A community school is both a place and a set of partnerships between the school and other community resources. Its integrated focus on academics, health and social services, youth and community development, and community engagement leads to improved student learning, stronger families, and healthier communities. Community schools offer a personalized curriculum that emphasizes real-world learning and community problem-solving. Schools become centers of the community and are open to everyone – all day, every day, evenings, and weekends.

Most people think of schools today as serving a single purpose: a binary, analog-system of delivery - teachers teach and students learn. Community schools are more akin to smart phones. Schools and communities connect, collaborate, and create. Children and families have an array of supports from community partners right at their school. Communities and schools leverage their shared physical and human assets to help kids succeed.

Community schools contain a host of opportunities and supports built-in that give students and parents all the tools they need to learn and grow.
What is a Community School?

Using public schools as hubs, community schools bring together many partners to offer a range of supports and opportunities to children, youth, families and communities. Partners work to achieve these results: Children are ready to enter school; students attend school consistently; students are actively involved in learning and their community; families are increasingly involved with their children's education; schools are engaged with families and communities; students succeed academically; students are healthy - physically, socially, and emotionally; students live and learn in a safe, supportive, and stable environment, and communities are desirable places to live.

Strategic Alignment

Just like smart phones, community schools have an infrastructure or operating system that makes all the 'apps' work in a synchronized manner. A school-site leadership team, often comprised of educators, parents, community partners, and others, is responsible for creating a shared vision for the school, identifying desired results and helping align and integrate the work of partners with the school. A community school coordinator works hand-in-hand with the principal, and is a member of the school leadership team. The coordinator is responsible for building relationships with school staff and community partners, for engaging the families and community residents, and coordinator an efficient delivery of supports to students both inside and outside of the classroom, all day, every day. Data on academic AND non-academic factors drive the work for a community school.