

THE SIX PILLARS FOR SUCCESSFUL, EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS:

- 1. Strong Culturally Relevant Curriculum**
Educators engage students with challenging, culturally-relevant material, providing tools to analyze and learn. Classes or programs offered by or coordinated through the school can include Advanced Placement, Honors, languages, arts, physical education, English Language Learner, special education, ethnic studies, before and afterschool, career and technical education, GED prep, and job-training for students, parents, and other community members.
- 2. High-Quality Teaching:**
Standardized tests are not the focus; instead, the emphasis is on teaching problem-solving, critical thinking, and reasoning skills. Educators spend time together analyzing student work and improving their skills and approaches.
- 3. Inclusive / Shared Leadership:**
Leadership is a responsibility shared by the school principal with *the Community School Coordinator* and the *Community School Committee* of parents, community partners, school staff, youth, and other stakeholders.
- 4. Community Support Services:**
These schools are the hubs of the community, in support of student learning. They are responsive to student needs by providing meals, healthcare, mental-health counseling, and other services before, during, and after-school.
- 5. Restorative Practices: (including positive/restorative discipline practices)**
Fostering positive, healthy school climates, helping students to learn from their mistakes by moving from zero-tolerance policies that promote suspension, expulsion and toward “restorative “ practices to address behavioral issues and improve school climate.
- 6. Family and Community Engagement:**
Families/Parents and other community members are partners with Educators whose expertise and experience and valued and respected, and together with other partners they all have a voice in the learning community.

Transformational Community Schools achieve success by implementing the Six Pillars through the following **four mechanisms**:

- 1. An asset and needs assessment** of and by both school and community; participants in the assessment process include parents, students, community members, partners and school;
- 2. A strategic plan** that defines how educators and community partners will use all available assets to meet specific student needs and get better results;
- 3. The engagement of partners** who bring assets and expertise to help implement the building blocks of Community Schools;
- 4. A Community Schools Coordinator** whose job is to facilitate the development and implementation of the strategic plan in collaboration with school and community members/partners to ensure alignment of solutions to needs.