



LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT REFERENCE GUIDE

TITLE: 2020-2021 Cohort 2 Community School Designation Application Process

NUMBER: REF-106102

ISSUER: Alison Yoshimoto-Towery
Chief Academic Officer
Division of Instruction

DATE: February 8, 2021

ROUTING
Local District
Superintendents
Administrators of Instruction
Community of Schools Administrators
Principals
Assistant Principals
UTLA Chapter Chairs

DUE DATES:
Letter of Intent: **February 26, 2021**
Application: **April 9, 2021**

PURPOSE: The purpose of this reference guide is to provide schools with the process and timeline to apply for Cohort 2-Community School designation for implementation in 2022-2023 school year.

MAJOR CHANGES: This is a new reference guide.

INSTRUCTIONS: The following information is provided to schools interested in applying for Cohort 2-Community Schools designation, for planning year 2021-2022, and implementation year 2022-2023.

I. BACKGROUND

The Los Angeles Unified (L.A. Unified) formally began the Community Schools model in the 2019-2020 school year by designating 17 schools as Community Schools. The District’s model focuses on the school as the central hub for all stakeholders with the support of community partners providing quality instruction, access to enrichment activities, physical and mental health, and social-emotional services.

The 2021-2022 application process is now open. Cohort 2 will be comprised of 13 Community Schools. Selected schools will receive \$150,000 in 2021-2022 (planning year) and \$250,000 in 2022-2023 (implementation year).

II. INFORMATION

This is an opportunity for schools to transform the way they work with families and community partners to provide well-rounded educational opportunities and support for students’ success.



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School staff, under the leadership of the principal and with support from a Community School Coordinator, work with families, students and community partners to create and implement a shared vision of student and school success.

III. THE FOUR PILLARS

Schools that apply to the L.A. Unified Community Schools designation process will be required to demonstrate the characteristics of the Community School's evidence-based school improvement framework that is centered on four pillars, which together create the conditions necessary for students to thrive:

A. Integrated Student Supports

Removing barriers to school success by connecting students and families to service providers or bringing holistic programs and services into the school that help families meet their basic needs so that students are able to focus on learning.

B. Expanded and Enrichment Learning Time and Opportunities

Ensuring there are before and after school learning opportunities that augment traditional learning, including summer instruction, additional academic instruction and mentoring, and out-of-school learning experiences. Learning opportunities build upon the cultural, linguistic and entrepreneurial assets of the community.

C. Family and Community Engagement

Incorporating strategies that cultivate clear communication between school and home, engaging parents with learning at home using strategies taught by educators, involving families in school decision-making, and embracing community organizing for school and District improvement.

D. Collaborative Leadership and Practice

Strengthening processes whereby parents, students, teachers, and principals with different areas of expertise work together, sharing decisions and responsibilities with mutual accountability toward a shared vision or outcome. Collaborative school cultures are central to school improvement, the development of professional learning communities, and the improvement of student learning.



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IV. TIMELINE FOR COMMUNITY SCHOOLS DESIGNATION APPLICATION PROCESS

Community Schools Designation Application Process Timeline Cohort 2	
February 8, 2021	Application process opens
February 22, 2021	Webinar – Video with FAQ
February 26, 2021	Letter of Intent due *(Schools may apply without submitting letter of intent)
March 5, 2021	Community School expert panel discussion and school team writing supports
March 24, 2021	Cohort 2 application office hours
April 9, 2021	Applications DUE
April 10-20, 2021	Application Review
April 23, 2021	CSSC selects 13 Cohort 2 schools to be designated as Community Schools
April 26 2021	All applicants are notified of status

V. SCHOOL-SITE PROCESS ACTIVITIES - FROM CONSIDERATION TO APPLICATION

When there is strong interest in establishing Community School designation by both the school community and the school leadership team, the following should take place:

- A. Schools engage in community and stakeholder engagement activities to determine interest by:
 1. Holding informational meetings for students, parents/families, and community members.
 2. Holding informational meetings for staff and faculty.
- B. School forms a writing team that includes multiple stakeholders to:
 1. Read the reference materials (linked in the related resources section).



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2. Participate in the webinar and discuss the implications for their school.
 3. Complete the application narrative.
 4. Hold reflection meetings for students, parents/families, faculty staff and community members to provide input and feedback related to the application narrative.
- C. School writing teams revise and finalize the application narrative.
- D. School writing team gathers all required signatures and documentation and submits the application.

VI. APPLICATION NARRATIVE

In addition to the required signature and commitment forms, all applications must contain a narrative that clearly articulates how the school envisions itself as a Community School, how it will plan and implement improvement efforts around the Four Pillars, and how it will sustain itself.

A complete description of the application process can be found in Attachment B, including the narrative writing prompts that must be addressed. Attachment C contains sample points that may be thought of as evidence of a solid response within each section.

VII. SCHOOL SELECTION CRITERIA

The most important element to ensure the success of a Community School is the genuine investment of all stakeholders, including the community. While all schools are invited to apply, schools with high needs (as defined below). Foundational criteria for school selection will include how schools in high-need areas demonstrate their readiness to begin the Community School designation process.

A. High Priority Criteria:

1. Schools in high-need areas as defined by the Student Equity Needs Index (SENI).
2. Schools experiencing decreasing enrollment and reduced resources.
3. Schools with high percentages of foster youth.
4. Schools serving large numbers of youth experiencing homelessness.



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B. Other Criteria - Readiness as Demonstrated by:

1. The narrative proposal describing existing collaborative leadership structures at the school site. Specifically, a school will demonstrate stakeholder buy-in via the voting template.
2. The narrative proposal describing the desire for significant parent-school relationships.
3. The narrative proposal describing a commitment to ongoing improvement in research and evidence-based effective teaching and learning practices.
4. The narrative proposal describing a student leadership role (Secondary Schools only).
5. Evidence of established (or ideas around developing) collaboration with neighboring schools in feeder patterns (Early Childhood to Post Secondary).
6. Evidence of identifiable connections (or plans around developing) connections to community partners (e.g., local community advocacy organizations, mental and physical health care agencies, etc.).

A rubric score will be given to each section of the narrative by three independent raters. Raters will be members of the Community Schools Steering Committee.

RELATED

RESOURCES:

Reading A: [Recommendations for Community Schools](#)

Reading B: [Trust in School](#)

Reading C: [LAUSD CS Benchmarks Visual](#)

Reading D: [CS Coordinator Job Description](#)

Reading E: [Mechanisms and Pillars Working Relationship](#)

ATTACHMENTS : Attachment A: *Letter of Intent to Apply*

Attachment B: *Applying to Begin the Community Schools Designation Process*

Attachment C: *Examples of Evidence to Include in Application Narrative*

Attachment D: *Application Cover Sheet*

Attachment E: *Stakeholder Engagement and Voting Template*

Attachment F: *Stakeholder Commitment Form*

ASSISTANCE:

For assistance or further information please contact your Community of Schools Administrator or Cora Watkins, Professional Development Coordinator, at cwatkins@lausd.net.



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ATTACHMENT A

**L.A. Unified Community School’s Initiative Cohort 2 Expansion
Letter of Intent to Apply**

Schools intending to apply to L.A. Unified Community Schools Cohort 2 need to complete and submit this Letter of Intent to Apply to cwatkins@lausd.net by 5:00 p.m. on February 26, 2021.

School Name:	Local District:
Community of School Name:	
Student Population Breakdown by Ethnicity:	
Percentage of Students Receiving Free/Reduced Price Lunch:	

Primary Contact Name:		
Title:	Email:	
Secondary Contact Name:		
Title:	Email:	

The signatures below indicate your stakeholder’s tentative agreement in support of submitting a Letter of Intent to Apply for participation in Cohort 2 of the L.A. Unified Community School Initiative. Please note that submitting this Letter of Intent to Apply is not binding on the school’s part, nor does it ensure selection into Cohort 2.

Principal Printed Name and Signature:	
UTLA Chapter Chair Printed Name and Signature:	
Parent/Community Rep. Printed Name and Signature:	
Student Body President Printed name and Signature (secondary schools only)	



COMMUNITY SCHOOL DESIGNATION PROCESS APPLICATION

Step 1: IDENTIFYING COMMUNITY INTEREST - Stakeholder Engagement

Part of the journey to begin the Community School designation process entails schools engaging the following groups: students, parents/families, school staff and community individuals. In order for a Community School to flourish, there must be genuine investment from all stakeholders. Community Schools excel through meaningful engagement with diverse stakeholders. You will use Attachments C & D to demonstrate the engagement and votes of stakeholders. **Please note:** Each member of the Local School Leadership Council (LSLC) is required to sign off on the proposal submitted for the Community School designation process. Use the Student/Parent/Family/Community Vote Sign-in sheet (Attachment D) to provide a list of the LSLC and non-LSLC members that were engaged in the writing and development of the plan narrative and offered their approval.

Step 2: DEEPENING THE TEAM'S UNDERSTANDING OF COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Once the team has decided to take the journey together, there must be a commitment. That commitment involves deepening the team's knowledge and understanding about Community Schools. Read the document titled, [Recommendations for Community Schools](#). The report provides a vision for the promise of Community Schools in L.A. Unified, an overview of key components of the model, and ideas on roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders.

Stakeholders should also read and carefully review the [Trust in Schools](#), [LAUSD CS Benchmarks Visual](#), [CS Coordinator Job Description](#), and [Mechanisms and Pillars Working Relationship](#) before signing the Stakeholder Commitment Form (Attachment F).

Step 3: COMPLETING COVER PAGE AND WRITING THE APPLICATION NARRATIVE

The next step of this process is for the team to complete the cover page (Attachment D) and write the application narrative.

The Narrative Proposal must follow this format:

- Double Spaced
- 12-point Times New Roman font
- One-inch margins on all sides
- 10 pages maximum excluding Cover Page and Appendices
- Include page numbers on each page of the narrative (not appendix)
- Clearly label all appendices



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ATTACHMENT B

The narrative section provides an opportunity for schools to describe in detail existing structures, as well as their level of investment in order to assess the readiness of the school to begin the designation process. Each of the following six sections should be addressed in the narrative:

1. **Vision:** School shows evidence of embracing the pillars in their response, weaving concepts of pillars to help them achieve their desired goals.
2. **Advancing the Four Pillars of Community Schools:** School addresses the four pillars in the responses (e.g., 1 point addresses 1 pillar)
3. **Planning: Schools** Identify three goals from their Single Plan for Student Achievement for 2021-2022 and describe how implementing the Community School model could enhance the school's ability to meet these goals.
4. **Student-Centered Data and Supports:** Give a specific example of when your school identified a problem and what data-driven solutions were brought in to increase academic success, social-emotional development, student behavior, etc.
5. **Sustainability:** Currently, schools that receive the Community School designation will be funded for two years. Describe how your school's leadership will ensure the continuation of the Community School model regardless of changes that may occur at the school, community, or district level (e.g., changes in school leadership, funding sources, available community partners, etc.).
6. **Reflection:** Describe the processes implemented to ensure the voices of students, staff, families, and community members are reflected in this application.

The completed narrative proposal should be reviewed with your school community (including active alumni groups, faculty, staff, students, parents, school councils, and community partner organizations) during regularly scheduled meetings and in an open forum so that all stakeholders have the opportunity to provide feedback and become informed about the plan.

Step 4: SUBMITTING THE APPLICATION

All submitted applications must include the following attachments:

- I. Cover Sheet (Attachment D)
- II. Narrative Proposal
- III. Appendix
 - A. Stakeholder Engagement and Voting Template (Attachment E)
 - B. Stakeholder Commitment Form (Attachment F)
 - C. Letter of Commitment or Letter of Support from One to Two Partners (optional)

An application must include all materials identified above and may not contain any other attachments than those listed under "Appendix" above.

The entire application must be submitted as one ZIP Folder/ZIP Filename the ZIP File as follows: ***Community School Cohort 2 Application: (complete school name)***



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ATTACHMENT B

Submit the application ZIP file/ZIP folder to communityschools@lausd.net. Applicants will receive an email confirming receipt of the application. Applications must be received by 5:00 p.m. on April 9, 2021. Late or incomplete applications will not be reviewed.



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ATTACHMENT C

EXAMPLES OF EVIDENCE TO INCLUDE IN APPLICATION NARRATIVE

I. Vision

School shows evidence of embracing the pillars in their response, weaving concepts of pillars to help them achieve their desired goals. School addresses the four pillars in the responses:

- A. Evidence of deep ownership by students, staff, and families.
- B. Asset mindset versus deficit mindset.
- C. Student outcomes are not just about grades, also address issues of school climate.
- D. Evidence that multiple stakeholders were engaged in the development of the vision statement.

II. Advancing the Four Pillars of Community Schools

A. Pillar 1 - Integrated Services

1. Links all needs and services to the school plan.
2. Contains diverse categories of service providers.
3. Acknowledges that connecting to harder-to-reach students/families is vital.
4. If there are not extensive existing partnerships, school articulates good understanding of needs of students/family/community and explains the desired partnership.

B. Pillar 2 - Expanded & Enriched Learning Opportunities:

1. Speaks to opportunities beyond remediation and intervention
2. Demonstrates culturally relevant curriculum
 - a. What does the community value? What is the culture of our community?
 - b. How might the community be involved in students' education?
3. Tells how this pillar supports families as well as students.
4. Describes in detail how opportunities are funded.
5. Provides concrete examples of why the school has chosen these enrichment opportunities or has a way of determining what their evidence will be to judge the effectiveness of the enrichment opportunity.

C. Pillar 3 - Parent/Family and Community Engagement:

1. Provides current examples of desired or expanded family engagement. Describes efforts to engage families that have been historically uninvolved or under involved.
2. Demonstrates that involvement goes beyond "compliance" (more than English Learner Advisory Council (ELAC) and School Site Council (SSC)).
3. Addresses intergenerational participation.



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ATTACHMENT C

4. Shows how families are not just engaged, but invested.
5. Provides examples of how school is targeting and being responsive to diverse group of parents/families.
6. Give examples of two-way communication with families.
7. Tells how family engagement goes beyond social events and towards families being engaged in children's learning outcomes and advancement.
8. Describes process from engagement to investment.
9. Provides specific examples and includes quantitative examples of family engagement (e.g., number of families doing certain things).
10. Creates a strong vision for family engagement as true partners in learning and decision making.

D. Pillar 4 - Collaborative Leadership Practices

1. Details the training that is provided
2. Details the assessment and acknowledgment of stakeholder skills and assets
3. Demonstrates ability to incorporate stakeholder skills, assets and input
4. Provides efforts made to address trust and relationship building

III. Planning

- A. Addresses needs of diverse student groups.
- B. Evidence of pillars in the Single Plan for Achievement such as the purchase of Pupil Services and Attendance Counselor (PSA) or Psychiatric Social Worker (PSW).

IV. Student-Centered Data and Supports

- A. The situation/problem is clearly articulated.
- B. The task is described.
- C. The action steps are delineated.
- D. The results of having taken the action are shared.

V. Sustainability

- A. Categorical program funds are aligned/realigned to match Community School priorities.
- B. Grant writing committee/work group pursues a variety of funding opportunities.

VI. Reflection

- A. There are a variety of opportunities for stakeholders to give input at various dates and times.
- B. Input is collected in multiple ways.



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ATTACHMENT D

APPLICATION COVER SHEET COHORT 2 - COMMUNITY SCHOOL DESIGNATION PROCESS 2021-2022

Name of School Site: _____

Grade Levels: _____

Principal's Name: _____ Phone: _____

Email address: _____

Submission Requirements

In order for your school to be considered for the L.A. Unified Community School designation, you must submit a full application that includes all relevant documents. These documents must be submitted by the school principal. Applications that are incomplete will not be considered.

Required Signatures

Principal: _____ Date: _____

UTLA Chapter Chair: _____ Date: _____

Local School Leadership Council (LSLC) Members-*each member of the LSLC is required to sign-off demonstrating agreement and collaboration in developing the narrative.* Due to COVID, electronic signatures are recommended. If electronic signatures are not obtainable, the principal may attach a list a names and certify that each of the members was in favor of the application. The LSLC meeting agenda and minutes must also be attached.

_____	Date: _____



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ATTACHMENT E

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND VOTING TEMPLATE

As part of your school’s application to begin the Community School designation process, you will be required to engage the following groups: students, parents/families, school staff and community. Please use this form to demonstrate the engagement and votes of stakeholders.

Certificated and Classified School Staff

All school-site staff (certificated and classified) that are assigned to this school 50% of their time or more may vote. Attach meeting agenda. Submit a roster of employees in attendance and indicate if certificated or classified.

Date(s) of Vote:	*Total Number of School Site Staff :
Number of “yes” votes:	Number of “no” votes:

*50% or more of the staff time on campus

Student (For Secondary Schools Only)

All students enrolled in the school may vote. Due to COVID, please attach a roster of students’ names who participated in the various meetings in lieu of the voting sign-in sheet.

Date(s) of Vote:	Number of Students Enrolled:
Number of “yes” votes:	Number of “no” votes:

Parent/Family and Community

All parents, families and community members may participate in the vote. Due to COVID, please have participants “sign in” with first and last names and role in the CHAT. Save and print the Chat roster of names and attach it to this form in lieu of sign-in sheets.

Date(s) of Vote:	**Number of Stakeholders that voted:
Number of “yes” vote:	Number of “no” vote:

**Stakeholders (Parents, Guardians, Community Members)

I certify that the above information is accurate.

_____	_____	_____
Name of Principal (printed)	Signature of Principal	Date
_____	_____	_____
Name of UTLA Chapter Chair (printed)	Signature of Chapter Chair	Date



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ATTACHMENT F

Community School Designation Process Stakeholder Commitment Form For School Years 2021-2022 and 2022-2023

Selected schools will be required to commit to specific terms during year one and two of the designation process.

Commitment to Appropriate Use of Funds

Selected schools will receive one-time general funds of \$150,000 in 2021-22 and \$250,000 for 2022-23. The funds allocated for year one are meant to support the planning and preparation for implementation. Schools will submit a budget worksheet outlining the proposed use of funds for each year. A justification for the proposed expenditures is to accompany the budget worksheet and must be aligned to the Four Pillars. Note: Alterations and Improvement (A and I) expenditures are not permitted. Schools are required to use part of the monies to fund a Community School Coordinator for two years.

Commitment to Hire a Community School Coordinator

L.A. Unified Community Schools are required to hire a full-time, certificated Community School Coordinator (CSC)* who will have specific roles and responsibilities in forming teams, leading the community needs and assets assessment process and guiding the school's adoption of the Community School model. Please see Reading D from Related Resources to review the job description. *Please note that the CSC must be a certificated employee of L.A. Unified and a UTLA represented position that is recommended by the school principal and elected by UTLA members at the school site.

Commitment to Support Required Training for the Community School Coordinator

The Community School Coordinator is required to participate in training to help build capacity and provide support at the school site. This will also allow for a network of support for all Community School Coordinators and schools going through the designation process to collaborate and learn from one another. Therefore, each Community School Coordinator must attend monthly PLC meetings, complete the National Education Association (NEA) Community School Coordinator Curriculum, and participate in monthly coaching sessions with an NEA Coach. The Community School Coordinator may not be assigned tasks associated with the role of Categorical Program Coordinator or Assistant Principal.

Commitment to Engage in the Needs & Assets Assessment & Community School Benchmarks during Planning Year One

Schools selected for the Community School designation process will engage in a comprehensive school and community needs and assets assessment process led by the Community School Coordinator, that will engage 75-100% of students, staff, families and community to identify top priorities. Resource mapping in the first year is a critical part of the planning year. Reading C (Community School Benchmarks) and Reading A (Recommendations to Support and Expand the Community School Network and Pathways in L.A. Unified) provide additional details on the



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ATTACHMENT F

needs and assets assessment process and timeframes for key benchmarks during the planning year and beyond.

Commitment to Comply with Documentation and Progress Monitoring Requirements

All Community Schools are required to document their Community School journey, submit self-evaluations, and engage in the use of Benchmark Assessment Tools. The process of the self-evaluation must also include input from stakeholders, including the school leadership team, school site staff (classified and certificated), students, families, community partner organizations, and community members. Reports generated by the Community School are due June 2022, during the planning year and June 2023 during implementation year. This report will demonstrate how well the school is addressing the four pillars of the Community School model and aligning resources and partnerships available to families. The report generated should be aligned with the needs and assets assessment that was used for root cause analysis and problem solving. Progress monitoring may also include:

- School-site visit by the Community School Steering Committee members.
- Submission of events calendar for the entire school year.
- Directory of community partners, services they are providing, and how they are aligned to the school’s goals/strategic plan.
- Participation in interviews with external evaluator partner(s).
- Submission of student achievement data.

This is a statement of commitment to work toward the goals of the Community School Initiative. Should our school receive designation as a Community School, we commit to engaging all stakeholders in work around the Four Pillars. We acknowledge that we have read and understand the terms of the designation process as stated above and we further agree to the terms.

School: _____ Local District: _____

Community of School: _____

Community of School
Administrator’s Name: _____

Principal’s Name

Principal’s Signature

Date

UTLA Chapter Chair’s Name

UTLA Chapter Chair’s Signature

Date