



# COMMUNITY SCHOOLS EVALUATION TOOLKIT:

## A STARTER GUIDE TO HELP YOU TELL YOUR STORY AND IMPROVE RESULTS

[www.communityschools.org/evaluationtoolkit](http://www.communityschools.org/evaluationtoolkit)

### Welcome to the Community School Evaluation Toolkit

This toolkit is designed to help community schools evaluate their efforts so that they learn from their successes, identify current challenges, and plan future efforts. It provides a step-by-step process for planning and conducting an evaluation at your community school site(s). The toolkit is a practical, hands-on guide that makes it possible for you to improve your community school's effectiveness and to tell your story. Equally important, it offers a menu of data collection tools (i.e. surveys, public databases) for evaluating whether and how your school is achieving results. You can find these tools on line at: [http://www.communityschools.org/resources/community\\_schools\\_evaluation\\_toolkit.aspx](http://www.communityschools.org/resources/community_schools_evaluation_toolkit.aspx)

### For whom is the toolkit written?

This toolkit is for community school leaders, i.e., superintendents, local government leaders, foundations, United Ways, principals, site coordinators, curriculum planners, community-based organizations, higher-education institutions, and others. Anyone connected to a community school can facilitate the evaluation process. A background in research or evaluation is not required to use this toolkit effectively. The toolkit highlights strategies for an individual community school but they can also be used for initiatives with multiple community school sites.

### What is the purpose of the Toolkit?

This toolkit is designed to help you learn more about planning and conducting an evaluation of your community school or community school initiative. For the purposes of this toolkit, evaluation is defined as an assessment of the performance and consequences of the strategies implemented at a community school or an initiative.

The toolkit is designed to help you:

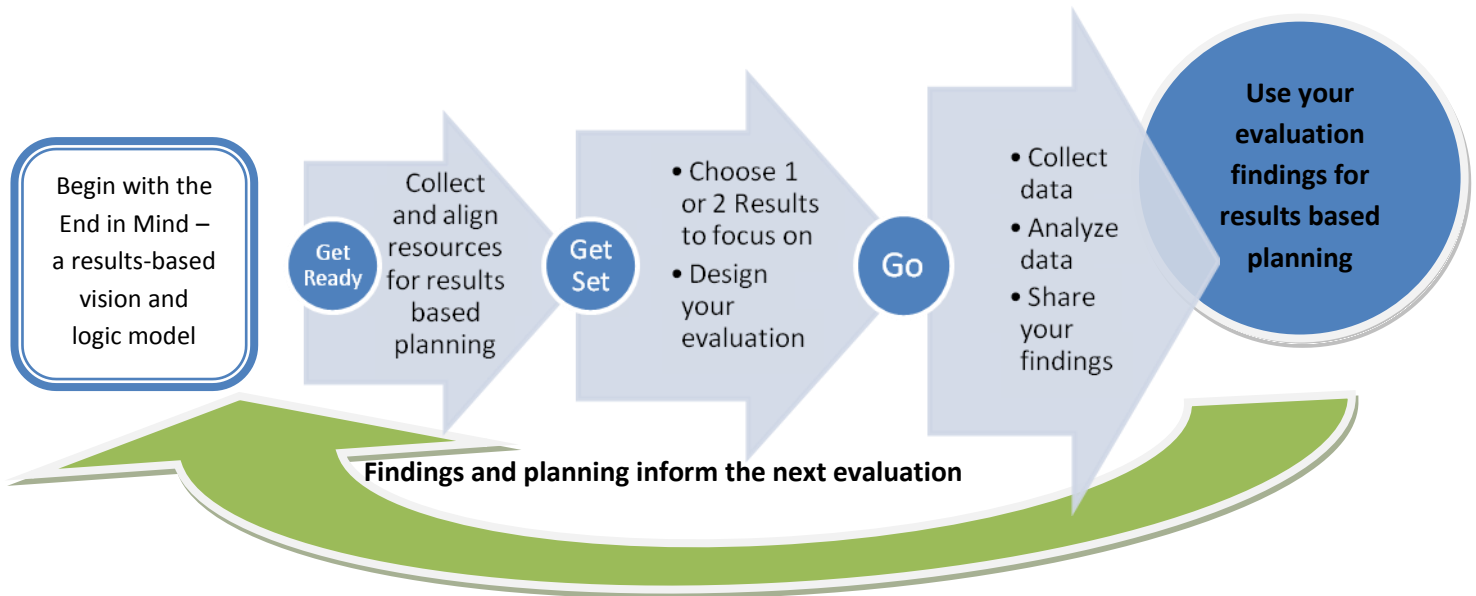
1. Use existing data sources and collect additional data (if needed) to conduct a low cost evaluation.
2. Identify areas of success and areas in need of improvement in your community school.
3. Gather information that can help you make planning decisions about your evaluation.
4. Facilitate community schools planning to lay a foundation for evaluation. The CCS Logic Model provides the basis for such planning.
5. Assess the extent to which you are leveraging resources.

### What is a community school?

*A community school is a place and a set of partnerships connecting school, family, and community. A community school is distinguished by an integrated focus on academics, youth development, family support, health and social services, and community development. Its curriculum emphasizes real-world learning through community problem-solving and service. By extending the school day and week, it reaches families and community residents. The community school is uniquely equipped to develop its students into educated citizens ready and able to give back to their communities.*

## What's in the Evaluation Toolkit?

The Evaluation Toolkit is organized into four parts that will help you prepare for an implement your evaluation: Begin with the End in Mind, Prepare to Evaluate, Designing the Evaluation, and the Evaluation Process. Each part contains steps that will help you think through and develop your evaluation.



### Evaluation Steps

#### Part 1- Before you Start: Begin with the End in Mind

- Step 1: The Community Schools Logic Model
- Step 2: Have what you need to conduct a successful evaluation

#### Part 2- Get Ready: Prepare to Evaluate

- Step 3: Know what you want to evaluate
- Step 4: Align your evaluation to the Community Schools Logic Model

#### Part 3- Get Set: Designing the Evaluation

- Step 5: Develop the questions you want to answer in your evaluation
- Step 6: Decide what data to collect

#### Part 4- Go!: The Evaluation Process

- Step 7: Collect data
- Step 8: Making sense of your data
- Step 9: Use your findings

### Community School Results

- Students in high-implementing Tulsa community schools outperformed students in non-community schools by 32 points in math and by 19 points in reading.
- Glenciff High School in Nashville has increased its graduation rate - 66.4% to 81.2% from 2007-2008 to 2010-2011.
- Oyler Community Learning Center, a K-12 school in Cincinnati has moved from Academic Emergency to Academic Watch and is now in Continuous Improvement for the second straight year. The school has improved its Ohio Performance Index by 21.7 points since 2006-2007.
- Community schools across the nation are seeing results in achievement, attendance, graduation, parental involvement, health, and more.
- For more results, visit [www.communityschools.org/results](http://www.communityschools.org/results)

## Results Framework

Community schools start with results that guide the vision of the initiative. They establish the criteria for the partnerships and activities needed to be successful. And they provide a benchmark which helps track progress, make modifications, and evaluate at regular intervals. The results and associated indicators presented below were identified from evaluations of community schools and reflect the research literature on best practices for youth development and community schools.

### Coalition for Community Schools Results Framework

RESULTS	INDICATORS THAT ALIGN WITH EACH RESULT	
Children are ready to enter school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Immunizations</li> <li>▪ More children with health insurance</li> <li>▪ Children in expected height and weight range for their age</li> <li>▪ Availability of early childhood education programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Attendance at early childhood education programs</li> <li>▪ Parents read to children</li> <li>▪ Vision, hearing, and dental status</li> </ul>
Students succeed academically	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reading on grade level by third grade</li> <li>▪ Daily attendance</li> <li>▪ Early chronic absenteeism</li> <li>▪ Tardiness</li> <li>▪ Truancy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Standardized test scores</li> <li>▪ Teachers support students</li> <li>▪ Grades</li> <li>▪ Graduation rates</li> <li>▪ Dropout rates</li> </ul>
Students are actively involved in learning and their community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Students feel they belong in school</li> <li>▪ Availability of in-school and after-school programs</li> <li>▪ Students feel competent</li> <li>▪ Schools are open to community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Attendance at in and after-school programs</li> <li>▪ Partnerships for service learning in the school/community</li> <li>▪ Post-secondary plans</li> </ul>
Students are healthy: physically, socially and emotionally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Asthma control</li> <li>▪ Vision, hearing, and dental status</li> <li>▪ Physical fitness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Nutritional habits</li> <li>▪ Positive adult relationships</li> <li>▪ Positive peer relationships</li> </ul>
Students live and learn in stable and supportive environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Students, staff, and families feel safe in school</li> <li>▪ Families provide basic needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Incidents of bullying</li> <li>▪ Reports of violence or weapons</li> </ul>
Families are actively involved in their children's education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Families support students' education at home</li> <li>▪ Family attendance at school-wide events and parent-teacher conferences</li> <li>▪ Family experiences with school-wide events and classes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Family participation in school decision-making</li> <li>▪ Trust between faculty and families</li> <li>▪ Teacher attendance and turnover</li> <li>▪ Faculty believe they are an effective and competent team</li> <li>▪ Community-school partnerships</li> </ul>
Communities are desirable places to live	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Employment and employability of residents and families served by the school</li> <li>▪ Student and families with health insurance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Community mobility and stability</li> <li>▪ Juvenile Crime</li> </ul>

## Tools

The Evaluation Toolkit provides a number of useful tools and connects users to surveys and instruments already used in the field. One example is the data collection plan template which helps initiatives think through what data they want to collect based on the results they want to achieve and where, how, and when to access it and from whom.

Data Collection Plan Template					
Evaluation Question	What	Where	How	Who	When
	What data are needed	Where are the data located	How will the data be collected	Who will collect the data	When will the data be collected
<b>Example Question:</b>  <b>Do students show improvements in their science grades and standardized test scores?</b>	grades, attendance in mentoring programs, opinions, standardized test scores	report cards, school database, county records, teacher files	review of records, surveys, focus groups, tests, program participation records	file clerks, teachers, program staff	daily, each grading period, end of year
See Step 5 to for guidance on forming evaluation questions	See Step 6 Table E to view example indicators for specific results and data collection instruments				

**To learn more** about the *Community Schools Evaluation Toolkit* or to get advice on evaluation in your community, please contact Reuben Jacobson at the Coalition for Community Schools – [jacobsonr@iel.org](mailto:jacobsonr@iel.org), (202) 822-8405. We also encourage you to consider evaluation as part of an effort to scale-up your community school initiative. You can read more about the role of evaluation in scale-up at [www.communityschools.org/scalingup](http://www.communityschools.org/scalingup).

[www.communityschools.org/evaluationtoolkit](http://www.communityschools.org/evaluationtoolkit)

**ABOUT THE COALITION FOR COMMUNITY SCHOOLS:** The Coalition for Community Schools is an alliance of P-16 education, local government, youth development, health and social services, community development, and higher education organizations as well as local community school initiatives. The Coalition believes that strong communities and strong school and strong communities are inextricably connected. We envision a future in which schools are centers of thriving communities where everyone belongs, works together and succeeds.