

# Community Schools Overview



# Defining Community Schools:

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The California Department of Education (CDE) defines a Community School as schools that use a “whole child” approach, with “an integrated focus on academics, health and social services, youth and community development, and community engagement.”

Community schools design their own curricula and programs to support the whole child and partner with community-based organizations (CBO) and local government agencies to align community resources to realize a shared vision of success.

# Community Schools Purpose:

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Community schools are designed to intentionally and collaboratively address the economic and social barriers that are the underlying cause of the opportunity and achievement gaps.

Community school initiatives enable the local education agency (LEA) and school to work closely with with educators, students, and families to address the unique needs, assets, and aspirations of the school community.

# Are Community Schools Effective?

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- A 2017 report that reviewed 143 reports of the Four Pillars of Community Schools and found that when properly implemented, the Community School model is effective.

- Finding 9. Comprehensive community school interventions have a positive impact, with programs in many different locations showing improvements in student outcomes, including attendance, academic achievement, high school graduation rates, and reduced racial and economic achievement gaps.

<https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/community-schools-effective-school-improvement-brief#:~:text=Comprehensive%20community%20school%20interventions%20have,racial%20and%20economic%20achievement%20gaps.>

# The Academy's Intentionality/What We Do

## 1 | Integrated Student Supports

Social-emotional curriculum

Focus on supporting students academically and emotionally

## 2 | Collaborative Leadership

Established Culture of Professional Development

School Culture is focused on social justice, social-emotional learning, and restorative practices

## 3 | Extended Learning Time

After School and Summer Programs

Additional academic supports during the school day

# The Four Pillars of Community Schools:

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# — What Is Missing? The Fourth Pillar: Family and Community Engagement

This includes:

- Home visits (do occur in AoA elementary)
- Home - school collaborations
- Authentic family engagement
- Actively engaging expertise and knowledge of families and community members in educating students
- Intentional partnerships

# What Does All of This Mean for The Academy?

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- Is becoming a community school something we wish to consider?
- We are currently, intentionally in our own AoA model, operating three of the pillars
- One of our big goals this year is to embrace family and community engagement, the fourth pillar
- What would it mean for AoA to rebrand as a community school?



# Things To Consider

- We owe our students and families the best school we can offer that supports their needs, the ones we know and the ones we don't yet know
- Strengthen and improve what we are already doing while we continue to expand and grow
- Distinguish ourselves from other schools in and around Alameda and increase our visibility in the community

# Why Does This Matter?

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- **Does Alameda need AOA?**
  - Our mission and level of support services are unique to Alameda public schools.
  
- **Are we delivering on our mission?**
  - Yes, but we can do better.

# What Do We Need To Do? Feb. 2022

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- We need to increase enrollment substantially, strengthen and deepen our programs, dramatically close our achievement gap, deliver on our mission, and make The Academy of Alameda the “go to” school in Alameda
- We need to define what success means for our students and the organization
- We need to better understand what our current and future community wants from their school setting to determine if we are, can, or should meet those needs

# The Academy of Alameda believes in:

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## **OUR MISSION:**

The Academy of Alameda equitably develops students into critical thinkers and life-long learners who navigate the world with integrity and who apply their learning to empower themselves and their communities

## **OUR ENVISIONED FUTURE:**

The Academy of Alameda envisions a future where all students are successful, and their destinies are not determined by their demographics.

Questions?

