

Vermont Act 67: The Community Schools Act

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Community Schools

...are not singular programs. Rather, it is an approach to schooling and represents a fundamental rethinking of how to deliver public education.

...align with Vermont's student-centered approach to learning and existing regulatory frameworks to support proficiency-based, personalized learning and flexible pathways to graduation.

...close equity gaps through the provision of services, resources, and opportunities for students AND their families, in the school.

.... leverage Vermont's unique context, history, and values through place based services and relational assets in rural communities **emphasizing learning by doing, schools as community centers and co-location of services for students, families, and community.**



Broader Policy & Initiative Connections

Implementation context of community schools in Vermont (Act 67) needs to consider intersecting leverage points connected to other progressive educational policies that support the five pillars of Community Schools:

- [Act 77](#) (2013) : Flexible Pathways, Personalized Learning
- [Education Quality Standards \(2014\)](#):
- [Act 173](#) (2018): Enhancing effectiveness, availability and equity of services [...]
- [Act 1](#) (2019): An act relating to ethnic and social equity studies standards for public schools
- [Act 66](#) (2021): Expanded local wellness policy to include comprehensive health
- [Act 28](#) (2021): Literacy
- Act 35 (2021): Equitable School Discipline
- Community Resilience and Workforce Development

CS is connected to many other initiatives and bills currently being put forward. Act 67/Community Schools contributes to and extends much of the work being done across education and social service organizations.

Implementation Science

Implementation Science has been described as **the study of how evidence-based programs or interventions can be incorporated and adapted to maximize successful outcomes.**

(Kelly & Perkins, 2012)

“Full implementation of complex change efforts can take 5-10 years, with schools generally achieving partial implementation in the first 3-4 years of these efforts.”

(Welner & Valladares, 2016)

	Emerging	Maturing	Transforming
Characteristics <i>what you would see in a CS at this stage</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Champions for community school call for the strategy and have developed an implementation team School community members are oriented to the strategy Setting priorities for implementation identified Desire to use data collaboratively for whole school transformation Data is shared with champions; new data interests and needs are identified Common understanding of community assets and needs (A&N) New systems and approaches to schooling are emerging (ie. whole school approach to restorative practices) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New youth, family, and community members are identified as leaders in the school and structures to promote community voice, reflection, and partnerships are developed Shared governance is visible Shared vision and goals are set for the CS based on A&N Data analysis begins and committees try practices such as “plan, do, study, act” New systems and approaches to schooling are codified in this phase Moving from outputs to outcomes Gaps have been identified and resources are connected to opportunities Community school has many feedback loops Alignment between budget and CS priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community leadership structures formalized, co-led, and co-created; all community members, families, youth, and partners involved in processes Policies support CS sustainability & community voice All structures engage in continuous improvement Community school guides other schools and systems to enact CS strategy Affinity groups for youth and staff support equity work Plans exist for transition and orientation of new community members
Processes/Structures/Tasks <i>what CS constituents would do at this stage</i>	<p>Develop or start with an existing group of families, youth, teachers, administrators, and community partners to enact the following implementation functions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct an assets and needs assessment Utilize power analysis to determine which constituents to engage as champions School based data review Orient all school community members to the strategy Community asset mapping to identify potential partners <p>Additional tasks during this phase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hire a Community School Coordinator Develop or utilize an existing ISS team using data (such as chronic absence) to begin connecting students to supports Develop youth and family leadership structures 	<p>Group responsible for implementation will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support co-constructed initiatives based on Assets & Needs assessment Formalize partnerships with a written agreement, such as a MOU or shared use agreement for space and data sharing and management Develop clear CS vision and goals and share with larger community <p>Additional tasks during this phase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structures in place to align classroom instruction with community & extended opportunities Build/identify designated room specifically for families/guardians CS and other CS staff members are sustained through diverse funding sources 	<p>Group responsible for implementation will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead participatory budgeting process or practice budget transparency Codify policies for sustainability with equity focus Coordinate advocacy efforts <p>Additional tasks during this phase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family and youth advocate for policy and address systemic inequities Youth and community led initiatives, such as; conferences/town halls, YPAR projects occur annually Piloted initiatives evolve into new “way of doing school” All community members involved in community school continuous improvement
Measures/Benchmarks <i>what to measure at each stage</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chronic absence Program attendance Enrollment Discipline Service use Student & Family engagement Youth feedback/voice (ie. Hope Survey) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School climate surveys Student and staff retention Staff turnover Academic growth Return on investment (ROI) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graduation rates Post-secondary enrollment Deeper learning & deep listening Workforce development Economic development Micro credentials & Certificates for teachers/staff/partners

Community Schools Forward | Stages of Development
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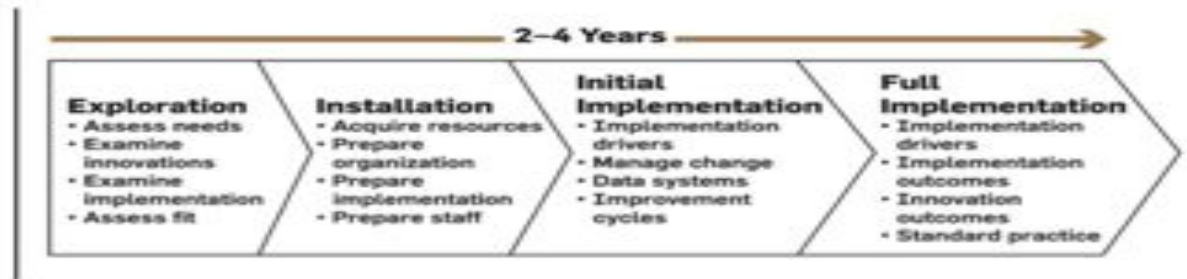


Figure 1. Implementation Stages

Enabling Context: Predictable and Accessible State Level Funding

State level policy provides **an opportunity** to consider how different funding structures can feed into community schools framework.

Coordinated state level structure to integrate multiple funding sources **across state agencies** so that LEAs can predictably access and apply for funding opportunities

Coordinated TA and support to **integrate inter-agency state funding sources** to support comprehensive community schools

State level investment in coordination, community schools mindset and ethos across state agencies

State Level Policy Can Support Community School Braiding

- Agency of Human Services
 - School Health/Health Education
 - Substance Use Prevention/Health Equity
- Department of Labor/Agency of Education
 - Workforce education, training and development
- Department of Agriculture
 - Food systems, community resiliency, farm to school
- Department of Mental Health
 - School/Community mental health prevention and treatment
- Agency of Education
 - Flexible Pathway funding for student-centered learning
 - State and Federal funding for systems-level improvement

Can coordinated and interdisciplinary policymaking at the state level support braided funding at the local level to advance community school work?

State Level Investments Support Local Braiding for Community Schools

- [Vermont Act 118](#): Opiate Abatement Special Fund and [Opiate Settlement Advisory Committee](#)
- Vermont Agency of Agriculture, [Farm to School](#) Early Childhood Capacity Building Grants, Vision Grants & Community Supported Agriculture
- Vermont Agency of Education, [Tobacco Grants](#), [Flexible Pathways Grants B.504.1](#)
- Vermont AOE, DMH & DVHA - [Options for Funding of Social Emotional Learning and School Mental Health](#)
- Vermont Department of Labor, [Work Based Learning & Training Grants](#)

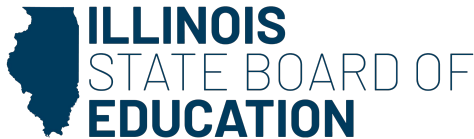
Recent state level investments: community schools



There are currently 91 community schools with grant funding from NMPED. Including CS without this funding, there are an estimated 150 CS throughout NM. [The NMPED CS team supports all of these community schools and all public schools \(including charter schools\) that wish to become a community school](#) to support the whole child. [NMPED offers community school grants:](#) planning, implementation and renewal



California made a historic \$4.1 billion investment in planning, implementation, and coordination grants—as well as technical assistance—for the [state-funded California Community Schools Partnership Program](#). This investment is intended to provide sufficient resources for every high-poverty school in California to become a community school within the next 5 to 7 years.



Illinois used federal Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funding to establish the [Community Partnership Grant](#) program and help address pandemic recovery efforts, similar to Vermont’s investment.



The Georgia Department of Education has begun a process to identify potential Community Schools in the state and is developing a “Whole Child Model School Certification” process, to support schools and systems working to implement the Community Schools model. [In 2022, GA HB HB 201 was proposed to create a certification process for Whole Child Model schools.](#)



Federal Full Service Community Schools Grant Program (FSCS)

The Full-Service Community Schools (FSCS) grant program provides support for the planning, implementation, and operation of full-service community schools that improve the coordination, integration, accessibility, and effectiveness of services for children and families, particularly for children attending high-poverty schools.

[OESE](#) » [OFFICES/PROGRAMS BY OFFI...](#) » [OFFICE OF DISCRETIONARY...](#) » [SCHOOL CHOICE & IMPR...](#) » [FULL-SERVICE COMMUNITY S...](#) » [FUNDING AND LEGISLATION](#)

Funding and Legislation

Included in the chart below is the amount of funding per fiscal year since FY 2009.

Fiscal Year (FY)	Appropriation for new and continuation awards
FY 2023	\$150,000,000
FY 2022	\$75,000,000
FY 2021	\$30,000,000
FY2020	\$25,000,000
FY 2019	\$17,500,000
FY 2018	\$17,500,000
FY 2015	\$10,000,000
FY 2014	\$10,000,000
FY 2013	\$0
FY 2012	\$10,000,000
FY 2011	\$10,000,000
FY 2010	\$10,000,000
FY 2009	\$5,000,000

- Full-Service Community Schools Program (FSCS)
 - FY 2023 FSCS Grant Competition
 - 2023 Call for Peer Reviewers
 - FSCS Grant Awards
 - Eligibility and Archived Application Information
 - Funding and Legislation
 - General Community School Resources



School Choice & Improvement Programs

Overview

The Office of School Choice and Improvement Programs (SCIP) administers discretionary grant programs and delivering technical assistance to improve schools, promote choice, and engage parents. This is based on the belief that all education sectors (public schools, public charter schools, and nonpublic schools) can offer quality education experiences for students, and that each parent has the power to find the right educational option for their child.

Recent Awardees: FSCS

State Scaling ([Idaho](#), [Florida](#), [Illinois](#), [North Carolina](#))

Multi-LEAs

Capacity Building

Fiscal Year (FY)	Number of new awards
FY 2023	30
FY 2022	42
FY 2020	19
FY 2019	08
FY 2018	15

Opportunities & Challenges: Federal FSCS Funding

SEA is not an eligible applicant and prioritization of community partners

IHE partner applicant potential but financial implications

Multi-LEA applications will require CS RPP support/TA as LEAs may not be individually competitive

What Help Would Look Like at the Federal Level?

Leverage/replicate the 21CCLC Nita M. Lowey model for Full-Service Community School grant program to support:

- **Efficiency and predictability** – provide allocations to SEAs to run competitive grant program & identify connections across existing state/ federal programs to support
- **Coherence and reduce initiative fatigue** – which will also address real-time and extended concerns about educator workforce shortages and unintended inequities that arise through short-term pilots and “innovation zones” which helps
- **Scale community school implementation** -- cohorts and communities can grow and can learn from one another and an SEA can staff & support it appropriately which requires
- **Avenues for small and rural districts and schools to compete** – (which is hard to do if you’re a school that has a shared principal or a nurse once a week) which can be supported by
- **FSCS grant allocations to states/SEAs**

Congressional Direct Spending Request, FY24 - Senator Sanders

- On April 12, 2023 - Senator Sanders [advanced our CS CDS request](#) to be considered Fiscal Year 2024 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education and Related Agencies appropriations bill
- Leverage our UVM-AOE CS RPP
 - CS Continuity Grants
 - CS Development Grants
 - Bolster UVM faculty research/involvement, student internships/placements and service learning courses
 - Integrate with [IFRP](#), [FSRC](#), [VCHIP/LCOM](#) and existing [CESS](#) school partnerships (social work, education, counseling)

University of Vermont

With this funding, the University of Vermont will support existing community schools through service-learning, research partnerships and grant funding, while also providing institutional support and grants to develop three new community schools.

Burlington VT

\$1,999

Community Schools: A Return on Investment for the State

A comprehensive ROI process is planned within the VT CS RPP.

To date, extensive qualitative, experiential data has been collected regarding CS implementation and evolution. Longitudinal, quantitative data (hard numbers) are forthcoming and will be used to contribute to ROI calculations.

Synthesis of cost-benefit research “suggests an excellent return on investment of up to \$15 in social value and economic benefits for every dollar spent on school based wraparound services” (Oakes, 2017)

Recent ROI research was conducted in New Mexico focused on Community School Coordinators. This report states,

*The calculated ROI represents the value of the benefits contributed to the community school by the Coordinator as measured by the ratio of the net benefits to the costs. The **ROI results were positive producing a 7.11 to 1 ratio, meaning for each \$1 invested in the cost of the Coordinator the school received \$7.11 in return.***

Martinez, L., Hayes, C. D., & Silloway, T. (2013); Bloodworth & Horner, 2019

Strategies for Sustainability

Predictable funding to support capacity building grants and scaled Community School development across the state:

- Aligns with and can advance our goals for students within other student-centered education regulation and initiatives (e.g., Act 77, Act 173, Act 1, Act 28, EQS, etc.)

Appropriately resourcing state-level supports/collaborative activity for sustaining Community Schools:

- Sustainable, anchoring organization structures for equitable and transformative research and evaluation (e.g., VT CS RPP) provide scaffolding and access to networks, resources.



Center for Universal
Education at Brookings,
2021)

Leveraging University-SEA RPP

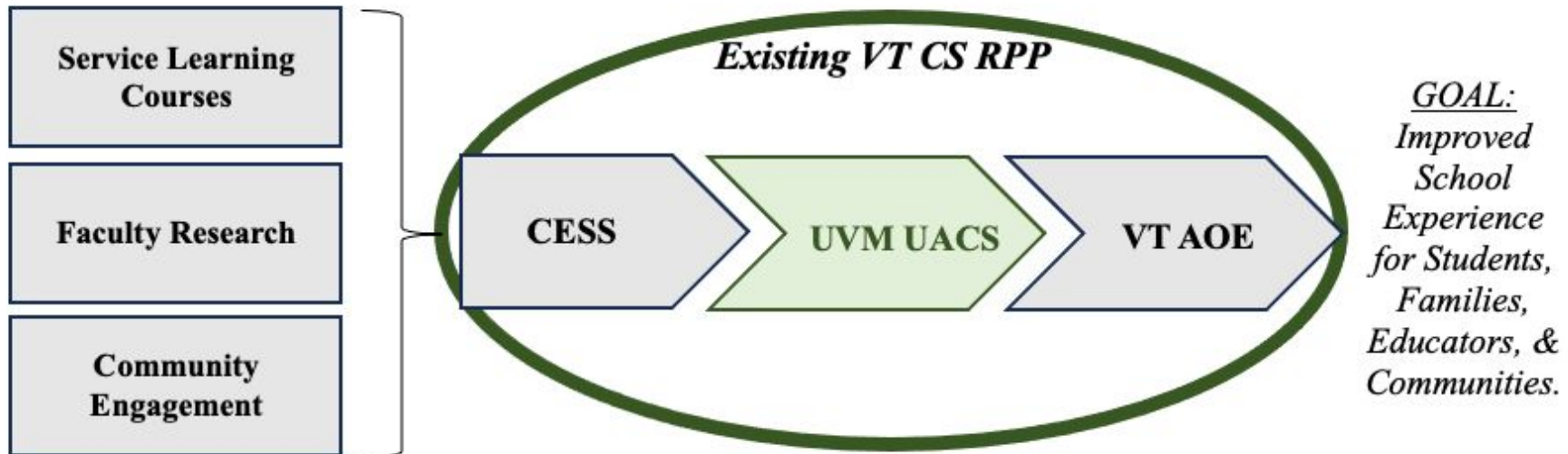
What can/should be the role of a IHE partner in supporting community schools implementation in Vermont?

How can IHE, like the University of Vermont, leverage their human capital, financial capital and resources to support community schools implementation and evaluation?

VTEdRPP@UVM

Different Kind of University Assisted Community School

The VT CS RPP has also laid the groundwork for the development of a unique structure for the implementation and sustained support of community schools in the State of Vermont, a University Assisted Community School (UACS). The design and implementation of a UVM UACS would seamlessly incorporate the existing VT CS RPP within a larger system, as an ongoing bridge between the VT AOE, the UVM UACS, and the broader education community across Vermont. Such a network would also provide distinct opportunities for UVM CESS faculty in a range of disciplines to conduct service-learning courses, independent faculty research, as well as unique, contextualized, and timely community engagement efforts that meet the needs of local Vermonters.





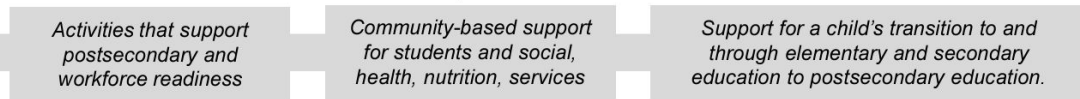
IHEs & Community Schools

i Community colleges, colleges, and universities (public as well as private) play crucial, multi-faceted roles in their communities. The FSCS grant has a **natural integration with the goals, programs, and initiatives currently being undertaken by IHEs**. The pipeline services that are offered via the FSCS program are directly connected to institutional missions and have a long-lasting positive impact on IHEs.

Current IHE Activities



Pipeline Service Benefits



The future of IHEs and their communities are deeply intertwined. Institutions that engage in the community school model stand to **benefit in a variety of ways**¹:



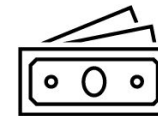
Advance learning, research, teaching, and service



Increased ability to recruit and retain outstanding faculty and students



Enhanced global leadership and reputation



Persuasive case for increased funding from donors and foundations



SEA Examples



While SEAs aren't an eligible applicant for FSCS, SEAs are an important partner for eligible applicants applying to an FSCS grant. Both the SEA and school district play a critical role in supporting and sustaining the full-service community school approach.

SEAs

- Identify opportunities, and encourage eligible applicants to apply for FSCS funding
- When applicable, pair with other federal or state funding to enhance programming
- Working at the State level, serve to broker relationships and coordinate resources across systems and sectors



Eligible Applicants

- Apply for FSCS grant and be the primary lead on implementation and oversight
- Engage with Department of Education for Technical Assistance on application and/or grant implementation when applicable
- Partner with community stakeholders to maximize impact



Several states and districts have taken steps to support community school approaches, with several states already using federal relief funds to support and expand access to full-service community schools. A few examples are highlighted below. The Department also made three awards under Absolute Priority 5 in FY22 – you can view information about these projects on [the FSCS Program Site](#).



California

- California is providing \$45 million, including from its Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funding, to start a competitive state grant program for school districts to support and expand existing community school initiatives.
- The state legislature passed a proposal providing the grant program with up to \$3 billion in onetime funding to develop new and expand existing community school initiatives.



Vermont

- Vermont is using \$3.4 million in ESSER funds to support community schools through community school coordinators, evidence-based programming, collaborative needs assessments, and more.
- Funds are targeted to schools where at least 40% of students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch



New Mexico

- New Mexico provides technical assistance and conducts annual evaluations of the 54 community schools in the state, each of which has a full-service community school coordinator.
- The SEA is supported by the New Mexico Community Schools State Coalition, an appointed body of educators, advocates, and researchers with community school expertise.

Source: <https://oese.ed.gov/files/2021/07/21-0138-ARP-Community-Schools-OMB-and-OS-Approved-071421-1.pdf>

