



New York State Community Schools Technical Assistance Centers

Community Schools

Community Schools are public schools that emphasize family engagement, strong community partnerships and integrated student and family supports. Community Schools are designed to counter environmental factors that impede student achievement. Fundamentally, Community Schools coordinate and maximize public, non-profit and private resources to deliver critical services to students and their families, thereby increasing student achievement and generating other positive outcomes.

New York State Community Schools Technical Assistance Centers (TACs)

The New York State 2017-18 Enacted Budget allocated funds to support three regional technical assistance centers to support its investment in community schools funding to districts.

The responsibilities of these TACs include statewide dissemination of information on effective and promising practices in the establishment and ongoing management of Community School strategies through professional development and technical assistance activities designed to:

- Familiarize school personnel across New York State with Community School strategies;
- Increase the knowledge and skills of school personnel and community partners to aid in the implementation, management, and sustainability of Community Schools;
- Promote the establishment and development of Community Schools that incorporate the characteristics of Community Schools strategies listed above: a rigorous academic program with strong supports, a full range of school-based and school-linked programs and services, and partnerships that demonstrate collaboration with the local community;
- Provide school districts with the tools necessary to design and implement needs/resource assessments that will provide the data necessary to effectively target Community School resources;
- Increase statewide capacity to support effective Community School strategies; and
- Identify and evaluate the school districts' needs within a region in order to provide tailored technical assistance and professional development.

The **New York City Community Schools TAC at Fordham University** serves the five boroughs of New York City. The **Eastern New York TAC at Rockland 21st Century Collaborative for Children and Youth, Inc.** serves the eastern portion of New York State from the North Country to Long Island, excluding New York City. The **Central/Western New York TAC at the Research Foundation for the State University of New York at Binghamton University** serves the central and western regions of the State. The TACs are overseen by the **New York State Education Department's Office of Student Support Services**.

Services

Since their commencement in late 2018/early 2019, the three TACs have collectively offered the following resources and services to schools across the state:

- A website providing contact information for each of the TACs, a library of curated resources including evidence-based and promising practices, recorded webinars, and event listings for each of the TACs
- A monthly newsletter highlighting the work of the TACs, spotlight features on New York Community Schools that are doing promising work and showcasing available resources.
- Technical assistance via phone and email with school staff and community partners at least Monday – Friday, 8:30 AM – 5:00 PM. The TACs have fielded approximately 1,157 calls since implementation.
- 59 on-site technical assistance visits of approximately one full day in duration must be made to high-need districts.
- 22 in-person sessions focused on developing smaller communities of practice within each region. These events collectively served 1,608 attendees.
- 10 additional interactive virtual meetings for each established community of practice via conference call, videoconference, and/or webinar served 189 participants.
- 16 webinars providing professional learning on topics of interest in New York’s Community Schools and served 1,185 participants

Impact Highlights

- Three school districts have hired Community School Coordinators after receiving a technical assistance visit from the Eastern Regional TAC.
- The Central/Western Regional TAC worked with representatives from the NYS Office of Mental Health and the NYS Department of Criminal Justice Services to develop a collaborative approach to mental health and regional youth justice initiatives as a way to build regional community school capacity.
- The NYC Regional TAC provided intense support to new Attendance Improvement and Dropout Intervention (AIDP) schools brought under the community schools umbrella with a specific focus on improving attendance and reducing chronic absenteeism.
- The Eastern Regional TAC worked with two school districts to develop strategic plans to be presented to local boards of education.
- The NYC Regional TAC works in regular collaboration with the NYCDOE Office of Community Schools to identify areas of need and provide relevant resources.
- The Central/Western Regional TAC worked to connect regional constituents with peers facing similar challenges in communities of practice, i.e. meetings of large urban districts, rural districts, and BOCES to discuss strategies for capacity-building within their own unique communities.
- The Eastern Regional TAC helped rural school districts connect with community partners they were unaware of.
- The University of Denver is currently working with the Eastern Regional TAC to conduct a research and feasibility study of community schools work in Massena Central School District.
- The Central/Western TAC has seen a proportional increase in the number of community-based organizations and county offices participating in activities and accessing resources
- All three TACs assisted districts in developing partnerships to support school-based health centers and/or school-based mental health clinics.