



Stages of Development in a Community School

	Stage 1: Exploring	Stage 2: Emerging	Stage 3: Maturing	Stage 4: Excelling
Summary of Key Features of Stages	This period is marked by discontent with the ways schools operate. This stage is marked by grandiose ideation, tremendous optimism and aspirational thinking that “if only” X was in place, things would be significantly different. All this should be encouraged because out of these dreams and desires will emerge a shared vision.	This period is marked by a commitment to jump in and do something! A decision has been made to commence the transformation by introducing some level of services, securing some funding and beginning to develop partnerships. Programs are designed in a strength-based paradigm, based on data from a formal or informal needs assessment. This period is like a roller coaster ride, marked by highs and lows, progress and frustration. To succeed in this stage, there needs to be a commitment to the shared vision, clear goals, good communication processes, clarity of roles and responsibilities, responsiveness to the needs, regular celebration. This period lasts for about 2 years.	This period is marked by steady, intentional progress and the realization that this work requires a tremendous amount of effort. The vision of the CS becomes clearer to multiple stakeholders, consequently there is likely to be broader support for it. Service utilization increases as interventions become timelier, more relevant, and of higher quality. Relationships between the CBO, partners, and the school are deepened, administrative and programmatic integration becomes more natural, and partners and the school jointly fund select programs. To succeed in this stage, one needs to keep the vision and programs fresh, tend to the relationships, increase partnerships, continue to demonstrate added value, and attend to sustainability.	At this level you are implementing quality programs and systems that are fully integrated into the fabric of the school. You have influenced the school culture with a focus on addressing the needs of the whole child, increased parent involvement, empowered parents and school staff to be advocates of quality education; you have established strong relationships within the school, community, and school district; you are valued as a committed partner & leader by the school. To succeed in this stage, one needs to take smart risks in innovative programming; develop youth leadership; use staff, parents and students to teach others to do this work.

The Capacities Across the Stages of Development

	Exploring	Emerging	Maturing	Excelling
Comprehensiveness	❑ Characterized by recognition that children and families have multiple needs that impact school climate and inhibit learning, and that schools cannot address them alone. Focus on how to get services and programs for children and families, both non-academic and academic enrichment.	❑ Characterized by initial steps towards building relationship with a Lead Partner and other willing providers. School open extended hours for partners to provide services, as well as inviting programming and support services during the school day.	❑ Characterized by opening school to multiple partner services and programs that respond to identified needs of students, school, families and community and that improve the overall conditions for learning.	❑ Characterized by a shift in role of schools as hubs of opportunity and civic engagement for students, families and neighborhoods residents. System in place for on-going comprehensiveness in response to need and demand.
Collaboration	❑ Characterized by interest in CS strategy as way to engage others in removing barriers and improving conditions for learning. Open to sharing leadership. Interested in increasing parental and community engagement.	❑ Characterized by increased efforts to engage parents and community in planning, implementation and oversight of academic and non-academic programs. Beginning to involve partners and parents in decision-making.	❑ Characterized by the regular involvement and leadership of wide range of stakeholders. Transparent agreements and mutual accountability underpin the ongoing development of partnerships.	❑ Characterized by permanent engagement across community, collaborative mode of community and program development, and policymaking.
Coherence	❑ Characterized by a recognition that effective management of needed programs and services exceeds capacity of existing staffing and structures. Recognized need for program integration. Planning process engages all stakeholders.	❑ Characterized by efforts to develop effective coordination and system of monitoring and accountability for programs and services. Development of new resources for staffing, communication patterns, management.	❑ Characterized by the integration of CS structure/processes/programs into “normal” operations of schools. Site coordinator role is clearly understood and leadership is reliably shared. Effective, consistent management is a hallmark of this stage.	❑ Characterized by policy shifts that make CS a permanent approach to school reform, service delivery, community-based education, and civic engagement.
Commitment	❑ Characterized by an interest in building the CS for the long term, with policy changes, systems, resources and engagement geared towards permanency.	❑ Characterized by systematic, multi-year efforts to collect data, build focus on results, seek resources and build support.	❑ Characterized by growing realization that CS can provide coordination and targeting for numerous child, family, and community goals. Policy and funding decisions begin to reflect site successes.	❑ Characterized by permanent political commitment, designated funding, private and community support, alignment of related initiatives, using CS as coordinating strategy.