

New York State Community Schools Technical Assistance Centers 2022 Impact Report

New York State Community Schools Technical Assistance Centers (CSTACs)

The New York State 2017-18 Enacted Budget first allocated funds to support three regional technical assistance centers to support its investment in community schools funding to districts. The CSTACs disseminate information on effective and promising practices in the establishment and management of Community School strategies through professional learning and technical assistance designed to:

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

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

Services

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

- A [website](#) providing contact information for each CSTAC, curated resources including evidence-based and promising practices, recorded webinars, and event listings for each CSTAC,
- A monthly newsletter highlighting the work of the CSTACs, with spotlight features on New York Community Schools that are doing promising work, and showcasing available resources,
- Technical assistance via phone and email with school staff and community partners,
- 283 on-site or remote technical assistance visits to school districts,
- 140 in-person or remote sessions focused on developing smaller communities of practice within each region. These events have collectively served 16,216 attendees, and
- 32 webinars providing professional learning on topics of interest have served 6,617 participants.

Impact Highlights

Events of the past several years have heightened awareness of the issues impacting students, educators, administrators, and families. The CSTACs offer critically needed support to schools and districts included professional learning around family engagement, trauma, diversity, equity, and inclusion, chronic absenteeism, mindfulness, and more. In 2022, they reported the following highlights:

- The CSTACs' website had over 14,000 visits and more than 28,000 page views in 2022, of which 84% were from new site visitors.
- The website's resource portal is a searchable database to support every aspect of the Community Schools approach, including diversity, equity, and inclusion. Over 80 new resources including articles, videos, and podcasts were added in 2022, bringing the total to about 285.
- A monthly newsletter is distributed to an audience of 2,285 across the state.
- In response to the current mental health crisis' impact on educators and students, the E-CSTAC provided professional learning on competencies and strategies to assist with self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and coping with stress. Of nearly 500 people, 100% reported decreases in toxic thoughts, isolation, toxic stress, anxiety, barriers, and challenges. 100% reported increases in awareness, autonomy, empowerment, and life satisfaction.
- Two virtual Community of Practice sessions with Ali Hearn, LCSW addressed supporting the social, emotional, behavioral, and mental health needs of students, staff, and families.
- Four virtual regional conferences were hosted by the NYC-CSTAC. Three focused on implementation of the NYSED Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework and one focused on the role of the school building leader in the community school model.
- A School Superintendents' Community of Practice addressed requests for technical assistance and support in implementation, resulting in expanded strategies and effectiveness.
- The New Community School Directors' Institute was facilitated by the NYC-CSTAC in partnership with the NYC Office of Community Schools. This community of practice for newly hired community school directors provided training for three cohorts in 2022.
- Representatives from nineteen BOCES across the C/W CSTAC's region attended a networking event in the fall and strengthened relationships necessary for successful community schools.
- The Netter center for Community Partnerships TAC for NY and NJ co-sponsored a monthly Communities of Practices with the C/W-CSTAC.
- A regional roundtable in Greece, NY was facilitated by the C/W CSTAC and brought together districts, BOCES, and CBOs to strengthen the community school model in the region.
- 16 new Community Schools were launched with the assistance of the E-CSTAC.
- 26 new Community School directors/coordinators were hired after school districts received technical assistance from the E-CSTAC.
- Through over 50 in-person visits in 2022, NYC-CSTAC staff supported new and existing community schools in the completion of strategic planning documents, equity team building, and capacity building for newly appointed Community School Directors.

New York State CARES for Communities

The New York State Education Department allocated \$2.5 million in Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act administrative set-aside to amend contracts with the C/W- and NYC-CSTACs to partner with and convene community and faith-based organizations and school districts to leverage the resources and experience of community partners. Together, they worked to build capacity for parent and family support, supporting school districts and building local capacity, meeting social-emotional and mental health needs of students, family, and staff members, and addressing transportation issues, with focus placed on addressing the needs of special populations and demographic groups most adversely impacted by Coronavirus.

New York State CARES for Communities (NYSCFC) distributed over \$1 million in CARES Act funding through 47 partnership awards to community-based organizations (CBOs) and faith-based organizations (FBOs). Regions eligible for NYSCFC support were identified based on economic disadvantage and the adverse impacts of the coronavirus. Partnership awards were disseminated to CBOs and FBOs serving children and their families in social emotional learning and or/ mental health services, academic enrichment, digital literacy for students and families, and family services.