

New York State Community Schools Technical Assistance Centers

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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 TACs disseminate information on effective and promising practices in the establishment and management of Community School strategies through professional development 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 that demonstrate collaboration with the local community;
- Provide school districts with the tools necessary to design and implement needs/resource assessments that will provide the data necessary 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 in order to provide tailored technical assistance and professional development.

The **New York City Community Schools TAC at Fordham University** serves the five boroughs of New York City. The **Eastern New York TAC at Rockland 21st Century Collaborative for Children and Youth, Inc.** serves the eastern portion of New York State from the North Country to Long Island, excluding New York City. The **Central/Western New York TAC at the Research Foundation for the State University of New York at Binghamton University** serves the central and western regions of the State. The TACs 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 TACs have collectively offered the following resources and services to schools across the state:

- A website providing contact information for each of the TACs, a library of curated resources including evidence-based and promising practices, recorded webinars, and event listings for each of the TACs
- A monthly newsletter highlighting the work of the TACs, spotlight features on New York Community Schools that are doing promising work and showcasing available resource
- Technical assistance via phone and email with school staff and community partners
- 114 on-site or remote technical assistance visits to school districts
- 30 in-person or remote sessions focused on developing smaller communities of practice within each region. These events collectively served 2,292 attendees
- 39 additional interactive virtual meetings for established communities of practice via conference call, videoconference, and/or webinar served 7,130 participants
- 33 webinars providing professional learning on topics of interest served 4,451 participants

Impact Highlights

The events of this year have shone a spotlight on the many issues impacting students, educators, administrators, and families. From escalating economic stress, a national uprising around social justice and enduring systemic racism, and a continuing, devastating pandemic, the ripple effects felt in the classroom and educational environment are significant and have compounded the factors impacting our young people and adults.

The Community Schools TACs were able to quickly pivot from their primarily in-person work to offer critically needed and invaluable support to schools and districts in new ways via technology from the very onset of school closures due to the pandemic. Offerings have included timely professional learning around family engagement, trauma, racial justice, chronic absenteeism, mindfulness, and more.

- All three TACs assisted districts in developing partnerships to support school-based health centers and/or school-based mental health clinics.
- The TACs' website has expanded its number of resources and continues to provide timely and relevant content, including webinars, events, and newsletters. From July 1 - December 1, there was a 69% increase in website visits from the same period last year.
- Five school districts hired Community School Coordinators in 2020 after receiving technical assistance from the Eastern Regional TAC. Including the three previously hired, this brings the total to eight Coordinators brought on following Eastern Regional TAC support, allowing for more students and families to receive specialized and targeted support during COVID-19 and beyond.
- The NYC Regional TAC has expanded its focus on the social and emotional needs of NYC community school families, delivering conferences and webinars focused on trauma-informed care; mindfulness and conflict resolution; cultivating racial justice; and developing student voice as an equity tool.
- The Central/Western TAC's Community School Networking Meetings with BOCES included the participation of 16 BOCES representing 220 component districts
- The Eastern Regional TAC (ETAC) is assisting 112 school districts in best practice attendance strategies to reduce chronic absenteeism. As a result of this work, Attendance Works' Executive Director Hedy Chang has invited Rockland 21C's executive director to serve on its national advisory committee.
- The NYC Regional TAC has collaborated with the NYCDOE's Office of Community Schools to establish a four-session intensive training for New Community School Directors using a tri-annual cohort model
- The Central/Western TAC actively participated on two recently developed BOCES Community Schools Advisory Teams (Erie 1 and C-A BOCES) and provided ongoing targeted technical assistance to nine individual BOCES in the region.
- The Eastern Regional TAC (ETAC) provided targeted assistance and support to school districts on critical race consciousness with partners from Harvard University. As a result, participating districts reported action steps taken to address race consciousness in their schools.
- The NYC Regional TAC developed a set of training modules for new and developing Community School personnel, completed over a series of six virtual site visits; to date, twelve schools have participated.
- The Central/Western TAC provided Ongoing targeted TA to community schools regional networks, including the Binghamton University Community Schools Regional Network of 10 school districts and Connected Community Schools, representing 4 school districts.