

# Virginia COMMUNITY SCHOOL FRAMEWORK



Virginia Community School Framework

October 2019

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## **Introduction and Overview**

The Virginia Community School Framework (VCSF) guidance document was developed in response to Item 135 (I)(2) of the *Appropriation Act* enacted by the 2019 Virginia General Assembly.

*“The Department of Education, in consultation with Communities in Schools of Virginia and other relevant stakeholders, shall develop, distribute to each local school division, and report to the Governor and General Assembly, no later than November 1, 2019, guidance on best practices for local school divisions to transition existing schools to community schools. Such guidance shall include best practices for removing nonacademic barriers to learning as a means to enhance student academic success in public elementary and secondary schools throughout the Commonwealth.”*

In August 2019, an advisory committee was formed to review current research and national models pertaining to community schools. The committee included school-based personnel representing diverse Superintendent regions, community agencies, university experts, and specialists from the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE). Additional support for this document’s development came through consultation with multiple stakeholders throughout the state with a variety of backgrounds and expertise. The VCSF is a result of the dedication, leadership, collaboration, and varied experiences of many invested stakeholders throughout the Commonwealth.

Many students and families served in Virginia face academic success barriers that are beyond the scope of a traditional school. To drive student improvement and success, the guidelines found within the VCSF couple community needs and resources with school improvement plans and supports, allowing school teams to adapt and evolve their practices to encompass all the critical aspects of a child’s life. Through root-cause analysis, data-informed planning, relationship building, shared-leadership, and a focus on equity for all students, this paradigm shift addresses student needs in new, systematic, and innovative ways. The VCSF connects teachers, families, community members, and local organizations to enrich and center resources around student success. As a result, schools are able to widen their range of impact, increase equity, and remove barriers that otherwise remained untouched.

## **Why Community Schools?**

According to the National Kids Count Data Center’s 2018 report for Virginia:

- 14 percent of children under the age of 18 live in poverty;
- 32 percent of children are living in a single-parent home;
- 8 percent of children have a parent that was or still is incarcerated in Virginia;
- 20 percent of Virginia’s students have a documented emotional, behavioral, or developmental condition; and
- 25 percent of children’s parents lack secure employment.

The Virginia Community School Framework (VCSF) seeks to remove nonacademic barriers to learning as a means to enhance student academic success. This cannot be done by the school alone, it requires the collective engagement and support of a community and external programs and partners.

Community schools vigorously pursue equity by creating opportunities, empowering communities, providing wrap-around services, and meeting students where they are, every day. Policies, practices, and supports allow for flexibility to put students first. VCSF offers equitable access to services such as early childhood education, mental health supports, food supports, and academic enrichment. As a result, doors are opened for students and they are able to reach their full potential.

The research surrounding Community Schools is substantial and relevant. The findings below are from a variety of community school results reports throughout the nation. This list represents only some of the extensive evidence surrounding community school initiatives and their coalition partners.

- In the 2017-2018 school year, Communities In Schools of Virginia staff helped 85 percent of the schools they serve meet their schoolwide attendance, school climate and/or behavior improvement goals. Also, 68 percent improved and/or earned accreditation status with the Virginia Department of Education. Of the 4,039 neediest students receiving intensive, targeted, and individual supports, 81 percent improved their attendance, academics, and/or behavior, 95 percent were promoted to the next grade, and 90 percent of seniors graduated or received a GED.
- In Tulsa, Oklahoma, their schools implementing community school initiatives significantly outperformed comparison schools in math by 32 points and in reading by 19 points. Additionally, the achievement gap between non-free/reduced lunch students was reduced substantially.
- In South King County, Washington, 60 percent of students identified as needing help increased their participation, attention, and motivation, and 75 percent improved their academic performance over the course of the year.
- In Fairfax, Virginia, Opportunity Neighborhood's 2018 bulletin shared that 92 children enrolled at the Early Learning Center, including 36 Pre-K students, producing a 9.5 percent increase in Pre-K enrollment since the previous year.
- An analysis of report cards in 11, K-5 City Connects (CCNX) schools in Boston, Massachusetts, showed that CCNX students significantly outperformed students in comparative schools in academic work effort across grades 3-5 and had significantly better work habits by grade.

To learn more about the data shared above please refer to the following documents:

[Community Schools, Research Brief](#)

[Communities In School, Richmond, Impact Results](#)

[Fairfax County's Opportunity Neighborhood's Bulletins](#)

### *Virginia Community School Framework (VCSF) Alignment with Statewide Initiatives*

The VCSF aligns with the Virginia Department of Education's commitment to **maximizing the potential of all learners** and directly supports the following statewide priorities and initiatives:

- [Profile of a Virginia Graduate](#);
- [Academic Career Plan](#);
- [Attendance and Dropout Rates](#);
- [Virginia's Tiered Systems of Support](#);
- [Virginia's Model Guidance for Positive, Preventive Code of Student Conduct; Policy and Alternatives to Suspension](#);
- [Early Childhood Learning Opportunities](#); and
- [Equity](#).

[Appendix A](#) has additional information on how VCSF directly supports each of these initiatives.

### **What is a Virginia Community School?**

**This framework is not a program**, it is a guide that offers technical support and recommendations to school teams looking to transition to a Virginia Community School. The VCSF recognizes that student needs, community resources, and school cultures vary. Keeping in mind that each of these respective elements is important in transitioning to a Virginia Community School, VCSF offers flexible guidelines that recognize and value contextual fit for successful implementation. As such, it allows for customized programming based on the needs of the local educational agency and its surrounding community. It is designed to complement and strengthen current school-improvement initiatives. School leadership teams looking to adopt VCSF can easily layer these elements into existing action plans and tiered systems of support (such as Virginia's Tiered Systems of Supports, VTSS - [Appendix D](#)).

The VCSF aligns with the Virginia Department of Education's focus on **advancing equitable and innovative learning** through the following key elements:



- Rich data sources to determine the root cause of problems and identify student/community needs;
- Shared leadership of school goals and outcomes;
- Supportive of basic needs and emotional/mental health needs;
- Engagement of students and families in authentic, supportive ways;
- Comprehensive school plans that are the result of collaboration between school staff, community stakeholders, families, and students; and
- Unifying partnerships with community organizations and businesses.

## Stages of Development

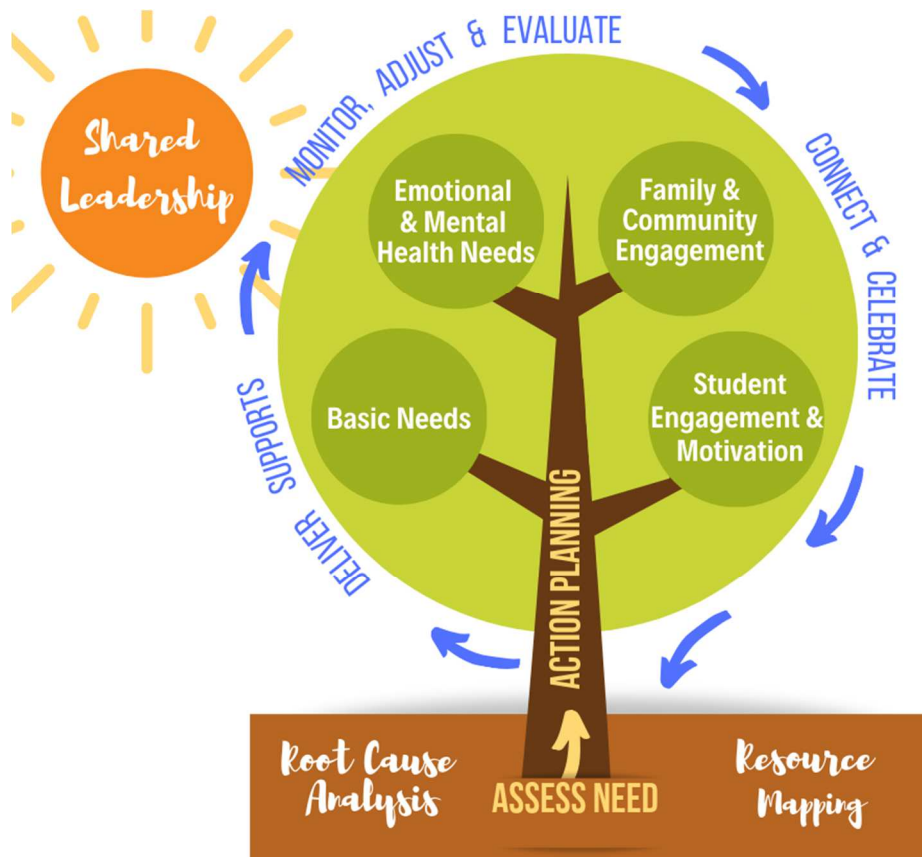
Table 1 gives implementers an overview of what each stage of development looks like during a single school year. Each stage is explained in more detail in the following pages.

Table 1

STAGES	SUMMARY
I. <a href="#">Assess Need</a>	Using a variety of data sources, complete a needs assessment using root cause analysis techniques, and create a resource map of services, supports, and assets of school and community.
II. <a href="#">Create an Action Plan</a>	Collaborate with a team of school leaders and community stakeholders to design supports targeting identified problems and leverage assets.
III. <a href="#">Deliver Supports</a>	Work with volunteers, partners, and the local community to provide and broker academic and non-academic tiered supports to students.
IV. <a href="#">Monitor, Adjust, and Evaluate</a>	Continually evaluate and adjust supports as needed. As new needs arise, supports can be added to the initial plan. At the end of the year, revisit the plan to evaluate the effectiveness of each service or support being implemented.
V. <a href="#">Connect and Celebrate</a>	Share successes and challenges with all stakeholders. Recognize community partners and volunteers for their service. Create a plan and process for continuing the framework into the following year.

Adapted from Communities In Schools model

The following tree diagram illustrates the five stages of development, four branches of support, and other crucial elements of the VCSF.



Schools start at the bottom by using rich data to **assess needs**, determine the root cause of issues and locate gaps in supports through resource mapping. This information fuels the tree and drives decision-making. The **action plan** represented by the trunk of the tree supports and provides structure. Throughout the process, teams are **delivering supports** within the four branches or categories of support.

1. Basic Needs
2. Emotional and Mental Health Needs
3. Student Engagement and Motivation
4. Family and Community Engagement

Local Education Agencies (LEAs) use the four branches as a guide to develop a continuum of supports through programs and interventions that align with the needs of the school and community. Additional parts of this continuum include **monitoring, adjusting, and evaluating** supports and student needs, as well as, **connecting and celebrating** with stakeholders. Shared leadership fuels the framework through shared ownership of school goals and embedded collaborative practices.

## **Overview: Four Branches of Support**

Action plan supports and interventions are organized into four branches. The branches are organized into categories to create a comprehensive plan that addresses multiple barriers to student success. The [VDOE's Student Assistance Programing: Creating Positive Conditions for Learning Manual](#) is an excellent tool for schools to reference while planning supports and interventions within these branches. The four branches described below work cohesively to reinforce and unify a school and community's efforts.

### *Examples of Supports within Each Branch:*

#### Branch 1: Student's Basic Needs

- Access to Food and Clothing
- Access to Housing and Transportation
- Healthcare Access
- School Supply Access

#### Branch 2: Student's Emotional and Mental Health Needs

- Support for Students' Feeling of Safety
- Support for Students' Exposure to Trauma
- Access to Counseling or Therapy Services
- Access to Behavior Interventions (Alternatives to Suspension)

#### Branch 3: Student Engagement and Motivation

- Access to Postsecondary Opportunities
- Opportunities for Service Learning
- Availability of After-School Programs, Clubs, Enrichment
- Teacher Professional Development

#### Branch 4: Family and Community Engagement

- Adult Education and Volunteer Opportunities
- Authentic Family Events Connected to Community/Student Needs
- Meaningful Home Communication
- Friendly and Welcoming School Environment

## I. Assess Need

### *Role of the School Leadership Team*

This stage of development is about assessing need from the school's perspective. Schools can use existing leadership meeting structures and teams or create a new team specifically assigned to these tasks. Membership should include those with a knowledge base to accomplish the following tasks:

1. Use primary outcome data to identify areas of concern, such as: attendance, office discipline referrals, grades, school suspensions, drop-out rates, gaps in student performance, or test scores. [Virginia's School Quality Profiles](#) are a helpful resource to utilize for this portion of the process.
2. Pull together multiple supplemental data sources to look at the root cause of the area(s) of concern. These sources can be both quantitative and qualitative.
3. Have an understanding of other established student support initiatives or frameworks such as Virginia's Tiered Systems of Supports (VTSS).

An analysis that considers multiple factors is critical to plan development. Effective intervention plans address the environmental and contextual factors contributing to the problem.

Additionally, the school team may want to assign certain roles to team members such as data keeper (runs reports and organizes data prior to meeting), record keeper (keeps notes and documents action plan), facilitator (organizes and runs the meetings), time keeper (monitors the agenda and time), branch point person (one person for each branch of support), and community liaison (point of contact for community supports). Research suggests keeping membership for this team at or around five members.<sup>1</sup>

### *Community School Leader*

Critical to the success of the VCSF is identifying a leader whose functions include overseeing the organization, communication, and delegation of responsibilities. Many community schools have a Community School Director whose sole responsibility is to coordinate and organize the efforts described in this framework. According to a recent progress report by Child Trends (December, 2017), administrator interviews suggest that having a coordinator dedicated to integration and coordination can increase impact. The VCSF does not require that schools wishing to implement VCSF employ a dedicated Community Schools Director, as long as the function of leading community school efforts is assigned to a specific individual. This leadership role can be fulfilled by

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<sup>1</sup> (Rogers, 2019)

an individual or team that could include an administrator, teacher, school counselor, or other instructional support personnel.

[Communities In Schools \(CIS\) of Virginia](#), a non-profit organization working in Virginia schools and serving over 50,000 students annually, has demonstrated a proven track record of effectively surrounding students with supports that align with the needs of the students and school. CIS implements [integrated student supports](#) (ISS) that develop or secure and coordinate supports that target academic and non-academic barriers to achievement. The ISS model is a student-centered approach that encompasses needs assessments, support identification, service coordination, and outcome tracking. This evidence-based model is most effective when a designated staff person works inside the school to coordinate and provide supports to students. CIS is an excellent resource and potential partner in helping schools fulfill this in-school coordinator role should a school have funding to put towards these efforts. [Appendix A](#) offers information on accessing funding by connecting to legislation and funding streams.

### *Data Based Decision-Making and Discovering the Root Cause*

Once the team has identified an area of concern (identified by outcome data) they will begin using appropriate supplemental data sources to uncover the root cause of the issue. Taking the time to dig deeper, and using multiple data sources, will identify the underlying causes of school struggles and result in uncovering the most effective solutions for schools. Supplemental data is often required during this process (see [Appendix B](#) for data resources).

Potential supplemental data sources to consider for root cause analysis include, but are not limited to:

- afterschool program attendance and program/curriculum goals;
- community health statistics;
- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) data;
- free and reduced lunch statistics;
- crime rates, gang activity;
- deaths related to addiction;
- school climate surveys;
- number of single family homes;
- poverty statistics; and
- student, family, staff surveys/interviews.

Student and family surveys are useful tools to measure need. School teams may want to use surveys to evaluate needs such as: student's sense of belonging, family needs, or perception of safety. This process can be lengthy but it is a vital piece of VCSF's

foundation. In addition to these surveys, there are other forms of supplemental data worth consideration (see [Appendix B](#) for additional data sources).

There are many appropriate and effective methods that school teams can utilize for root-cause analysis. School teams already using a root cause analysis tool or technique should apply those methods to this framework. Teams should use function-based thinking that considers environmental and contextual factors. [Function-Based Thinking: A Systematic Way of Thinking about Function and Its Role in Changing Student Behavior Problems](#) can provide additional guidance on this type of reasoning. Additionally, schools looking for root-cause analysis tools can find resources in [Appendix B](#). A sample of root-cause analysis results can be found in [Appendix C](#).

### *Branch Resource Mapping*

Resource mapping is a tool that allows school teams to communicate, evaluate, and synthesize their efforts when supporting students. The goal is to assess current supports and identify minimum levels of service and discover unmet needs. There are multiple resource mapping tools school teams can use to facilitate discussion along the following questions:

#### Guiding Questions for Resource Mapping:

1. What supports do we already have in place to address:
  - Student’s basic needs;
  - Student’s emotional/mental health needs;
  - Student’s engagement and motivation; and
  - Community/family engagement?
  
2. What supports exist in our community that address needs, and
  - Is the school connected to these supports and able to streamline access; and
  - Are there community supports needed that do not currently exist?
  
3. How effective are the current supports, and
  - How can they be improved or strengthened;
  - Are we implementing evidence-based programs;
  - Are our current supports, interventions, or programs being done to fidelity; and
  - Do we have supports at all three tiers?

## **Collaborative Leadership**

### *Creating an Advisory Board*

The advisory board should include the school leadership team, additional representatives from school staff, students, families, and community organizations. Member selection should be purposeful and considerate of the identified issues being targeted. The school leadership team and community leaders should collaborate on identifying potential members for the board. For example, a school hoping to connect students to more post-secondary opportunities may consider including a representative from the local community college. To keep meetings manageable and efficient, ideal membership for a school's advisory board should fall between 10 to 15 members.

Schools are more likely to make significant improvements in the lives of students by forming partnerships, building relationships, and accessing community resources than by working alone. Building your VCSF engages multiple stakeholders to inform and drive decisions around school initiatives, programs, interventions, and resources. Schools should take the time to build meaningful relationships with students and families to assess need from the very beginning. Establishing trusting relationships at the start will provide stability and buy-in throughout the process, resulting in a shared responsibility to achieve the school's goals.

Shared leadership includes the voices of your community, families, and student stakeholders as part of the root cause analysis process as well as action planning. The root cause analysis process can begin with your school leadership team but it should not end without the input of your advisory board. Additional root-causes may emerge from their input and they should be considered before moving towards action planning and support selection. Additionally, advisory boards should collaborate to complete the resource map. The majority of the advisory board meeting should be focused on action planning (which is described in more detail on the following page). Leadership should center discussion on identifying what can be done to create change and developing an action-plan to address the identified needs.

An advisory board may need to meet multiple times at the beginning of this process and then periodically throughout the school year to evaluate progress and address any new needs that may emerge. Data can be shared with the advisory board, however, student-specific data or identifying data should not be included in this meeting. See samples in [Appendix C](#) of how teams can move from root cause towards action planning by designing tiered and targeted supports.



### Possible Community Representatives Can Include:

Law Enforcement	Local Colleges or	Bank Representative
Faith Based Leaders	Universities	Government Representative
Day Care Personnel	Community Service Board	Local Judge or Lawyer
Gyms (ex. YMCA)	Local Nonprofit	Food Bank Representative
Coaches	Organizations	Employment Agency
Real Estate Agents	Local Business Owners	Retirement Home Personnel
Hospital Personnel	Mental Health Provider	Virginia Employment
	Career Center	Commission

### *Vision Statement*

Part of establishing a community school culture is sharing a common understanding and vision for the school. A vision statement should be created and signed by all the members of the advisory board. This shared vision acts as a map for your school to ensure that all members know the direction and destination the school is headed. Developing a shared vision helps members work effectively and cohesively. Teams may consider the following questions during the vision development:

- What values are essential to us?
- What do we want for our students/community in the future?
- What is our overall goal?

## **II. Create an Action Plan**

Action planning is a collaborative effort of the advisory board members. Collective community wisdom is valuable and everyone should have an active voice during this process. It may be appropriate for schools to utilize their current action plan structures or school-improvement plans for this process. Action plans that use a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) systematically deliver a range of interventions based on demonstrated levels of need. Based on a problem-solving model, the MTSS approach considers environmental factors as they might apply to an individual student's difficulty, and provides services/intervention to directly support. For more information on MTSS please visit [Virginia's Tiered Systems of Supports webpage](#).

A VCSF action plan incorporates the elements listed below:

- Collaboratively created with school leadership team and advisory board;
- Identifies specific areas of need supported by data;
- Includes measurable goals for each identified area (determined by baseline data);
- Explicitly outlines the role of school staff, families, community partners, and multi-disciplinary teams in helping achieve goals;



- Describes detailed steps needed for implementation of identified supports or actions with a timeline;
- Addresses both academic and non-academic issues determined by root cause analysis;
- Includes a range of evidence-based programs and practices identified and aligned with school goals;
- Identifies a mechanism for measuring impact, progress, and fidelity toward desired results and indicators as defined;
- Defines structures for identifying students for each support; and
- Incorporates a multi-tiered system of supports.

### III. Deliver Supports

#### *Branch 1: Student's Basic Needs*

Students cannot focus on learning if their basic needs are not being met. Schools can address these barriers to learning through community partnerships with local businesses, organizations, social services, and health service agencies. A community school may not be able to eradicate poverty, but it can increase the accessibility of basic needs such as food and clothing. Schools can remove barriers for students by either bringing services in or connecting students/families to providers in the community.

Disseminating information about supports to families and staff members is something advisory boards should discuss and plan. Teachers may be the first to recognize a need for additional support and can communicate that help is available. Families in need of assistance may not access typical school communication methods. Reaching those families may require schools to advertise services in multiple formats and in nontraditional ways. Consulting with your parent stakeholders can help schools identify gaps in communication methods.

School teams may support basic needs at varying tiers depending on their school's demographics and community needs. The following are some examples of tiered supports to address basic needs:

**Tier 1 (support/intervention available to entire school/grade):** To address accessibility to supplies (for a school with 73 percent of students receiving free or reduced lunch), a school decided to shorten their school supply list to cost \$20 or less. A local business partner and neighboring school donated supplies that were removed from the list.

**Tier 2 (some students):** The school leadership team identified that office referrals from first grade students between 8:30a.m. - noon were increasing. A root cause

analysis determined that over 35 percent of their first grade students did not bring a snack from home and 20 percent did not have access to breakfast on a regular basis. As a result, many students were waiting over five hours for their lunch block and next meal. Utilizing a community partner to donate snack items to first grade classrooms on a monthly basis, the school created a free snack program.

**Tier 3 (few students):** To address food insecurity issues faced by homeless families, the school worked with community partners to create an in-house “food pantry” for identified students/families to access.

**Possible Supports May Include** (please visit [Appendix D](#) for more resources):

- In-house food pantry or holiday food packages for families;
- Winter coat program or shoe program;
- Financial counseling;
- School supply program; and
- School-based health clinics.

### *Branch 2: Student’s Emotional and Mental Health Needs*

The [National Child Traumatic Stress Network](#) (NCTSN) estimates that one in every four children will experience a traumatic event before the age of sixteen. Many students face difficult circumstances and adverse childhood experiences on a daily basis. These circumstances can contribute to the presence of chronic or toxic stress, which will diminish learning readiness and academic success. Additionally, over 20 percent of Virginia’s students have a documented emotional, behavioral, or developmental condition,<sup>2</sup> and many often go undocumented.

The VCSF’s focus on building trust, providing support, and fostering parent/guardian partnerships reframes the school’s role for both students and parents. Supporting student’s emotional well-being is not something all school staff feel equipped to do. Additional staff trainings on the topics listed below can strengthen a school’s ability to support emotional well-being.

**Tier 1 supports (all students)** can address needs through staff professional development, reforming school policies, family engagement programs, or student instruction on topics such as:

- Social-emotional and/or social skills instruction;
- Strategies to enhance executive functioning, such as, classroom mindfulness routines and/or emotional regulation;

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<sup>2</sup> (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2019)

- [Trauma Informed Education Practices](#);
- Establishing schoolwide behavioral expectations and supporting students to meet them;
- Bullying prevention strategies;
- Restorative approaches; and
- Suicide awareness and prevention.

**Tier 2 supports (some students)** may include:

- Small group counseling on topics such as: social skills, emotional regulation, or coping skills;
- Mentorship programs; and
- Parenting courses that reinforce intervention.

**Tier 3 supports (few students)** may include:

- Individual counseling supports;
- Counseling services through a community agency;
- Special considerations for disciplining students with disabilities;
- Homebased counseling supports; and
- Functional Behavioral Assessments.

[Positive Behavioral Interventions Supports, OSEP Technical Assistance Center Webpage](#) is a great resource, as it includes examples of multiple supports across all tiers. For a list of additional resources please reference [Appendix D](#). Site-coordinators or designated school personnel can assist with collaboration of providers, implementation of supports, and monitoring of services.

### *Branch 3: Student Engagement and Motivation*

Learning remains a top priority in a community school. This branch looks at supports that expand learning time and opportunity. High expectations for students and strong instructional practices are part of a strong community school plan. Supports in this branch can address issues with student engagement or motivation.

The VCSF supports [Virginia's Standards for Accreditation](#) (SOA) which requires all students to develop Academic and Career Plan Portfolio in elementary school and an Academic and Career Plan in middle school ([8VAC20-131-140.C.2](#)). When considering ways to increase engagement or opportunity, these plans may be an excellent source of data for determining root cause and/or developing purposeful intervention. Additionally, graduation requirements mandate that all students have the opportunity for a work-based experience. While there is no specific career-related activity that a student must experience (such as an internship or job-shadowing assignment) to earn a

diploma, schools must provide opportunities for all students to learn about workplace expectations and career options in their own communities and elsewhere. These standards increase flexibility for schools to expand work-based and service-learning programs that promote college, career and civic readiness.

The following are some examples that could support this branch and be adapted to tier 1, 2, or 3, depending on the needs of the school and community:

- Early learning opportunities for preschool age students;
- Integrate service learning into core-curriculum;
- Before/After school tutoring or homework clubs;
- Learning opportunities that emphasize real-world learning and community problem solving;
- Expansion of service industry credentials or licensure opportunities;
- Increase online learning opportunities;
- Virtual tutoring platform;
- Professional development for teachers on 21st Century Instructional Models;
- Begin, expand, or increase before/after-school programs, clubs, and enrichment opportunities with connection to curriculum;
- College field trips, college fairs, or career center visits;
- Job shadowing or work-based learning opportunities;
- Adaptive instructional software programs for math or reading (that align with the curriculum);
- Intensive tutoring programs; and
- Student volunteers from local middle or high school to tutor elementary students.

For additional resources on student engagement and motivation please refer to the list in [Appendix D](#).

#### *Branch 4: Family and Community Engagement*

Forming partnerships that bring families and the community into the schools in authentic and meaningful ways turns a school into a neighborhood hub of support. When schools seek collaboration and open dialogue with stakeholders, they can build the trust and respect that is needed to make meaningful changes. Community schools prioritize creating a welcoming atmosphere for all families and community members. They schedule programs, courses, and meetings at times that allow the broadest participation and consider providing meals, transportation, and child care for parent events to increase accessibility.

Effective school teams understand the value of collaborating with families because the barriers to learning that students face affect them as well. Depending on the needs of the school/community, the following are some supports schools can consider incorporating into their tiered systems of supports:

- Adult education opportunities;
- Engaging and interactive family events (ex. SOL-based activities to keep families engaged in learning process);
- Differentiated home communication techniques;
- [Teacher Home Visits](#);
- School staff attendance at community events;
- Volunteer/Community service opportunities;
- Financial planning events for families;
- Culture Nights to celebrate the different cultures and traditions within a community;
- Open forums at the school to discuss community issues or challenges;
- School staff and community partners to participate in [community walks](#);
- Visiting local neighborhoods during the summer to distribute free books and popsicles;
- Parent/guardian opportunities to learn about the special education process;
- Conducting school-based parenting classes that will teach parents how to raise expectations of their children and support them as they work towards their goals;
- Train teachers on the elements of a [collaborative parent-teacher conference](#);
- Utilizing [student-led conferences](#): and
- Efforts to increase Parent Teacher Association (PTA) membership/accessibility.

[Appendix D](#) has additional resources and information on many of the supports listed above.

[The Center for Innovation and Improvement \(CII\) publication Handbook on Family and Community Engagement](#) and the [The How Family Friendly is Your School](#) checklist from *Beyond the Bake Sale- The Essential Guide to Family-School Partnerships* (2006) are recommended reference tools.

#### **IV. Monitor, Adjust and Evaluate**

Roll out is quicker and fidelity is increased when action plans are created with clear roles, assigned responsibilities, timelines, and periodic meetings for monitoring. Advisory boards and school leadership teams should be considering the following questions throughout the year as they monitor and adjust supports.

- Are supports or interventions being done with fidelity and consistency?

- Are the identified students (needing assistance) accessing supports?
- Does the data indicate the supports are effective?
- Do we need to expand or offer follow-up training?
- Are there any changes in outcome data?
- Were services delivered to students identified as needing additional supports?
- Are there any fidelity concerns?
- Do we need to change anything in the future?

[Appendix E](#) includes a table with additional guiding questions for advisory boards and can act as a guide for schools through each stage of development.

[The Virginia Community School Framework Implementation Checklist](#) is meant to serve as a possible planning and evaluation tool for school teams currently implementing community school practices or those just initiating the implementation process.

[Appendix E](#) also includes additional resources for evaluation that an advisory board can reference anytime.

## **V. Connect and Celebrate Community**

The community is a stakeholder in a school’s success. The school should act as a central hub or the heart of the community. The school may be used to address community issues and challenges, hold events, and celebrations. When a community is truly invested in the success of the school, everyone benefits. Reframing the mindset of both staff and community members about this relationship is critical. Community leaders, local business partners, parents, and residents all have a stake in the future of the school and should be supportive of its goals.

When community partnerships are formed it is important to establish a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The MOU is a working document between the organization and the school/school division to clarify expectations, roles, and responsibilities. This document clearly lays out the expectations of both the school and organization to avoid misunderstandings or inconsistencies in support. For tips on how to create a Memorandum of Understanding, refer to the [VDOE’s Student Assistance Programing \(SAP\) Manual](#), p. 68. There may also be community volunteers where a simple agreement stating the expectations of both parties is more appropriate. Schools should refer to their local policies to determine what paperwork is required for ongoing community partnerships or agreements.

A simple but impactful way to distinguish your community partners and advisory council is to have your school’s vision printed on a piece of paper and include the

signatures and titles of all the supporting partners on it. Display in a frame in your school's front office or foyer, or create a bulletin board titled: "*Thank you to our community partners*" that includes photos and/or company logos. Public displays such as these not only recognize those already contributing but may also serve to recruit additional partners looking to be involved.

One final piece of the VCSF includes celebrating the accomplishments, partnerships, and outcomes fostered by leaders in and out of the school building. Schools should make an effort to recognize community partners through social media outlets, volunteer breakfasts, school-generated certificates of recognition, bulletin-boards, etc. When community partners feel appreciated and recognized for the efforts, they become motivated to continue. Additionally, sharing how their efforts have directly impacted the lives of students through data or qualitative summaries is even more encouraging to those looking to help. Celebrating student success as a community unifies all those involved and strengthens efforts for the future.

## Appendix A: Connecting to National and Statewide Initiatives

[The Every Student Succeeds Act \(ESSA\)](#) encourages schools to “provide all children significant opportunity to receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality education, and to close educational achievement gaps.” The ESSA expands accountability measures to include: conditions for learning and resource inequities. An important [research brief](#) by the National Education Policy Center and the Learning Policy Institute demonstrates how community schools are an evidence-based strategy that can be used to improve schools under the federal ESSA. This research brief concludes that the evidence based on “well-implemented community schools,” meets the criteria to justify including community schools as part of ESSA school-improvement plans<sup>3</sup>.

[Coordinated Early Intervention Service \(CEIS\)](#) funds may be used to develop and support tiered interventions, but may not be used to support the implementation of core (universal) activities designed to provide high quality instruction to all students in a grade, school, or division. All services paid for by CEIS funds must be targeted to the students identified for those services. Some examples of appropriate use include (but are not limited to):

- The salaries of: teachers, school nurses, school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, and/or paraprofessionals to provide academic or behavior interventions directly related to the targeted area of significant disproportionality;
- Tutors/Mentors: to reinforce or follow-up on instruction; and
- Professional Development on academic or behavioral interventions.

The **Profile of a Virginia Graduate** describes the knowledge, skills, experiences, and attributes that students must attain to be successful in college and/or the work force and to be “life ready.”

In developing the profile, the Board of Education determined that a life-ready Virginia graduate must:

- Achieve and apply appropriate academic and technical knowledge (content knowledge);
- Demonstrate productive workplace skills, qualities, and behaviors (workplace skills);
- Build connections and value interactions with others as a responsible and responsive citizen (community engagement and civic responsibility); and
- Align knowledge, skills and personal interests with career opportunities (career exploration).

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<sup>3</sup> (Daniel, Maier, & Oakes, 2017)



As schools work to meet the requirements of a Profile of a Virginia Graduate there is an increased need for social-emotional learning opportunities. Students are required to develop the “Five Cs” (Critical Thinking, Creative Thinking, Communication, Collaboration and Citizenship); however, these broad skills require social-emotional skill development as well. For example, a student cannot effectively collaborate if they lack empathy. The VCSF recognizes and encourages social-emotional learning opportunities as an appropriate support to meet the needs of students.

Across the Commonwealth, schools are developing **Academic Career Plan Portfolios (ACPP)** for every elementary student, and **Academic and Career Plans (ACP)** for every middle school student. These plans make school relevant to students and can become engagement tools worth consideration by VCSF implementers. Research has shown that program techniques that keep students in school include career guidance, work-based learning, career pathways, and tech prep (Stone, 2004). ACPP’s and ACP’s can be used to support students at risk of dropping out or struggling with attendance. Additionally, the involvement of local businesses and community leaders increases a school’s ability to provide a variety of work-based learning opportunities.

**The Nationwide Initiative, Every Student, Every Day** has called for actions to be taken towards eliminating chronic absenteeism. School Advisory Boards can enlighten school personnel to the issues contributing to absenteeism, giving teams the ability to more effectively address it. The VCSF can also increase a school’s ability to support attendance interventions through community partnerships and volunteers.

Schools integrating **Virginia Tiered Systems of Supports** structures will find that VCSF strengthens their efforts and broadens their variety of supports and interventions. The four branches give guidance as to additional programs, interventions and supports at each tier. Both frameworks improve student outcomes and provide targeted supports to address student needs. The VCSF’s four branches of support can be designated for specific tiers and added to a school’s intervention resource map.

**Early Childhood Education** is an important stepping stone for all young learners but especially those facing barriers such as poverty. Virginia is looking to bolster early childhood education opportunities and standards across the Commonwealth. The VCSF community partnerships may include local preschool personnel to discuss the needs of incoming kindergarteners. Advisory boards may also identify the need for increased opportunity for early childhood learning in the community and devise a plan to address it.

The VCSF implementation embraces **equity** by putting student needs at the forefront. The framework's design and guidelines require advisory boards and school leadership teams to explicitly examine data through a lens of equity. The involvement of community leaders and families in school decision-making gives voice to underlying issues and undetected barriers facing students. As a result, schools are better equipped to address the root issues surrounding achievement gaps. The innovative supports and wrap-around services provided through VCSF's structures target students who need it the most, allowing all students to achieve their fullest potential.

## **Appendix B: Resources for Data-Driven Decision Making**

### *Tools and Techniques*

[\*\*Data Collection Tool Guide from Community Schools\*\*](#) contains a list of 45 free surveys schools can use to examine specific indicators. This list outlines the result areas, indicators, target groups, and number of questions for each data collection instrument referenced. *Helpful tip: click on the number in the left hand column to view the survey.*

[\*\*Function-Based Thinking: A Systematic Way of Thinking about Function and Its Role in Changing Student Behavior Problems\*\*](#). This article outlines the FBT model, which aims to empower general education teachers and school-based personnel to apply a more systematic approach to problem-solving possible functions of student behavior. FBT is an approach to behavior intervention planning that can be more easily embraced by general education teachers than FBA.

[\*\*How Family Friendly is Your School Checklist\*\*](#) from Beyond the Bake Sale- The Essential Guide to Family-School Partnerships (2006) by Henderson, Mapp, Johnson, Davies (p. 214-218).

[\*\*Measuring Student Engagement\*\*](#) This report reviews the characteristics of 21 instruments that measure student engagement in upper elementary through high school. It summarizes what each instrument measures, describes its purposes and uses, and provides technical information.

[\*\*National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments\*\*](#) has information and training on the measurement of school climate. Utilizing the tools featured on this site provides educators with the necessary data to identify school needs, set goals, and track progress toward improvement.

[\*\*Needs Assessment Guide\*\*](#) is comprehensive and focuses on the entire school. The guide walks teams through collecting and examining data to identify areas of need in all aspects of school operation.

[\*\*Root Cause Analysis \(RCA\) Resources, Understanding Community Need: The Five Whys\*\*](#) is a commonly used RCA tool that can be used by organizations as a systematic and formalized approach to considering the root causes of community need. Instructions for the Five Whys are provided in addition to a template for recording data.

[\*\*24+ Root Cause Analysis Templates\*\*](#) offers a simple explanation of the root cause analysis process followed by sample templates for implementation.

[\*\*Success Gaps Toolkit: Addressing Success Gaps, Indicators of Success Rubric\*\*](#) includes materials and resources to assist a school or district to conduct a root cause analysis and make a plan for reducing success gaps.

## *Data Resources*

[\*\*ADT's Crime Map\*\*](#) displays local crime rate index scores for communities in an easy to understand map. Simply type in your school name and you can see the crime rate for such issues as assault, robbery, or murder in the school's surrounding neighborhoods.

[\*\*American Community Survey\*\*](#) provides data profiles with social, economic, housing, and demographic data. The data profiles summarize the data for a single geographic area.

[\*\*Child Opportunity Maps\*\*](#) creates a map to visualize the geographic distribution of neighborhood-based opportunity for children in the 100 largest U.S. metropolitan areas.

[\*\*Kids Count Data Center\*\*](#) can offer the ability to differentiate ACEs at a county level.

[\*\*The Safe Schools Information Resource \(SSIR\)\*\*](#) provides access to the discipline, crime, and violence (DCV) data that are collected annually from all Virginia school divisions, regional centers, and programs. Reports may be generated in various categories according to the user's selections.

[\*\*School-Based Health Alliance Mapping Tool\*\*](#) is a resource for looking at a variety of issues on a district-level such as single parent homes, teen birth rate, obesity, and food insecurity.

[\*\*Secondary School Climate Survey Results\*\*](#) provides schools with information on school climate and safety conditions in order to maintain a safe and orderly school environment conducive to learning. The survey measures student and teacher/staff perceptions of school rules and discipline, teacher-student relationships, student engagement in school, and the extent of bullying and teasing at school.

[\*\*The Virginia Early Warning System \(VEWS\)\*\*](#) relies on readily available data housed at the school to predict which students are at risk for dropping out of high school, target resources at the school- and division-level to support students not on track to graduate, and examine patterns and identify school climate issues that may contribute to disproportionate dropout rates.

[\*\*Virginia School Quality Profiles\*\*](#) reports for schools and school divisions about the status and achievements of the Virginia's public schools.

## Appendix C: Samples

### *Elementary Sample Root Cause Analysis and Tiered Support Plan*

#### **Sample Issue #1: Out-of-School Suspensions (Elementary School Setting)**

**Identified Problem:** *Over the past five school years, there has been a 34 percent increase in office referrals and a 22 percent increase in suspensions at the school.*

**Data used during root-cause analysis process:** *Office referral data, qualitative notes from office referrals, 34 family interviews (of frequently referred students), 40 student surveys (students with >3 office referrals), staff survey to assess student's emotional regulation skills, demographic data, and crime rate data.*

#### **Data-driven hypothesis of functions/causes of problem:**

1. *Increase in aggressive or threatening behaviors.*
2. *Many students are unable to navigate through peer-conflicts effectively.*
3. *Many students lack coping skills that allow them to control their emotions.*
4. *Students have experienced trauma that has made it difficult to regulate their emotions.*

#### **Possible Tiered Targeted Supports based on above Root Cause Analysis:**

- **Tier 1-** Coping strategies added to schoolwide expectations and taught to every student. Visuals posted throughout the building to reinforce coping skill strategies. Community workshop on how to enforce social-emotional skills outside of the school building. Community public television runs two minute spots on coping strategies. Newspaper runs one page add on coping strategies.
- **Tier 2-** Small group workshops with students who have been suspended in the past (for physical aggression or threatening behaviors). Students will work on developing emotional regulation and conflict resolution skills. Groups will be run by school counselors or school psychologists. School counseling department will partner with the local Taekwondo studio to provide five, free after-school enrichment sessions for these students that includes mindfulness practices (five sessions will reoccur every other month).

With a parent partner, the Assistant Principal will arrange a meeting with the football coaches of the local recreation league (many of the targeted students participate in the league) to share the issues and discuss how they can partner to evoke change with the students. During the meeting they will share strategies so that it can be used in other settings. For example, how to calm down after a bad call. Additionally, to build relationships and support students, the school will

work to make sure that a staff member attends local football games on the weekend to show support of students outside of school. Team schedules will be posted in the teacher workroom for sign-up.

- **Tier 3-** If suspensions continue, after tier 2 supports are in place, a support meeting should be called to determine what additional supports the family might need (such as: after school programs, mentoring, food/clothing needs, parent workshops through mental health agency, outside counseling support, individual counseling sessions with school counselor, etc.).

### *Secondary Sample Root Cause Analysis and Tiered Support Plan*

#### **Sample Issue #2: Attendance (Secondary School Setting)**

**Identified Problem:** *46 students have 25 absences or more and over 100 are being monitored for attendance concerns.*

**Data used during root-cause analysis process:** *qualitative data from attendance secretary, parent interviews, family and student interviews (of students chronically absent), student survey, academic and career plans, and resource map of afterschool activities.*

#### **Data-driven hypothesis of functions/causes of problem:**

1. Some chronically absent students do not want to come to school.
2. Some chronically absent students do not feel connected or like they belong at school.
3. Some chronically absent students do not understand the purpose of school or its connection to their interests.
4. Some chronically absent students indicated they do not have a plan for after graduation.

#### **Possible Tiered Targeted Supports based on above Root Cause Analysis:**

- **Tier 1-** Increase clubs and student organizations to offer a wider variety of options (using community volunteers and organizations) and increase days for after-school transportation (currently after-school transportation is only offered on Tuesdays and Thursdays). Clubs under consideration: running club, art club, photography club, school blog club, Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) club, and community service club. Students will be completing an interest survey at the start of the year to identify which clubs/organizations would be the best fit. The goal is to have an additional 15 clubs/organizations started by the end of the

school year and to increase student's after-school participation by 30 percent (based on baseline participation data from previous school year).

- **Tier 2-** If attendance concerns continue, after an attendance plan is written and implemented (when a student exceeds five unexcused absences), a mentorship support is offered. Students identified for this support will have a staff or community mentor to help them feel more connected at school. Mentors will be trained by the school counseling department and will be given their assigned student's academic and career plan to explore and discuss during the first meeting. Community mentors will be supplied by the local hospital, police department, fire department, YMCA, and local law firm. Mentors will meet with students the first and second Tuesday of each month, during homeroom for 20-30 minutes. The grocery store behind the school has agreed to supply muffins/doughnuts for the first meeting. (An estimated total of 130 students will receive mentorship supports at some point during the school year, 15 percent of student population.)
- **Tier 3-** At the start of the school year, an assigned mentor, a school social worker, school psychologist, school counselor, or administrator will meet with families of students that absence totals fall in the top 5 percent of students (during the previous school year). This meeting will go beyond the attendance plan to create detailed individualized post-graduation plans that directly connect to their education and link community opportunities. Barriers to attendance such as health, mental health needs, and basic needs, will be revisited and addressed. Punitive measures will not be discussed during the meeting. Instead the focus will be on support and relationship building. Staff members can meet with families at school or in their homes (whichever the family prefers). (Total of 46 students received this support).

## Appendix D: Resources

### *Basic Needs Resources*

[\*\*Action Pack: How to Start a School Food Pantry\*\*](#) helps hungry students and reduces food insecurity. A food pantry accepts, stores, and redistributes donated food to students.

[\*\*Connect VA Portal\*\*](#) allows simple access to basic needs information. Connect VA leverages the Aunt Bertha platform to provide communities with a comprehensive directory of local, state, and national service information.

[\*\*Department of Medical Assistance Services \(DMAS\)\*\*](#): Virginia's Medical Assistance Services

[\*\*Directory of Virginia Food Pantries\*\*](#) is an organized list of food programs.

[\*\*Feed More's\*\*](#) programs are dedicated to providing healthy meals and hope for a better tomorrow to Central Virginians who face hunger.

[\*\*One Warm Coat\*\*](#) is a national nonprofit that has locations throughout Virginia. Schools can partner with a local agency to discuss school needs and the possibility of receiving coats and/or doing a coat drive at the school.

[\*\*The Virginia Community Action Partnership\*\*](#) is composed of 28 local area agencies and three statewide agencies. These 31 agencies provide various services throughout the Commonwealth.

[\*\*Virginia's Doorways for Women and Families\*\*](#) creates pathways out of homelessness, domestic violence, and sexual assault leading to safe, stable, and empowered lives.

[\*\*Virginia's Habitat for Humanity\*\*](#) is a nonprofit housing organization working in local communities. Habitat works by building strength, stability, and self-reliance in partnership with families in need of decent and affordable housing.

[\*\*211 Virginia: 2-1-1\*\*](#) is a free service that can help to find local resources 24 hours a day, seven days a week.



## *Emotional/Mental Health Resources*

[\*\*Caring School Community Webinar Series\*\*](#) builds classroom and school community while developing students' social and emotional learning (SEL) skills and competencies. This four-part webinar series introduces and explores the Caring School Community program for grades K–8.

[\*\*The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning \(CASEL\)\*\*](#) collaborates with leading experts and support districts, schools, and states nationwide to drive research, guide practice, and inform policy.

[\*\*Evidence-Based Alternatives to Suspension and Expulsion\*\*](#) reviews five different solutions that address social/emotional needs of students in an effort to decrease suspensions/expulsion rates.

[\*\*Health Smart VA\*\*](#) provides free curriculum and instructional resources for social, emotional, physical, and environmental health.

[\*\*How Can Schools Reduce Disparities in Disciplinary Action and Promote Student Mental Health?\*\*](#) In this video interview, Ken Martinez, AIR principal researcher, discusses the steps that schools can take to reduce these disparities and increase access to mental health services for students.

[\*\*The National Alliance on Mental Illness of Virginia \(NAMI Virginia\)\*\*](#) provides support, education, and advocacy for individuals and families in Virginia affected by mental illness. Along with community-based affiliates, they provide education, support, information, training, and resources, and engage in systems change policy advocacy.

[\*\*Restorative Practices: A Guide for Educators\*\*](#) is a toolkit intended for all educators who support the growth and health of students in schools. It is an introduction for those new to the concepts and will help support and enhance the work of teachers already implementing these practices in their classrooms.

[\*\*Promising Practices for Social and Emotional Learning\*\*](#) is a resource with best practices and ideas for implementation.

[\*\*Virginia's Child Service Act and The Office of Children's Services\*\*](#) offers programs "empowering communities to serve youth" and can provide tier 3 resources at a local level.

## *Student Engagement and Motivation Resources*

**Attendance Works** provides technical assistance and tools to help communities, schools, and school districts monitor and work together to address chronic absence.

**Battelle for Kids** is a not-for-profit organization committed to collaborating with school systems and communities to realize the power of 21st Century learning.

**The College and Career Readiness and Success Center (CCRS Center)** is dedicated to ensuring all students graduate high school ready for college and career success.

**Developmental Relationships Framework and REACH Program** through the Search Institute offers a range of research, tools, and resources to create school and classroom environments where all of your students can succeed.

**Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports** is a nationally recognized approach to support positive academic and behavior outcomes for all students. PBIS is the behavioral component of the Virginia Tiered Systems of Supports.

**Techniques for Giving Students Charge of How They Learn** provides information on giving students more autonomy, via task design, rubric development, and student-led conferences.

**Virginia's Career and Technical Education (CTE) Resource Center** supports career and technical and occupational-technical preparation programs by providing curriculum development and program design and implementation.

**Virginia Education Wizard** is an interactive online tool developed by Virginia's Community Colleges to help students succeed in discovering career pathways and important information about college planning.

**The Virginia Partnership for Out-of-School-Time (VPOST)** is a statewide, public-private partnership dedicated to developing and expanding academic, social, emotional, and physical supports and services to youth across Virginia during the out-of-school time.

**Work-Based Learning Tool Kit** provides information regarding the key components of work-based learning (WBL), an instructional strategy that enhances classroom learning by connecting it to the workplace. It offers guidelines and resources related to creating a WBL strategy, engaging employers, collecting data, and scaling effective programs.

## *Family Engagement Resources*

[\*\*Center for Family Involvement\*\*](#) works with families to increase their skills as advocates, mentors, and leaders so that children and young adults with disabilities can lead the lives they want.

[\*\*Community Walks\*\*](#) is a program where students lead teachers through their communities. The cultural exchange can have a transformational effect on school culture and create understanding.

[\*\*Global Family Research Project\*\*](#) is a nonprofit organization that supports effective engagement practices and policies so that all children find success in and out of school.

[\*\*Parent Partnership in Education: Resource Roundup\*\*](#) is a list of articles, videos, and other resources to help parents engage productively with teachers and school staff.

[\*\*Parent-Teacher Conferences ... or Collaborative Conversations\*\*](#) is where teachers can team up with students' families, encouraging them to take a more active role in driving the conversation.

[\*\*Parent-Teacher Home Visits\*\*](#) build relationships, skills, and engagement for families, educators, and students from Pre-K to 12th grade.

[\*\*Student Led Conferences: Resources for Educators Tips\*\*](#) is a list that includes a variety of go-to examples, guides, tips, and forms to help launch or improve these meetings.

[\*\*Virginia Career Works\*\*](#) aims to create economic stability and growth by preparing and connecting people who want to work with employers who need to hire through its training providers and network of professional partners.

[\*\*Virginia's Formed Families Forward\*\*](#) focuses on moving foster, adoptive, and kinship families to better outcomes through support and education.

[\*\*Virginia's Parent Educational Advocacy Training Center\*\*](#) builds positive futures for Virginia's children by working collaboratively with families, schools, and communities. PEATC's primary focus is on children with disabilities. PEATC provides services and support for families and professional and easy-to-understand, research-based information and training.

## *Additional Community Schools Guides and Models*

[Center for American Progress, \*Building Community Schools Systems: Removing Barriers to Success in U.S. Public Schools\*](#) is a report that describes the community school strategy and its impacts for those looking to learn more about incorporating community school systems.

[Communities In Schools \(CIS\) and CIS Virginia](#) is a non-profit organization working directly in 2,300 schools in 25 states and the District of Columbia. Communities In Schools builds relationships that empower students to stay in school and succeed in life. Their school-based staff partner with schools to conduct school and student needs assessments, and create, deliver, and monitor corresponding plans to address the needs of the schools and students. CIS is a national leader who has been providing integrated student supports for over 40 years, coordinating with community partners to bring outside resources inside schools and providing direct supports to students.

[Community Schools Playbook, a Practical Guide to Advancing Community Schools Strategies](#) is a guide that provides tools for advancing community schools as a strategy to improve schools, provide more equitable opportunities, and prepare students for success in life and as citizens.

[Leading with Purpose and Passion: A Guide for Community School Directors](#) is a toolbox for school leaders or directors as they initiate or refine their community school structures.

[National Center for Community Schools](#) builds capacity, guides practice, disseminates knowledge, and advocates for policies at the city, state, and national levels. They provide training, consultation, and other forms of support to community school initiatives.

[Opportunity Neighborhoods](#) are place-based initiatives. Led by school-government-community partnerships in Fairfax County, Opportunity Neighborhoods engage communities in geographically-defined areas to achieve identified outcomes for children and youth.

[United Way Community Schools](#) brings resources into the school building that address the specific barriers preventing students from being successful. They are hubs rich with resources for students and their families. Community Schools represent a strategy, not a program and rely on many partners, including school districts, social service organizations, businesses, the public sector, universities, and more.

## *National Models*

### [Beacons Schools - Youth Development Institute](#)

New York City, New York

### [The Children's Aid Society Community Schools](#)

New York City, New York

### [Communities In Schools, Inc.](#)

Alexandria, Virginia

### [Center for Mental Health in Schools: An Enabling Component to Address Barriers to Learning](#)

Los Angeles, California

### [University Assisted Community Schools](#)

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

### [Community Partnership Schools](#)

Orlando, Florida

### [Schools of the 21st Century](#)

New Haven, Connecticut

## *Other Support Resources*

**[Boys and Girls Club of Virginia](#)** enables all young people to realize their full potential as productive, responsible, and caring citizens.

**[Children's Aid](#)** serves high-need New York City neighborhoods and is committed to ensuring that there are no boundaries to young people's aspirations. Their website has resources and ideas for schools looking to implement a community school approach.

**[National Dropout Prevention Center's \(NDPC\)](#)** mission is to increase high school graduation rates and reduce school dropout rates through research, research dissemination, and the provision of evidence-based solutions.

NDPC Resources include:

- [After/Out of School Opportunities](#)
- [Trauma-Skilled Schools Model](#)
- [Early Childhood Education](#)
- [School-Community Collaboration](#)

**[PROSPER](#)** (PROMoting School-community-university Partnerships to Enhance Resilience) is a scientifically-proven delivery system that facilitates sustained, quality

delivery of evidence-based programs that reduce risky youth behaviors, enhance positive youth development, and strengthen families.

**[Virginia Cooperative Extension](#)** brings the resources of Virginia's land-grant universities, Virginia Tech and Virginia State University, to the people of the Commonwealth. Extension agents and specialists form a network of educators whose classrooms are the communities, homes, and businesses of Virginia, where they bring research-based solutions to the problems facing Virginians today.

- [Video about their services](#)
- [Locator tool to find your local extension agent](#)

**[Salud America](#)** is a national Latino-focused organization that creates culturally relevant and research-based stories and tools to inspire people to drive healthy changes to policies, systems, and environments for Latino children and families.

**[Working with Advisory Boards](#)** is a guidance document for schools on forming an advisory board. It discusses membership and planning.

**[Youth.gov](#)** provides opportunities and resources for addressing student needs. Schools can explore research-based programs and innovative practices as well as locate funding opportunities available in their area. From supporting students with incarcerated parents to resources on financial literacy, this site has an abundance of information readily available for schools to utilize.

### *Virginia Department of Education Resources*

**[Attendance Modules](#)** created in collaboration with Attendance Works, is a 12 module series that will assist schools and divisions to address and eliminate chronic absenteeism, and ultimately boost student outcomes.

**[Career and Technical Education Work-Based Learning Guide](#)** focuses on the eleven types of work-based learning (WBL) methods of instruction. It includes Virginia regulations and guidelines for the administration of WBL and provides training materials for work-based learning coordinators. School divisions should use this guide to implement WBL

**[Drug and Alcohol Prevention Resources](#)** is a collection of resources and strategies for schools to prevent drug and alcohol abuse by students.

**[Model Guidance for Positive, Preventive Code of Student Conduct Policy and Alternatives to Suspension](#)** is a blueprint for school boards in revising local policies, systems, and practices related to student conduct and school climate. It focuses

on ensuring equity and establishing prevention and intervention in a tiered system of supports.

**Student Assistance Programming (SAP): Creating Positive Conditions for Learning** provides a framework and process for managing the continuum of social, emotional, and mental health supports for all students and intervention for those in need.

**Suicide Prevention Resources** provides school personnel, families, and community's tools and information to take an active role in suicide prevention so lives can be saved.

**Virginia is for Learners** offers a variety of resources for schools to reference. From equity to future-ready learning, this is worthy of exploration as schools look at ways to prepare every student to succeed.

**The Virginia Tiered Systems of Supports (VTSS)** is a data-informed decision making framework for establishing the academic, behavioral, and social-emotional supports needed for a school to be an effective learning environment for all students. The VTSS systemic approach allows divisions, schools, and communities to provide multiple levels of supports to students in a more effective and efficient, clearly defined process

## Appendix E: Evaluation Resources and Fidelity Inventory

### *Possible Guiding Questions for Advisory Boards*

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Guiding Question</b>
<b>Assessing Need</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What does our data (discipline, test scores, attendance, report card, school climate, etc.) indicate?</li> <li>• Do we need additional data from secondary sources to determine root cause?</li> <li>• Do we need to survey our students, families, or staff to gather more information?</li> <li>• Are there any discrepancies between subgroups?</li> <li>• What supports or resources do we already have in place? Does our data show they are effective?</li> </ul>
<b>Create an Action Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are some possible non-academic causes for these issues?</li> <li>• What supports do our students need that we are not providing?</li> <li>• Who in the community could assist us in reaching our goals?</li> <li>• Do we need tier 1, tier 2, and/or tier 3 supports to address this issue?</li> <li>• What needs to be done and who will do it?</li> </ul>
<b>Delivery of the Four Branches of Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who is responsible for following-up on and monitoring these supports?</li> <li>• How can we make sure our families and staff are aware of these supports?</li> <li>• What structures are in place to identify students who need supports?</li> <li>• Which students will have access to these supports?</li> </ul>
<b>Monitor, Adjust, and Evaluate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are supports or interventions being done with fidelity and consistency?</li> <li>• Are the identified students (needing assistance) accessing supports?</li> <li>• Does the data indicate the supports are effective?</li> <li>• Do we need to expand or offer follow-up training?</li> <li>• Are there any changes in outcome data?</li> <li>• Were services delivered to students identified as needing additional supports?</li> <li>• Are there any fidelity concerns?</li> <li>• Do we need to change anything in the future?</li> </ul>
<b>Connect and Celebrate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can we share our success in meaningful ways with the community?</li> <li>• How can we share our success with school staff?</li> <li>• How can we recognize and thank our volunteers, partners, and organizations for their support?</li> </ul>



## VCSF Implementation Checklist

Circle the number below to best describe progress.	<b>VCSF Indicators of Success</b> Score each indicator using the following scale: <i>0- Not Applicable or No Information</i> <i>1- Not Yet Implemented or Initial Phase</i> <i>2- Somewhat Implemented</i> <i>3- Fully Implemented</i>
Section Total: /18	<b>Assess Need</b>
0...1...2...3	1.1 Data used for root-cause analysis and to inform decisions includes surveys, demographic data, student outcome data, and community data.
0...1...2...3	1.2 Root-cause analysis techniques are used to identify barriers and needs facing students.
0...1...2...3	1.3 Needs assessment includes multiple data sources.
0...1...2...3	1.4 Community wisdom is included in the needs assessment process.
0...1...2...3	1.5 A resource mapping technique is used to identify resources and supports in the school and community.
0...1...2...3	1.6 Student voice is represented in the data used to inform team decisions.
Section Total: /21	<b>Create an Action Plan</b>
0...1...2...3	2.1 A vision statement is created through shared leadership.
0...1...2...3	2.2 There is a designated leader within the building to coordinate and organize efforts. Leadership roles and responsibilities are clearly defined within the team.
0...1...2...3	2.3 Administration is actively involved in the development and monitoring of efforts.
0...1...2...3	2.4 Families, students, and community partners are leaders in decision-making process.
0...1...2...3	2.5 School personnel and community partners are organized into working teams focused on specific issues identified during the needs assessment
0...1...2...3	2.6 Action steps and timeframes are clearly defined with assigned roles.
0...1...2...3	2.7 The action plan includes measurable goals that support the shared vision.
Section Total: /30	<b>Deliver Supports</b>
0...1...2...3	3.1 There are an array of accessible services responsive to basic needs.
0...1...2...3	3.2 Mental health supports and services are available in and outside of school.
0...1...2...3	3.3 Social emotional skills are taught and valued by all school staff.

Circle the number below to best describe progress.	<b>VCSF Indicators of Success</b> Score each indicator using the following scale: <i>0- Not Applicable or No Information</i> <i>1- Not Yet Implemented or Initial Phase</i> <i>2- Somewhat Implemented</i> <i>3- Fully Implemented</i>
0...1...2...3	3.4 Lessons are meaningful, engaging, and appropriate for students and include real-world or work-based learning experiences.
0...1...2...3	3.5 Families are empowered to support learning at home.
0...1...2...3	3.6 Students have access to a variety of enriching before/after-school programs.
0...1...2...3	3.7 Time slot, location, and translation needs for families is considered to ensure equitable access to key school events (ex. family/teacher conferences).
0...1...2...3	3.8 Messages and information are shared in multiple ways to increase accessibility.
0...1...2...3	3.9 Services and strategies designed to promote equity and/or address disparities have been included.
0...1...2...3	3.10 Tier 1, 2, and 3 services and strategies have been included.
Section Total: /18	<b>Monitor, Adjust, and Evaluate</b>
0...1...2...3	4.1 Supports are monitored and consistently checked for fidelity.
0...1...2...3	4.2 The school team includes data analysis in the meetings throughout the year to monitor and identify additional student needs or concerns.
0...1...2...3	4.3 School personnel and community partners assess the effectiveness of their relationship.
0...1...2...3	4.4 Partner programs are evaluated by impacted students, teachers, and families.
0...1...2...3	4.5 Practices and programs are evidence-based.
0...1...2...3	4.6 Student, teacher, and community feedback is collected regularly via surveys and interviews.
Section Total: /15	<b>Connect and Celebrate</b>
0...1...2...3	5.1 The vision statement is clearly displayed in our school building.
0...1...2...3	5.2 Community stakeholders are recognized publicly.
0...1...2...3	5.3 MOUs or informal agreements with community partners are established and revisited.
0...1...2...3	5.4 Results are shared with teachers, families, and community stakeholders.
0...1...2...3	5.5 Volunteers are recognized for their efforts (ex. banquet, thank you cards, small gift).

### *Additional Evaluation Tools*

**Community School Collaborative Agreement Compliance Checklist** is meant to serve as a planning and assessment tool for school teams looking to evaluate their vision, structures, leadership, and communication.

**Community Schools Evaluation Toolkit** is designed to help community schools evaluate their efforts so that they learn from their successes, identify current challenges, and plan future efforts accordingly. It provides a step-by-step process for planning and conducting an evaluation.

**Community School Standards** are designed to engage and support community schools as a data-driven, evidenced-based strategy.

**Indicators of Capacity Rating Form** by Coalition for Community Schools is for schools looking to considers multiple measures to assess a school's implementation.

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