

## Act 67

# Community Schools Act Grant: Request for Applications

### I. Introduction

Current education legislation such as [Act 1](#), [Act 173](#) and [Act 77](#) are examples of Vermont's ongoing efforts to ensure Vermont education systems are rigorous, accessible, and equitable for all learners. [Act 67 of 2021](#), referred to as the Community Schools Act, joined Vermont's history of education reform legislation when it was signed into law on June 8, 2021.

The Community Schools Act *"provides funding for the implementation of community school programs that provide students with equitable access to a high-quality education [...]."* To support our supervisory unions/districts (SUs/SDs), schools, educators and communities in this collective effort, the AOE is providing a competitive grant opportunity to encourage school systems to engage in activities that facilitate the development and implementation of community school programs.

The competitive grant of ARP-ESSER federal funds will be for a three-year award period, contingent on AOE annual evaluations and progress toward deliverables, beginning in fiscal year 2022 (2021-2022 academic year). Each year of award will be managed separately through continuation applications. Applicants may apply for grants of \$50,000 - \$250,000 per year. Grant applications will be reviewed by the Agency of Education after the application closes on August 18, 2021. Awards will be granted to eligible applicants or consortia that meet eligibility requirements that show the greatest promise for developing and implementing Community Schools as defined in Act 67. Approved grants may be fully or partially funded. The final award(s) will be determined by the panel of reviewers.

**Please NOTE:** This is a new program developed on recently passed legislation with a significantly abbreviated timeline. The Agency's goal is to ensure we meet two competing priorities – one, meet the requirements of the legislation including distributing funds to awardees by the September 1, 2021 deadline; and two, ensuring that all eligible applicants have sufficient access and opportunity to submit quality applications. In an effort to provide sufficient support and engage in continuous improvement as we pilot this new grant opportunity, awardees will be expected to work closely with the Agency throughout the

### Contact Information:

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Jess DeCarolis, Student Pathways Division, at [jess.decarolis@vermont.gov](mailto:jess.decarolis@vermont.gov)

duration of the award period to meet the Community Schools Act's evaluation and reporting requirements.

## II. Background

The Community Schools Act states that:

*Every child should be provided with an equitable education, as defined by the Agency of Education as access to the resources, opportunities, and educational rigor they need at the right moment in their education, whatever their race, gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, language, disability, family background, or family income may be. Every child should be able to grow up with the opportunity to achieve their dreams and contribute to the well-being of society. Our public schools must be designed and equipped to fully deliver on that promise. [Sec. 2(a)(1)]*

This goal is consistent with [16 V.S.A. §165](#), Vermont's [Education Quality Standards](#), and previously mentioned legislation (among others) in the introduction.

As Vermont supervisory unions/districts, schools and communities, along with the State, engage in COVID recovery and innovation efforts, community schools may be one effective model in supporting or strengthening education recovery efforts, furthering implementation of existing student-centered legislation and regulation (such as Act 77, Act 173, and Act 1), and supporting future innovations in public education.

As articulated in the Community Schools Act:

- *Community schools facilitate the coordination of comprehensive programs and services that are carefully selected to meet the unique needs of students and families and build on the assets they bring to their schools and communities. Community schools combine challenging and culturally inclusive learning opportunities with the academic and social supports every student needs to reach their potential. Sec. 2(a)(3)*
- *Community schools serve as resource hubs that provide a broad range of easily accessed, well-coordinated supports and services that help students and families with increasingly complex needs. These schools, at their core, are about investing in children, through quality teaching; challenging, engaging, and culturally responsive curricula; wrap around supports; safe, just, and equitable school climate; strong ties to family and community; and a clear focus on student achievement and well-being. Sec. 2(a)(7)*
- *Community schools are important centers for building community connection and resilience. When learning extends beyond the walls of the school through active engagement with community partners as with place-based learning, relationships expand and deepen, community strengths are highlighted, and opportunities for building vitality*

*surface through shared learning. Sec. 2(a)(8)*

- *Recognizing that literacy proficiency is a foundational learning skill, community schools can advance the State goal of improving literacy for all students in the State. Achieving this goal will require a multiyear and multidimensional effort requiring continued focus by the General Assembly, the Administration, and school leaders, and community schools are an important component of that effort. Sec. 2(a)(10)*

Community Schools are characterized by:

- quality teaching;*
- challenging, engaging, and culturally responsive curricula;*
- wrap around supports;*
- safe, just, and equitable school climate;*
- strong ties to family and community; and*
- a clear focus on student achievement and well-being.*

Successful applications will demonstrate their ability to meet the requirements of the application and how they will develop and sustain the characteristics of a Community School.

### **III. Project Award and Timeline**

Successful awardees will be announced August 27, 2021. The three-year grant period will begin September 1, 2021 (or upon the date that final signatures are executed, whichever is the later of the two), and will end on August 31, 2024. Continuation of the multi-year grant and annual awards will be contingent on program objectives, reporting requirements, and monitoring requirements being met annually. Grant awards and reporting periods will run from September 1 of each year until August 31 of each year. The FY22 grant award timeline is specified below. Grantees are expected to provide a plan, timeline, and budget request for the identified grant activity period aligned to the requirements of the grant program and Community Schools legislation (as outlined in this RFA).

#### **Timeline for Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22):**

Grant Application Released: July 14, 2021

Application Submission Deadline: August 18, 2021

Anticipated Grant Duration: September 1, 2021 (or upon final signed grant agreement whichever is the later of the two) – August 31, 2022.

Number of Awards: Multiple awards are anticipated and are contingent on available funding.

Note to applicants: Questions about the application will be answered on a rolling basis. Questions and answers will be posted publicly when relevant.

#### IV. Definitions

TERM	ACT 67 STATUTORY DEFINITION
<p><b>“Community school coordinator”</b></p>	<p>A person who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is a full-time or part-time staff member serving in an <i>eligible school or in a school district or supervisory union with an eligible school</i> and appointed in accordance with Vermont law; and</li> <li>• is responsible for the identification, implementation, and coordination of community school programs, subject to the operational and reporting structure of the community school coordinator’s employer</li> </ul>
<p><b>“Community school programs”</b></p>	<p>programs offered at a public elementary or secondary school <b><u>that include all five</u></b> of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Integrated student supports</b>, which address out-of-school barriers to learning through partnerships with social and health service agencies and providers, coordinated by a community school coordinator, which may include access to services such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ medical,</li> <li>○ dental,</li> <li>○ vision care, and</li> <li>○ mental health services or</li> <li>○ access to counselors to assist with housing, transportation, nutrition, immigration, or criminal justice issues,</li> </ul> <p>and include what young people bring with them to the classroom and the ways that schools and communities working together can enhance and embrace the knowledge and capacity that students and families can offer their schools. This could include educational strategies like universal design for learning, recognition and respect for cultural and linguistic diversity, and practices that focus on building and supporting relationships such as restorative practices.</p> </li> <li>• <b>Expanded and enriched learning time and</b></li> </ul>

	<p><b>opportunities</b>, which may include before-school, afterschool, weekend, summer programs, and during the school day, that provide additional academic instruction, individualized academic support, enrichment activities, and learning opportunities that emphasize real-world learning and community problem-solving and that may include art, music, drama, creative writing, hands-on experience with engineering or science, tutoring and homework help, and recreational programs that enhance and are consistent with the school’s curriculum.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Active family and community engagement</b>, which brings students’ families and the community into the school as partners in children’s education and makes the school a community hub, where all students and their families feel a sense of belonging and engagement. This shall include broad student and community participation, with a diversity of income, race, gender, newcomer status, language, and ability represented in the design, implementation, and evaluation of all activities, that is embraced by the leaders and decision-makers in schools and communities. This also provides adults with a facility to access educational opportunities they want, which shall include access to evidence-based literacy instruction and may include coordinating services with outside providers to offer English as a second language classes, green card or citizenship preparation, computer skills, art, financial literacy, career counseling, job skills training, services for substance misuse, and other programs that bring community members into the building for meetings or events.</li> <li>• <b>Collaborative leadership and practices</b>, which build a culture of professional learning, collective trust, and shared responsibility using strategies that shall, at a minimum, leverage the multitiered system of supports and include a community school coordinator and an integrated school and community leadership team that include youth and family representatives, and may</li> </ul>
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	<p>include other leadership or governance teams; teacher learning communities; and other staff to manage the multiple, complex, joint work of school and community organizations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Safe, inclusive, and equitable learning environments.</b> This area was not defined in statute.</li> </ul>
<p>“Eligible recipient”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a school district with one or more eligible schools; or</li> <li>• a supervisory union with one or more eligible schools; or</li> <li>• two or more school districts, each with one or more eligible schools that seek to work collaboratively to provide community school programs; or</li> <li>• two or more supervisory unions, each with one or more eligible schools that seek to work collaboratively to provide community school programs.</li> </ul>
<p>“Eligible school”</p>	<p><b>a public elementary or secondary school that:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• has a student body where <b>at least 40 percent of students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch</b> under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, 42 U.S.C. § 1751 et seq.; <b>or</b></li> <li>• <b>has been identified for comprehensive or equity support</b> and intervention under Section 1111 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, Pub. L. 89-10, as amended, or otherwise identified by the State as in need of additional support.</li> </ul>
<p>“Site-based leadership team”</p>	<p><b>an interdisciplinary, school-based leadership team</b> that may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the school principal,</li> <li>• the community school coordinator,</li> <li>• teachers,</li> <li>• other school employees,</li> <li>• students,</li> <li>• families,</li> <li>• community partners,</li> <li>• nonprofit organizations,</li> <li>• unions, and</li> <li>• neighboring community residents</li> </ul> <p>that supports collaborative planning, implementation, and</p>

	oversight of community school programs by the eligible recipient.
"needs and assets assessment"	<p>1) where available, and where applicable, <u>student demographic, academic achievement, and school climate data, disaggregated by major demographic groups</u>, including race, ethnicity, English language proficiency, students with individualized education plans, and students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch status;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. access to and need for <u>integrated student supports</u>;</li> <li>B. access to and need for <u>expanded and enriched learning time and opportunities</u>;</li> <li>C. <u>school funding information</u>, including federal, State, local, and private education funding and per-pupil spending, based on actual salaries of personnel assigned to the eligible school;</li> <li>D. information on the <u>number, qualifications, and stability of school staff</u>, including the number and percentage of fully certified teachers and rates of teacher turnover; and</li> <li>E. active <u>family and community engagement information</u>, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. family and community needs based on surveys, information from public meetings, or information gathered by other means;</li> <li>2. measures of family and community engagement in the eligible schools, including volunteering in schools, attendance at back-to-school nights, and parent-teacher conferences;</li> <li>3. efforts to provide culturally and linguistically relevant communication between schools and families; and</li> <li>4. access to and need for family and community engagement activities;</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**V. Eligibility to Apply**

In accordance with Act 67, to be eligible to apply for this grant applicants must meet a two-part test:

- Meet the definition of an eligible recipient; and
- Meet the definition of an eligible school

Please review the definitions in Section IV (above) prior to completing the application. The Agency of Education strongly encourages applicants to, minimally, include Career Technical Education centers as critical and consulting partners in their project applications. It is important when reviewing the above definitions, and considering the stated goal of the Community Schools Act, to draw attention to the language of 16 V.S.A. §165, specifically the following: “In order to carry out Vermont’s policy that all Vermont children will be afforded educational opportunities that are substantially equal in quality, each Vermont public school, **including each career technical center** [...]” Career Technical Education centers play a critical role in secondary education, are governed by the Education Quality Standards in the shared goal of “providing educational opportunities that are substantially equal,” and serve individual and multiple school communities. Students and families are the ultimate beneficiaries of Community School Programs. Including CTE centers as partners ensures that all Vermont learners and families have an opportunity to benefit from a community school model.

**VI. Community Schools Program Requirements**

Applicants seeking to develop Community School Programs offered at a public elementary or secondary school **must include all five of the following** in their application:

Statutory Element	Statutory definition or description (except where noted)	AOE Spotlight Considerations for Applicants (these are prompts only and are not an exhaustive list of terms/considerations)
<b>Integrated student supports</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• address out-of-school barriers to learning through partnerships with social and health service agencies and providers, coordinated by a community school coordinator, which may include access to services such as</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flexible Pathways</li> <li>• Personalized Learning Plans</li> <li>• MTSS</li> <li>• EST</li> <li>• Coordinated Curriculum</li> <li>• Local Comprehensive</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ medical,</li> <li>○ dental,</li> <li>○ vision care, and</li> <li>○ mental health services or</li> <li>○ access to counselors to assist with housing, transportation, nutrition, immigration, or criminal justice issues,</li> <li>● and include what young people bring with them to the classroom and the ways that schools and communities working together can enhance and embrace the knowledge and capacity that students and families can offer their schools. This could include educational strategies like: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ universal design for learning,</li> <li>○ recognition and respect for cultural and linguistic diversity, and</li> <li>○ practices that focus on building and supporting relationships such as restorative practices.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Assessment Systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● School Counseling</li> <li>● Local Core Teams</li> <li>● Designated Agencies</li> <li>● Community-Based Organizations</li> <li>● Culturally Sustaining</li> <li>● Project-Based Learning</li> <li>● Community-Based Learning</li> <li>● PBIS</li> <li>● SEL</li> <li>● Equity Literacy</li> <li>● Restorative Practices</li> </ul>
<p><b>Expanded and enriched learning time and opportunities</b></p>	<p>which may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● before-school, afterschool, weekend, summer programs, and</li> <li>● during the school day, that provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ additional academic instruction,</li> <li>○ individualized academic support, enrichment activities,</li> <li>○ learning opportunities that emphasize real-world learning and community problem-solving and</li> <li>○ that may include art, music, drama, creative writing,</li> <li>○ hands-on experience with engineering or science,</li> <li>○ tutoring and homework help,</li> <li>○ and recreational programs that enhance and are consistent with the school’s curriculum.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Flexible Pathways</li> <li>● Personalized Learning Plans</li> <li>● 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers</li> <li>● Community-Based Organizations</li> <li>● Culturally Sustaining</li> <li>● Project-Based Learning</li> <li>● Community-Based Learning</li> <li>● Work-Based Learning</li> <li>● Interdisciplinary</li> <li>● Independent/Extended Learning</li> <li>● STEAM</li> <li>● Makerspaces</li> <li>● Proficiency-Based Learning</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Digital Badging/Micro-credentialing</li> <li>• Callbacks/Advisory</li> <li>• Capstones</li> <li>• Intergenerational Learning</li> </ul>
<b>Active family and community engagement</b>	<p>...[b]rings students’ families and the community into the school as partners in children’s education and makes the school a community hub, <b>where all students and their families feel a sense of belonging and engagement.</b></p> <p><b>This shall include broad student and community participation, with a diversity of income, race, gender, newcomer status, language, and ability represented in the design, implementation, and evaluation of all activities,</b> that is embraced by the leaders and decision-makers in schools and communities.</p> <p>This also provides adults with a facility to access educational opportunities they want, which shall include access to evidence-based literacy instruction and may include coordinating services with outside providers to offer English as a second language classes, green card or citizenship preparation, computer skills, art, financial literacy, career counseling, job skills training, services for substance misuse, and other programs that bring community members into the building for meetings or events.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adult Education and Literacy Providers</li> <li>• Career Technical Education</li> <li>• English Language instruction</li> <li>• Cultural Inclusivity</li> <li>• Literacy</li> <li>• Digital/Computer Literacy</li> <li>• Media Literacy</li> <li>• Civic Literacy</li> <li>• Equity Literacy</li> <li>• Financial Literacy</li> <li>• Career Counseling</li> </ul>
Collaborative leadership and practices	<p>which build a culture of professional learning, collective trust, and shared responsibility using strategies that shall, at a minimum, leverage the multitiered system of supports and include a community school coordinator and an integrated school and community leadership team that include youth and family representatives, and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MTSS</li> <li>• EST</li> <li>• Coordinated Curriculum</li> <li>• Local Comprehensive Assessment Systems</li> <li>• Needs-Based Professional Learning</li> </ul>

	may include other leadership or governance teams; teacher learning communities; and other staff to manage the multiple, complex, joint work of school and community organizations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restorative Practices</li> <li>• Distributed Leadership</li> </ul>
<b>Safe, inclusive, and equitable learning environments</b>	<p><i>Note: The statute did not provide a definition. The AOE has offered the below for consideration and consistent with language from both the Annual Snapshot and the MTSS Field Guide.</i></p> <p>that foster a culture and climate where all students, families, and community members feel healthy, safe, and supported in achieving their learning goals. This environment allows educators, students, and the community to see and respond to situations where educational inequity may occur.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MTSS</li> <li>• EST</li> <li>• Needs-Based Professional Learning</li> <li>• Restorative Practices</li> <li>• Distributed Leadership</li> <li>• Equity Literacy</li> <li>• Career Counseling</li> <li>• Youth Risk Behavior Survey</li> <li>• Parental Engagement</li> </ul>

## VII. Community School Grant Project Requirements

*Note: Items A – D of Section VII align with the Cognito application sections.*

- A. **CONTACT INFORMATION:** Name, address, phone number, and e-mail information for Lead Grant Contact, Authorizing Individual, Partners (when applicable), and Business Manager.
- B. **OVERALL PROJECT MANAGEMENT DESCRIPTION:** Provide a clear description and a plan for organizational structure and communication system to meet the grant expectations. This must include:
1. **Organizational structure:** Clearly defined roles/positions and responsibilities of:
    - Eligible grant recipient/project team;
    - Eligible participating schools' project members;
    - Community School Coordinator position;
    - Site-Based Leadership Team and members;
    - Others such as existing Leadership Teams, Steering Committee, and
    - Partners (and their participating members)

that demonstrate that the Community Schools grant applicant has the capability of managing the project, organizing the work, and meeting deadlines over the course of the three-year grant; and,

2. **Communication system:** Identify intended strategies for communication and dissemination of project information. This should include:
  - Anticipated/planned stakeholder engagement strategies;
  - Anticipated/planned strategies for communication with and among the SU/SDs, school(s)/CTE and other education providers, community partners, other stakeholders, and the Agency of Education; and,
  - Anticipated/planned strategies for be disseminating and sharing progress and products with the school community, as well as the AOE for reporting and publishing.

### C. PROJECT, PLAN, EVIDENCE, TIMELINE, AND BENCHMARKS OF SUCCESS

(No more than 10 pages)

1. **Provide overview and description of Three-Year Vision and Goals** for developing Community School Model that addresses all FIVE Community School Program elements. This should include:
  - a. Purpose statement for developing a Community School Program and how it will benefit your school community;
  - b. Description of how the Community School Program will:
    - i. support implementation of existing student-centered education legislation and regulation (e.g., Act 77, Act 173, Act 1, EQS, PBIS, etc.),
    - ii. support recovery efforts,
    - iii. resolve equity gaps; and
  - c. Connections to any or all of the following (when applicable) e.g.:
    - i. Recovery Plans
    - ii. Continuous Improvement Plans
    - iii. SAMHSA grant projects
    - iv. Equitable Education System projects
    - v. Other initiatives; and
  - d. Proposed data collection and/or research plans to support continuous improvement; and
  - e. Proposed sustainability planning through other investments and integration into policy, practice and through community engagement.

2. **Provide a clear and specific description of Year One Plan.** This plan and timeline must be developed for the time period between September 1, 2021 and August 31, 2022 and include:
- a. An achievable plan addressing each of the FIVE Community School elements (a. – e.) that includes:
    - i. strategies and activities to achieve the plan (*for those who have not yet completed Needs and Assets Assessment, hired Community Schools Coordinator and/or implemented PBIS these are **required** first-year activities and investments*),
    - ii. evidence basis and/or connection to needs and assets assessment,
    - iii. timeline for this project,
    - iv. specific indicators of quarterly project benchmarks (i.e., a description of the measurements that will be used to determine success including clearly defined goals, numeric objectives, and specific outcome).

**D. BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION:** Please provide the following:

- An estimated budget for Three-Year Vision and Goals (this can include proposed continuation activities based on the Year One Plan).
- A cost-effective budget and justification for line items that reflect the goals and priorities of this project for Year One Plan. This must support meeting the FIVE elements of a Community-School Program and required use of funds when applicable. This budget and budget justification must be for the time period between September 1, 2021 and August 31, 2022.

**Please pay special attention to the following when developing your budget:**

1. To maximize the use of ESSER and other existing federal funds made available to Local Education Agencies (LEAs), eligible applicants should consider first expending existing federal funds. According to the Department of Education's Frequently Asked Question on emergency funding (bolded emphasis added):

*Section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act requires an LEA to reserve not less than 20 percent of its ARP ESSER allocation to address the academic impact of lost instructional time through the implementation of evidence-based interventions such as summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive after-school programs, or extended school year programs, and ensure that the*

*interventions implemented respond to students' social, emotional, mental health, and academic needs and address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on students from low-income families, students of color, children with disabilities, English learners, migratory students, students experiencing homelessness, and children and youth in foster care.*

Community Schools grant applicants should pay close attention to proposed strategies and activities that could be supported through other existing funds.

Additional information and FAQs about required or permissible use of ESSER and GEER funds can be found at: [Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Programs FAQs](#)

2. Required use of funds (excerpted from Act 67): A recipient of funding under this act *shall use* the funding to:
  - [I]f a needs and assets assessment has not been conducted within the prior three years that substantially conforms with the requirements in this subdivision, then, in collaboration with the site-based leadership team, **conduct a needs and assets assessment** that includes:
    - a) *where available, and where applicable, student demographic, academic achievement, and school climate data, disaggregated by major demographic groups, including race, ethnicity, English language proficiency, students with individualized education plans, and students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch status;*
    - b) *access to and need for integrated student supports;*
    - c) *access to and need for expanded and enriched learning time and opportunities;*
    - d) *school funding information, including federal, State, local, and private education funding and per-pupil spending, based on actual salaries of personnel assigned to the eligible school;*
    - e) *information on the number, qualifications, and stability of school staff, including the number and percentage of fully certified teachers and rates of teacher turnover; and*
    - f) *active family and community engagement information, including:*
      - *family and community needs based on surveys, information from public meetings, or information gathered by other means;*
      - *measures of family and community engagement in the eligible schools, including volunteering in schools, attendance at back-to-school nights,*

- and parent-teacher conferences;*
- efforts to provide culturally and linguistically relevant communication between schools and families; and*
- access to and need for family and community engagement activities;*

*NOTE: If a needs and assets assessment has not been conducted under subdivision (1)(A) of this subsection within the prior three years, the first year of funding shall be used to conduct the needs and assets assessment of the school to determine what is necessary to develop community school programs and an action plan to implement community school programs. During the second and third years of the funding, the community school coordinator shall, in collaboration with the site-based leadership team, oversee the implementation of community school programs.*

- hire a community school coordinator** to, in collaboration with the site-based leadership team, develop and implement community school programs or designate a community school coordinator from existing personnel and, in collaboration with the site-based leadership team, augment work already being performed to develop and implement community school programs; and
- if the recipient has not fully implemented positive behavioral integrated supports under 16 V.S.A. § 2902, provide professional development to staff on positive behavioral integrated supports and implement those supports.**

3. Permissible use of funds (excerpted from Act 67):

A recipient of funding under this act may use the funding to, in collaboration with the site-based leadership team, develop and implement a plan to improve literacy outcomes and objectively assess those outcomes.

## VIII. Application Submission and Review

### A. Submission:

- Applicants must complete their Community School Application via the following 2021 [Community Schools Act Grant Cognito form](#). Planning/drafting tools and prompts to assist in application completion are located at the end of this document. Please note, the order and format of these tools do not correspond directly to the web-based grant application.
- Once completed, applicants will receive a OneSpan cover page for electronic signature to be signed by the authorized institutional official. This must be completed and returned to Rose Wheeler at [rose.wheeler@vermont.gov](mailto:rose.wheeler@vermont.gov) at the Vermont Agency of Education.

Any questions regarding this grant opportunity should be directed to the following email: [AOE.CommunitySchoolsProgram@vermont.gov](mailto:AOE.CommunitySchoolsProgram@vermont.gov). Questions about the originating legislation can be directed to Jess DeCarolis via email ([jess.decarolis@vermont.gov](mailto:jess.decarolis@vermont.gov)).

To be considered for funding, applications must be completed in Cognito **by 4:00 PM on August 18, 2021.**

**B. Review Process:** A review panel will evaluate the eligible applications in accordance with the required application components.

### C. Criteria:

Criteria	Points
<b>Community School Project Components</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Three-year Vision and Goals (10)</li><li>• Project Management (10)</li><li>• Partnerships (10)</li></ul>	30
<b>Community School Core Elements for Year One</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• For each of the FIVE Community School elements (10 points each):<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ strategies and activities to achieve the plan</li><li>○ evidence basis and/or connection to needs and assets</li></ul></li></ul>	50

<p>assessment,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ timeline for this project,</li> <li>○ specific indicators of quarterly project benchmarks (i.e., a description of the measurements that will be used to determine success including clearly defined goals, numeric objectives, and specific outcome).</li> </ul>	
<b>Budget and Budget Justifications</b>	20

The Agency reserves the right to award in full or in part, to reject any and all applications in whole or in part, and to waive technical defects, irregularities or omissions if, in its judgement, the best interest of students would be served. After receiving the application, the Agency reserves the right not to award a grant, to negotiate specific grant amounts and to select certain grantees regardless of points awarded as part of the process to meet federal or State requirements or State Board of Education priorities.

Applicants may be asked to clarify or rewrite certain aspects of their applications. Finalists may be asked to participate in an interview before funds are awarded. Applicants will be contacted if such information or actions are necessary.

## IX. Award Administration

- A. Notification of the Award:** The SU/SD designee will be notified of the status of their application within one week of the application deadline.
- B. Reporting Requirements:** The Grant Lead, Leadership/Site-Based Team designee, and/or Community-School Coordinator will provide quarterly updates on progress to a designated staff person at the Agency of Education.
- C. Final Report to be submitted by September 30, 2022:** Project Evidence and Final Evaluation report should include a detailed description of how the project goals were met, as well as any challenges that were encountered. Additionally, the Community School Project annual evaluation may include activities such as the following:
  - Interviews, surveys or evaluations by Agency of Education staff or their designees;
  - An explanation of how partnerships functioned including strengths and challenges; and
  - An explanation for how this work will be sustained upon completion of three-year grant project.

**NON-REQUIRED GRANT PLANNING AND DRAFTING TOOLS:** These planning/drafting tools are for applicants to organize their thinking prior to completing the application. These prompts do not correspond directly in format or order to the web-based grant application. Using these tools is not required.

**School eligibility**

ELIGIBILITY	Criteria A	Criteria B	Criteria C
<b>STATUTORY DEFINITION</b>	<i>has a student body where at least 40 percent of students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, 42 U.S.C. § 1751 et seq.; or</i>	<i>has been identified for comprehensive or equity support and intervention under Section 1111 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, Pub. L. 89-10, as amended, or</i>	<i>or otherwise identified by the State as in need of additional support.</i>
	Yes/No	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Equity Support Designation</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Comprehensive Support Designation</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Not Sure</i>	Please site reasons why you need additional support.

## Technical Requirements Review

	Statutory Technical Requirement	Yes, next steps	No, <u>required</u> next steps
1.	<b>Completed Needs and Assets Assessment within last three years.</b> (Comprehensive Needs Assessments (CNA), CFP Data Inventory, Recovery Planning analysis, surveys and other sources that meet the core components of the <b>needs and assets assessment</b> defined in Section IV are permissible.	Confirm in application and move to Technical Requirement #2	Include in project description and budget your plan for completing Needs and Assets Assessment Year One (FY22).
2.	<b>Have a Community School Coordinator</b> on staff.	Identify in application and move on to Technical Requirement #3	Include in project description and budget your plan for hiring or designating Community School Coordinator Year One (FY22).
3.	Have fully <b>implemented positive behavioral integrated supports</b> under 16 V.S.A. § 2902.	Identify in application and move on to Technical Requirement #4	Include in project description and budget your plan for providing professional development to staff and implementing PBIS Year One (FY22).

**Three-Year Vision and Goals** for developing Community School Model that addresses all FIVE Community School Program elements. This should include:

1. Purpose statement for developing a Community School Program and how it will benefit your school community;
2. Description of how the Community School Program will support implementation of, or expand upon, existing student-centered education legislation and regulation, recovery efforts, and resolve equity gaps;
3. Connections to any existing investments or initiatives;
4. Proposed data collection and/or research plans to support continuous improvement; and
5. Proposed sustainability planning through other investments and integration into policy, practice and through community engagement.

<b>Statutory Element</b>	<b>For development – What we’d like to do.</b>	<b>For expanding/ Refining – How we’d like to do it better.</b>	<b>For sustaining – How we’d like to maintain doing this well.</b>
<b>Integrated student supports</b>			
<b>Expanded and enriched learning time and opportunities</b>			
<b>Active family and community engagement</b>			
<b>Collaborative leadership and practices</b>			
<b>Safe, inclusive, and equitable learning environments</b>			

**Year One Plan** addressing each of the FIVE Community School elements, including:

- a. strategies and activities to achieve the plan (*for those who have not yet completed Needs and Assets Assessment, hired Community Schools Coordinator and/or implemented PBIS these are **required** first year's activities and investments*),
- b. evidence basis and/or connection to needs and assets assessment,
- c. timeline for this project,
- d. specific indicators of quarterly project benchmarks (i.e., a description of the measurements that will be used to determine success including clearly defined goals, numeric objectives, and specific outcome).

Timeline (Month)	Community School Element and Strategy	Description of Activity and Participants	Deliverable/ Product	Measurement/ Benchmark of Meeting Need

## Budget Drafting

Functions	Salaries (100)	Employees Benefits (200)	Professional/ Technical Services (300) Consultants Contracts	Purchased Property Services (400)	Other Purchased Services (500) Travel Printing	Supplies (600) Food Books Periodicals	Equipment (730) Equipment Tech Hard/ Software, Furniture	Miscellaneous Expenditures (800) Subgrants, Dues, & Fees	Other Items (900)	Total
2110-Attendance & Social Work										
2130-Health Services										
2212-Instruction & Curriculum Development										
2213 -Instructional Staff Training										
2219 - Other Improvement of Instruction Services										
2230- Instruction-Related Technology										
2240-Academic Student Assessment										
2290 - Other Support Services-Instructional Staff										
2495-Administration of grants										
2715- Field Trips (Education related)										

### Contact Information:

If you have questions about this document or would like additional information, please contact:

Jess DeCarolis, Student Pathways Division, at [jess.decarolis@vermont.gov](mailto:jess.decarolis@vermont.gov)

2716-Transportation to extra/Co-curricular										
2901-Other Support Services										
3300-Community Services Operations										
5510 – Subgrant to member districts										
Approved Indirect Rate (optional)										
<b>Total</b>										

## Applicant Contact Information

### Superintendent

Institution or Organization	
Name	
Title	
Address	
Telephone	
Email	
Fax	
Signature	

### Lead Grant Contact

Institution or Organization	
Name	
Title	
Address	
Telephone	
Email	
Fax	

### Business Manager

Institution or Organization	
Name	
Title	
Address	
Telephone	
Email	
Fax	

### Contact Information:

If you have questions about this document or would like additional information, please contact:

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## Proposal Cover Page

<b>Supervisory Union/District [LEAD]</b>	
<b>Type of Entity</b>	
<b>Tax ID #</b>	
<b>Contact Person</b>	
<b>Business Manager</b>	
<b>Phone</b>	
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Superintendent Name</b>	
<b>Superintendent Email</b>	
<b>Superintendent Signature</b> (via AOE's OneSpan e-signature process)	
<b>Date</b>	

## Scoring Criteria

<b>Score (Out of 100 possible points)</b>	<b>Scoring Guide:</b> We offer the following scoring ranges as a guide to assist you when developing and evaluating your application submission. <i>The proposal...</i>
80 – 100 = Excellent	Demonstrates the highest level of thinking, capacity, or impact. The content of the responses is exemplary across criteria area and could be an example to others.
55 – 79 = Good	Exhibits ideas that will affect positive change. While the criteria are not fully addressed, the responses are thoughtful and striving for effectiveness and coherence.
30 – 54 = Fair	Has gaps that are apparent. Criteria are not addressed fully. Responses lack detail.
0 – 29 = Poor	Has significant weaknesses in meeting the criteria; questions/criteria are not addressed or the logic is faulty.