

NEA 5 STEPS TO COMMUNITY SCHOOLS





NEA 5 Steps to Kickstarting Community Schools in Your District

Build Leader Support

Local leaders understand the importance and benefits of Community Schools

- Executive Board Resolution Supporting Community Schools



STEP 1



Build Member Support

Members understand the importance and benefits of Community Schools

- Rep Council Resolution, Site Visits

STEP 2

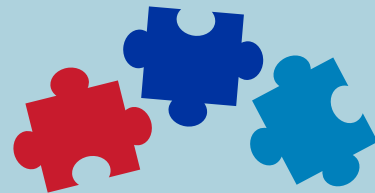
Build Community Support

Families and the community understand the importance and benefits of Community Schools

- Community Town Halls, Home Visits



STEP 3



Build an Agreement for Collaborative Planning

District commits to an open, inclusive, and collaborative planning process

- District signs MOU agreeing to engage with interest-holders in planning meetings

STEP 4

Build Structures for Shared Decision Making

District commits to permanent, ongoing, and inclusive shared decision-making governance structures

- Permanent contract language describing the Community Schools steering committee

STEP 5



After you've completed all 5 steps, apply to NEA Community Schools Implementation Institute on behalf of your local/district collaborative team.



Step 1: Build Leader Support

WHAT outcomes are you looking for?

Executive Board passes a resolution endorsing Community Schools, advocating for the district to meaningfully engage interest holders in planning and pursue funding.

WHY are these outcomes important?

This creates the public, official position of the local affiliate in favor of Community Schools. It also makes sure everyone within affiliate leadership is informed and onboard.

WHEN does it need to be completed? How should you prioritize this given the rest of the work?

ASAP - agenda item at next Executive Board meeting.

In a perfect world, this step would be Step 2 or 3 and the push for Community Schools would rise from the membership and community.

HOW can you achieve these outcomes?

Educate EBoard and other chapter leaders (ex. committee and team chairs) as to how Community Schools would benefit students, educators and schools as well as potential challenges.

Ask EBoard to pass a resolution endorsing the idea of Community Schools, advocating for the district to apply for planning grants and meaningfully engage interest holders in planning.

Begin to incorporate buildup for Community Schools in chapter organizing plans.

WHO should be involved? What responsibilities should they have?

- Manager: Local President
- Owner: Local President
- Consultant: Board Members and Staff
- Helper: Board Members and Staff
- Approver: Executive Board Members

Example:

- [Hacienda La Puente TA Executive Board Resolution](#)

Step 2: Build Member Support

WHAT outcomes are you looking for?

Leaders educate members as to how Community Schools benefit students, teachers and schools so there can be a strong show of member support.

Rep Council passes a resolution endorsing Community Schools, advocating for the district to meaningfully engage interest holders in planning and pursue funding.

WHY are these outcomes important?

Member support is necessary for a sustainable Community Schools initiative; if it remains completely leadership-driven, leadership will constantly have to expend time and energy encouraging members to participate and support when members don't see the value of the project.

WHEN does it need to be completed? How should you prioritize this given the rest of the work?

ASAP and ongoing - agenda item at next two Rep Council meetings, first to prepare Reps to go talk to members, and second to bring feedback back to Rep Council and vote on a resolution.

HOW can you achieve these outcomes?

Educate Rep Council as to how Community Schools would benefit students, educators and schools as well as potential challenges, both to build Rep support and so Reps can work to inform members in their constituencies, provide talking points.

Educate members as to how Community Schools would benefit students, educators and schools as well as potential challenges

- Site visits/road show, explain, answer questions, build support
- Newsletters and print communications
- Digital communications, social media

Form a Community School Committee and draw on a diverse selection of members to work toward Community Schools and to advise bargaining team or organizing team or whatever body is driving the community schools initiative.

WHO should be involved? What responsibilities should they have?

- Manager: President, Organizing Chair
- Owner: President
- Consultant: Local Staff
- Helper: Executive Board, Organizing Team, Staff
- Approver: Rep Council, Membership

WHERE can you go for resources?

Rep Council Resolution, examples:

- [Montebello TA Rep Council Resolution](#)

Resources:

- [NEA Policy Statement on Community Schools](#)
- [NEA Community Schools Fact Sheet](#)
- [TRUE Time is Now](#)

Toolkits:

- [The Six Pillars of Community Schools Toolkit: NEA Resource Guide for Educators, Families, and Communities](#)
- [Partnership for the Future of Learning Community Schools Playbook](#)

Articles:

- [Lawmakers Push Forward On Legislation To Expand Community Schools](#)
- [Alternet: How the increasingly popular community schools model is boosting rural America](#)

Step 3: Build Community Support

WHAT outcomes are you looking for?

Educate families and the community as to how Community Schools benefit students, educators, families/caregivers, and the community.

WHY are these outcomes important?

To be true to the Community Schools values, families and the community **MUST** be involved as co-leaders.

Strategically, having families and the community on board will help pressure the district to make the right decisions and accept shared-leadership proposals.

WHEN does it need to be completed? How should you prioritize this given the rest of the work?

ASAP and ongoing

HOW can you achieve these outcomes?

- Does the local affiliate have a community engagement team? If not, train volunteers to speak with community leaders and community groups, provide talking points.

- Community mapping.
- Do a power analysis of the community to identify influential allies and potential allies.
- Family/community education - going to sites, parent and family centers, house meetings, community organizations, explaining, answering questions.
- Consider contacting local press and local elected officials about the benefits of community schools and the current opportunities.

WHO should be involved? What responsibilities should they have?

- Manager: President, Organizing Chair, Community Outreach Chair
- Owner: President
- Consultant: Staff
- Helper: Executive Board, Organizing Team, Community Outreach Team, Members, Staff
- Approver: Community

WHERE can you go for resources?

Many of the same resources used with members and other educators

- [Partnership for the Future of Learning Community Schools Playbook – Messaging: How to Effectively Communicate for Community Schools](#)
- [Community School Backpack Activity](#)

Step 4: Build Agreement with District

WHAT outcomes are you looking for?

District commits to an open, inclusive, and transparent planning process that includes educators, families, and the community. District begins to explore Community School funding.

WHY are these outcomes important?

Districts are typically the fiscal agent for Community School funds, and for many types of funding they alone are eligible. Having an agreement with the district to collaboratively explore Community Schools will set the stage for more formal shared decision-making.

WHEN does it need to be completed? How should you prioritize this given the rest of the work?

As soon as a critical mass of members and community members are aware and supportive of Community Schools.

HOW can you achieve these outcomes?

- Leaders/members/families/community educate district leaders and the school board in multiple, informal venues as to how Community Schools benefit students, educators, families, and the community.
- Formal union conversations with district leaders and school board members about benefits of Community Schools, opportunities for students and districts.
- Lobby school board members, if necessary, with members and community partners. Advocate for them to pass a resolution in favor of Community Schools and committing to an open, inclusive, and transparent planning process.

- Work with the district to write the Community Schools grant application. Work with district on details of the Planning Committee (which may be different than the structure of the final, permanent Steering Committee).

WHO should be involved? What responsibilities should they have?

- Manager: President
- Owner: President
- Consultant: Staff
- Helper: School Board Contact Team, Members, Community, Organizing Team, Staff
- Approver: School Board, District Admin

WHERE can you go for resources?

School Board Resolutions and Policy

- [NEA Sample School Board Resolution Community Schools](#)
- [Las Cruces, New Mexico Board Resolution](#)
- [Las Cruces, New Mexico Board Policy](#)
- [Adams-14, Colorado Board Resolution](#)
- [2017 LAUSD School Board Resolution: Embracing Community School Strategies in the Los Angeles Unified School District](#)
- [2020 SDUSD School Board Resolution: Supporting the San Diego Community Schools Coalition](#)

Proposed and Sample Contract Language

- [UTLA Tentative Agreement Community Schools \(January 20, 2019\)](#)
- [UTLA Beyond Recovery Proposal \(May 27, 2022\)](#)
- [CTA C4OB Community Schools Organizing and Bargaining Strategies Advisory \(October 2022\)](#)
- [UTR Bargaining Language TA February 2023](#)

Step 5: Build Structures for Shared Decision Making

WHAT outcomes are you looking for?

MOU with the district describing the governance structure of Community Schools, including who is part of the Steering Committee and who selects/elects/appoints them, the scope of the Steering Committee's authority, and how decisions will be made.

WHY are these outcomes important?

For long-term stability and success of a democratic Community Schools model, leadership structures and authorities need to be written, clear and binding on all parties (particularly districts). This is what guarantees that educators and community members have a voice and parity with school and district leaders.

It will be much more difficult to shape the governance structure and secure an MOU after the district has already implemented its own Community Schools model. It then becomes a struggle to restructure something that is already in place rather than to shape something well from the beginning.

WHEN does it need to be completed? How should you prioritize this given the rest of the work?

Once there is an agreement to collaborate on Community Schools, prior to Community School selection.

HOW can you achieve these outcomes?

This may require levels of organizing and coalition building with community allies on par with what locals are accustomed to seeing during contract negotiations over traditional subjects like salary and benefits and other bread-and-butter issues.

THIS is also why building member support and community coalitions prior to this point is essential.

WHO should be involved? What responsibilities should they have?

- Manager: President, Bargaining Chair
- Owner: President
- Consultant: CTA Staff
- Helper: Bargaining Team, Organizing Team, Membership, Community, CTA Staff
- Approver: District Bargaining Team, Superintendent, School Board

WHERE can you go for resources?

1. [NEA-Midwest Academy Strategic Campaign Institute for Community Schools Overview](#)
2. [NEA-Midwest Academy Strategic Campaign Institute for Community Schools Self-Assessment Categories](#)
3. [NEA System-Level Structures for Effective Community School Implementation & Support](#)
4. [Step by Step Guide to Developing Community School Systems](#)
5. [NEA Community School Implementation Institute](#)
6. [Joint Powers Agreement, Las Cruces NM](#)
7. [Hillsborough County Welcome to CSSC Memo/Letter](#)
8. [Los Angeles CS Steering Committee Bylaws](#)
9. [San Diego CS Steering Committee Bylaws](#)