



Self-Assessment for Community School Development

Developed by CSCi for its....

Community Schools Initiative



Center for Strategic
Community **Innovation**

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Self-Assessment of Community School Development

“A community school is both a set of partnerships and a place where services, supports and opportunities lead to improved student learning, stronger families and healthier communities.”

- Coalition for Community Schools, Partnerships for Excellence

Self-Assessment Development

The *Self-Assessment of Community School Development* was initially developed by the Center for Strategic Community Innovation (CSCi) and is built around the Coalition for Community Schools’ Five Conditions for Learning and related research literature. In addition to CSCi’s experience, examples for the exemplary practices are drawn in part from community schools work by Hatchuel Tabernik & Associates, the Coalition for Community Schools, Children’s Aid Society, Boston Excels of the Home for Little Wanderers, Florida Department of Education, Santa Rosa County (Florida) School District, California’s Healthy Start Initiative, Joy Dryfoos, Molly Stark School in Vermont, and CSCi.

Using the Self-Assessment Tool

The *Self-Assessment of Community School Development* provides teams with a framework and rubric for assessing the status of their development under each Condition for Learning. Each Condition has a set of correlated strategies community schools use to achieve that Condition. For each strategy, the team rates their current community school efforts along a continuum of four stages: Emerging; Maturing; Advanced; and Exemplary. The rubric provides a description of what community school efforts look like at each stage of development. In addition, there is a description of “exemplary” included for every strategy.

Therefore, begin the assessment by familiarizing yourself with the rubric. Once you have a sense of the four stages, apply them to the strategies described under each Condition. After assessing each Condition, there is an opportunity to note overall strengths and challenges in your school community. This is how you assess Conditions #2 through #5.

Condition #1 is an exception to this process. As Condition #1 refers to more traditional instructional reform efforts, the assumption is that each team will have different, existing strategies they are already using within their school. Almost all schools now engage in a self-assessment of their instructional program, curriculum, teacher qualifications and support, etc. as part of school-based or district level planning. This portion of the assessment is as critical as the other Conditions, however teams should rate their school’s stage of development based on those existing efforts, still using a four-point scale, but not using the rubric descriptions.

	Stage 1 Emerging	Stage 2 Maturing	Stage 3 Advanced	Stage 4 Exemplary
Engagement in CS Design	Your school has started having conversations about the holistic needs of students and families, and strategies for addressing them.	You have started involving more stakeholders in the needs conversation, e.g., whole school staff, PTA/PTO, a partner agency.	You have involved a broad range of stakeholders in the needs and strategy conversations, e.g., partners, parents, youth, local business or community groups.	You consistently involve the whole school community in identifying needs and strategies, using data to inform both parts of the conversation.
Range of Services	You have identified some resources for basic services in this area and made connections with specific referral sources in the community.	You are providing on-site services for the most pressing need(s) in this area, as well as referring students and families to outside agencies. Most likely, the services are developing parallel to other school efforts.	You are providing significant services on-site. They are consistent and more integrated into the overall fabric of the school. There is also more innovation, maybe an on site laundromat or an after-school quilting club.	You have a broad menu of on-site services in this area that are responsive to student and family needs <u>and</u> interests, well-coordinated, and integrated into the functioning of the school and partner agencies.
Staffing	You are trying to meet expanded needs with existing staffing. You may have gotten a small grant to pilot a project in this area.	You have at least a part-time Community School Coordinator. You have some additional part-time staffing for this area, either through new funding and/or restructuring resources (e.g., change coach, after-school coordinator, nurse, counselor, case manager, parent liaison). Staffing is still very ad hoc.	You have a full-time Community School Coordinator. You have additional staffing that coordinates with other areas, through new funding and restructuring resources (e.g., the positions under Stage 2, plus park and rec. personnel, public health staff, health educators, volunteer coordinator, etc.)	You have a full-time Community School Coordinator. Services in the area are staffed with dedicated personnel. These positions are supported and integrated into the school community and culture. The school, district, and partners have restructured resources to ensure sustainability.

	Stage 1 Emerging	Stage 2 Maturing	Stage 3 Advanced	Stage 4 Exemplary
Partnerships	The school is providing most all services in this area, but is looking at possible partners or contractors in the community.	You have engaged partner(s) in providing services, at least as contractors.	More developed partnerships – you have at least one key partner in this area (or a lead agency overall) that has a shared vision and contributes significantly to the CS.	Partnerships are critical to success in this area. There is a strong lead agency and a diverse group of committed partners, with shared vision, protocols, and resources.
Infrastructure and Governance	New CS efforts in this area are supported through existing school infrastructure. Staff working on new CS efforts in this area are sometimes clear about roles, responsibilities and processes.	You have developed some CS infrastructure, such as outreach materials, standard MOUs, and teams with clear roles and responsibilities. Teams at this level would most likely include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • core group to manage the services, referrals even if it's a small group, e.g., the principal and case manager; • governance team with narrow responsibilities, e.g., the afterschool/ CLC program, or sustainability. 	You have strengthened the CS infrastructure, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • centralized team that coordinates services; • collaborative governance with broad responsibility, e.g., managing partnerships, alignment and integration of services, sustainability and resource development; • standard referral forms, tracking and documentation; • joint hiring of key CS positions. 	Solid infrastructure for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • coordinated services team; • collaborative governance; • standardized policies, procedures, forms; • development and monitoring of workplans; • joint hiring of all key school positions. Your community school approach is institutionalized and fully integrated within school and partner systems and structures.
Best Practices		You have an established/ signature program or programs in this area.	You have established program(s) in this area and are able to train others or present to the field.	You are recognized as experts in this area and share lessons. You may be looking at expansion.
Account-ability	New CS efforts fall under existing school goals and evaluation.	You have discreet goals and objectives, and primarily evaluate outputs (numbers served) and mandated outcomes.	You have developed goals and objectives tied to an overall CS vision, and have added a focus on quality and effectiveness in this area.	You are conducting an in depth evaluation focused on quality improvement and outcomes.

Condition #1 School has a core instructional program with qualified teachers, challenging curricula, and high standards and expectations.

How far along is your school community development of:

Quality teaching staff	<input type="checkbox"/> Emerging <input type="checkbox"/> Maturing <input type="checkbox"/> Advanced <input type="checkbox"/> Exemplary Comments
Challenging curricula	<input type="checkbox"/> Emerging <input type="checkbox"/> Maturing <input type="checkbox"/> Advanced <input type="checkbox"/> Exemplary Comments
High standards and expectations for all students	<input type="checkbox"/> Emerging <input type="checkbox"/> Maturing <input type="checkbox"/> Advanced <input type="checkbox"/> Exemplary Comments
A clear and unifying vision for the school	<input type="checkbox"/> Emerging <input type="checkbox"/> Maturing <input type="checkbox"/> Advanced <input type="checkbox"/> Exemplary Comments
Professional development	<input type="checkbox"/> Emerging <input type="checkbox"/> Maturing <input type="checkbox"/> Advanced <input type="checkbox"/> Exemplary Comments
Teacher engagement in the examination of teaching and learning practices (e.g. data-driven instruction, cycle of inquiry, grade level teams, looking at student work)	<input type="checkbox"/> Emerging <input type="checkbox"/> Maturing <input type="checkbox"/> Advanced <input type="checkbox"/> Exemplary Comments
Early childhood education / school readiness programs or linkages to these programs	<input type="checkbox"/> Emerging <input type="checkbox"/> Maturing <input type="checkbox"/> Advanced <input type="checkbox"/> Exemplary Comments

Condition #1 School has a core instructional program with qualified teachers, challenging curricula, and high standards and expectations.

Overall for this Condition

Strengths

Challenges

Condition #2

Students are motivated and engaged in learning-- in school and community settings, during and after school.

Incorporation of Community-Based Learning in and out of School

Exemplary: Defined in CCS's **Community-Based Learning Report** as strategies that engage students in learning through community-based problem solving, an exemplary community school incorporates some of the following "community-based learning" strategies into the school day and OST curricula: service learning; civic education (e.g., integrated lesson about history of voting with mock voting); environmental education (e.g., learning expeditions); place-based and experiential learning (documenting a neighborhood by walking expeditions with cameras, followed by 3D modeling of the community with guest speakers about the history, and action on a concern the students prioritize); work-based learning; and project-based learning. Research suggests these strategies increase student engagement because, among other reasons, the content is connected and applicable to a real life context, and students take an active role in decision making related to their learning.

Emerging Maturing Advanced Exemplary

Comments

Out-of-School-Time (OST) Programming

Exemplary: Your community school (CS) includes before- and after-school programs, summer programs, and occasional, if not regular, weekend activities. There is a comprehensive after-school program providing a balance of academic support (homework help and targeted academic intervention), academic enrichment, and enrichment and recreation activities. The program is fully staffed and meets national quality standards (e.g., NIOST, Forum for Youth Investment, SACERS). The program is open to all youth but may prioritize enrollment of teacher, staff or parent referred students based on the needs of the school community (e.g., academic support, safe and engaged settings, social skill development). Youth development principles are applied throughout OST programming, e.g., youth input into design and operations, activities promote skill building and connections to the school and/or greater community, focus on relationship building. OST activities maximize parent and community involvement— as teachers, workshops, guests, and resources for service learning, project-based learning, field trips, internships, etc.

Emerging Maturing Advanced Exemplary

Comments

Condition #2

Students are motivated and engaged in learning-- in school and community settings, during and after school.

Integration of School and After-School

Exemplary: School staff view the after-school program as a critical support, while appreciating that it is not simply an extension of the regular school day. Therefore, integration of the two is explicitly addressed in many ways. There is a “lead teacher” from the school who works closely with the after-school coordinator and staff to align the academic portions. There is an academic enrichment curriculum that supports the school day lessons without repeating them. Program staff are involved in the school’s professional development or, if that is not appropriate, the lead teacher provides academic-related training and coaching. The program has a bulletin board to display student work and involves the school in events (e.g., performing during assembly or at lunch, holding open house for teachers). Many teachers lead a class or workshop in the program. There are clear systems of communication, including an after-school box in the office, a written or in-person assessment of needs and strengths of each child (possibly as part of the referral process) followed by check-ins as necessary, and sharing of homework packets and assignments, as well as books, materials, math manipulatives, etc. After-school staff are invited to participate (in person or in writing) in SSTs and parent-teacher conferences.

Emerging Maturing Advanced Exemplary

Comments

Diverse Range of Enrichment

Exemplary: Enrichment classes are based on interest of the youth and the strengths of the staff and community. Students have the opportunity to experience success and share it with family and the school community. Students are given an appropriate level of choice about activities, but also exposed to new ideas and experiences. Attention is paid to engaging youth in activities that might be intimidating or “nontraditional” in a less structured setting, e.g., sports for girls, cooking for boys, Ballet Folklorico for non-Latino students.

Emerging Maturing Advanced Exemplary

Comments

Youth Leadership

Exemplary: Youth development principles are applied throughout your community school. As discussed under the other strategies in this area, students are engaged in meaningful learning that builds skills and a sense of belonging and self-efficacy. Students are trained as mentors/tutor for their peers and younger children. There are opportunities for youth to take and create leadership roles during the school day and OST, including clubs, student government, and representation on advisory committees. Older students work with the adults on identifying problems facing the school community and creating solutions.

Emerging Maturing Advanced Exemplary

Comments

Condition #2

Students are motivated and engaged in learning-- in school and community settings, during and after school.

Overall for this Condition

Strengths

Challenges

Condition #3

Basic physical, mental and emotional health needs of young people and their families are addressed.

Case Management

Exemplary: Your community school has a case management team that coordinates all services in this area. The core case management team has representation from key stakeholders, for example CS coordinator, principal/AP, social worker, clinician, resource specialist, teacher, school nurse, speech therapist, student advisor, resource officer, after-school coordinator, plus additional resource people as available. The team manages all referrals for services, using universal forms regardless of the referral source or outcome, deciding what type of action to take, e.g., hold an SST (student success team) meeting with parents, teachers, and students as appropriate, provide direct services (counseling, screening, after-school program), follow-up by one of the team members most appropriate to the concern. The team shares information to avoid duplication of services, maximize available resources, coordinate scheduling, and share progress and strategies. The team also looks for strengths and gaps in programs school-wide.

An exemplary strategy that emphasizes prevention and leverages resources to meet the needs of all students, not just those referred is for the case management/support team to hold a **“whole class SST”** with each teacher early in the year to identify students for early interventions such as: new or follow-up SSTs; psycho-social groups; screenings; conflict manager or leadership programs; after-school program; academic tutoring; other academic supports; or for health, attendance, or family concerns. Another exemplary strategy is use of **family care coordination plans**. After deciding that a referred student and family are facing multiple challenges, the team meets with the family to develop a written plan. The plan identifies the family’s strengths, concerns, and goals, and coordinates the CS resources in support of those goals

.Goals may include health services for one child, after-school and mentoring for another, adult education classes for parent(s), and family counseling.

Emerging Maturing Advanced Exemplary

Comments

Condition #3

Basic physical, mental and emotional health needs of young people and their families are addressed.

Health Care and Access

Exemplary: At this level, your community school provides significant prevention and direct health care for children and families on-site, in addition to having clear referral paths for more specialized health needs. In conjunction with a committed partner, you operate either a clinic model, i.e., health or nursing services offered during specific days/time, or a full school-based health center (SBHC). Services include: primary health care (exams, checkups, immunizations, testing), first aid/emergency care, management of chronic diseases, medication, basic labs, dental and vision screenings and treatment, and referrals. Health insurance registration and health care counseling are also offered. Depending on the age range and community context, gynecological and family planning services may be offered. Mental and behavioral health services can also be provided via the SBHC/clinic. Health services are accessible after core school hours (e.g., a few evenings a week) and during the summer. An SBHC could offer on-call 24 hour emergency coverage via an answering service that contacts the doctor on call. School staff and parents are well-informed, make referrals, and participate in services and follow-up whenever appropriate.

Emerging Maturing Advanced Exemplary

Comments

Mental Health Services

Exemplary: Your community school provides comprehensive mental health services that include prevention, intervention and crisis services. At a minimum, prevention includes a school-wide positive behavior program (Tribes, BEST, PBIS, Second Step), professional development for teachers on mental health issues, and a case management system. Intervention services include individual and family counseling, psycho-social groups, and in-depth assessments and referrals, in collaboration with the school psychologist and special education services. Groups are organized around a range of topics, as needs are identified (e.g. gender specific puberty groups, anger management, dating issues, new arrivals/newcomers, loss/grief). You expand capacity by utilizing CBOs with specific expertise to run less “clinical” groups. All children can access services, regardless of eligibility issues, and you have an established system in place to bill Medi-Cal, etc. for all reimbursable services. Interns are supervised by licensed professionals as per the Board of Behavioral Science guidelines. School staff, parents, and students are well-informed of services, make referrals, and participate in services and follow-up whenever appropriate.

Emerging Maturing Advanced Exemplary

Comments

Condition #3

Basic physical, mental and emotional health needs of young people and their families are addressed.

Nutrition and Fitness

Exemplary: Your community school addresses the need for nutrition education and physical fitness on multiple levels. You have a school nutrition policy that all staff and partners follow. Nutrition and cooking classes are offered in the after-school program, with take-home recipes and information for families. The gardening program sells fresh produce to local restaurants or at a farmer's market stand, or donates it to a shelter or soup kitchen. Older students are engaged in critical reflection and research into healthy eating and physical development. You have at least one Family Nutrition Night which combines traditions from your families' cultures with easy, nutritious cooking. PE classes happen a few days a week during and after school, either led by partner agencies and/or the teachers. Adult health is addressed as well, perhaps with afternoon aerobics classes for teachers and parents, and salad bar lunch days with teachers.

Emerging Maturing Advanced Exemplary

Comments

Health Education

Exemplary: Health education is provided in the classrooms, OST programs, and as part of the SBHC, clinic, or nurse's health screening and services. There is a trained health educator – either through the SBHC or other grants – who work with teachers to integrate health education lessons across the curriculum, including project-based work. The health educator supplements the basic health curriculum with lessons that meet specific needs, e.g., sexuality, family life, drug prevention. The health educator recruits and trains peer educators to work within their school and with younger children. Lessons and workshops are taught collaboratively by many people including the teachers, school nurse and interns, after-school staff, health educators, peer educators and outside presenters. Health workshops for families are offered regularly on core issues such as asthma and childhood obesity, along with topics specific to your community's needs and interests.

Emerging Maturing Advanced Exemplary

Comments

Condition #3

Basic physical, mental and emotional health needs of young people and their families are addressed.

Overall for this Condition

Strengths

Challenges

Condition #4

Mutual respect and collaboration among families and school staff

Parent Engagement Plan

Exemplary: Your community school has a parent engagement plan which includes efforts across Joyce Epstein's typology of Parent Engagement (Communication, Parenting, Volunteering, Learning at Home, Decision Making, and Collaborating with Community).

Emerging Maturing Advanced Exemplary

Comments

Adult Education and Family Literacy

Exemplary: Your community school offers a wide selection of adult education classes, based on parent input and community resources. This includes basics such as ESL or GED prep., as well as vocational classes (VESL, trades, resume writing), and enrichment (e.g., art, quilting, karate). Flexibility is key, so ongoing classes are offered along with workshop series and one-time events. Classes and workshops happen during convenient hours for parents, e.g. evenings and weekends, and include childcare. The curricula are aligned with the school's where possible, for example, parents in English class are using the same Success For All curriculum as their children. Life skills are taught in context of the public school and other systems, for example, a lesson on forming questions uses topics for parent-teacher conferences ("my child pays attention in class... does my child pay attention in class?"), or an oral exam includes role playing a phone call to your child's doctor. An exemplary model in this area is "family school," which combines adult education classes with parent support groups, child learning in a separate location at the same time (e.g., the after-school program or an evening class), and parent and child together time.

Emerging Maturing Advanced Exemplary

Comments

Condition #4

Mutual respect and collaboration among families and school staff

Leadership Development

Exemplary: Your community school is committed to building leadership among parents and family members, and thereby creating advocates for children, schools, and communities. You provide leadership training, either via CS staff or in collaboration with parent leadership organizations and institutes. Parents have active and meaningful roles on leadership bodies, and represent the school in the community and at public events. They have been hired into paid positions at the school, such as cafeteria workers, paraprofessionals, OST program staff, and parent liaisons. Trained parents act as ambassadors, mentors, and advocates to other families in the school. Parents work in tandem with teachers to improve the school, such as by forming parent-teacher action research teams or inviting teachers to dialogue about how to support child learning at home.

Emerging Maturing Advanced Exemplary

Comments

Condition #4

Mutual respect and collaboration among families and school staff

Overall for this Condition

Strengths

Challenges

Condition #5: Community engagement and school efforts promote a safe, supportive and respectful school climate that connects students to a broader learning community.

Engaging Community as Partners

Exemplary: An exemplary community school invites the community to participate actively in problem solving issues related to the school or the broader community, leveraging the creativity that comes from multiple perspectives and the advocacy potential of community organizing. Community members are also involved in identifying needs and gaps for programming purposes, through surveys, town hall meetings, focus groups, etc.

Emerging Maturing Advanced Exemplary

Comments

Using Community Resources as “Classroom”

Exemplary: Similar to Condition #2, you maximize the community as a setting and as text for learning. Both in and out of school, students are engaged in projects that are meaningful and rooted in the real life issues, people, places, and resources of their community. A strong service learning component is one common exemplary practice, as is work-based learning or action research with older students.

Emerging Maturing Advanced Exemplary

Comments

Appropriate Space and Facilities

Exemplary: In addition to adequate space and facilities for basic teaching and learning, your community school has dedicated space for expanded services, including a confidential space for counseling and an office for the CS Coordinator. The school is accessible and welcoming to community members. If there is a new school being built, community partners are involved in school design and space allocation.

Emerging Maturing Advanced Exemplary

Comments

Condition #5: Community engagement and school efforts promote a safe, supportive and respectful school climate that connects students to a broader learning community.

Whole School Climate and Community Building

Exemplary: Your community school has a school-wide positive behavior and/or community building program (e.g., TRIBES, BEST, PBIS, Second Step). Conflict resolution and pro-social skills are taught explicitly and consistently across settings. Students, staff and partners are recognized for positive contributions. There is a school climate committee, which utilizes the expertise of partners and staff to create a positive climate, engaging students in leading workshops and assemblies on diversity, anti-bullying, etc.

Emerging Maturing Advanced Exemplary
Comments

Mentoring

Exemplary: You have a structured mentoring program, with a consistent group of mentors from various sectors of the community, a referral process and matching protocol, and screening, training and support for the mentors. Members of the school staff are engaged as mentors too, both formally and informally.

Emerging Maturing Advanced Exemplary
Comments

Community Outreach

Exemplary: As a center of the community, your school proactively reaches out to the community. You invite community members to events and forums, or just to come get to know the school. You recruit volunteers, mentors, after-school teachers (e.g., your hairdresser now teaches an after-school elective, the neighborhood café hosts a back-to-school reception for the school staff, a group of retired teachers from the senior center tutor on Wednesdays, the owners of the market give students a guided tour and talk about entrepreneurship, community agencies participate in the Resource Fair, and a student's uncle DJs the picnic). You have brochures that describe your community school vision and model and are often in the local paper.

Emerging Maturing Advanced Exemplary
Comments

Condition #5: Community engagement and school efforts promote a safe, supportive and respectful school climate that connects students to a broader learning community.

Overall for this Condition

Strengths

Challenges



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