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## **Guidance Document Foundation Aid: Community Schools Set-Aside 2016-17 Enacted State Budget**

### **Introduction**

The 2016-17 Enacted State Budget created a \$100 million set-aside within Foundation Aid for Community Schools programs. The set aside within the State's primary operating aid formula applies to 225 school districts that have been identified as high-need. Districts will use the new funding to provide students and their families with the supports students need to ensure readiness to learn a rigorous curriculum; support connections between schools and community organizations that offer enrichment or social/health services; and encourage the use of school sites as community resources.

### **Subdivision 4 of section 3602 of the Education law states the following:**

*"e. Community schools aid set-aside. Each school district shall set aside from its total foundation aid computed for the current year pursuant to this subdivision an amount equal to the following amount, if any, for such district and shall use the amount so set aside to support the transformation of school buildings into community hubs to deliver co-located or school-linked academic, health, mental health, nutrition, counseling, legal and/or other services to students and their families, including but not limited to providing a community school site coordinator, or to support other costs incurred to maximize students' academic achievement."*

Community schools aid set-aside funds must be used to supplement and not supplant district expenditures for eligible programs and services in the 2015-2016 school year<sup>1</sup>. Accordingly, Community Schools aid set-aside funds must be used for new expenditures on eligible programs and services as articulated in the budget language. Districts that currently administer Community Schools strategies must clearly demonstrate new expenditures on eligible programs and services and integrate existing programs with any new investments permitted by the budget appropriation language. This may include cost growth for current programs and staffing. For example, if the salary and fringe benefits of program staff go from \$60,000 to \$65,000, the \$5,000 increase can be paid for with these funds.

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<sup>1</sup> For school districts with Community Schools Grants from the 2013-14 school year that expire on June 30, 2016, set-aside funds may be used to continue funding for those existing programs. The supplement-not-supplant requirement will still apply for set-aside amounts in excess of the Grant amount.

## Definition of Community Schools

Community Schools are public schools that emphasize family engagement and are characterized by strong partnership and additional supports for students and families designed to counter environmental factors that impede student achievement. While some of the specific attributes of a community school program vary based on the needs of the respective community, all Community Schools share three foundation pillars:

1. A **rigorous academic program** with strong supports to **prepare all students for college, careers, and citizenship, and that supplements quality curriculum** with expanded learning opportunities that keep students engaged, coupled with high levels of accountability for results;
2. A **full range of school-based and school-linked programs and services** that, **based on a needs assessment of the community**, address the comprehensive needs of students and their families and that work with families as essential partners in student success;
3. **Partnerships that demonstrate collaboration with the local community**, including by engaging families and other community stakeholders and drawing on a broad set of resources, incorporating local and State government agencies, non-profit service providers, institutions of higher education, and the philanthropic and business communities in order to extend the impact and depth of services and programs.

## Allowable Expenditures by Category

Each district's set-aside amount will be posted on the Student Support Services website at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/sss/>. For services outlined in the statute and addressed below, costs for provider salary/benefits or contracts are eligible, except where specified, whether the service is provided by district employees or contracted individuals or community-based organizations as long as the costs are an expansion of an existing or for a new Community Schools model.

Eligible expenditures may include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Academic
  - New contract and/or salary and benefit costs for the provision of professional development that improves classroom instruction for providers of regular instruction, credit-bearing enrichment programming or academic support services for students;
  - New contract and/or salary and benefit costs for providers of enrichment and or supplemental academic services to be provided to students;
  - New contract and/or salary and benefit costs for providers of high school equivalency, English language or similar instruction for families or community members;
  - Costs of supplemental instructional materials to be purchased to support regular classroom instruction, academic enrichment or academic enrichment services for students;

- Provision of developmentally appropriate early childhood education programs, not otherwise provided by the school;
  - Other costs of academic support services approved by the Commissioner.
- 2) Health, mental health and counseling, dental care
- New contract and/or salary and benefit costs for fully licensed and certified professional providers of these services;
  - New contract and/or salary and benefit costs for providers of career counseling services for students, families or community members;
  - Initial site preparation and set-up expenses;
  - Provision of pupil services (including violence prevention counseling) and referrals for such services;
  - Referrals for medical, dental, other health services, and social service;
  - Other related costs, not supported through other available funding such as Medicaid.
- 3) Nutrition
- New contract and/or salary and benefit costs for providers of nutritional education;
  - Site preparation for 'food bank' type spaces;
  - Seeds, growing equipment, etc. for a community garden;
  - Other costs of nutrition programs approved by the Commissioner.
- 4) Legal Services
- Districts may prepare and provide space for the provision of low- or no-cost legal services by external providers.
- 5) Other services to students and their families, including but not limited to, new costs for:
- Extended day programs;
  - Programs that address the needs of homeless students and their families;
  - Career exploration or preparation programs;
  - Technology access and instruction;
  - Provision of education and training to parents of students about the curriculum, post-graduation opportunities, educational rights, and available resources.
- 6) Salary and benefit costs for a community school site coordinator.
- 7) Costs of coordination between schools and service agencies.
- 8) Excess cost of transportation to services provided under the Community Schools Plan (e.g., portion of transportation expense not covered by State Aid or Medicaid reimbursement).
- 9) Other costs incurred to maximize students' academic achievement.

## **Accounting and Reporting Community Schools Set-Aside Funds**

These funds must be accounted for in the school district's general fund and under appropriate existing codes within the annual ST-3 report. However, school districts will also be required to document new expenditures on eligible expenses under this guidance relative to the base year for the program, 2015-16. These items will be submitted through the State Aid Management System (SAMS), using the NYSED Business Portal by September 2nd of the School Year following the expenditures. Districts will be required to provide projected expenses for the 2016-17 school year by September 2, 2016, and revise those projections as final expenses in 2017. Changes to SAMS to reflect this report will be forthcoming.

### **Contact Information**

Districts should contact the Office of Student Support Services at (518) 486-6090 with programmatic questions regarding Community Schools, and questions regarding whether and where to include expenses on the new SAMS Community Schools Expenditure form. Questions related to the operation or submission of the new SAMS form should be directed to the State Aid Office at (518) 474-2977.