

Coalition for Community Schools

2026 STATE COALITION STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT

EXPLORING ([click to read more](#))

There is talk of developing a coalition, but only informal communications or plans have been made. Someone convenes a group of people to move the plans forward.

EMERGING ([click to read more](#))

There is commitment to developing a coalition by actively convening partners and putting in place a governance structure with initial goals and benchmarks outlined.

EVOLVING ([click to read more](#))

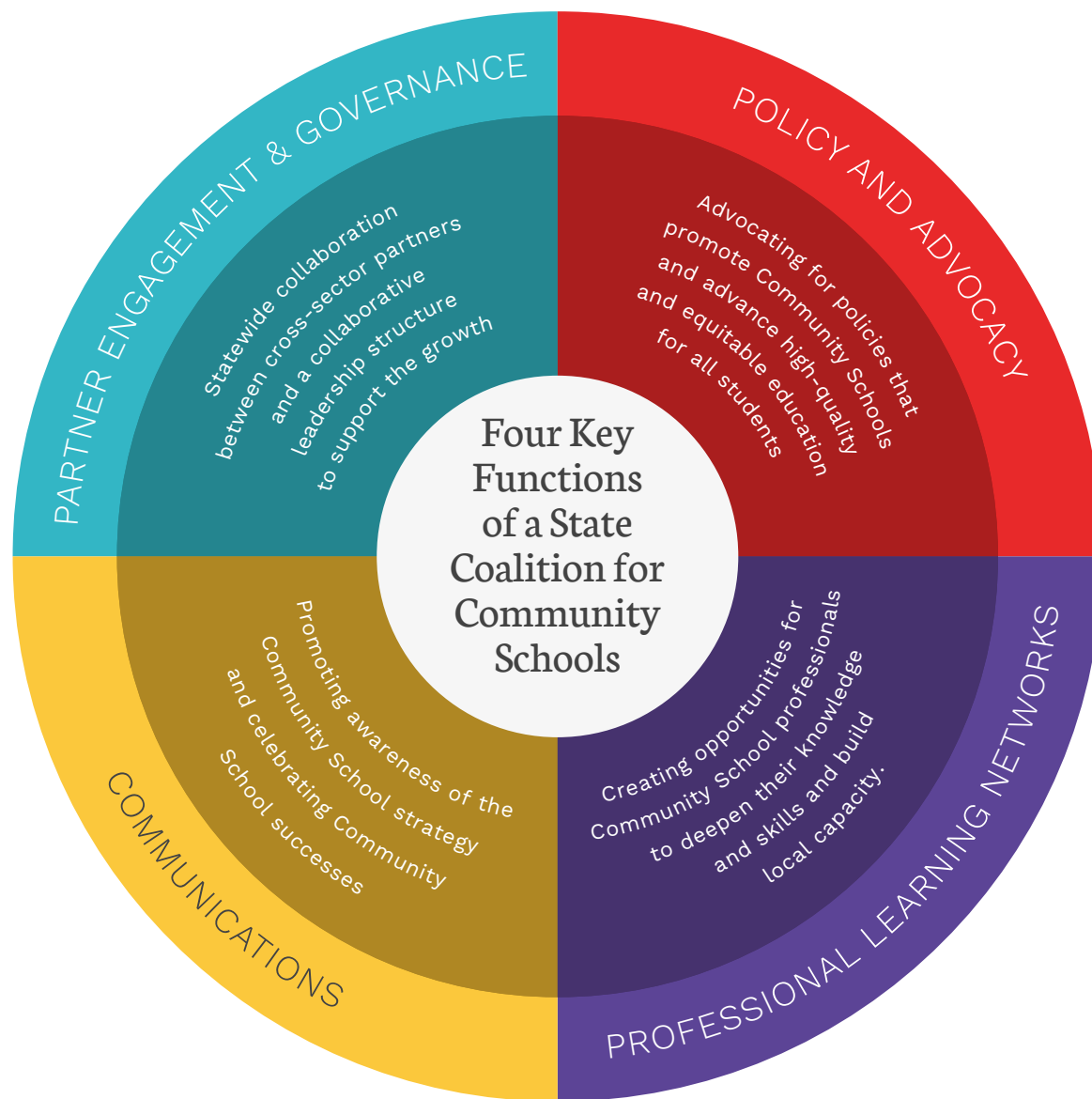
There is an official coalition in place, a wide range of partners are involved, regular communications to the field, and a leadership team and professional learning convenings are occurring.

EXPANDING ([click to read more](#))

The coalition has added key committees, is regularly tracking impact and stories, and is widening sphere of influence through new partnerships, expanded public communications, and ongoing capacity building.



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- An informal leadership team meets
- Key partners are identified (including SEAs, LEAs, CBOs, cross-system agencies, state intermediaries, families, educators, and youth)
- Initial meetings have been calendered and frequency of meetings has been determined
- Mapping of critical potential stakeholders is underway
- A shared understanding of the coalition's purpose, identity, and vision is beginning to develop among partners

- Initial leadership team is in place with elected co-chairs
- Key partnerships have been established
- A consistent core group of coalition members regularly participates in meetings and coalition activities
- Funding source secured for meeting costs
- Agreements for meeting norms and shared state coalition values and vision have been established
- Coalition meetings intentionally incorporate opportunities to build and deepen relational trust among members
- Critical stakeholders have been identified and tiered according to ideal level of engagement
- A plan for engaging critical stakeholders is developed and drives partner engagement strategies

1 EXPLORING

Partner Engagement & Governance

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EMERGING 2

3 EVOLVING

EXPANDING 4

- Official leadership team and Intermediary entity identified to guide coalition efforts
- Structure complies with all legal and financial requirements
- Co-chairs selected by the state partners actively engage in state and national Coalition networks
- Co-chairs are participating regularly in meetings and activities within the state and nationally
- Partnerships regularly reviewed to ensure balanced engagement, reciprocity, and participation across governance and network levels
- Coalition includes practitioners, school leaders, families, students, community organizations, state agencies, and unions
- Strategic collaborative plan actively drives coalition and committee outcomes

- State Coalition is recognized by the state as collective body to make recommendations
- The governance structure includes policy, communications, state Research Practice Network, and youth advisory committees
- Partners are leading and contributing on committees
- Potential and current funders are identified and engaged on a regular basis to support sustainability of State Coalition and partner activities
- Funding secured for full time state coalition coordinator position and general operations
- Relationships with a network of funders are established and cultivated to support the long-term sustainability of the state coalition and its activities

- State landscape mapping is underway to identify current community school policies at the site/district/municipal/state level
- State policy opportunities are discussed
- Municipal policy opportunities are discussed
- District level policy opportunities are discussed
- Informal inquiries of elected official interests are in process
- Policy power mapping is underway to identify key influencers in the policy process
- State Education Agency colleagues are engaged in ways that are appropriate to the local context and the scope and restrictions of their roles and agencies

- Clear policy priorities are established, informed by the state and local funding landscape
- Key policy influencers have been identified, and a plan is developed for how to educate and engage each influencer
- Shared messaging and collateral materials are developed through the state coalition's communication functions, and messaging is tailored to each policy influencer's interests
- Organized education of elected officials is occurring
- Opportunities for alignment and collaboration with State Education Agencies are identified and pursued in ways that respect the scope and restrictions of their agencies.

① EXPLORING

Policy & Advocacy

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EMERGING ②

③ EVOLVING

EXPANDING ④

- Consensus on state policy agenda, informed by various local and state partners, is established among partners and local communities
- Process is developed for how, when, and if the coalition will demonstrate support for various policy asks
- Key outcome measures and goals are identified
- Templates are developed and shared for potential school board and/or municipal resolutions and policies
- An organized annual grassroots advocacy strategy is in place
- Elected official champions are identified
- Elected official champions are using the coalition's shared messaging to educate colleagues

- The State Coalition's policy agenda and advocacy are aligned with the Coalition for Community School's national policy and advocacy agenda
- Student, family, educator, practitioner, and community members are engaged and sharing their lived experiences in local and state advocacy
- State Coalition prepares and advocates for policies that promote Community Schools and advance equity
- Local and state elected officials are champions for Community Schools and identify opportunities for alignment of efforts and resources to support development
- Community Schools appear in resolutions and policies at the district, municipal, and state level

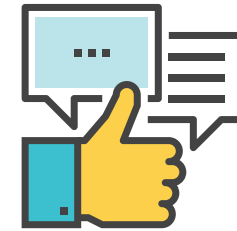
- The national Coalition for Community Schools is notified; state receives communications guide
- A listserv of local stakeholders is created
- Messaging on the purpose of the state coalition is developed and used to engage new stakeholders

- Coalition partners have developed shared core messages that follow national best practices and can be adapted for local contexts while maintaining a consistent statewide narrative
- Print collateral is developed with shared messaging
- Outward communications include branding and messaging developed by the coalition
- Additional tools such as newsletters and virtual collaboration groups or listservs are used for frequent communication
- A guide is developed on how to host local site visits using shared branding and messaging

① EXPLORING

Communications

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EMERGING ②

③ EVOLVING

EXPANDING ④

- Student, family, educator voices shape shared communications and messaging materials
- Shared branding guidelines and a nationally aligned communications plan are fully adopted
- Regular two-way communications and content-sharing across the state listserv network
- Members receive training to practice and integrate shared messaging into advocacy and presentations
- Messaging incorporates compelling outcome data and site visit invitations for key stakeholders

- Key partners are incorporating Community Schools messaging in communications
- Local and state advocacy reflect and utilize shared state coalition branding and messaging
- A PR strategy has been developed and guides messaging efforts
- Stories of Community Schools regularly appear in the media
- Evaluation and outcome data is integrated into community school messaging and storytelling
- Results and outcomes of the state coalition are shared widely within the state, local partners, and the Coalition for Community Schools
- Influencers and stakeholders continue to be engaged in localized site visits

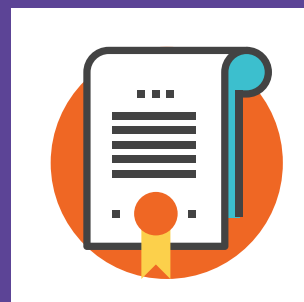
- Local Community School lead partners conduct internal trainings on Community Schools
- Community School practitioners participate in Coalition for Community School's convenings, network activities, and webinars
- Opportunity mapping is conducted, including a statewide landscape analysis, identification of target audiences, and assessment of existing assets, needs and gaps to identify opportunities for advancing shared learning

- State standards are developed and state standards are aligned with national standards
- State coalition works with state and local partners to identify priority audiences, needs, and gaps in learning and implementation and shapes professional learning and technical assistance accordingly
- State coalition leaders participate in relevant Coalition for Community Schools networks and activities
- Professional learning opportunities are offered to current practitioners to share knowledge
- Professional learning opportunities are offered to potential stakeholders to increase awareness

① EXPLORING

Professional Learning Networks

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EMERGING ②

③ EVOLVING

EXPANDING ④

- Statewide capacity building system is in place, including structures such as role-alike networks, technical assistance/coaching, and mentoring
- Common impact measures are in place
- Data collection systems (quantitative data and stories) are in place to identify, analyze, illuminate, and inform state coalition efforts and professional learning opportunities
- Participating partners share expertise through the state coalition's activities and communications
- Role-alike professional learning opportunities are offered
- An annual learning exchange/conference is offered for networking and knowledge sharing for continuous improvement and deepening relationships
- Shared tools are developed for state specific implementation guidance and data collection

- Data is used to inform state coalition's activities and communications
- State coalition is working in regional clusters with others for knowledge sharing, sustainability, and scaling practices
- Statewide structures are developed for localized assistance such as technical assistance and mentoring