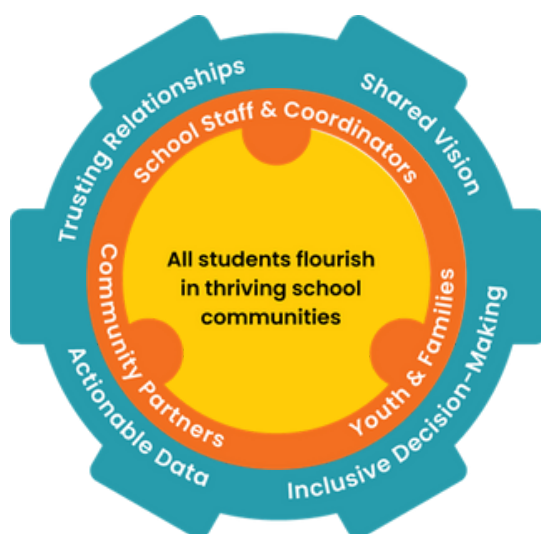




Assets & Needs Assessment Toolkit

Conducting an Assets and Needs Assessment (ANA) equips schools with the insight, tools, and collaborative processes needed to improve outcomes for students, families, and the broader community. It is a foundational step in the Community School Impact Cycle, anchoring the work in real-time data and authentic stakeholder voice to drive meaningful, measurable change.



Rooted in the Community Schools Framework, the ANA supports the use of actionable data and inclusive decision-making to identify priorities and aligned strategies, building the foundation for the implementation of the community school strategy.

The ANA helps build this foundation by

- Identifying patterns and trends in both historical and current data
- Engaging students, families, staff, and community partners in conversations that illuminate strengths and opportunities of the community
- Informing the implementation of strategies and services that respond to community needs and build on existing assets
- Establishing a baseline to track progress and demonstrate impact over time
- Aligning school priorities with community voices and values
- Strengthening trust, engagement, and ownership among all stakeholders

By using the ANA as a launching point, schools use data to set clear goals and build responsive strategies within a continuous improvement cycle. It ensures planning is inclusive, data-driven, and community-centered, with the flexibility to adapt and grow alongside the school's evolving needs.

The ANA is not a one-time event; it is the first step in a dynamic cycle that ensures all students can flourish in schools where community success is at the heart of the work.

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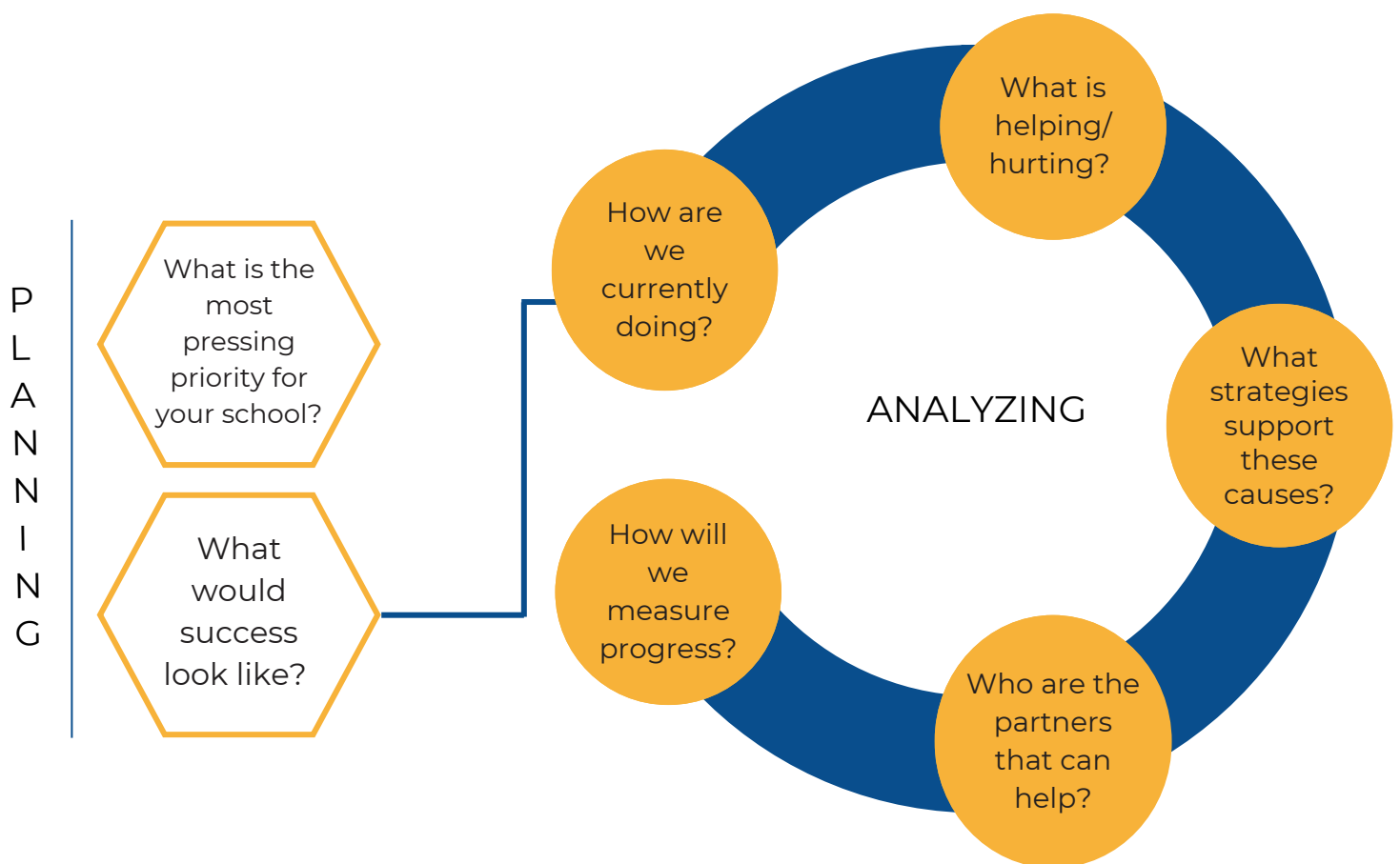
All resources and supporting documents can be accessed in this [ANA Folder](#).

Community School Impact Cycle

The Community School Impact Cycle is a backward-planning, continuous improvement process that helps schools improve outcomes and monitor program impact. It supports thoughtful, data-informed decision-making, grounded in stakeholder voice and community engagement, with a focus on supporting the well-being of students, families, and the broader school community.

At the heart of the process are a set of guiding questions that drive inquiry and action at every stage. These questions shape each phase of the cycle. It begins with identifying priority outcomes the school aims to achieve. Schools then conduct an Assets and Needs Assessment (ANA) to gather and interpret data, surface patterns, and understand both the strengths and needs of the school community. Based on the ANA findings, the Action Plan outlines strategies, actions, partnerships, and outcomes designed to support student and family success. The cycle continues with regular analysis and reflection to assess progress and impact, using the guiding questions to refine strategies and adjust course as needed.

This cycle is not a one-time effort, but a dynamic process that supports ongoing learning, strategic alignment, and meaningful change in how schools serve and support their communities.



Community School Impact Cycle

PLANNING



What is the most pressing priority for your school?

First identify the priorities of the school. What are the end goal outcomes that will happen? This is the north star to guide implementation. For example, students and families will feel belonging.

Action Steps

1. Convene the community school leadership team and advisory council
2. Discuss vision and priorities for student and family success



What would success look like?

Next, identify what success will look like if the priority need was met. Who will be better off? What are the conditions that the school will create that will aide in the success of the priority (i.e. positive family engagement, student leadership opportunities)? For example, these success outcomes could be improved attendance, school climate, etc.

Action Steps

3. Facilitate an advisory council discussion around shared vision long term outcomes

ANALYZING



How are we currently doing?

After identifying the north star priorities, then begin planning the ANA, starting with gathering archival information on how the school is currently doing. This could be data that inform trends, patterns, or insight on the current place the goal stands. For example, past years climate surveys could inform on trends in family engagement and student leadership opportunities.

Action Steps

4. Begin the ANA by deciding which assessments will be utilized, considering stakeholder groups, key practices, and the levels of data collected
5. Collect the archival data



What is helping/hurting?

Next, gather a diverse representation of the school community voices and use a strengths and opportunities process to inform what is helping to progress towards the outcomes and what could be hurting progress towards the outcomes. Additional assessments may need to be conducted in order to uncover the root of the needs.

Community School Impact Cycle

ANALYZING cont.

What is helping/hurting?

Action Steps

6. Analyze the archival data collected
7. Develop questions for the stakeholder audiences that will provide more context about potential root causes
8. Administer the assessment to gather Individual Voice level data
9. Compile the results for the advisory council's review
10. Use an analysis activity to determine root cause

What strategies support these causes?

Then, prioritize the strategies that support the causes of helping progress towards the school priority. Utilize the archival data collected to demonstrate that the strategies are helping.

Action Steps

11. Convene the school leadership team and advisory council to select strategies and set goals that align with school vision and priorities

Who are partners that can help?

Next, gather information on partners that can help implement the priority strategies from the previous stage. What partnerships can be put into place to implement effectively?

Action Steps

12. Determine the resources (people, partnerships) needed to accomplish the strategies implementation
13. Begin to reach out to partners to foster relationships

How will we measure progress?

Last, decide on the tools that will help to measure progress within those strategies. These are the assessments that will continually track progress throughout implementation. These measures can give information on how much (i.e. how many students are participating in mentorship), how well (i.e. Did students continue to participate in mentorship), and who is better off (i.e. has student attendance improved).

Action Steps

14. Identify desired outcomes from implementing the strategy
15. Determine the indicators used to measure progress towards the priority outcomes
16. Gather the baseline data for those measures

ANA Data Collection

The ANA can be created using a variety of assessments to better understand how the school is currently functioning within each key practice and to identify opportunities for growth. Selecting assessments aligns with the *how are we currently doing?* and *what is helping/hurting?* steps of the Community School Impact Cycle, ensuring broad representation across stakeholders and key practices.

Below, each key practice is paired with the stakeholder groups most likely to be reached, along with sample assessment methods, such as climate surveys, community conversations, and attendance. These assessments could provide both anecdotal and measurable insights into strengths and needs, ensuring a well-rounded view of the school community. Use this guide to design the ANA plan by selecting assessments that reflect diverse stakeholder perspectives and inform your school's priorities and next steps.

Collaborative Leadership, Shared Power and Voice



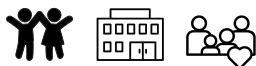
- Climate Surveys
- Community Conversations
- Community Asset Map

Expanded, Enriched Learning Opportunities



- Pipeline Services Inventory
- Climate Survey
- Community Conversations
- Empathy Discussions

Culture of Belonging, Safety, and Care



- Climate Survey
- Classroom Observations
- Empathy Discussions

Rigorous, Community-Connected Classroom Instruction



- Academic Data
- Classroom Observations
- Climate Survey
- MTSS Data

Integrated Systems of Support



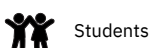
- Community Level Data
- Pipeline Services Inventory
- Community Conversations
- Climate Survey
- Empathy Discussions

Powerful Student and Family Engagement



- Chronic Absenteeism Data
- Pipeline Services Inventory
- Climate Survey
- Community Conversations

Icon Key



Students



Families



Staff



Community Members



Community Based Organizations

ANA Data Collection

To deepen the analysis from the assessments organized by stakeholder group and key practice, this next lens focuses on the levels at which data is experienced and collected: community, school, and individual. Intentionally examining data across these levels helps uncover the root causes behind identified needs. This aligns with the *what is helping/hurting?* step in the Community School Impact Cycle and moves the ANA process towards actionable insights.

Below are descriptions of the three data levels, including examples of what can be collected and links to related resources where applicable. This list is not exhaustive. Use these levels alongside stakeholder groups and key practices to guide your selection of data sources that will help illuminate the root causes behind your school's priority needs.

Community Level Data

This level of data is a **high scope** that gets a broad view of what the community has as a whole for assets and needs.

- findhelpidahoh.org
- [ALICE](#)
- [Asset Mapping](#)
- [District/State Graduation Rates](#)
- [Community McKinney Vento Percentages \(By District\)](#)
- Community Health Needs Assessments



School Level Data

This level of data is **medium scope** of specific to the school site that drills down from the community into assets and needs directly pertaining to the population that the school is serving.

- [Climate Surveys](#) for families, students, staff, and/or community members
- [Academic \(IRI/ISAT/MTSS\)](#)
- [Chronic Absenteeism](#)
- [Program Services Inventory](#)
- Program Participation
- Family Engagement Participation
- Free and Reduced Lunch percentages
- Student Behavior Referrals
- Transportation method Percentages
- Teacher retention
- [Communities for Youth Well-Being Assessment](#)



Individual Voice Level Data

This level of data drills down to the **granular level**, to hear the voices of stakeholders that the school is serving; to help identify the specific assets and needs they are able to share.

- [Community Conversations](#)
- [Learning Walks](#)
- [Community walks](#)
- [Home visits](#)
- [Empathy Discussions](#)



Administering the Assessment

Once your team has analyzed the archival data that was selected, the next step is to administer the assessments to gather stakeholder voices. This step of the ANA aligns with the *what is helping or hurting?* stage of the Community School Impact Cycle, ensuring that real time, lived experiences are captured to inform the root cause analysis. Collecting these perspectives provides critical context for the archival data analysis.

Use the steps below to plan, organize, and administer a well-rounded assessment process that supports diverse stakeholder participation and will deepen your understanding of your school community's assets and needs.

1

Identifying Gaps in Existing Data

After analyzing the archival data, determine what's still unclear about the needs or barriers that are revealed in the data. This step ensures the individual voice assessments are designed to help uncover root causes. Use a data inquiry activity to explore the patterns and trends and dig into reasons why they exist and what's missing to fully understand the context. The gaps identified through this analysis will guide the selection of questions and help determine which stakeholders to engage next.

Potential Reflection Questions

- What trends or patterns do we see in the data?
- What don't we know yet that would help explain *why* these trends exist?
- Are we missing the voices of stakeholder groups (i.e. students, families, staff, community partners)?
- What historical or systemic barriers could be contributing to the trends?
- What assumptions are we making that should be tested with stakeholder input?

2

Develop Questions and Select Assessment Methods

Based on the identified gaps in your archival data, create targeted, open-ended questions that will help uncover the root causes behind your school's needs and barriers. These questions should connect to the trends and patterns observed in the archival data, and be designed to generate more meaningful, contextual insights. Select the most appropriate Individual Voice assessment methods to gather this information. Be intentional in matching each question to stakeholder group best positioned to answer it.

Potential Reflection Questions

- What information is still needed to better understand the root cause of this trend or barrier?
- What questions will help uncover *why* this need is occurring?
- How can I phrase questions to invite honest, thoughtful responses?
- What type of assessment best fits the question (i.e. one-on-one, group, or written)?
- Which stakeholders are best positioned to provide meaningful insights?
- Are the questions accessible and appropriate for the audience I am engaging?

Administering the Assessment

3

Schedule Assessments and Assign Roles

Assign clear responsibilities within the ANA team to lead and support each selected assessment. Coordinate the scheduling of each assessment that will be administered (i.e. community conversations, surveys, learning walks, etc.), ensuring that they are accessible and inclusive of your target stakeholders.

Be intentional about selecting times, formats, and locations that maximize participation and reflect the availability and needs of the school community. Plan for materials, space, interpretation/translation needs, and outreach to encourage engagement.

Potential Reflection Questions

- Where and when will the assessments take place?
- Who will facilitate and participate in each assessment?
- Who will be involved in each assessment?
- Are there barriers that might limit participation (i.e. language, timing, transportation)? How can we remove them?
- What outreach or communication is needed to increase stakeholder participation? What strategies (i.e. incentives, childcare) could help?
- Do we have the tools and resources needed to administer each assessment effectively?

4

Administer the Assessments

Administer the selected assessments according to your schedule and assigned responsibilities. Ensure all facilitators are prepared, materials are ready, and that participants feel welcomed, respected, and safe to share honest feedback.

Designate a note-taker or recorder for each activity to capture key takeaways, themes, and quotes. These notes will be essential for the data analysis and root cause interpretation phases with the advisory council.

Potential Reflection Questions

- Are all logistics and materials in place to support smooth implementation?
- How will we ensure participants feel heard, respected, and safe?
- Who will record key insights during each assessment activity?

5

Closure

Conclude the process by thanking all stakeholders who participated. A simple email, card, or phone call can show appreciation and reinforce trust in those partnerships.

Compile the Data

This step transitions the process from data collection to analysis by organizing all findings in one place. By compiling both the archival and data collected through administering additional assessments, schools can begin identifying patterns, strengths, and barriers from multiple perspectives. This is the final step in the *what is helping/hurting?* stage of the Impact Cycle before moving into strategy prioritization. It ensures a holistic, inclusive understanding of root causes and creates a comprehensive data set to guide next steps. Additionally, compiling the data into one document builds a historical record of each year's ANA's. This record supports the continuous improvement efforts over time.

HOW?

Before convening the school leadership team and advisory council, use this step to review all collected data and determine which pieces are most relevant for identifying root causes. This organized summary helps prioritize themes from the data and support the shared reflection and decision making around prioritizing strategies to implement.

Reflection Questions

- What themes are emerging across multiple data sources?
- Are there any patterns that align or contradict each other?
- Which voices are represented in this data? Are any missing?
- What strengths and barriers show up consistently?
- What findings point to deeper root causes of needs?

Compiling the Data

- Gather all data collected during the ANA, both archival and additional administered assessments
- Use a data compilation template, to organize the findings by data type, stakeholder group, and key findings (i.e. percentages, numbers or quotes)
- Apply the ANA Data Rubric to assess the specificity, relevance, timeliness, and accuracy of the data
- Prioritize data that are in the “transforming” range and show clear trends, patterns, context, and represent diverse stakeholders perspectives
- Add reflection prompts or notes to the selected data sets to support the school leadership team or advisory council's discussion and shared decision making
- Save this document as a living record to inform future planning and track year-to-year changes in needs and impact

Resources

- [ANA Data Rubric](#)
- [Data Compilation Tools](#)

Data Analysis

This step of the ANA process brings the school community together to collaboratively interpret the data that has been collected and compiled. By engaging the community school advisory council in shared analysis, schools root decision-making in inclusivity, transparency, and the lived experiences of students, families, staff, and community members.

This process aligns with the *what strategies support these causes?*, *who are partners that can help?*, and *how will we measure progress?* stages of the Community School Impact Cycle. It marks the transition from data collection to action planning by surfacing root causes, setting school priorities, and co-creating strategies that support the school community.

Begin by preparing the facilitation of the school leadership team and advisory council for inclusive, shared decision making. Then, use a data analysis protocol to collaboratively determine school priorities, outcomes, strategies, and measures of success based on the data and school vision.

Advisory Council Facilitation



Before engaging the leadership team or advisory council in collaborative data analysis, prepare the facilitation structure, environment, and materials to support equitable participation and decision making. This preparation makes the process efficient and rooted in trust and transparency.

Define the Purpose and Goals

- Clarify the objectives of the meeting (i.e. identify root causes, set school priorities, create SMART goals, etc.)
- Determine what outcomes you want to achieve by the end of the meeting

Develop the Agenda

- Plan time for context, steps of the analysis protocol, and next steps
- Incorporate norms and decision-making protocols
- Build in moments for voices of the council to reflect and respond

Prepare Meeting Materials

- Create visuals of the data that are clear and accessible (charts, graphs, quotes, etc.)
- Provide summaries of themes when possible

Select and Prepare the Space

- Choose a space that is accessible and welcoming to all participants
- Arrange the room to promote collaboration and inclusivity
- Arrange for supports to prevent barriers (translation, childcare, transportation)

Reflection Questions

- What are the most important outcomes of this meeting?
- Who needs to be in the room for an inclusive, representative conversation?
- What support do participants need to engage meaningfully with the data?
- Have we included strengths as well as needs?
- How can we structure the agenda to ensure every voice is heard?
- What barriers might prevent full participation, and how can we remove them?
- What leadership roles can be shared across staff, students, families, and community partners?

Data Analysis

Data Analysis Protocol

This [data analysis protocol guides](#) the participants through a collaborative review of the compiled data to identify themes, root causes, school priorities, targeted strategies, meaningful partnerships, and measures of progress.



Identify Strengths and Needs

- Begin by reviewing key findings from the compiled data that highlight the community's strengths and needs
- Look for patterns and themes that align across stakeholder groups and data types

Reflection Questions

- What strengths are emerging from the data?
- What needs or challenges consistently show up?
- Which voices are represented in these findings? Are any missing?
- What surprised us or challenged our assumptions?



Illuminate Root Causes

- Use a structured inquiry tool like the [5 why's](#) or [SWOT analysis](#) to dig into why these needs are occurring
- Consider systems level and surface level barriers

Reflection Questions

- What might be causing this pattern or need to appear?
- What historical, systemic, or structural factors might be contributing?
- What are stakeholders telling us about this issue and its context?
- Are certain student groups affected more than others? Why?
- Are there policies or practices that might unintentionally reinforce this challenge? How might we adjust those practices?



Identify School Priorities

- Based on the root cause analysis, select 3-5 key priorities
- When selecting priorities, consider alignment to school vision and long-term goals

Reflection Questions

- Which needs are most urgent and actionable?
- Which priorities are most aligned with our school's long-term vision?
- Do our priorities reflect the input from all stakeholder groups?
- Are we serving all the groups of people in our community through these priorities?
- What's feasible given our time, staffing, and resources?

Data Analysis

Data Analysis Protocol cont.



Develop Strategies and Goals

- For each priority, co-create targeted strategies
- When selecting priorities, consider feasibility, impact, capacity, and sustainability
- Consider strategies that address the root cause and build on existing strengths
- For each priority co-create [SMART goals](#) (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, timely)

Reflection Questions

- What changes in practice, policy, or programming would help address this root cause?
- Are these strategies inclusive and culturally responsive?
- Which strategies align best with our school's vision and long-term goals?
- Do our strategies address the needs across stakeholder groups?
- What does success look like? What will we see or hear if this strategy is working?



Partnerships

- Discuss the internal and external partners who can help implement each strategy
- Consider community-based organizations, service providers, parent leaders, and other school-based staff
- An asset map could be a potential tool to guide this conversation

Reflection Questions

- Who in our community already works in this area?
- Who brings expertise, trust, or lived experience relevant to this strategy?
- Are we including non-traditional partners or overlooked voices?
- How might we co-design solutions with these partners?



Identify How Progress is Measured

- Identify outcomes that would show the strategies are working
- Select indicators that will help track progress toward each goal (attendance data, surveys, focus group feedback, etc.)

Reflection Questions

- What outcomes would show our strategies are working?
- What data will we collect, and how often?
- Who will be responsible for monitoring progress?
- How will we share and reflect on this progress as a team?

Action Plan

Action Plan Overview

Why create an Action Plan?

The action plan serves as both a guide for implementation and a tool for transparency. It documents the school's shared priorities, root causes, strategies, and measures of progress, creating a clear connection from data to action. Co-developed with the school leadership team and advisory council, it reflects the lived experiences of students, families, staff and partners, confirming that the strategies are responsive to the real needs of the school community. It can also be used to communicate the goals and impact of the community school strategy with school boards, district leaders, community partners, and families.

Who develops an Action Plan?

Action Plans are co-developed by the school leadership team in partnership with the advisory council, and submitted by the coordinator. The council should reflect the diverse voices of the school community, including students, families, staff, and community partners. Shared decision-making between the coordinator, administrator, and advisory council allows the strategies in the action plan to be responsive to the needs of the entire school community.

What is an Action Plan?

The action plan is a collaborative, living document that captures a school's priorities, strategies, and measures for addressing identified needs and building on strengths. Driven by the findings in the ANA, the action plan serves as a roadmap for implementation and continuous improvement. It represents the culmination of the Community School Impact Cycle and guides the work moving forward.

How is an Action Plan created?

Action planning begins once the ANA process has been completed. This marks the transition from the *what's helping/hurting?* stage of the Impact Cycle to the *what strategies support these causes?, who can help?, and how will we measure progress?* stages. Using the findings from the ANA, the council co-develops the action plan by identifying the root causes, selecting strategies, naming resources and partnerships, and defining outcomes and indicators for measuring progress. The completed action plan becomes a flexible, working guide that supports continuous improvement and alignment to the schools vision.

The Action Plan is not meant to be a separate or standalone initiative, rather, it is a tool that aligns the community school strategy with the school's existing goals and priorities, including those in Title I plans, state continuous improvement plans, and district strategic frameworks. This integration makes sure that the community school approach strengthens, rather than adds to, the school's overall mission.

Action Plan

Action Plan Template Components

Each section of the [action plan template](#) helps schools move from root cause analysis to targeted action and accountability. These components provide a clear structure to organize implementation efforts while allowing flexibility for schools to update and adapt strategies over time.

Core Components

School Vision	A brief statement capturing the school's aspirations for students and families. This vision anchors the priorities and strategies selected in the plan.
School Priorities	3-5 needs or focus areas surfaced through the ANA process. These priorities reflect trends in the data and the voices of stakeholders across the school community.
Data and Root Cause	A summary of key data and identified root causes that connect directly to each priority. This ensures the strategies are grounded in evidence and community voice.
Strategies and Action Steps	Specific strategies the school will implement to address each priority, including the action steps for implementation.
Goal Setting	Setting SMART goals for each priority that are directly tied to the outcomes and can be measured by the selected indicators.
Resources and Partnerships	The supports needed for effective strategy implementation, such as personnel, funding, materials, or community partners.
Indicators	Clear indicators identified that will measure progress over time.

Each of these components helps tell the story of where the school is now, what it aims to improve, and how it will get there.

Sharing with Stakeholders

Sharing with stakeholders is essential to raising awareness of your strategy and support from your community. This can help increase partnerships, involve more family and community members, and highlight the continuous improvement efforts of the Community School.

Groups to Consider When Developing Messaging

- School Staff
- School Board
- District Leadership
- Local Business Leaders
 - Chamber of Commerce
- Elected Officials
 - City Council
 - Mayor
 - State Representatives
 - State Senator
- PTO/PTA
- Nearby University Staff
- Local Nonprofit Partners
- Incoming Students
- Incoming Parents

Talking Points

- [Community Schools Brochure](#)
- [Four Major Talking Points](#)
- [Rural Expansion Communication Guide](#)
- [Bipartisan Messaging Guide](#)
- [Examples of Impact Stories](#)

For additional support developing your message, planning to engage with stakeholders and receive their input is a great way to get ideas on how to communicate the impact.

Sharing Data Visually

The information can be shared through posters (as displayed below), social media, flyers, websites, or any public-facing space.

This editable 11x17 poster can serve as a template or be adjusted to suit the needs of the Community School.

Copy a [Template in Google Slides](#)

The poster template is titled "Community School Transformation Story" in a blue header. It features a central area for "Insert School Name/Mascot". To the right is a "Shared Vision" section with a placeholder for the school's vision/mission. Below the central area is a "Community School Goals" section with three numbered input lines. To the left of the bottom half is an "Assets and Needs" section with a placeholder for the number of community school assets, partners, and resources. Below that is an "Identified Barriers" section with two numbered input lines. To the right of the bottom half is a "Programs and Services" section with a placeholder for a list of programs and services provided. At the bottom is a "Contact to Get Engaged" section with a placeholder for contact information. The Idaho Coalition for Community Schools (ICCS) logo is in the top right corner.

Community School Transformation Story

Insert school district logo here

Insert School Name/Mascot

Shared Vision
Enter the school vision/mission here.

Community School Goals

1. Enter the school goals here.
2. Enter
3. Enter

Assets and Needs

Number of Community School Assets, Partners, & Resources

Identified Barriers

1. Enter the top two or three Needs
2.

Programs and Services

• Enter a list of the programs and services provided
•

Contact to Get Engaged
Enter contact information

Glossary

Advisory Council

The advisory council unites individuals from both the school and the wider community, ensuring a voice of broad representation of perspectives and experiences. As an integral part of the community school, this group collaborates to gain and uphold a profound understanding of student and family priorities, lived experiences, and strengths—key elements that shape the community school strategy. Their mission is to shepherd and champion the growth of community schools.

Assets and Needs Assessment (ANA)

A cyclical data-inquiry process of identifying strengths and needs for the school community.

Archival Data

Information or data that already exists from the community or school.

Community School Impact Cycle

The Community School Impact Cycle is a backward-planning, continuous improvement process that helps schools improve outcomes and monitor program impact.

Indicators

A way to track how well an education system is doing or how it's improving over time, especially in reaching its goals. *How will we know if we're reaching our goals?*

Outcomes

The actual results or changes that happen because of a program, strategy, or intervention. *What happened as a result of what we did?*

Root Cause

A reason or underlying issue behind a problem.

School Leadership Team

A collaborative group of individuals that lead the work to guide and improve the school's overall effectiveness, comprised of school staff (typically administrator, lead teachers, Title 1 coach, counselor).

Stakeholders

a person with interest or concern in the success of the school community.

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