

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 CSTACs 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 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
- Identify and evaluate the school districts' needs within a region to provide tailored technical assistance and professional development

The **New York City CSTAC at Fordham University** (NYC-CSTAC) serves the five boroughs. The **Eastern New York 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 New York CSTAC at the Research Foundation for the State University of New York at Binghamton University** (C/W-CSTAC) serves the central and western regions of the State. 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 CSTACs
- 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
- 183 on-site or remote technical assistance visits to school districts
- 116 in-person or remote sessions focused on developing smaller communities of practice within each region. These events collectively served 13,858 attendees
- 32 webinars providing professional learning on topics of interest served 6,507 participants

Impact Highlights

The events of the past two years have shone a spotlight on the issues impacting students, educators, administrators, and families. From escalating economic stress, enduring systemic racism and inequity, and a protracted, devastating pandemic, the effects felt in the classroom and educational environment are significant and have compounded the challenges faced by our young people and adults.

The CSTACs offer critically needed and invaluable support to schools and districts included timely professional learning around family engagement, trauma, racial justice, chronic absenteeism, mindfulness, and more. This year, they reported the following highlights.

- The shared CSTACs' website had more than 11,700 visits in July-December 2021, of which 87% were new. More than 50 resources have been added to the website during this period and more are added weekly, with a current catalogue of more than 200.
- 12 new Community School coordinators were hired after school districts received technical assistance from the E-CSTAC, bringing the total number of coordinators hired after their support to 20. Community Schools are strongest with a dedicated individual to lead the work.
- NYC-CSTAC collaborated with NYCDOE Office of Community Schools to deliver resilience-building communities of practice for new/developing Community School Directors (CSDs).
- C/W-CSTAC's fall meeting was attended by 10 regional BOCES representing 168 component school districts. They also co-sponsor a bi-annual conference with Cattaraugus-Allegheny BOCES and provide ongoing technical assistance to several BOCES.
- C/W-CSTAC is developing a strong partnership with the new Netter Center for Community Partnerships TAC for NY and NJ, which has enabled them to co-sponsor a monthly CoP. Regional interest in using a University-Assisted Community Schools approach is increasing.
- E-CSTAC provided ongoing professional development to a county in partnership with Dr. Pedro Noguera of the Center for the Transformation of Schools at UCLA. Consequently, that county is now implementing a Community School strategy.
- NYC-CSTAC launched a four-part conference series using the NYSED Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework to cultivate equity in community schools.
- E-CSTAC provided technical assistance and professional development to over 130 school districts on chronic absence. 92% reported implementation of practices learned from the series.
- C/W-CSTAC began offering asynchronous online courses with over 50 learners in two months.
- E-CSTAC provided a training series on family engagement with Harvard University's Dr. Todd Rogers. 93% reported implementation of practices learned in the sessions.
- C/W-CSTAC presented to a variety of school, CBO, BOCES and higher education partners and continues to offer new professional development opportunities.
- NYC-CSTAC resumed in-person site visits coaching new CSDs, guiding schools through the NYC Assets & Needs Assessment evaluation, and implementing the Equity Team model.

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 existing contracts with the CSTACs at Fordham University and the Research Foundation for the State University of New York (RF SUNY) at Binghamton University to expand their scope of work to partner with and convene community and faith-based organizations and school districts to leverage the resources and experience of community-based partners. Together, they are working 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.

Through 47 partnership awards to community-based (CBOs) and faith-based organizations (FBOs), New York State CARES for Communities (NYSCFC) has distributed \$1 million in CARES Act funding. 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