Coordination is the value multiplier: partners contribute more effectively when priorities and roles are explicit.

Community School Resource Portfolio

Partnerships can bring revenue, professional capacity, and shared infrastructure—depending on local commitments and eligibility.

01DIRECT FUNDING	02IN-KIND CAPACITY	03SHARED INFRASTRUCTURE
- Competitive grants - Public-agency allocations - Philanthropic support - Business sponsorships	- Health and social-service staff - Tutors, mentors, and interns - Professional expertise - Volunteer time	- Facilities and space - Equipment and technology - Transportation or meals - Data and referral systems

WHO BENEFITS	DISTRICT	SCHOOL	FAMILIES
	More coordinated spending and partnerships	Additional people, programs, and operational capacity	Greater access to supports and opportunities

Sources: U.S. Department of Education FSCS; Learning Policy Institute

Sustainable Revenue in Community Schools Model

Asset Mapping based on needs assessment of student, family and community needs, matched to community partner resources

01

DEFINE

Choose a small set of student and family priorities.

02

MAP

Inventory current spending, services, assets, and gaps.

03

MATCH

Link each need to allowable public funds and partner contributions.

04

FORMALIZE

Use budgets, MOUs, timelines, and data agreements.

05

RENEW

Track value and outcomes; diversify before one-time funds end.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Balance funding sources, including ongoing v. one-time grants
- Count the full cost of coordination, reporting, and compliance.
- Document the value of in-kind contributions and who owns delivery.
- Protect core services from a single partner or funding cliff.
- Measure access and outcomes—not dollars raised alone.

The evidence is broad—and implementation quality matters

A major research synthesis found that well-implemented community schools can improve student and school outcomes.

143
rigorous studies

synthesized across multiple
community school approaches and
outcome areas

01	ATTENDANCE	More consistent participation in school
02	ACADEMIC LEARNING	Achievement and grade progression
03	GRADUATION	Educational attainment over time
04	SCHOOL CLIMATE	Belonging, relationships, and discipline
05	FAMILY ENGAGEMENT	Voice, trust, and empowerment

WHAT DRIVES RESULTS

- Integrated supports
- Expanded learning
- Family engagement
- Collaborative leadership
- Sustained implementation

California's early results show movement across multiple outcomes

After the first full implementation year, grantee schools improved versus matched comparison schools.

30%

LOWER

chronic absence

Compared with matched schools

15%

LOWER

suspension rates

Compared with matched schools

50+

DAYS

of learning gains

For Black students and English learners in math and ELA

2,500+

schools in the statewide initiative

Read the results as early evidence: one full year, a matched comparison design, and outcomes that may strengthen as implementation matures.

States are scaling community schools through different policy levers

The common thread is durable support for local implementation—not one prescribed service model.

01 ONGOING FORMULA FUNDING

Maryland

Entitlement grants for high-poverty schools

New York

A set-aside within the state funding formula

02 COMPETITIVE GRANTS

California

\$4.1B initiative; more than 2,500 schools

New Mexico

State grants plus coordinator and technical support

03 CAPACITY + INFRASTRUCTURE

California • New Mexico • New York

Training, coaching, consultation, and knowledge building

Illinois • Vermont

Statewide initiatives expanding implementation capacity

Implementation looks different at city, district, and rural scale

Each example builds the same core capability: align partners, people, and supports around local priorities.

	SCALE	OPERATING MODEL	EVIDENCE / LESSON
NEW YORK CITY	400+ community schools across every district	Lead community-based organization + community school director at each site	RAND found positive effects on most academic and discipline outcomes; attendance effects grew over time.
OAKLAND UNIFIED	District-wide whole-child infrastructure	Central partnership coordination, training for managers and support teams, professional learning, family-engagement resources	A district role that makes site partnerships easier to build and sustain.
PEÑASCO, NEW MEXICO	Rural community school district since 2021–22	Coordinator, project-based and after-school learning, health and behavioral-health partnerships	Chronic absence fell from 45% to 32%; graduation exceeded 90% in 2022–23.

Sources: NYC Public Schools, infohub.nyced.org/in-our-schools/working-with-nycps/community-schools/nyc-community-schools-our-results; RAND (2020), rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR3245.html; OUSD, ousd.org/community-schools-student-services; NASBE (2025), nasbe.org/how-states-are-investing-in-community-schools/

Create a Community Schools Citizen Advisory Committee

A time-bound public process can turn a promising model into an Olympia-specific recommendation.

WHY A CAC

LOCAL VOICE SHARED DESIGN

Community schools work when families, educators, students, and community partners shape priorities together. A CAC creates a formal path to test fit, surface needs, and build public trust before major commitments are made.

WHAT IT WOULD DO

- | | | |
|----|------------------|--|
| 01 | LISTEN | Gather student, family, staff, and community priorities. |
| 02 | MAP | Identify existing assets, service gaps, partners, and funding pathways. |
| 03 | RECOMMEND | Present phased options, guardrails, measures, and resource implications. |

BOARD ACTION REQUESTED

Authorize a CAC charter, recruitment process, and 120-day work plan.

Sources: osd.wednet.edu/board-advisory-committees • <https://go.boarddocs.com/wa/osd111/Board.nsf/vpublic?open#> • nea.org/student-success/great-public-schools/community-schools/what-are-they

Community Schools Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC)

Olympia already uses citizen advisory committees to gather input, study district topics, and submit recommendations.

RECOMMENDED CHARGE

**STUDY.
ENGAGE.
RECOMMEND.**

The committee is advisory. It develops findings and options; the superintendent and board retain decision-making authority.

01	PRIORITIES	Define the student, family, and school needs a community-school strategy should address.
02	ASSETS + GAPS	Map current programs, partner capacity, service gaps, and barriers to access.
03	IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS	Recommend a phased approach—pilot, sequence, staffing, coordination, and funding pathways.
04	SUCCESS CONDITIONS	Propose measures, accountability practices, engagement routines, and implementation guardrails.

Membership should mirror the people and systems community schools connect

Balanced appointments make the committee more credible—and its recommendations more implementable.

COMMUNITY VOICE

Students
Parents and caregivers
School-level and geographic representation
Communities most affected by access gaps

SCHOOL EXPERTISE

Teachers
Classified staff
Principals and school leaders
Counselors and student-support staff

PARTNER CAPACITY

Health and behavioral-health partners
Youth development and expanded learning
Local government, higher education, nonprofits, tribal and philanthropic partners

OPERATING GUARDRAILS

Two co-chairs • Board liaison + district staff liaison • Public agendas and materials • Accessible participation • Conflict-of-interest disclosures • Consensus where possible; documented minority views when needed

Sources: osd.wednet.edu/board-advisory-committees • <https://go.boarddocs.com/wa/osd111/Board.nsf/vpublic?open#> • nea.org/student-success/great-public-schools/community-schools/what-are-they

A 120-day process can produce a board-ready recommendation

A clear sequence keeps the committee focused on evidence, community priorities, and actionable choices.

01	WEEKS 1–3	02	WEEKS 4–7	03	WEEKS 8–11	04	WEEKS 12–16
CHARTER + ONBOARD		LISTEN + ASSESS		MAP + DESIGN		RECOMMEND + REPORT	
Confirm charge, norms, decision rules, evidence base, and community-school principles.		Hold listening sessions; review student and family needs; inventory current programs and access.		Engage potential partners; identify resource pathways; develop phased implementation options.		Test options publicly; finalize findings, measures, guardrails, resource implications, and next step.	

DECISION GATE

Board receives findings, implementation options, resource implications, success measures, and a recommended next step: pilot, refine, or pause.