



Aligning to Support Community Schools



The County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) and the San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE) have made a commitment to align organizational goals - HHSA's [Agency Promise](#) and SDCOE's [North Star](#) - in order to better serve students and families.

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS BACKGROUND AND NEED

- There are approximately 500,000 students in 43 school districts in San Diego County.
- 52.3% of students in 2023-24 were income-eligible for the free or reduced lunch program. The income guideline in 2024-25 for free and reduced-price eligibility for a family of four is \$40,560 to \$57,720 per year, respectively (California Department of Education).
- 20% of students (more than 81,000) are chronically absent, putting them at risk to drop out of school.
- The [California Community Schools Partnership Program](#) (CCSPP) began in 2021 to support schools' efforts to partner with community agencies and local government to align resources to improve student outcomes. The CCSPP follows the [California Community Schools Framework](#), adopted by the California Department of Education in January 2022.
- Schools receiving state funding through CCSPP are those identified as having higher than average percentages of child homelessness, dropout, suspension and expulsion rates, and students in low-income families, among other criteria.
- There are [189 San Diego County schools](#), and growing, in the CCSPP.

As HHSA and SDCOE continue to build their partnership, two initial objectives are to Strengthen Understanding of Community Schools and to Build Connections to Expand Support.

STRENGTHEN UNDERSTANDING OF COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Community schools are created through a partnership between the schools, families, and community to provide safe, supported spaces where:

- Students have what they need to learn.
- Families are partners and have what they need to thrive.
- Communities benefit from stronger, healthier, more informed people.
- Community schools use a whole-child approach that cares for each student's academic learning while supporting their social-emotional, physical, and mental well-being.

Why are Community Schools needed?

Schools are community hubs where students, families, staff members, and community groups gather.

- Schools can listen and respond to the unique needs of their communities.
- Schools are trusted messengers of information for families.
- Schools can bring their communities together with organizations that provide services and care.

Where can I learn more about Community Schools?

Watch a short video and learn more at

[SDCOE.net/CommunitySchools](https://sdcoe.net/CommunitySchools) or scan the QR code.



BUILD CONNECTIONS TO EXPAND SUPPORT

Actions for SDCOE to expand support for Community Schools:

SDCOE provides the following to Community Schools in San Diego County:

- Coaching and Professional Learning Opportunities for school teachers and staff
- Support with writing and monitoring grants
- Networking opportunities for school staff and community partner organizations
- Coordination of services between schools and community partner organizations
- Visit [Regional Technical Assistance \(RTAC\)](#) and [SDCOE Community Schools](#) for more information.

Actions for HHSA to expand support for Community Schools:

Collaborating with SDCOE, HHSA staff are planning and participating in convenings with staff from Community Schools to identify needs, strategies and action steps to bring programs and services closer to students and families.

HHSA departments are encouraged to:

- Contact Pam.Smith@sdcounty.ca.gov to schedule a Community Schools presentation for staff.
- Assign appropriate staff to participate in periodic HHSA-SDCOE Community Schools convenings to explore opportunities to connect and support.
- Review and update HHSA programs currently serving and available to schools on the [Live Well Schools Program Map](#).
- Keep updated on events and professional learning opportunities by [signing up for the Transforming Communities Newsletter](#) (scroll to "The Community Schools Strategy" section to sign up).
- Join the discussion and receive updates through the [Live Well San Diego Education Sector](#) on a variety of school-related topics, including Community Schools.

